

indeed, with whom, as mere mortals, the day ends with a peace like that which prevades animal creation, in complete contentment with their worldly lot. No doubt there are multitudes, who every night lie down more than contented ; but it is not with their human circumstances as such, but it is with a peace, “not as the world giveth.” Divest these believers of their heavenly comfort ; imagine that there were no Christian prayer to close the day with, and that this town were like any one of the many heathen towns which St. Paul visited ; conceive yourselves also without Christian knowledge ; and then man’s lot would seem to you a wanton exception to the happiness of all nature besides ; and even if you had no woes of your own, still, if you were like the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes, — at least, I think it would be so with myself, — the sight of suffering inflicted apparently for no purpose, and sympathy with my fellow-creatures in their hard and forever, hopeless lot, would thrill me, as it were, with a dying agony in every nerve of my moral being, and make St. Paul’s words mine in all their bitterness, — “O, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?”

But it is spiritual death these words refer to chiefly. The Christian view of life, — step aside from that, and it is into a position “having no hope and without God in the world.” No hope, and no God ! It is so, and the more horribly so, the farther you recede from discipleship with Christ. In earlier ages Deity might be believed in under various characters ; but as men grow wiser, they have need of a purer religion ; so that now it may be said, that, with an intelligent man, faith in religion is proportionate to the purity of it, — that he believes and can be-