

in the same court, and we commune at the same fireside. But then the separation, mercifully suspended, shall be effected. Then there will be but two classes of people and one distinction—chaff and wheat. Now there are Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Methodists, Baptists, and so on: then there will be but two classes. The angels shall separate them upon one grand principle—love to Christ, practical and proved. The wicked shall be condemned for their works; the righteous shall be acquitted and saved *according to their works*. The blast of the divine judgment shall sweep the threshing-floor. It shall leave the wheat unscathed, but it shall drive away the chaff into unquenchable fire. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." On the other hand, with this storing up of the righteous—this gathering of them together, we associate the ideas of *security and peace*. The blast, the storm, and the pain, are gone for ever. Their happiness, from a small beginning, enlarges with their capacity, and lends increasing power to the song, which shall roll its measures through eternal ages: "Glory to God and to the Lamb for ever and ever"!

II. In meditating upon this passage at present, let us briefly advert to the *lessons enforced*. As a harvest must *first grow*, the question forces itself upon our minds: Are we growing in grace? We are growing, either in grace or in guilt. How solemn the thought, that we are either rising to heaven or sinking to hell. There is no absolute quiescence in the universe. Not even the rock remains unaffected by the forces of nature for a single day. Are we living or dying? Agitating is that moment wherein the physician feels the pulse of the patient to discover his chances of life; and can the question be impertinent, Am I living or dying? As we are growing, then—in which direction? It is true as this Book that we shall not leave this church the same as when we entered. Our bodies shall have taken a step to the grave, and our souls a step to heaven or to hell. Do you believe this? It is the verdict of experience. Why are so many hearts steeled against the truth, but because they are hardened in their obstinacy by repeated acts of resistance? Repeated disobedience makes them Gospel-proof. Resist not, then, the Holy Ghost.

2. Are we grateful? God has been very good to us. We have had an average harvest, peace, and abundance of work for poor people, and we deserve nothing. Yet wickedness abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Even Christian professors are not ashamed of barefaced wickedness and the grossest worldliness. Now it is reasonable that we should be grateful to God for His mercy; yet, mark my words, a wicked man is never grateful. God may give him wealth, proper-

ty, land, harvests, splendor, health, children, and he is never thankful; and, on the other hand, He may cast the believer into a loathsome prison for his loyalty to the truth, and rend his flesh with stripes, and he is, like Paul and Silas, astonished at the Divine goodness, and his praises astonish others. Humiliating proof of our corruption, that grace alone can make us grateful! Let us pray that He would enkindle the flame of grateful love upon the altar of our hearts, cold as the unfeeling stone.

3. Do you mark the footsteps of time? Life is a journey between the cradle and the grave. The journey is differently performed and of diverse length. Some perform it in fine carriages upon a smooth and splendid road. Others pant, weary and foot-sore, upon a rugged and thorny path. But death is sure to seize his prey, deaf alike to the blandishments of beauty and the claims of worth. He plucks the noble from his carriage, rends the purple from his shoulders, and lays his head low with the poorest of the poor. Nor is he forgetful of the wretch who bewails the day of his birth. Let us not dishonor our heritage as reflecting beings by rushing on in worldly engrossment till the night cometh in which no man can work. Let us live, drawing our deepest joys, our dearest hopes, our firmest peace, from the atonement and life of Christ. Let us serve Him with faithfulness, and then, when our day closes in weakness and decay, He will place His everlasting arms underneath us, and receive us to Himself and to the society of the noblest and the best who have adorned the annals of time—that galaxy of Christian heroes who, from their exalted seats, now animate us to patience and to victory. AMEN.

— 3 —

"As Good as a Christian."

"I fear that my husband will stumble into hell over the faults of professing Christians." Such was the remark of a lady whose husband belonged to that large class in every community that live on the faults and inconsistencies of the children of God. They claim that they are as good as Christians, and look for the Christian's joy in the world to come.

It need not for a moment be denied that Christians have faults, and are not as consistent as they ought to be. Every true believer in Christ will tell you that he is a greater sinner than you think he is. He knows the secret faults of his heart. You only know the inconsistencies of his outward conduct.

And yet there is a heaven wide difference between the most unworthy child of God and the most moral and upright man who is not a Christian. The one will be saved; the other, unless he repent, will be lost. The one has consecrated himself to the service of God, and has the promise of God's strength to help