

have abiding with, and dwelling in us, the Holy Ghost the Comforter, sent of Christ, to lead us to Christ, to testify of Christ, to assimilate us to Christ, and to sanctify us to dwell with Christ for ever. Oh! could the personal departure of our Lord have been blessed and graced with an assurance more transcendently great, precious, and glorious than this?

Our Lord's *second* farewell was when He closed the sacred canon of Scripture, fencing it with the most solemn warning, and sealing it with the most illustrious promise. And, as the threatenings of woe to them who should either take from, or add to, the perfect word of God, resounded solemnly on the ear, it was succeeded and softened by words which will live and linger in the sweetest cadence until the promise they contain shall be fulfilled: 'Behold, I come quickly!' Then shall all that is dark in providence and grace be lucid, and all that is discrepant be harmonized: the bliss of the saints will be complete, the mystery of God will be finished, and God will be all in all. O believer in Jesus! long for that day that shall bring the Beloved of your soul arrayed in all His Father's and His own glory. He will come quickly, suddenly, unexpectedly—His advent surprising both the Church and the world; the one slumbering in the light, and the other in the dark. But let us who are of the day: sober, watchful, hastening unto His coming, prepared as a bride for her husband—loving and desiring Him with a single, ardent, wakeful affection. 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!'

But it was in connection with His *first* farewell that Christ spake the memorable and precious words, 'Lo, I am with you always.' It is not to a future, but to an *ever-present* Christ with His saints, that these pages will direct your thoughts. What the Lord has laid up for us, by what road He will lead us, what lessons he will teach us, by what discipline of trial He will mature us for present service and prepare us for future rest, we will not be too curious to divine. Enough that it is all in the covenant, and in his hands who administers the covenant. And whatever new lights and shadows may be pencilled upon life's picture, though our song be of *mercy* and of *judgment*, we will patiently wait and calmly trust its gradual and timely unfolding, assured that all our trials will be shrouded blessings, and all those blessings will be bright stepping-stones aiding our progress in the divine life, our nearness to God, and

our meetness for heaven. Embarking upon a new stage of your pilgrimage, I propose placing the pilgrim's true *STAFF* in your hands, upon which, if you lean in childlike faith, you will be firmly upheld, safely led, securely kept, divinely strengthened, cheered, and comforted every step of your journey. It was left by our Lord for the use of His one and whole Church when He exchanged the scene of His humiliation for the throne of His glory. He Himself placed it in the hands of His apostles, who, now that their pilgrimage is closed, have transmitted it to us. In the name of Christ, I now put this divine *staff* in your hand, and bid you firmly grasp it, and set out anew for heaven. 'Lo, I am with you always [*all days*], even unto the end of the world.'

Let me for a moment concentrate your thoughts upon Him whose promise is thus pledged: 'I am with you.' Were you assured of the personal presence, ever attending, ever clinging, ever abiding, of a beloved friend selected from a wide and choice circle; and were that one friend the most wise, the most powerful, the most true, the most loving, confiding, and sympathizing, would you not be content to link with him alone all your future lot—to make him confidant of your bosom, the partaker of your every joy, the sharer of your every sorrow? That Friend is Christ! He occupies the pre-eminent position of being ever near to His people. Everywhere, and at the same moment, His presence is the atmosphere that enfolds them, the shield that encircles them, the sun that guides and cheers their path to the celestial city, where His glorified presence fills each soul with ineffable happiness, heaven with its sweetest song, and eternity with its transcendent splendour. When Jesus left our earth, He entwined the personal interests of His members around His heart, and bore them with Him to heaven; leaving the gracious promise, that, though personally and visibly withdrawn from the scene of their journeying, trials, and conflicts, His spiritual presence should ever and everywhere engirdle them, until, like Himself, they should exchange earth for heaven. 'Lo! mark! behold! I, the Incarnate God, I, who opened my bleeding heart for your redemption on Calvary, I, who am your dearest Friend, your Elder Brother—I am with you always, in all places, and at all times, unto the end of the world.' Saint of God! this is the promise of promises, the richest pearl of all the promises, exceeding in its mightiness and preciousness,