

LOVE FOR SOULS.

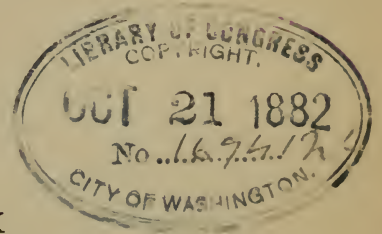
LOVE FOR SOULS

BY THE
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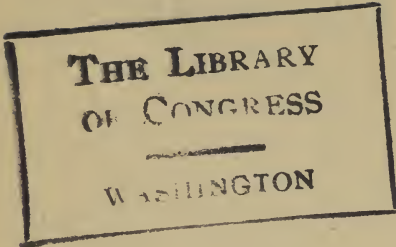
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LOVE FOR SOULS.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF TRUE LOVE FOR SOULS.

LOVE for those who have no spiritual want supplied, and who are in danger of dying in their sins is entirely different from the benevolence which is so often manifested by mere philanthropists. We pity the sick and wounded and try to minister to their wants and to lighten their sufferings, but this pity is of a different nature from that felt by God's people for perishing souls. Compassion is greatly stirred when thousands are in danger of undergoing a lingering death by famine, and large sums of money are freely and gladly contributed to purchase for them the food which they must have without delay, but this is not the same in kind as compassion for those whom only the Bread of Life

can save. Pity for men on account of their mental and bodily sufferings does not imply love for God. It is true that grace existing in the heart will lead us promptly to relieve the temporal necessities of men, but it is not true that kindness to the poor, and efforts to relieve men's temporal necessities, certainly and necessarily imply right feelings towards God and the presence of grace. It is most important to understand what true pity for perishing souls is not, and in what it really consists.

We retain, since the fall, conscience, a sense of justice, the social affections, and when these principles of action exist in great strength they produce, even in many who are destitute of holiness, great amiability and worth of character. Many who have no real piety exhibit in their lives great magnanimity and sweetness of disposition, and are kind to the poor. But since these virtues may, as was said, be possessed by persons who are destitute of holiness of heart and of love for God, they may exist without being accompanied by love for perishing souls. They may even exist where there is no belief that men are in need of salvation.

Did we believe with the utmost sincerity that a friend who lately died was now undergoing torture in a place called purgatory, the thought of his torture by literal fire would horrify us, and our pity for him would be intense, but it would not be the same in kind as the pity which God's true people feel for souls completely under sin's dominion.

Our Saviour did not teach us that angels rejoice whenever men, pressed down by earthly sorrows, are delivered from them, but that their joy is called forth when one is made holy; namely, when a sinner with a heart truly broken and penitent turns from sin unto God. This shows that the pity which angelic beings feel for our fallen race is pity for them considered as lost, considered as in bondage to sin, and doomed to suffer that death which is its wages.

There is a happiness which has no moral character, *i. e.* which is neither holy nor sinful. There is also in our world much suffering of this description. But God was not thinking of this kind of misery, so abundant in the world, when He so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him

should not perish but have everlasting life. That which moved God to deliver up His Son for sinners was the sight of their subjection to the dominion and curse of sin. And we are like God when we too pity sinners on account of their slavery to sin.

If love for souls is genuine it will be called forth by the thought of their exposure to punishment after death. But what is this punishment?

When a soul dies impenitent and passes into the world of woe it carries within itself all the elements of perdition. Undoubtedly there is also imposed suffering,—positive infliction from the hand of God. Undoubtedly torments descend upon it from without. But it also suffers in other ways. There is the greater torment, consisting in the unrestrained raging of indwelling sin. There is also the agonized condition caused by remorse* or an accusing conscience, and

*Not remorse for some of its sins but for all of them. For every sin will doubtless be remembered. In this life most of our sins are forgotten almost as soon as they are committed, and we also continually sin without being conscious of sinning, but each sin which the lost soul has committed here will be distinctly

it is this which will give future punishment its moral character. We see then in what the punishment consists which the impenitent endure after death. And if such is its nature how different must be the pity, which Christians feel for those who are in danger of it from all other kinds of pity—how different from that pity which is excited by the contemplation of mere bodily suffering! How evident, also, it is, that it is a compassion which can be felt only by true Christians—only by those who have been made holy. I could indeed deeply pity those in danger of eternal punishment *without my possessing a spark of holiness* did I sincerely think that it consisted solely of physical suffering, but it must be impossible for me unless I am in some degree holy, to have compassion on those in danger of eternal punishment as long as I fully believe in my heart that punishment in hell consists in part in a sinner being totally abandoned by God; that

brought before its conscience in the world of woe. Probably nothing we have done, or have known, or experienced in the present life is ever so obliterated from the memory as not to come before the mind again and be distinctly remembered in the future state. This opinion is held by many.

is in his being given up to sin, and to go on sinning forever. While only those who have become holy can love perishing souls, it is also true that their love for them must be in exact proportion to their holiness.

It is not for the reformation of sinners, nor is it to keep others from transgressing that the world of woe has been prepared for the wicked. But sin must be punished because justice would be outraged if it should go unpunished—in other words because sin has an inherent ill desert. It is because justice is and always will be, an attribute of God's character that sinners, unless Christ has atoned for all their sins, cannot possibly escape punishment. This we must be able in some degree to see before we can have a deep anxiety for unpardoned sinners. At least, without the perception of the real nature of sin, namely, that it deserves punishment for what it is in itself, we could not believe that there is such a thing as remorse or an accusing conscience in the abode of the lost. When, however, we are enlightened to see that sin for its own sake *deserves* punishment, pity for condemned sinners will be awakened in our hearts, and we shall

long for their deliverance from that dreadful death to which they are justly sentenced. Where this longing for their salvation exists, there is true love for souls.

We have alluded above to the nature of future punishment. As to its duration and intensity, we are taught in the Scriptures that it will be eternal, and also inconceivably great. The wicked are represented as blaspheming God, while they gnaw their tongues for pain. In Mark ix. 42-48, our Lord says it is better "to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." He tells us that "At the last day the judge shall say to those upon his left hand, 'Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'"—Matt. xxv. 41. "The Son of Man shall send forth, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."—Matt. xiii. 41-42. These passages are not intended to teach that there is any physical fire in hell. Fire that never shall be quenched, lake of fire, furnace of fire, the undying worm—are

images employed to convey the idea of unutterable misery. Abandonment by the Spirit of God, the being given up to the dominion of evil passions, "with the self-loathing, self-contempt, despair, and accusations of conscience, or remorse therewith connected," together with evils, the nature of which the Bible does not explain, inflicted directly by God, must produce a degree of suffering to which literal fire would be a positive relief. O believer! cease not to look with compassion upon all in danger of being lost.

Before we conclude this chapter, we have a word to add to what has been said on the subject of remorse as constituting a part of the punishment of those who die impenitent. Infants and idiots, no less than others, need to have an interest in Christ's atonement, and to be regenerated before they can enter heaven, but the sufferings they endure (and this is one of the things which makes their sufferings mysterious) cannot be of the nature of punishment. For their sufferings are not only *not* attended with the actings of conscience, but there is in their case no possibility of such actings. Conscience in them

being totally undeveloped, there is in their case no more possibility of the exercises or actings of such a faculty than if the moral sense had not been given them as an original faculty of their souls. As long as it remains undeveloped in human beings, they are not moral agents. Therefore, as was said, the sufferings which they endure *while in the state* of infancy or idiocy cannot be sent on them as a punishment. And if we should suppose that the consciences of the lost were to become extinct—utterly to cease to have any existence, then from that moment their sufferings would not be real punishment. The existence of conscience in the soul is a necessary condition of its suffering the penalty of God's law, and the accusations of conscience, called remorse, will cause much of the anguish which the lost will endure; and as was said, it is this which will give their punishment its moral character. The following quotation must strike every reader as forcible and true: "The emotion experienced on the performance of a wicked action is well known to every one. It has a distinctive appellation—*remorse*. It is a feeling distinguishable from all others, and more intolerable than any

other species of pain. It is like a scorpion stinging the soul in its tenderest part. No language can exaggerate the misery of a soul abandoned to the torture of this feeling. And though, in time, it may seem to be allayed by forgetfulness of the crime, yet when any circumstance or association brings the evil action distinctly before the conscience, the torment is renewed. Thus acts of iniquity committed in heedless gaiety, often produce sensible remorse in the time of solitude and reflection; and the sins of youth embitter old age. This feeling often accompanies the sinner to his times of decline, and is the pain which most annoys him on his bed of death. As the feeling accompanies the guilty unto the last moment of their earthly existence, there is much reason to think that it will cause the bitterest anguish of a future state."—*Outlines of Moral Science*, by Dr. A. Alexander.

CHAPTER II.

NO MAN CAN BE A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST WHO
DOES NOT LOVE PERISHING SOULS.

WE do not say that very ardent and lively compassion for souls is necessary in order to prove one a Christian. We only say that it is sufficient proof that a man is not a Christian who is *entirely* destitute of this feeling. The feeling must at least exist in some degree. For consider what a total want of love for souls implies. First, it implies that we do not care whether they are the objects of God's displeasure or not. God's displeasure against a soul means his wrath felt towards it—a wrath which is not yet appeased, and which never can be appeased until the law is satisfied in its behalf by Christ's atonement—a wrath which, if poured out upon the soul, would destroy it. Now, a total want of love for souls implies that no anxiety is awakened in our minds on account of their being

the objects of God's displeasure—displeasure such as this, and surely this cannot consist with our being true disciples of Christ.

In the second place, want of love for souls implies that we do not care if they continue to hate God. A totally depraved being, one who has been such from his birth, without ever having been changed by grace, hates the God of the Bible. He is blind to the loveliness of God's holiness. God's infinite holiness does not seem to him to be lovely, but odious. The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is a friend of the world—it rejects the Saviour, it resists the Holy Spirit. The enmity of the natural man to God is especially roused into activity when God opposes his plans and pursuits. Only those whose hearts are broken, and who have some tender sweet approval of God's opposition to all sin, only such have ceased to hate God. Impenitent men hate the God of the Bible, however much complacency they may feel in some god of their own imagination. Now not to have any love whatever for impenitent souls is to be entirely indifferent to the fact that they belong to the class of beings who hate God, and how can

we have such indifference, and yet be God's true children?

In the third place, total want of love for the soul of our neighbour, for his highest good, implies a willingness that his character should forever remain entirely dissimilar to God's. The true glory of a regenerated soul is that the image of God which man lost by the fall is now restored to it. It has been made in some degree holy—has regained a resemblance to God. Until regeneration has taken place, it bears not the faintest trace of the divine image—has not even the faintest spark of holiness. True Christians long to have all men made holy, partakers of God's nature; but those who love not the souls of men have not a particle of this longing, and if this is the case, such persons cannot be real Christians.

In the fourth place, to be without any love for souls, is to be insensible to their dreadful deprivation, in that they have not the Holy Spirit and are strangers to His gracious operations. The Holy Spirit no less than the Father and the Son has an agency and performs a part in the soul's salvation, and it is in regenerating and sanctify-

ing it, in communicating to it the holiness already spoken of that his work consists. This is only a general statement of his agency or operations. He convinces the soul of sin. He enables it to see the beauty, glory and attractiveness of the truth. He enriches it with all the lovely graces of the Christian character. He gives it the power of seeing unseen things and of walking by faith. He gives it assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and consolation and support in affliction. He enables it to behold the beauty and glory of Immanuel. These are some of the Holy Spirit's gracious operations, and in order that sinful needy souls may be the subjects of them, and thus be saved and finally glorified, He makes them His temple. Now, not to love souls in the least degree is to be perfectly indifferent whether they are thus richly blessed and is therefore to be without any right to the name of Christian.

In the fifth place, if one's heart contains not a particle of love for souls, it will feel no regret on account of the failure of the unrenewed to perform those holy acts, and to cultivate those holy habits which are peculiar to Christians. A true Christian tries to conform his life to God's com-

mandments. He redeems time to read and study the Scriptures. He keeps up the habit of contributing of his means to support the cause of Christ. He performs many deeds of kindness and mercy. These acts characterize all believers more or less. And above all, the people of God without a single exception, pray. Surely we were right in saying that one, who has no love for souls in his heart, cannot be a disciple of Jesus, if the absence of this love implies the absence of all regret or sorrow that impenitent men are utter strangers to these holy acts and habits of the child of God.

In speaking of the inward spiritual gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit on such as are the subjects of his gracious operations we alluded to the power which He gives to behold the beauty and glory of Immanuel. It is this power possessed by all believers, which, above everything else, distinguishes them from other men. In this, more than in all else, their happiness and blessedness consist. And they deeply feel that if the unregenerate multitude, by whom they are surrounded, were only enlightened by the Spirit of God to see the loveliness of Jesus, they could

ask no more for them. Alas, the unregenerate know not Him who is the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, and it is this blindness of the perishing more than all other miseries belonging to their condition as lost sinners, which awakens the pity of God's people for them. And what wonder is it when we consider that all believers know by experience what Christ can be to a poor perishing sinner. They know that to be separated from Him and to die forever are the same—that it is only when Christ lives in the soul, that *it* lives. They sweetly feel that Christ is their own present joy and everlasting portion—their all in all. Dearer to them than all other hymns, are hymns of praise to Christ. Their favorite Christian poets are those who can praise the Saviour in such words as these:

“ Jesus, the very thought of Thee,
With sweetness fills my breast :
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

“ When once Thou visitest the heart,
Then light begins to shine ;
Then earthly vanities depart,
Then kindles love divine.

“ Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our prize shall be ;
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,
And through eternity.”

The impenitent and the unbelieving are separated by an infinite distance from Christ. It is in this that their loss and their misery consist.

CHAPTER III.

LOVE FOR SOULS IS A GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE Holy Spirit no less than the Father and the Son, has an office to perform in the work of redemption. It is His office to reveal divine truth to men. First, he made the writers of the Scriptures His organs in the communication of God's will to a lost world, and, second, His Holy Word having been written, He reveals the divine truth contained in it to the souls of men by giving them a sight, a perception of its glorious qualities. For He everywhere attends divine truth by His power. He not only attends it by that influence called common grace, which extends to all men, elect and non-elect, but He illuminates the minds of God's people that they may know the truth externally revealed. He regenerates souls and then dwells in them to carry forward their sanctification.

In former times there were extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which were only designed to be

temporary, and which were not necessarily confined to believers. Unrenewed men might receive them. The Holy Spirit gave to Saul "another heart," but not a new heart. Physical strength was given to Samson by the Spirit of the Lord. He also gave skill in curious workmanship to Bezaleel and Aholiab for the construction and adornment of the Tabernacle. These men may have been God's true children, but their receiving these gifts does not prove that they were. Upon Judas Iscariot and other unrenewed men, the Holy Spirit bestowed inspiration and the power of working miracles.

As already said, the Holy Spirit constantly attends divine truth by that influence usually called common grace. Thus He enlightens the consciences of the unregenerate. He warns and strives with them. He constrains them to believe certain truths of the Bible which they do not love and which they would willingly disbelieve. He so restrains them that the evil which is in them does not act itself out. Reluctant to give them up, he continues for a long season to urge them by his gentle influence to leave the path of destruction. The Holy Spirit's striv-

ings with men are spoken of in Genesis vi. 3—
“ My spirit shall not always strive with man.”
They are the same in their nature now that they
were in the days of the Antediluvians. They
are the Spirit’s common operations, but they do
not necessarily bless and save the soul. They
must be attended or followed by the communi-
cation of that gift of God called faith. When
a sinner receives this, his salvation is begun.
But the gift or grace of faith cannot exist with-
out having other graces associated with it. Some
of these are sorrow for sin, a perception of the
glory of God in the face of Jesus, love for Jesus,
a hungering and thirsting after righteousness and
love for souls. Yes, love for souls must be classed
with those gifts of the Spirit which are called
graces.

The Holy Spirit has the same love for the
lost which the Father and the Son have, and this
pity he communicates to all the people of God.
It is important that Christians should recognize
this as a gift of the Spirit, otherwise they fail
to render Him the honour which is His due.
Love for souls, like all other exercises of the
spiritual life, is saving and sanctifying. There

is something of the divine nature in it. It is more excellent than the gift of miracles, or the gift of prophecy, or the gift of tongues: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love [*i. e.* love for others] it profiteth me nothing." Love for souls cannot be acquired by your own independent agency, nor can it in this way be increased. But you have no reason to be disheartened or discouraged on this account, for it is one of the graces of the Spirit, and if a grace of the Spirit it can be obtained by prayer. Still you yourself have a part to perform in increasing it. It is only when we co-operate with the Holy Spirit in his actings that He keeps the Christian graces alive in our souls. If you are conscious of great defect in your pity for the perishing, and if this greatly grieves you, how encouraging

to know that the blessed Spirit has power to increase the grace within you, that it is His office to do so, and that He will certainly cause it to grow in answer to importunate prayer.

We cannot, as was said, exercise the feeling of compassion for the perishing, even in the faintest degree, independently of the Holy Spirit. He excites this feeling in the hearts of Christians. He also is that Person of the blessed Trinity who new creates or regenerates those who stand in such need of our Christian pity. This is His office and in fulfilling it He is constantly active. Perhaps an hour does not pass in which He is not in many parts of our world, calling some souls, dead in trespasses and sins, to life. So that while we may well grieve to think that such vast numbers are constantly dying in their sins, we have cause for the greatest gratitude and joy in knowing that very many are daily, by divine power, created anew and saved. For only divine and infinite power can regenerate a soul.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR CHRISTIANS TO BE DEFICIENT IN LOVE FOR
SOULS IS A GREAT SIN.

GOD would still have been just and holy and good, had he never loved sinners or shown mercy to them. Kindness to sinners, the exercise of mercy to transgressors, is with God entirely optional; in other words, while transgression of law *must* be visited with retribution; while the exercise of justice is necessary, it is by no means a matter of course that God will show mercy to those who sin. The relation, however, in which the redeemed stand to the unrenewed and impenitent, is entirely different from that which God sustains to them. It is important that we should see and constantly remember that to be contented to have men live and die in sin, that to feel no uneasiness on account of the condition of those in danger of destruction so terrible as this; uneasiness strong enough to rouse us to exertion in their behalf, is shameful and wicked.

Though no ransomed child of God can be entirely destitute of anxiety for souls in danger of being lost, yet even God's own people have need of greater compassion for them than they possess. There is no greater proof that our sanctification is incomplete, that we are far from being perfect, than that comparatively trifling causes will awaken our liveliest concern, while we can contemplate the spiritual misery and destruction of a large part of our race with but little emotion. We see innumerable companies of our fellow-men in many parts of the world in such awful misery (wretched here and certain to perish forever), that we are constrained to feel that it would be better for them not to have existed. And yet it is with composure and stillness of mind that we contemplate their condition. Alas! how fearful must be the perversion of our nature from that which was its original state.

Touching this sin of having such little pity for the perishing, what ought you to do? In the first place you should repent of it just as you repent of your other sins. And in order that your repentance may be thorough, seek to obtain a clear perception of your deficiency as to

this holy feeling. Watch yourself. Notice how cold and unfeeling you are to the multitude around you who are condemned by God's holy law—the multitude whom you meet in the streets and in your travels, and who throng the marts of business. Think of the little Christian anxiety you feel for your unconverted relatives. And when you become deeply sensible of your apathy and of your want of Christian pity for the spiritually blind and unconverted, let repentance for this sin, as for your other sins, be enkindled. And when your feelings of penitence are awakened, make confession of your sin to God. You are accustomed to tell Jesus your griefs. Let this be one of the burdens which you make known to Him. Tell Him that it afflicts you that you are so insensible to the condition of those, who, you are sure, are not of the number of his people, and so are in danger of being lost. And to confession add reformation. At least, make use of all the means you can think of to remove your apathy, and soften your heart, and cause you to feel more for the unconverted and to be more anxious about them. To some Christians it almost seems as if *this* grace of the Spirit is

that in which they are most deficient. It is far easier for them to see (so it appears to themselves) that they love God, than it is for them to see that they have a disinterested yearning love for sinners.

It is impossible for men who feel no anxiety about their own spiritual condition and wants, to feel interested in the spiritual state of those around them. As, therefore, God's people are the only ones who are truly seeking their own salvation from sin, they are the only ones who are capable of pitying the unconverted. This is a fact which is well known to them. They well know that if *they* feel little or no concern for the spiritual and eternal welfare of those who are without hope, none others will, and the knowledge of this must surely aggravate their sin of not loving perishing souls. It is a great sin not to have the least love for souls. Those, who are not God's people, are totally destitute of this love, and we have said that they are incapable of having it. But this does not excuse them. They are as much bound to have pity on others who are going down to death as Christians, and their spiritual blindness to the lost condition and

to the wants of other men (which blindness alone closes their hearts against this pity), this blindness, we say, is itself a sin for which they will be judged.

CHAPTER V.

IF WE ARE WANTING IN PITY FOR PERISHING SOULS, WE SHALL SURELY NEGLECT THEM.

IT is difficult for men to resist our efforts to do them good, if we show that we love them. They are then overcome. Such wonderful power has love, that, where it is clearly seen to exist, and to be the only motive which actuates us, our efforts to persuade men to attend to their soul's good, will be almost certain to be successful. They will generally yield, attend to what we say, consider their danger, feel their wants, and thus the truth applied by the Holy Spirit, and received and believed, will be the power of God to their salvation. On the other hand, let this love for our fellow-men be wanting, and what we say to them will have no effect. They will remain unmoved. They will doubt whether we believe our own assertions. Love is necessary.

But not only is this love or pity necessary before our efforts can prevail—it is even necessary

in order that we may be capable of putting forth effort. We shall inevitably neglect souls if we do not pity them. This all experience proves. For centuries, the Church did almost nothing to save the perishing heathen. And it is easy to see that this inactivity was accompanied by the absence of all feeling for them. Indeed, the Church's having no pity on the dying heathen was even the *cause* of her neglecting them. What is true of the Church is true of individual Christians. If you are doing but little for the salvation of your fellow-men, it is because you have little feeling for them. To bestir ourselves for the salvation of souls merely from the stress of conscience, and when we do not love them, is up-hill work. Indeed, to persevere long in such activity impelled simply by the goadings of conscience, is impossible. Some whom we may endeavour to save may be ignorant; others may be very careless and even indifferent to divine things; others may be hardened; but whatever may be the state of mind of those whom we seek to rescue from their perilous condition, our efforts, if not sustained by love, will be short-lived. Rest assured that, if you do not love souls, you will neglect them.

And if they are neglected, they must perish. When our blessed Saviour was in this world, He knew that if souls were neglected they must perish, and therefore, although often, if not always weary, and although opposed in every way in their power by wicked men and by the Prince of darkness, He incessantly laboured to instruct the multitudes around him. Our blessed Lord did not desist when exertions began to be painful. After going about all the villages and the cities teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness, thus exerting Himself to weariness, He saw still others—multitudes, who were as sheep not having a shepherd, and when He saw them He was moved with compassion for them, and He began to teach them many things. His beginning to *teach* them without delay showed what He reckoned their most urgent want, It is because souls must be lost if they are neglected, that our Saviour commands us to be incessantly praying for more labourers, and this is the reason why, just as He was about to ascend, He commanded His church to go into all the world and preach

the gospel to every creature. It is the knowledge of this fact that will ever keep many Christians active in efforts to multiply copies of the Bible, and to sustain schools and teachers and workers in all parts of the harvest field.

Many a thoughtless sinner has only been saved through prayers and faithful efforts in his behalf, persevered in for many years. Efforts less persistent in behalf of these thoughtless ones, and less patient, would not have availed. But others have been, during almost their whole lives, not thoughtless, but near to the kingdom of God, and these, humanly speaking, might easily have been saved had they not been entirely neglected; and no other cause can account for their being neglected except that no one pitied them.

We should desire and pray that God in His holy Providence would bring us to know the inward anxieties and perplexities of convicted souls with whom we may be brought in contact, and would incline us to seek to do them good instead of neglecting them. For doubtless we are often in company with persons who are secretly under deep conviction, and with

whom the Holy Spirit is striving, and who would be glad to have us speak to them about their soul's welfare.

Even those who are known to have much compassion on their unconverted fellow-men, and to be engaged in unwearied labours for the eternal good of such men, are at times chargeable with want of faithfulness. How certain it is then that *they* will be negligent of their duty to souls who have little or no pity on them.

CHAPTER VI.

WE FAIL TO FULFIL ONE OF THE ENDS OF OUR CONTINUANCE IN THIS WORLD WHENEVER WE ARE WANTING IN LOVE FOR SOULS.

MOST men live without having God in their thoughts. They live, indeed, as if there was no God. They care nothing about knowing what His will is with respect to them. They never ask themselves why he created them, or what his purpose is in bestowing those blessings upon them which they enjoy, or what object He has in view in keeping them in the world. The Christian was also himself formerly chargeable with this folly, but it is not so with him now. Christians, however, are not all alike as to this. Some even among them reflect too little upon the reason why they are continued in the world. Our Heavenly Father has not revealed to us all the reasons why our stay here is prolonged, but He has made it sufficiently plain that one of the reasons is that we may be instrumental in saving

perishing souls. Nor can it be thought strange or a thing to be wondered at, when it is considered that it was for this that Christ came into the world and lived and suffered and died and rose again and ascended to the right hand of God. He came not to condemn the world but *that the world through Him might be saved*. It is for this that the Eternal Spirit is sent among men. "It was for this that God instituted His church and His ministry, and proclaimed an amnesty, and committed to His ministry the word of reconciliation. The gifts of God in nature and in Providence; all the dispensations of God in the government of nations and constitution of society—all have reference to this one end. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and life eternal. This is on the very face of Scripture." The salvation of men through the gospel then is the business of Christians on earth. It is the chief thing for which they are continued here, and are kept away from their Father's house, and joy, and glory in heaven.

This is a very precious and glorious end to live for. When a soul is saved, it is snatched

from an eternity of sin and misery towards which it was rapidly moving. Besides this, it has the lost image of God restored to it—it is made holy. It begins to conform to the end for which it was created. It is preserved by the power of God from relapsing into spiritual death, and when it leaves the world it enters into the presence of the Saviour, where it beholds His glory and becomes like Him. On account then of what souls gain when they are saved, it is a glorious end to live for their salvation.

But it is also a great and exalted end to live for, because their salvation glorifies God. In President Edwards' dissertation on "The End for which God created the World," he brings forward many passages of Scripture to show that the glory of God is the ultimate end of the work of Redemption. This is undoubtedly taught in the Scriptures, and it involves the idea that the actual salvation of each particular soul who is redeemed, has for its end (in the design of God), the promotion of his own glory, and that it really promotes it.

There is a solemnity about this thought, reader, that your continuance here is prolonged

in order that you may be the means of saving souls. Ponder it. Be anxious not to fail altogether in doing what your stay on earth is lengthened out on purpose that you may do. Seek to save souls, the souls you casually meet—the souls of your daily companions—the souls of your children, the souls of your servants. “Our children and friends and kindred may be spiritually dead, but they are human beings and have natural affections, and can hear and appreciate the voice of sympathy and love. They can easily tell whether you care for their souls or not.”

Help to rescue the souls whom Christ’s faithful labourers are seeking to recover—some of them near, some afar off. There are various ways of exerting ourselves to save men. We may exert ourselves by praying for them, by using indirect means to bring them under the influence of the truth, by countenancing and helping on the organized efforts and public movements of God’s people, which have for their aim the extension of Christ’s kingdom, by doing all in our power to increase the number of labourers and by direct personal appeals. Will it not be lamentable if you leave this world, after remain-

ing in it for years, without fulfilling the end (that of saving souls) which God had in view in keeping you here so long. If you entirely come short here you will also fail in fulfilling all other designs contemplated in the continuance of your lives, for God has other reasons for keeping us on earth which he has not revealed to us. We should be happy in the consciousness of fulfilling the end of our existence, whatever it may be. We cannot be strangers to happiness, and happiness of an exalted nature, while we are striving to save souls in God's appointed ways. God does not require us to passively contemplate the spiritual misery which our fellow-men are in, without exerting ourselves to rescue them, and no exertion,—no activity, is so fitted to give happiness as that by which souls are won.

CHAPTER VII.

IT SHOULD DEEPLY AFFECT OUR HEARTS, AND MAKE US MORE ACTIVE IN THE WORK OF SAVING SOULS, THAT GOD HIMSELF SEEKS TO SAVE THEM.

IT was not owing to their agonizing solicitude —it was not owing to their despairing cry for help, that God devised the plan by which sinners may be saved. He was moved to send His Son by His own pity for them, and that even when He saw their enmity to Him; yes, by love “welling up and pouring forth from His heart.” And having, at an infinite cost to Himself, provided a way by which His enemies may be saved and at the same time all the demands of the law be satisfied, He gives still further proof of His longing to save them by earnestly pleading with them and tenderly remonstrating with their rashness. “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as

Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me; my repentings are kindled together." The same mingled earnestness and compassion pervade all his appeals, however varied in form. "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sin." "Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plentiful redemption." "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." Even the impenitent cannot read their

Bibles without being convinced that God is unwilling that they should perish—that He compassionately and sincerely desires their salvation. In their inmost hearts they do believe that the merciful Saviour came to seek and to save that which was lost, and they are unable to hide from themselves why they shut their ears against the solemn warnings and the pathetic invitations of the gospel, that it is because they love darkness rather than light. They know that God's sincerity is evinced by His commanding every minister to offer salvation to all men without exception, and even to beseech sinners not to despise the offer, nor to put off accepting it till a more convenient season. And they know that these ambassadors of Christ are guilty of unfaithfulness for which they must give account, unless they warn sinners of the danger which they are in of being forever forsaken by the Holy Spirit.

It should profoundly affect our hearts that God himself so earnestly seeks the salvation of lost sinners, and we should deeply feel that if we have not a portion of the same love for perishing souls, we cannot be God's chil-

dren. In regard to pity for the rejecters of Christ, we find that all the Apostles were like their Master. "For many walk," says one of these tender-hearted servants of Jesus, "of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ."

We have said that we, whose duty it is to seek the salvation of souls, should notice and be deeply impressed by the fact that God himself seeks to save them. Among those whom he seeks to save, are little children. Yes; he speaks of them, and says: "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Here God commands us to have something of the same earnest desire for the salvation of children which He himself has. He enjoins it upon us to strive to be instrumental in their salvation, and he gives us to understand that our efforts shall not be in vain, by adding that little ones are heirs and partakers of glory. As for the children of the Church, whenever they grow up in sin and perish, it is just in consequence of unfaithfulness and neglect on the part of parents and the church. The covenant promise to believing

fathers and mothers, and to the church, with reference to the little ones is, that if they will with faith train them up for God, they shall be saved. - God has promised this in His Word, and how evidently does it show that He seeks the salvation of the children.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME OF THE WAYS IN WHICH SINCERE LOVE FOR
SOULS WILL MANIFEST ITSELF.

IN the first place it will constrain you to pray for them; for your unconverted relatives, and also for all dependent on you. Not for these alone, however, will love, if it is deep and strong in your heart constrain you to intercede. You will be urged on to supplicate for all classes of your needy fellow-men. You will pray for the deliverance of the multitudes of totally-forgotten ones living in Christian lands, from destructive ignorance and neglect; for the unconverted youth in our schools and colleges and other literary institutions; for the countless millions of perishing souls in India, China, Japan, Burmah, Siam; for the vast numbers composing the numerous tribes of Africa, and for the heathen inhabiting the islands of the sea; for the millions of wretched Mohammedans; for the cast-off Jews, and for the multitudes who

are the slaves of Romish superstition and ignorance. You will pity and pray for the multitudes living in the full blaze of gospel light, knowing enough truth to be saved but who are daily resisting the Holy Spirit and rejecting Christ; and for the swarms of poor, sunken, neglected men, women and children pent up in the worst and vilest parts of our cities. You will often think of and intercede for the forgotten and roughly treated sailors of every nation, for the hosts of uncared for soldiers composing the standing armies of the world, and for all prisoners. If you are passing your days without prayer offered for any of these classes of dying men, can your love for souls be genuine? You supplicate God for a perishing world indirectly, but in a way which is acceptable to the Saviour when you pray for God's blessing on all the labours of all ministers, teachers, godly writers, translators of the Bible, Bible readers, tract distributors. When you pray for the increase of the holiness and spiritual power of the church, and for her rapid growth in numbers, *that* is the same as praying for the salvation of unrenewed and godless men. It is also true that you pray

for the perishing when you ask that the church as organized, may be assisted to fulfil her mission to establish Christ's gospel in every land under heaven.

Another effect of much love for souls will be seen in our not permitting ourselves to be ignorant of the church's work, and of the state of Christ's cause in the world—in our using on the contrary the sources of information which are now so abundant, in order to increase our knowledge concerning it. The sources of information of which we speak, are the many periodicals prepared and printed for the very purpose of giving information concerning the blessed Spirit's saving operations on the souls of men. No sincere lover of souls can be contented to remain ignorant of the intelligence touching the progress of Christ's kingdom which these reports convey. He will be thankful that they are so regularly published, and will read them. And how exceedingly will his heart be gladdened as he notices the success of the various labours of Christ's servants in all lands, and of the progress of the Holy Spirit's glorious work of regenerating and sanctifying souls. The advance

made by the church in the days of the great and good President Edwards was small compared with that which we now see she has made, and yet he tells us that he was animated and refreshed by what he observed even in his day as to the progress of the Saviour's kingdom. He says: "I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of anything that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favourable aspect on the interests of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it, and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public newspapers, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interests of religion in the world."

Again, an intense desire for the everlasting good of our fellow-men who are in danger of dying in their sins, will make us quick to see the connection between Christian giving and the salvation of souls, and we shall obey Christ's command to give as God prospers us. The work

which the church has to perform in spreading the knowledge of Christ, cannot be accomplished without continual outlays of large sums of money. Knowing this, we shall wish and strive to give liberally, and that during our whole lives. As those who by the unmerited kindness of God have become members of the church of Christ, and identified with her, we shall long to behold the church pouring out of her means abundantly into the treasury of the Lord. There are two motives which should influence us to be liberal givers. One is love and gratitude to Christ who, when He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich. The other is pity for dying souls. The first of these motives is with all disciples of the Saviour the superior one, but the last should of itself be felt by all of them to have exceeding great power.

Another effect of overmastering love for souls will be to make us willing that God should place us in His providence in that position in life and give us that work to do which will be the best for the spiritual good of those around us. If we care nothing about the spiritual condition

of our fellow-men, we shall crave that social position which can only gratify pride or selfishness or ambition. We shall also choose that employment which will be most likely to make us the possessors of wealth or worldly influence. Whereas, if we have that love for Christ and for souls which every Christian ought to have, we shall ask that both our position and our occupation in life may be such as will enable us most effectually to do good to needy souls.

Again we shall be anxious, if love for souls is strong in our hearts, to have the truth prevail in its purity, since by every wide departure from the truth, the salvation of men is imperilled. God is glorified when the truth prevails, when it is embraced and loved, and this is the chief reason why His servants desire and seek its promotion. But they are also anxious for its prevalence, because its prevalence and triumph are necessary for the good of men. Error, on the contrary, is always harmful. It never can, under any circumstances, produce the effect of truth. Many false inferences drawn from the facts of science are relied on by a certain class to bring discredit on revealed truth, and by their

teachings not a few are perverted. That men are not responsible for their belief—that they are not indeed responsible for their bad actions, because they are all the creatures of circumstances, all being in character just what the things around them necessitate them to be; that vice is no otherwise vice than as it is judged to be such as the result of education, and that there is no punishment after death—these and a multitude of other falsehoods are working the death of many, and true lovers of souls must and will be afflicted to see what havoc and desolation they are causing. Not only this, but the friends of God and man will count it a joy to be used by the Saviour to stay in any degree the progress of such deadly errors in the world.

In the next place, when we are afflicted, and look about us in our affliction to see what compensation God is giving us, we shall feel that in the good we are doing to souls by our prayers and efforts, we have our greatest compensation. When a child of God sincerely tries to benefit souls, he is guilty of sinful unbelief if he persists in thinking that his efforts are entirely unsuccessful. He should believe and know that his labour

is not in vain in the Lord. And in times when he is bowed under burdens and griefs, he should feel that if his heavenly Father does not see fit to remove his afflictions, he is more than compensated in being permitted to be helpful to others, in being permitted, by means of his prayerful efforts, to gratify his longings for the good of souls.

Another effect of much love for souls will be witnessed in our trying to avoid in speech and behaviour everything which might injure those in whose society we are occasionally or frequently thrown. We shall even often seek, by what we say, to do them good. There is much instruction and admonition given us as to this in the Bible. And no wonder; for we are constantly benefiting or injuring those whom we associate with, whether we will it or not. Our words, our manner, and our character, are always influencing them for good or evil. The Scriptures recognize this truth, and so they admonish us to give heed to what we say in the hearing of men, and to how we act in their presence. In the fourth chapter of Ephesians, the Apostle forbids corrupt conversation, enjoin-

ing profitable discourse, and assigns as one of the motives the good of others. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace unto the hearers." "Neither filthiness nor foolish talking," says he, in the fourth verse of the fifth chapter, "nor jesting which are not convenient." And He exhorts us not to be weary in well doing, but as we have opportunity to do good unto all men. When one is born of God, the spirit of love springs up in his heart never to die—love to God and also love to souls. It should be our earnest desire to do good like the light, in a silent but effectual way, every day of our lives. We should not often come in contact with an impenitent friend without sometimes giving utterance, in an earnest manner, to holy desires for his everlasting good. Our conscience should be quick to reproach us whenever there is reason to fear that we have said, in the hearing of our neighbour, anything which may possibly encourage his carelessness about his salvation, or lead him to feel at ease in his unconverted state.

While those who pity souls will be impelled to

labour for them by the thought of their spiritual necessities, they will also be actuated in their efforts by tender and unquenchable love for the Saviour, and by a longing to make some returns to Him for what He has done and suffered for them. They will long to bring others under the same obligations to the Saviour which they are under. Still, the more they deny themselves for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-men, the warmer will be their love for *them*, and the less will they make of the self-denying efforts which that love may prompt them to put forth. The labours, which seekers after fame and wealth have undergone, and the dangers which they have cheerfully encountered in pursuing the objects they so much desired, have often and properly been brought forward to stimulate to great exertions those who profess to have compassion on perishing souls.

CHAPTER IX.

FAITHFULNESS TO PERISHING SOULS WILL CONSTRAIN US TO TELL THEM PAINFUL AS WELL AS COMFORTING TRUTHS.

HAD Adam remained in his original condition, he would have gone on increasing in knowledge forever, and no truth upon his discovery of it would either have been viewed by him with aversion or have awakened within him any painful fears or uneasiness. No new discovered truth can ever cause any anxiety or pain to the inhabitants of heaven. But it is not so with sinners who, although they remain impenitent, persist in hoping that they will become Christians before they die. These discover truths in the Bible which they look upon with strong repugnance. The teachings of the Bible which are unpalatable to unrenewed men and which they will ever dislike, are those which tend to humble human pride—those which assert man's utter unworthiness in the sight of God

and his entire helplessness. You may easily get men to receive opinions upon superficial evidence. You may also insinuate into their minds the belief of great absurdities, but to obtain their hearty assent to those truths of God's word which uniformly lay their pride in the dust is, to unaided human effort, a hopeless task. Nevertheless, in obedience to God's command to keep back nothing which it is profitable for the sinner to know, and in reliance upon the divine promise to make the Word effectual, the religious teacher will not shun to declare unto the despisers of the Gospel the whole counsel of God. Besides those doctrines of grace which mortify pride, there are truths which are fitted to alarm and pain the sinner. They are those which can not be seriously attended to without awakening the conscience. Very few men have their conscience entirely seared. There are times when the consciences of most sinners are aroused into unwonted activity. They are forced to see with alarm at times how grievously they neglect duty and how terribly they fail to be conformed to the demands of God's strict but righteous law. Sometimes the truth shines in upon the sinner's

conscience with such revealing power as to awaken agonizing remorse and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. Now there are many careless ones of whom it is especially true that they can never be brought to flee to the ark of safety until their consciences and their fears are thus awakened, and no reluctance to give them pain should ever hinder Christ's ambassadors from awakening their fears and causing them the distress which it is necessary they should feel before they can be induced to seek their soul's salvation.

There are truths which are unwelcome also to all self-indulgent and worldly Christians. They are those which teach that the religion of Christ is a religion of self-denial. Such declarations and teachings of God's Word, are in direct opposition to the views of those professors of religion who suppose that there are few obstructions in the way that leads to life, and that heaven is easily gained. Indulgences, which, if the Bible was carefully studied, would be plainly seen to be hindrances to a life of godliness are considered by many to be harmless and they do not like to hear what might change their views.

The thought of being forced by the clear exhibition of the truth to admit their inconsistency and sin in living as they do is well nigh intolerable. They are, however, not faithfully dealt with unless the requirements of the Gospel are plainly set before them. Another class of truths which it is not agreeable to many to hear are those which teach that persons who enjoy gospel privileges should co-operate to the extent of their opportunity and ability with faithful labourers in conveying a knowledge of the Gospel to others. Many professing Christians seem to be almost entirely inactive in the service of the Redeemer. They contribute but little compared with what they might easily contribute to help on the Saviour's cause. They have never uttered any words of admonition or exhortation or encouragement to those who have need of them. It does not seem as if they were identified in the least with the great agencies employed by the Church to advance the Saviour's kingdom. They stand aloof from all the departments of Christian activity which are a characteristic of our time. It is painful to this class to be told their duty and to be exhorted to perform it. Nor is it

pleasant for any one to urge them on to a life of greater activity and usefulness in Christ's service. Nevertheless, they who love their souls and are faithful to them, will feel constrained to hold up the truth to them. They will speak the truth in love, but they will not fail to utter it. Here it is to be feared that the pulpit is greatly at fault, and that this is one of the reasons why there is such little renunciation of the world for Christ.

CHAPTER X.

SOME OF THE REASONS WHY TRUE CHRISTIANS
PUT FORTH SUCH LITTLE EFFORT TO SAVE
PERISHING SOULS.

MANY are naturally contemplative, and this trait predominates in their piety. It disposes them to love quiet and to live much in seclusion, and it constitutes a difficulty in the way of their performing labours which bear on the conversion of their fellow-men, a difficulty which they often do not sufficiently try to overcome. Shrinking from observation they often culpably neglect the performance of many duties which tend to promote the spiritual good of others.

There are others who would rejoice at any time to behold multitudes coming to Christ, but who nevertheless sadly fail to exert themselves to bring the unconverted to Him, and the reason is because they have delayed to acquire the habit of thus exerting themselves. For though

love for men, and a desire for their salvation may exist in the heart of a Christian, it will not constantly incite him to efforts to win souls until by continuing for a time to be active in the work, he has at last obtained the habit of being active in it.

It will be observed that we are not assigning reasons why all who profess to be disciples of Christ do not endeavour to save their fellow-men, but why *they* do not exert themselves more for that purpose who do truly love Jesus, and who therefore may be supposed to have some compassion on the perishing.

While the reasons above given may explain the thing in part, they do not constitute a full explanation. Undoubtedly the principal reason is because those truths of the Bible which relate to the condition and wants of the soul are only half believed by God's people. The Bible declares that it comes into existence condemned to eternal death by God's holy law, and totally depraved. The death to which it is condemned it must certainly suffer unless all the law's demands are fully satisfied in its behalf. Should it leave the world before the sentence of con

demnation is removed it will be forever too late. A little longer refusal of the rebellious soul to comply with the gospel call, a little longer resistance of the Holy Spirit, and it is forever lost, is cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. When these truths are profoundly believed, when there is a realizing and absorbing persuasion of their reality it awakens an intense pity for unrenewed sinners—a pity which arouses to great exertion in their behalf, a pity which has many a time so inflamed believers to action as to make them instrumental in the conversion of many. The power of those who are renowned for their success in winning souls is in that love for the perishing which is born of their belief in the things of which we have spoken. These truths live in these men as mighty forces. But many Christians only half believe them—have but an imperfect conviction of their reality and awfulness—one which is greatly wanting in depth and thoroughness.

It would seem, moreover, as if believers—yes, even believers, are in a great degree blind to

the blessedness and glory which become the possession of every one who is saved. It is impossible to have a very strong relish for worldly pleasures and pursuits, and at the same time be much alive to the beauty of holiness and to the excellence of those heavenly treasures which Christ has purchased for believing sinners, and which He freely bestows on them. But many true Christians are very worldly, and set their affections strongly on things on the earth, and they are as a consequence too indifferent even to their own privileges and to their own heavenly inheritance. Is it to be wondered at then that they fail to realize the misery of those who are utterly destitute of these blessings, and how infinitely important it is that such poor souls should obtain them?

Perhaps many Christians underrate their power to impress and influence for good the minds of their fellow-men, especially if those, whom they would gladly benefit, are their superiors.

Whatever causes, Christian reader, may hitherto have had power to lead you to neglect your duty (if you have neglected it) it is not necessary

that you should continue to be influenced by them. There is no hindrance in the way of doing for your fellow-men what Christ calls you to do for them, which may not be overcome. No longer neglect to engage in the blessed employment of seeking to save souls. But while you are working in various ways to accomplish this, it is important that you should wear a cheerful aspect. Be discreet and wise. It is true that the larger part of the dwellers on earth are perishing, and that the thought of this is dreadful, but you will not be fitted to save any of them if you wear an aspect of gloom. It is right to contemplate the unhappy state of the multitude, and to be deeply affected by the thought of their lost condition, and it is also true that the least degree of levity, or want of tenderness, while engaged in the work, would be shocking; nevertheless, the very consciousness of sincerely desiring and seeking to bless those whom Christ came to save is fitted to cause cheerfulness and peace. Besides, the absolute certainty that the infinite Spirit of God is daily carrying on His work of regenerating souls ought not to fail to awaken joy.

CHAPTER XI.

REAL LOVE FOR SOULS WILL MAKE US ANXIOUS
THAT PROFESSED CONVERSIONS SHOULD IN
ALL CASES BE GENUINE.

THE Church of Christ embraces many denominations. The number of those who, hoping that they have become believers in Jesus, join themselves to these denominations, varies greatly from year to year, but not a year passes in which the churches of each of them are not enlarged by the addition of multitudes. It is astonishing that such little fear is expressed on the part of church officers and private Christians, lest a large portion of the newly-added professors may be deceiving themselves, seeing it is well understood that in all ages multitudes, with no intention of appearing what they are not, join the church without experiencing the new birth, without a particle of faith in Christ, and who at last perish. That instances of self-deception are frequent is evident from the many warnings

against it contained in the Apostolic writings, from the alarming declarations of Christ, and from the facts recorded in the New Testament. Dr. Archibald Alexander, speaking of the great numbers who have not attained a comfortable assurance of the goodness of their spiritual condition, says: "In dealing with professors troubled with doubts, we are too apt to proceed on the assumed principle that, notwithstanding their sad misgivings and fears, they are sincere Christians, and have the root of the matter in them; while in regard to many this may be an entire mistake, and we are in danger of cherishing in them a fatal delusion. Here the skill and fidelity of the spiritual watchmen are put to the test; and while they should not deviate a hair's breadth from the rule of the divine word, it is better that the pious Christian should suffer some unnecessary pain than that the false professor should be bolstered up with delusive hopes. I must say, therefore, that the true reason why many professors have no comfortable evidence of their religion, is because they have none. They have never experienced the new birth, and being still dead in trespasses and sins,

it is no wonder that they cannot find in themselves what does not exist.”

The more we love souls, the more shall we be pained to know that many are constantly deceived about their own spiritual state. The condition of such in eternity is much worse than if they had made no profession of piety in this life. And no greater burden has ever weighed upon the church than that of having in her midst unconverted professors. Satan's kingdom is not weakened when persons, mistakenly supposing that they have been brought out of his kingdom, proceed to unite themselves with the visible Church of Christ. On the contrary, the empire of the adversary is thereby strengthened.

It is not strange that many conversions are spurious, for the heart of man is very treacherous. Men are easily deceived, and therefore there is constant danger of persons regarding themselves as Christians who have never been the subject of the Spirit's saving work. Is there no way of remedying this evil? Can it not at least, be greatly lessened? If love for souls possessed us in a greater degree, would not that love be quick to devise and use means which

would be successful in greatly diminishing the number of the self-deceived? Let the following means be employed, and we cannot but think that cases of delusion, and of the indulgence of false hopes, would be less frequent than they are.

In the first place, let all Christians bring the cause of their solicitude to God, and entreat Him to prevent so great an evil from happening to the unconverted. Yes; impelled by earnest longings (called forth by pity for endangered souls), that there should be no spurious conversions, let us, with reference to this thing, cry incessantly unto God, who has the hearts of all men in His hands. No one who believes that God governs all His creatures, and all their actions, can doubt that He is able to answer this petition with infinite ease. The longer we persevere in offering this request, the more shall we wonder that it has been so seldom offered. It will be impossible for us to doubt that there would have been, in all times past, far fewer instances of self deception, had God's people more earnestly besought Him to avert the danger. In the second place, let ministers have more to say on the following points: 1. The danger itself.

The fact that millions have perished who hoped that they were Christians, and were on the way to heaven. 2. The nature of true religion, showing that it cannot exist where there is ignorance or rejection of fundamental truth, that it does not consist of forms, and that it cannot be separated from morality. 3. The importance of counting the cost of being a disciple of Christ. 4. The deceitfulness of the heart. 5. The arts, the machinations, the malice, and the activity of Satan and of his hosts of subordinate evil spirits. 6. The strictness of God's law, and the wonderful extent of its demands, while yet all its demands are reasonable and just. 7. The true gospel method of salvation. 8. The evils and mistakes which are apt to accompany and grow out of revivals of religion. 9. The value of a practical belief on the part of parents and the church in God's covenant promise to bless and save the children of His people—by which practical belief we mean such a belief in God's covenant promise as will lead to faithful attention to the children from their earliest years. One who, in childhood and youth, is assiduously and thoroughly instructed, trained, and prayed

for, is less likely to be deluded to his destruction by the hope of the hypocrite.

Not only ministers of the Gospel, but elders and even private Christians might do much by their prayers, and by their efforts to diffuse saving knowledge to prevent poor souls from practising deception on themselves, and from professing to be Christians while in an unconverted state.

Nothing can be so effectual in leading God's people to labor and pray against the prevalence of self deception in the church, as love for souls. It is so dreadful to be deceived! It is to be feared that self-deluded church members are rarely converted. Ministers and elders too often act as if they considered their duty to professors of religion wholly discharged when they have admitted them to communion. They do not sufficiently visit, watch over, encourage, warn, instruct, guide, and pray with those whom they may have admitted with some misgivings.

CHAPTER XII.

THERE IS NEED OF A GREAT INCREASE OF LOVE FOR PERISHING SOULS, NOT ONLY IN THE HEARTS OF INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS, BUT IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AS A UNITED WHOLE.

THE Church of Christ has not gone on advancing steadily from the beginning of her existence. While she has made progress in faith and holiness at times, she has at times greatly declined. It is our happiness to see her more enriched with the gifts of the Spirit than she has been in any time past, but she still fails to be conformed to the will of Christ and she is still full of infirmities. Errors abound in her. Corruptions and much weakness of faith still cleave to her. But of all the defects which we witness in her, none are more prominent than her feeble love for souls, and yet she is not destitute of this love. We speak of the Church as a whole. All know what devoted labourers some of her members are, how full of compassion they are for

those who are as sheep without a shepherd, and how, impelled by this feeling, they are daily toiling to save the lost.

It is admitted that before the coming of Christ the Church was more insensible to the perishing condition of the world than she is at present, and that after her first bright period—the period of her infancy—had passed away, long centuries succeeded during which she was inferior to what she now is, in an expansive Christian spirit, but it cannot be denied that she still has but a small portion of that pity for the perishing which characterized the Master and His first followers.

As has been said, pity for the dying prevails in her to some extent and it is impossible for it to become entirely extinct. Our longing desire should be that it should increase. You are not a Christian if you have no desire for the increase of the Church in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and love for the perishing as has been shown, is one of his gifts.

What is the feeling which the Church needs to have wrought in her by the Holy Spirit in order that she may be thoroughly stirred up to engage in the work of saving men? First, she needs to

have wrought in her an unquenchable desire to obey Christ's command—a grateful and loving desire to be conformed to the will of the Master as made known to her in his parting injunction. But then, in the second place, she needs that the Holy Spirit should increase her love for souls—her pity for men in their lost condition. That love for souls does not pervade the Church—the body of Christ, as it ought, needs no proof. It is what every believer knows and feels. Even the unconverted know it. The very heathen when awakened to see their own misery and to some appreciation of the blessings which the Gospel alone confers, are struck with the little interest manifested in their condition and wants by God's people living in Christian lands. "How could you and your fathers have possessed the knowledge of salvation for so many generations and yet never impart it unto us till now?" has been asked again and again by awakened and wondering heathens. "This painful question has been put to the missionary with a pathos which should have touched the heart of the whole Church."

Love for men greatly lessens many of the

difficulties which stand in the way of benefiting them. It imparts wisdom, skill, perseverance, and patience. All these important aids to success in the prosecution of her work the Church would possess, if she only had a warmer, a more intense love for the destitute around her. The Church will never be quick to respond to the appeals made to her by the destitution of suffering souls, until she loves them more. The Apostle was commanded by the Saviour (Acts xvi. 9) to leave Asia in order to preach the Gospel to the European Gentiles, but he felt that he was also appealed to by the wants of this people. And it is evident that it was the Saviour's design that he should feel this, as we may infer from the manner in which the will of Christ was communicated to him. For when he was at Troas, on the coast of Asia, a vision appeared to him in the night. A man of Macedonia stood before him, saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us;" that is, help us to be saved—help us to obtain salvation. The church of these times may, if she only will, hear the same call. For not only does the Saviour command her to help the destitute to be saved, but she is most affect-

ingly appealed to for help by the very necessities of the starving, dying nations. And she will be alive to these appeals just in proportion to the degree in which she loves and pities those from whom they come.

If the church loved the spiritual welfare of men as she ought she would watch over the souls of her own members better than she does. And the result of this faithfulness to her members would be seen in the increased holiness of those who really belong to her, and in the conversion of many self-deceived professors.

It is in the power of believers to secure for the church the priceless blessing of an increase of this love for souls. Nothing pleases the Saviour so much as when His church, which He has purchased with His own blood, is interceded for by the faithful. He knows her great need of this gift, and He will hear your importunate entreaties that she may receive it, but importunate they must be, and you must also pray with faith.

If Satan could have his way his kingdom would speedily be established on the ruins of that spiritual kingdom of which we are speaking,

but it is not by violence that he seeks its destruction. He uses wiles, deceits, snares and temptations. He knows that if by these means he can cause the church of Christ to be conformed to the world, she will decrease in holiness and lose her spiritual gifts, and among these, love for those whom it is her duty to save. Now if with unutterable longings for the blessing you continually and with faith pray for the church's deliverance from Satan's power, and for the overthrow of his kingdom, you will be doing that which will effectually bring about his disappointment and defeat, and which will secure the church's steady progress to victory. You will be instrumental in helping her to "keep herself in the love of God" and of perishing souls. It is right that you should pray that the church of God may be more free from errors, and ignorance and strife; right that you should ask that she may be more humble, prayerful, zealous, liberal and enterprising, but, O! do not forget to ask that her love for souls may be increased. Filled with this love she would be fully imbued with the missionary spirit. She would possess a zeal in prosecuting the

work of converting the world to Christ so enlightened and so fervid, that success would speedily be reached. A late writer speaking on the subject of the speedy evangelization of the world says: "Probably we have 20,000,000 of evangelical Christians in the world. The entire population of the world is near 1,400,000,000, about 1,000,000,000 of whom have heard little or nothing of Christ. Given 20,000,000 of men and women saved and endued with the Holy Ghost as witnesses and heralds, possessing almost untold wealth and unprecedented facilities of travel, aided by the million-tongued press, and unobstructed by national barriers, what would hinder the thorough evangelization of the whole world in ten years?"

"Let each Christian during ten years be the means of reaching fifty souls, or five new ones a year, and the work is done. The commission is fulfilled; our duty is done, and God will thus gather out of the Gentiles a people for His name.

"If the enterprise involved the absolute conversion of the whole world, it would indeed seem appalling, but 'to preach the gospel to

every creature' is neither appalling nor difficult."

"We only need a church separated from the world, consecrated to God, and concentrated upon this grand evangelism. We want a church not only converted to Christ, but to enthusiastic zeal in the cause of missions. We must send missionaries to the lukewarm in our churches to fire their hearts. Although we have gained to-day, over yesterday, we must gain far more to-morrow, over to-day."

CHAPTER XIII.

SOME OF THE EVIDENCES WHICH, IF THEY REALLY
EXIST, AFFORD PROOF THAT LOVE FOR SOULS
HAS A PLACE IN THE HEART.

ALL true Christians bewail their feeble love for souls. They long to be more like Christ, whose pity for lost sinners constrained Him to die for them. Even if they are sure that the feeling exists within them in some degree, it seems to themselves that it is as nothing compared with what it should be. Many are not sure that they have any pity for the unconverted at all, and that they are compelled to entertain doubts of it causes them no little grief. The very fact of their having such grief, however, is some evidence that they are not entirely destitute of the feeling. But it is not necessary that any one should long remain doubtful as to the matter. There are tests which it is in the power of all to use, and by which one can know whether he

really loves souls or not. We proceed to present some of these tests.

You may hope that you are not entirely without this Christian grace ;

If whenever you hear of conversions it gives you sincere pleasure. For since the joy which angels feel whenever one sinner turns from his sins unto God convinces us that they love men and desire their everlasting happiness and blessedness, why does it not afford some evidence that we also love souls if we are truly glad in our hearts every time we hear that one with grief and hatred of his sins has come to Jesus and found pardon ?

If you find that the agencies employed in the world for diffusing the knowledge of salvation are very dear to you. For nothing could make them seem precious to you and keep an interest in them alive in your heart, except the good which you know results to souls from their successful operation.

It is difficult to see how one can take delight in those who bear the Saviour's image without having kindness in his heart towards poor sinners, and without longing to see them also become the

followers and friends of Jesus and made like Him.

If you truly desire to learn how love for souls may be obtained, what means it is necessary to employ in order to increase it, and if you are willing to use those means.

If it causes you alarm and anxiety to witness the extensive prevalence of errors so hostile to true religion that no soul can embrace them and escape destruction.

If you often have sorrow to think that although Jesus came to save sinners, the greater part of our race in consequence of the supineness and unfaithfulness of the Church is still unsaved, and that only a small proportion of the generations of men living at the present time can possibly enter heaven. If this never causes you a pang, it clearly proves that you are destitute of pity for lost souls, but if there are moments when it deeply afflicts you, it must be because you have this pity.

If whenever you hear of the death of a godless sinner, it causes you grief to think that he died in his sins.

If you feel such concern on account of the

state of those of your relatives who are unconverted that you are led to pray for them with earnestness and importunity. For while true Christians embrace in their pity all their unconverted fellow-men, they cannot but be conscious of having a stronger feeling of pity for their impenitent kindred than for others.

If you have anxiety for the spiritual welfare and growth in grace of those who are already Christians.

If it causes you joy to think that the Holy Spirit is every day regenerating great numbers in many parts of the world.

If it rejoices you to think that God has expressly commanded His people not to withhold the knowledge of the truth from any, but on the contrary, has made it their duty to communicate the good news to all men. It would seem as if the Jews of old were unwilling to have the knowledge of the true religion imparted to all men, but this was because they had never experienced its power themselves, and consequently had no love for any who did not belong to their own race. Paul himself possessed this selfish wicked spirit until he was made a new creature. As

soon, however, as this change took place in him, especially as soon as the divine glory and sweetness of Jesus were revealed to him, he rejoiced and exulted in the thought that the knowledge of Christ was not to be confined to a few, but that it was God's will that it should be extended to people of every clime and every nation. This was because his heart now overflowed with yearning love for souls. The fact that the Gospel, with its revelation of the beauty and glory of Immanuel, is by God's command a Gospel for all men without exception, will also rejoice you if you have the same divine love for the souls of men which glowed in the Apostle's heart.

Such are some of the evidences of the existence in the heart of love for souls. If you find that they exist in your case be grateful to the Holy Spirit, for this feeling is a grace of which He and He alone is the author. But remember that the grace was given you to be exercised through active efforts to save souls. When you put forth such effort for the unconverted, you give the best of all proof that you pity them and long to save them.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE OBLIGATIONS WHICH THE WORLD IS UNDER
TO THOSE WHO LOVE SOULS.

GOD is the giver of all the good, whether temporal or spiritual, which we enjoy, and yet under God the world owes much to lovers of souls. The instances are innumerable in which individuals and communities have been made blessed by means of their unselfish, Christlike exertions. The larger part of the children of men are needy and wretched, and in order to minister to their temporal and spiritual necessities, those who love them have gladly performed, and are still performing, the greatest labours. They are toiling for this purpose in all parts of the world. And their toils and sacrifices are not only bringing blessings on those for whom they are directly labouring, but on those whom they are not directly seeking to benefit. The way in which they do good to their fellow-men (and it is the only way to do them real and

lasting good), is by making Christians of them. In their efforts to accomplish this, God has made them very successful, and thus they have ever been the very salt of the earth. How much the world owes to lovers of souls can never be known until the results of their benevolent labours are disclosed in eternity. The great Christian nations of the earth are what they are, in consequence of the holy lives and active labours of the lovers of souls whom God spares to the world, but far more good would have been done to our fallen world, had all professing Christians loved the perishing as they ought to have done.

Aside from Christian nations, consider what we this day witness in both civilized and uncivilized heathen lands as the result of the toils of that class of lovers of souls called missionaries of the Cross. They have covered, with hundreds of those living centres of power and blessed influence called mission stations, the great Empire of British India, from Cape Comorin to the Punjab, and up to the Himalayas. They have occupied many of the provinces of China, the most powerful and the most populous of heathen lands.

They have laboured with the population which has overflowed from China into Australia and our own country. They have so successfully laboured for Christ in the island world of the Pacific, that whole groups of those islands are to-day almost entirely Christianized. They have carried the gospel into Burmah, Siam, Japan, and into the islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, the Celebes, and New Guinea. They have established central evangelization stations in the chief places of the lands of Islam, from the Balkans to Bagdad, and from Egypt to Persia. They have planted numerous Christian schools and colleges in Palestine, the primitive seat of Christianity. They have vigorously attacked Africa, west, south, and east, and have even powerfully assaulted the very heart of the dark continent. Through their faithful efforts, "the sun of the Gospel, after a long storm, has burst forth over Madagascar in such brightness that it can never again disappear." They have established missions in the immense plains of the Hudson's Bay Territory, and among the remnants of the numerous Indian tribes in our own country. Central America and the West Indies. The

southern extremity of South America and the natives of Brazil, have received the light of the gospel through their unwearied labours. Nor let another thing which has been said be forgotten: that the great *Christian* nations of the earth are what they are, in consequence of the earnest Christian labours of lovers of souls belonging to them. Thus it is seen that they have compassed the world around, and that their efforts for the evangelization of mankind are universal.* And if it is true, as has been said, that the only way to do the world real and lasting good, is to make the men who compose it the disciples of Jesus, then does the world owe much to those who love souls. This feeling existing in the hearts of all Christians alike is a strong bond of union between them. They are conscious that it is, and thus in all their labours for souls their hands are greatly strengthened.

But their labours have not only yielded spiritual fruit, they have been productive of immense incidental benefits to mankind. Their disinterested, self-sacrificing exertions to promote the spiritual good of men, have opened the way for

* See Christlieb's Protestant Foreign Missions.

the social and moral elevation of millions, by increasing commerce, by stimulating scientific investigations, by widening the field of all kinds of useful knowledge.

If sin is an evil in itself, and if it is the cause of all mental and bodily suffering, then he is a benefactor of men who is instrumental in freeing them from the dominion of sin, and in making them even to a partial extent holy. But this is just the good which lovers of souls are instrumental in bringing on their fellow-men. These are the ones whom God uses as His instruments to convert men, and to implant in them new views, new relishes, and new affections, which blessed change of nature results in their living holy and happy lives.

It is by means of the earnest endeavours of lovers of souls that men are delivered from their blindness to spiritual things, while they are brought to look upon the attractions of the world in their true light. Things on the earth, things which are seen—these are scriptural expressions. We are to understand by them all the attractions which belong to time and to the world into which we are born, all the objects

which here appeal to our desires and affections, as wealth, human approbation and love, earthly honours and friendships, science and literature, the delights which minister to a refined taste and to bodily appetites. It cannot be denied that these are God's gifts to man, but they may be overvalued, and it constitutes much of the folly and sin of unrenewed men that they do overvalue them, and even attribute to them an importance of which they are utterly destitute. This estimate which men of the world form of temporal things is fatal, it is destructive. It is looking at the things which are seen in a false light, out of their relation to eternity and to the spiritual world. Only one thing can remove their delusion and save them from ruin. It is to become possessed of a faith which will enable them to see spiritual things with all the glory and sweet attractiveness which belong to them. The soul no sooner receives this faith, this perception of spiritual things in their real nature, than its delusion is removed and its salvation is begun. Though this faith or spiritual discernment is the effect of an unction from the Holy One, yet whenever men become believers they owe their gift

of faith under God to lovers of souls. It is only by means of the labours of such, that men are delivered from their blindness to spiritual things and turned from darkness to light. Nor are those who are rescued through their labours unwilling to acknowledge this. While they give all the glory of their salvation to God, they remember with grateful feelings the human instruments of their deliverance.

CHAPTER XV.

VERY GREAT LOVE FOR SOULS IS A GRACE WHICH
ALL MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL MAY BE EX-
PECTED TO POSSESS.

THEY may well be expected to possess it, but the mere fact that they are called to the ministry does not secure it for them. They must obtain the gift precisely as other Christians do. Their office has not the slightest tendency to awaken within them pity for the perishing. And when they possess the gift, they must use the same means to increase it which private Christians use. It is admitted that there are qualifications bestowed upon ministers to fit them for their peculiar work, which are not granted to private Christians, but as it regards love for souls, they must make exertions to obtain it just as much as others.

2. There is another respect in which, as to this matter, the minister, and he who does not hold that office, are precisely on the same foot-

ing. Both are bound to work for this result as much as they are able. It may not be in my power to employ those gifts and opportunities to save men which ministers employ, because I may not possess their gifts and opportunities, but I am as truly bound to do what I can to win souls, as they are to do what they can.

3. Ministers encounter many of the same hindrances to increasing in love for souls as the private Christian. They have the same love of ease; the same fear of derision, and of losing the friendship of men; the same inordinate appetites and passions; the same slowness to discern the things of the Spirit; the same susceptibility to the power of worldly attractions, and the same tendency to set their affections on things on the earth. These are hindrances to engaging in the work of saving souls which ministers encounter no less than others.

4. But there is one temptation which besets ministers of the gospel, which others who profess to love souls do not have in as great a degree. As they occupy conspicuous positions in the church, they are in danger of being actuated by ambitious motives. And then, the

nature of some of their duties is such, that they are required to perform literary labours. Thus at the very time that they are writing sermons in their studies, or preaching in the sanctuary to benefit souls, they are in the greatest danger of being influenced by a desire for human applause. The desire for human applause must be destructive of the feeling of love for souls in proportion to the degree in which it is indulged. "Love for Christ, and a longing to save souls, ought, of course, to be the great motives and inducements to ministerial labour, but it will be admitted that these principles of action do not ordinarily attain, *without much cultivation*, that habitual preponderance — that overmastering influence over the mind and heart—which they ought to possess, and which they must possess in every truly faithful minister." *

* With reference to this excessive desire for human applause, which, with almost every one, is very often the impelling motive, the eminent John Foster writes as follows: "I appeal to the reflective man of conscience, whether he has not felt that a very small degree of the indulgence of human applause is enough to prevail over the desire to please God and to do good to men. So mightily does the feeling tend to an excess, destructive of the very essence of piety, that it ought (excepting in the cases where human

5. Ministers, in their love for souls, and in their efforts to save them, should resemble Christ, the Good Shepherd. Our dear Lord, in His labours to do good, was unselfish and self-deny-

estimation is sought purely as a means toward some valuable end) to be opposed and repressed in a manner NOT MUCH LESS unconditional than if it were purely evil. Whatever tends to animate it with new force is most pernicious. The New Testament, though not requiring the absolute extinction of the desire of human applause, yet alludes to most of its operations with censure, exhibits probably no approved instance of its indulgence, and abounds with the most emphatically cogent representations, both of its pernicious influence when it predominates in the mind, and of its powerful tendency to acquire this predominance. Insomuch that a serious reader of the Bible will perceive that the question is not so much how far he may encourage it, as by what means he may repress it; and that in the effort to repress it there is no possibility of going to an excess." Ministers of the gospel, even the most faithful and useful of them, would be the first to admit that *they* are entirely too much under the influence of this love of human approbation. How often does a minister, when preparing to go from home to preach on some Sabbath, find himself tempted to select among his sermons one which may gain for him the good opinion of the audience as a superior preacher. Christ's true ministers often feel, with grief, that their thoughts much more promptly turn to the consideration of human praise than of divine approbation and the good of souls. They desire to be heartily *willing* to be forgotten, overlooked, disesteemed, provided that no harm is done to poor souls thereby, and that the Saviour is not dishonoured.

ing. He was not self-indulgent. He did not consult His own ease. He did not spare Himself. He was patient as a teacher. He was faithful. He was fearless. He was the friend of little children. He did not shrink from contact with poverty, nor with those whom the refined and cultivated despised as grossly ignorant. He preached in a way to be understood by the most unlettered. In all this His under shepherds should resemble Him. They will then show that they have a portion of that love for souls which their Lord and Master exhibited. But there is one respect in which their manner of pleading with sinners must necessarily be totally dissimilar to Christ's. The law which the blessed Saviour voluntarily subjected Himself to, He never disobeyed. None could convince Him of sin, whereas all His ministers are sinful, like other men. They are born in sin, and under the sentence of death, and it is only by free grace that they are pardoned and regenerated, and in some degree sanctified, and made heirs of heaven. They cannot, therefore, as the Saviour could, address sinners with the air and manner of one who is conscious of being sinless. Their

manner of delivering their message should lead every hearer to see that they feel themselves to be under the same obligations to repent of sin, and to come to Jesus daily for forgiveness, as others are.

6. A minister's success in winning souls may possibly not be in exact proportion to his love for them, or to his faithfulness in labouring for them. "The spirit of fidelity may be given him for other ends; ends personal to himself, judicial to sinners, sanctifying and sifting to the church." His work of preaching Christ is acceptable to God, whatever may be the result of his labours. He is unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. Fidelity as God's ambassadors, and as the shepherds of souls, is to be tested, not by visible success, but by faithfulness in the delivery of our message, and by the care, and watchfulness and prayerfulness used in its discharge. Prophets and apostles, and thousands of beloved labourers, have toiled faithfully, and toiled long, without great visible results of their efforts, and God has been greatly glorified by their fidelity and labours.

7. A minister's love for souls will be in exact

proportion to his inward holiness. This must be so, because genuine pity for the perishing is pity for them considered as under the dominion of sin. An itinerant revival preacher may make loud professions of love for sinners, and yet have very little of the feeling. God alone can know just how much holiness we possess, and therefore He alone can know how much we love souls.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW LOVE FOR PERISHING SOULS MAY BE INCREASED.

SUPPOSING that you possess this love in some degree, in order that it may become stronger, use the following means.

1. Resolve in reliance upon divine aid that you will grow in love for souls. This resolution is necessary. You will hardly attain to a greater degree of pity for them unless you first resolve that you will.

2. Reflect much upon the condition, and the wants of the unrenewed. You may know the awful facts relating to their condition, but if these lie dormant in your mind, they will not arouse you. You must deliberately think of them. Let not the cares and the pursuits of life then so wholly occupy you as to prevent you from reflecting thoroughly on their fearful state. Consider also certain truths already dwelt upon. We trust that we have convinced you that souls must be

loved in order that they may be saved, since if not loved they will be neglected; that no man can be a disciple of Christ who does not love perishing souls, it being as truly a Christian grace as any other fruit of holiness; that for Christians to be even deficient in love for souls is a great sin; that we fail to fulfil one of the ends of our continuance in this world whenever we are wanting in love for souls; that the Holy Spirit communicates the same pity for the perishing to the people of God which He Himself has and which also belongs to the other persons of the glorious Trinity, so that there is something of the divine nature in it; and that it should deeply affect our hearts and make us more active in the work of saving souls that God himself seeks to save them. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. And then in His word He tenderly, earnestly and repeatedly pleads with sinners, assuring them that He has no pleasure in their death. If, besides contemplating the sad condition and the pressing wants of the unpardoned and the unrenewed, you fre-

quently ponder *these* truths, it will be almost certain to make your pity for them more intense and vivid. As to their sad condition, which you ought more frequently to contemplate, if you really consider it, you will take into view the punishment which awaits them in the next world unless they speedily repent and believe. "Although the Bible speaks with reserve of the details of the future misery of the impenitent and unbelieving, yet it clearly teaches the general truth that they shall perish, that their ruin shall be total and final, and that their condition shall be growing worse and worse forever." Often reflect upon this their doom, however painful it may be to you. It is necessary that you should, in order that you may not lose the pity you even now feel for them.

3. As, however, this pity is a gift which God alone can bestow, earnestly pray for it. Ask for it with confession of your dependence on God—with confession of your dependence on Him for the *very desire* for it. To your sense of dependence let faith be joined. Ask also with perseverance. Keep on earnestly entreating till you obtain the blessing. It was shown in a previous

chapter that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Let your prayer then be addressed to Him. When you offer requests for temporal blessings, or when you ask that God's providential efficiency may bring good out of evil, it is not especially important that you should address the third person of the Trinity rather than the other divine persons. But there are gifts of which the Holy Spirit is peculiarly the author. He, rather than the Father or the Son, is the author of the Christian graces, of which love for souls is one. When, therefore, you supplicate for this blessing, it is proper that you directly address the Holy Spirit.

4. Faithfully intercede for perishing souls, and you will find that you are using another sure means of increasing your love for them. Pray for their renewing, for their salvation. Entreat the Holy Spirit to carry on more rapidly His work of new creating the spiritually dead. Many of God's children are doing this. The more you commend your fellow men to God the stronger will your love for them become. The desire which you already have for the salvation of the perishing has been implanted in your

heart by divine power. Now, when we give utterance in words to those desires which God Himself has implanted in our hearts, we use the very means which above all others will increase their strength.

5. Besides interceding in your closet for the unconverted, exert yourself in other ways. Some of the various ways of putting forth effort to save men have already been mentioned. As far as it is in your power, make use of these means. Join the self-denying company of tract distributors. Converse with the impenitent. Always have before your mind some one at whose conversion you are aiming. Personal work in behalf of souls will be likely to be effective when you separate men and make them individual objects of your attention. If you are already a Sabbath-school teacher, make it your aim to save every child committed to your care. If the means of grace and holiness are largely withheld from the members of your class at home, strive to supply this lack. Seek to take the place of faithless, godless parents. Make the salvation of their children, whose spiritual welfare you providentially have in charge, a matter of deeper concern

than your necessary food. Take a livelier interest in the agencies employed by the Church to advance the Saviour's kingdom. Identify yourself with them in every way in your power. Read their reports and periodicals, that you may keep yourself acquainted with all the work they are performing. By using means which have an indirect influence, as well as those which are directly powerful to save your fellow men, you will greatly increase your love for souls.

6. The blessed Saviour has had many servants whose consuming love for souls has made their names famous. The lives of many of these have been written. Read the lives of these men. Think much about their sacrifices and toils joyfully undergone, and while you muse your heart will be touched. You will feel yourself knit to them in bonds of Christian affection. Your heart will be stirred with gratitude to God for giving such labourers to the church, and you yourself will partake of that yearning love for sinners which actuated them.

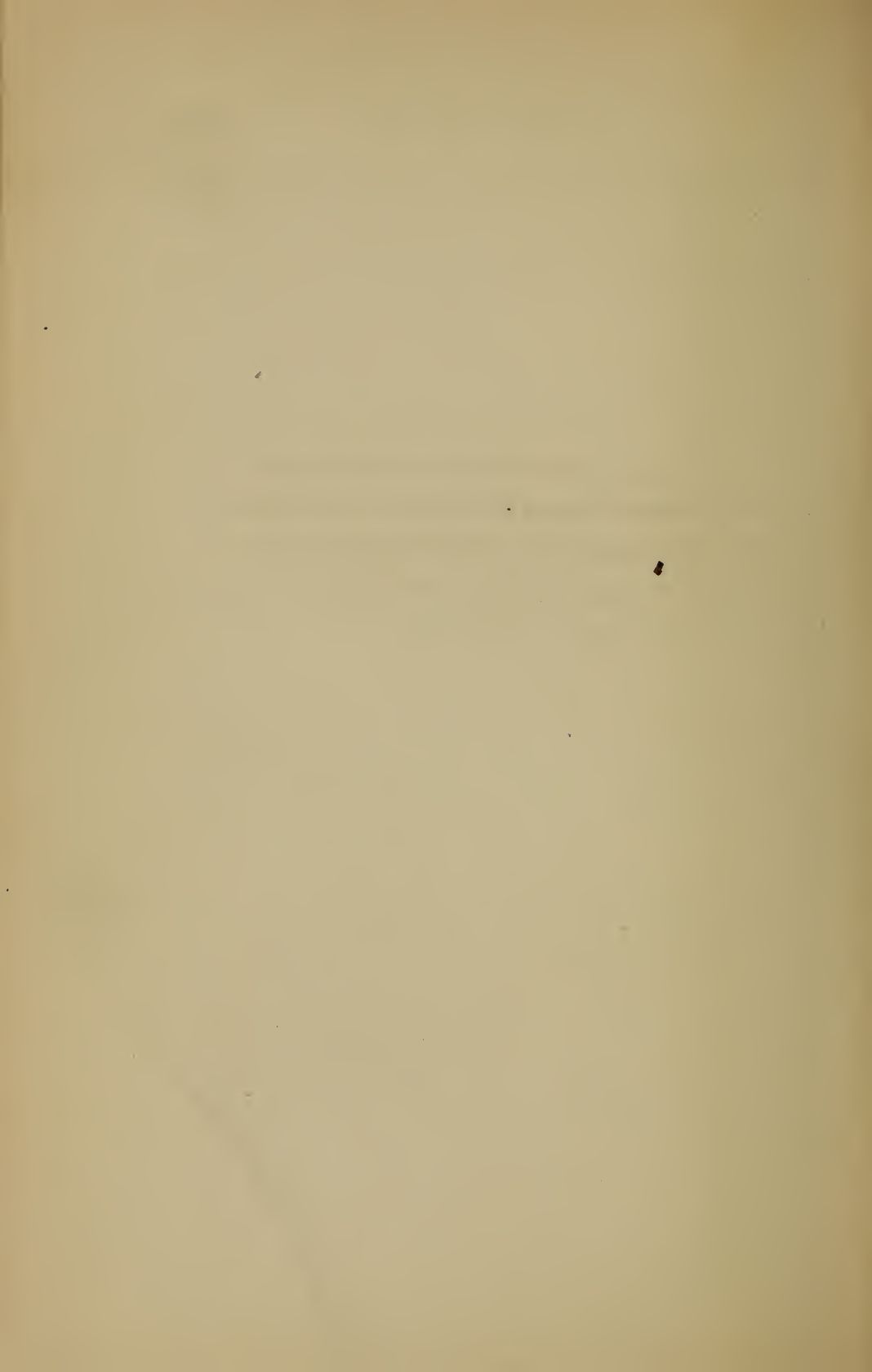
7. Whoever has pity on sinners in danger of dying in their sins and of being forever lost, is truly merciful, for he is merciful to the souls of

men. And the Bible says: "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." It also says: "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." Also, "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." Frequently ponder these sayings of God's word.

8. Love the blessed Saviour more, and you will grow in love for souls, for the love which Christians have for souls is in exact proportion to their love for Him. Throughout all ages the men who have laboured most and suffered most to save souls, have been men animated and controlled by Christ's love to them, and by their love to Christ.

We would ask you, reader, in conclusion, never to forget the intimate connection which exists between the salvation of souls and the glory of the blessed Saviour. Whenever a sinner is saved, saved in spite of the opposition of Satan and all his hosts, Jesus is victorious, He is glorified, a new star is added to His crown.

This thought should have a stronger influence than that which any other could have to impel you to seek the salvation of the lost. Indeed their redemption should never be thought of apart from the glory of Christ. Your desire for His exaltation should be stronger by far than any other passion of your soul. Perhaps our prayers and labours for the conversion of men would more frequently be blessed to their salvation, were we, in the efforts which we put forth, more influenced by the desire that our blessed Redeemer should be glorified.



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