

he should go they could not come. So is it still. Those who believe are saved, and are exalted to the mansions prepared for them above. They become the inheritors and occupants of the heavenly glory: they are taken to be with Christ himself. They go whither he has gone Heaven will receive them, and they will dwell in those heavenly mansions for evermore. Those on the other hand, who will not believe, die in their sins, and whither Christ has gone, they cannot come.

But the peculiar danger pointed at in Christ's word is that *persisting* in unbelief—refusing to believe while the Gospel offers are made, while the gospel is preached unto us. The peculiar danger in such a case is that of being given up to unbelief—of having these words pronounced in regard to us: "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins; whither I go ye cannot come." The danger is that of being delivered over to unbelief, to impenitence, and a final rejection of Christ. That is a risk which all more or less run who do not believe in Christ, who persist a single day in unbelief. Not only may they die in their sins; but they may seek Christ, and yet die in their sins. They may seek Christ, but not by true faith—They have been delivered over to impenitence and unbelief—the state which they themselves chose; and therefore they will not now truly believe, or really trust in Christ for salvation. They cannot. The Spirit of God has left them.—They may desire a Saviour, but not such a Saviour as Christ is. They will not submit to the terms of his salvation. They would rather continue in their sins, even at the risk of dying in them at last. The great barriers to faith are the love of sin, and that hardness of heart which is alike insensible to the evil of sin on the one hand, and the danger of it on the other. When the sinner has been given up to his unbelief, and impenitence of heart, when the Spirit no longer strives with him, when God has said: "He is joined to his idols, let him alone"—when Christ has said: "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins"—then the sinner will choose his own ways, and will continue to refuse all the offers of salvation, however freely made, and however urgently pressed. It is a sad state to be thus deserted by the Spirit of God—to be delivered up to final impenitence and unbelief. The consequence of such a state is what Christ here describes: "Ye shall seek me, and shall

die in your sins: ye shall seek me, but shall not find me: ye shall seek a Saviour, but not the Saviour you need: ye shall seek to be saved, but not in the way in which alone you can be saved—not through the blood of atonement, not by the only Saviour revealed.

To die in our sins, is to die with sin unrepented of, and unforgiven. It is to go down to death without having seen the evil of sin, and of our sins in particular: it is to have got no view of the sinfulness of sin, and never to have truly repented of our sins in the sight of God. In that case, we continue in our sins: our sins adhere to us: all the guilt of them attaches to us: and we are punished for them by the holy and righteous God.—Sin can be taken away only by the blood of Christ. His blood it is which cleanses from all sin. He came to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness: He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. All who believe in him are saved from their sins—they are justified from all things. On their part what is requisite, is repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Before there can be true faith, there must be sincere repentance. Both of these must go together. They can never be separate. Each implies the other. And it is this which renders true faith so rare; because true repentance is so rare. The sinner in coming to Christ must lay aside his sins—must repent of his sins. This is it which keeps so many away from Christ. They do not choose to regard themselves as sinners, and to renounce their sins. They would rather part with all that they have than do this. They cherish their sins, or they shrink from the exercise of *repentance*. The Spirit of God can alone overcome the love of the one, and the reluctance to the other. Many continue to resist the Spirit, to quench his influences so long, and so obstinately to hold by their sins, that the Spirit leaves them to themselves, and they die with all their sins upon them, with all their guilt cleaving to them, without having ever looked to Christ for salvation. And what must that state be—to go down to death with the guilt of every several sin attaching to us, and meet the wrath of an angry God! Is this such a fate as you would choose? To die in your sin! To be without an interest in Christ! Without his atoning merits—without his justifying righteousness—without any lot or part in his salvation: