

in advanced years must be wholly changed—when all the past has been worse than lost—when the present only can be reckoned on to correct the past, and prepare the soul for communion with God, and to enjoy the inheritance of the saints in light, who can overestimate the value of time? How anxious should we be to learn, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that the “now” of the present is the acceptable time. Let us strive to know and feel, under His teaching, and the advocacy of the all-prevailing Intercessor, the great purpose for which our days are measured out to us, and the many lessons which admonish us of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and how solemnizing it is to die. We are continually amid the dead and the dying. All nature, which, a little ago, was a picture of life and loveliness, now presents the sad image of death all around. On your own person or around you, you see the symbols of mourning and death. In your room you have the pictures of the dead or of the dying. Everywhere you meet with indications of decay and death. Every living creature—every man, woman and child, every bird and beast, every plant and flower, must fade and die. Not one can arrest the hand of death, or say, with the remotest degree of confidence, but that the next thought that shall arise in the mind shall be that of a disembodied spirit, separated from all earthly concerns.

In full view of what the past has brought to us, whether treasures of wisdom and godliness, or folly and sin, and impressed with the solemnities before, let us, betimes, close our eyes on the things of time and sense, on which they must soon close forever,—let us stand on the shores of that vast ocean of eternity, on which we must sail so soon,—let us listen to its tremulous waves, and try to realize the momentous interests before, in all their enduring realities, until we realize all the past rushing up before our view, and the Judge about to assign us our never-ending recompense of bliss or misery, *according as we have employed our brief span of life.*

II. Inquire, what is wisdom? When a man is under the sentence of death, or when infected with dangerous disease, it is wise to use the speediest and best means of deliverance and recovery. When temporal life is in imminent danger, no time is to be lost; the wisest counsel, and the best means of safety must be at once embraced. How much more so, when eternal life and eternal interests are at stake. All, in a state of nature, are under the condemnation of the supreme Judge. Soul and body are infected with disease and death; and both, alike, in danger of being consigned to eternal death. While in this perilous condition, is it not the first duty to avoid the frown, and to secure the friendship of Him whose favor is life, and whose loving kindness is better than life? Is it not true wisdom to employ the present precious time,

to secure union and fellowship with Him who alone can sustain and cheer us in all the circumstances of life, go with us through death, and be our satisfying portion through eternity? It is our highest wisdom to engage in those holy exercises which shall ensure the fullest measure of happiness in time, and prepare us for the highest state of blessedness in eternity. Truly, all our enduring and momentous interests consist in knowing God, and enjoying His friendship. All earthly joys and sorrows, poverty and wealth, honor and shame, contempt and honor, of the men of this world, shall soon vanish. All temporal gains and losses stand amid vanishing vapours and fleeing shadows.

Have you, hitherto, lived regardless of God, trampled on His laws, and slighted His Gospel? Come and learn wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation. Adopt the means, and embrace the salvation provided by infinite wisdom. Accept of free and full pardon, and embrace the robes of Christ's righteousness. Be it your first and continuous effort, to avail yourself of the Teaching, Advocacy and Guidance of the Holy Spirit. Reject His wisdom and His aid, and all else you do, even in religious exercises, is sheer folly. Labour earnestly to yield yourself to the mighty influences of the Teacher from God, who is God. Regard neither the first nor the last breathing of your life on earth the most important, but rather the new birth-day of your spiritual existence. The first exercise of godly sorrow, which is unto life, is the beginning of wisdom. Then it will be your continuous wisdom and highest interest, to exercise fear, lest you offend your Friend, your Companion, your supreme Judge. Let none, then, indulge in the folly of deferring true repentance. All the invitations, commands and promises of the Gospel, are centred in the present moment. The Holy Spirit, who only can convince of sin, and make wise unto salvation, declares that “Now” is the accepted time: “Now” is the day of salvation. Even had you the pledge of God, that your days are to be prolonged in sin—what, in great mercy, He promises none—no tongue can picture the daring madness of that man, who would persevere in rebellion against God, and defer repentance to some future day. What would your repentance be, but an attestation of your folly? Since God must be regarded the wisest Lawgiver, His Gospel the scheme of infinite wisdom, devised and carried out by the Triune God, what folly and danger to delay! If, then, you would manifest wisdom, which will be approved by God, admired by angels, and applauded by the whole universe of intelligent beings, renounce the service of Satan *now*, and cleave to the Lord Jesus *now*, and yield yourself *now* to the guidance of the Spirit of Truth.

Be assured that it is Divine wisdom, *early* to cultivate that godliness which will bless