

fired with love and filled with joy, swiftly retraced their steps back to Jerusalem, and, eager to publish the glad event, they hastened to the chamber where the Apostles were assembled, and related to them "what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread." Believers, members of this congregation, you have this Lord's day been in the company of that same blessed One who, on that ever-memorable first day of the week, so many centuries ago, walked, and talked, and supped with those two privileged disciples at Emmaus. But your eyes have not been holden so that you should not know him; for he has graciously made himself known to you as your risen Lord and Master. In company with him you have come up hither this day; you have enjoyed sweet converse with him here; and he, by his servant your pastor, has opened up to you the Scriptures, and expounded to you therein the things concerning himself. You have sat down with him at his table in his own banqueting-house, where his banner over you has been love. There you have partaken abundantly of his bounty, for he has given you to eat of that bread of life, the heavenly manna; and made you to drink at the fountain of living waters.

While thus enjoying sweet communion with him, and commingling your spirits with his spirit, have you not felt yourselves more and more drawn towards him? Like the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, have you not felt your hearts burn within you, while he talked with you, as it were, by the way; while the glad sounds of the gospel have been proclaimed in your hearing; and while you drank in refreshing draughts from the wells of his salvation? Have you not found in him the best, the dearest the most generous of friends? And has he not revealed himself to you as a Saviour, full of grace and truth, "the chiefest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely?" And having thus discovered

the exceeding preciousness of such a Friend and Saviour, does not the very thought of separation from him seem to you unbearable, so that, should he make as though he would go further; should he seem, as at Emmaus, to part company from you, you would feel constrained, like the two disciples, to entreat him to tarry with you; to abide with you even for ever? Dreading the very thought of his ever leaving you, does not the invitation of these two disciples express most appropriately the desire you this day feel for his ever-abiding presence:—"Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." Or, as it is beautifully rendered in that most beautiful evening hymn:—

"Abide with me! fast falls the eventide.

The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide."

And, brethren, when we think of all that this blessed Saviour has done, and is still doing for us, we may well beseech him to abide with us, and that he may never leave us nor forsake us. For he has done for us what no human, or even angelic being could ever do for us. He has poured out for us that precious life-blood of his upon the cross which could alone avail with an offended God for our redemption. And this he did, remember, not when we were innocent, righteous beings like himself; but it was "while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us." And having thus, by the sacrifice of his own precious life upon the accursed tree, reconciled us to God our Heavenly Father, he still continues to act the part of our Friend and Brother. He

"Pursues in heaven his mighty plan,
The Saviour and the friend of man."

And, brethren, how immeasurably is the value of his heavenly friend enhanced when we consider that when all earthly friends change and pass away, he never changes, but abideth ever the same to all his people, "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," for he is "the same