

to know is life eternal. Jesus Christ, whom it makes known to us, is the Prince of *Life*—the Resurrection and the *Life*—the Way, the Truth, and the *Life*. Its life-giving tidings are as living waters to a thirsty soul; and through the influence of the Holy Spirit of Life by the Gospel, those who were spiritually dead in trespasses and in sins, are quickened and revived to a life of faith and holiness in newness of life, restored to the image of the living God, which shall end in an eternal life of happiness in heaven. That vital principle, then, which may be called the life of God, is communicated by the Spirit of life—the preservative of life—"The healing balm" of life "for all our wounds, the cordial for our fears." The Gospel is not, then, a vain thing: it is your life, and shall prove a savour of life unto life, unto all those who receive and obey it; but the savour of death unto death to those who neglect and refuse it.

Again: The Gospel, in its nature, is a **HEAVENLY LIGHT**. By this light the Holy Spirit enlightens this wicked world of ignorance and darkness by shining into the hearts of men, and giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. The condition of this earth by sin, is truly deplorable. When we think on the awful state in which ignorance and vice prevailed in the generations that are past, and the state of more than six hundred millions of human beings in our own day, without the "lamp of life," or a guiding star, without the "light of the glorious gospel of Christ;" but under the dominion, and held in slavery by the "rulers of the darkness of this world; blinded by the God of this world, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," how answerable to this state do we find the words of the Prophet, when he said, "They shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble, and darkness, and dimness of anguish; for behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." Alas! many might indeed take up their lamentation, and in the language of the Bible say, "We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness: we grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon-day as in the night." "He that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes." And many there are on this earth, who, in the darkness of their minds, are led by the Devil, driven by their lusts, till at last they stumble into the pit of woe and misery, and are lost—lost in the blackness of darkness for ever!

If the natural light is precious and delightful, how much more the spiritual and

heavenly light. Think on a traveller wandering in a distant and strange land, losing his way, and going farther and farther astray—overtaken by storms and darkness—surrounded by ten thousand horrible and frightful dangers—without light, without guide, without any knowledge of what is before him, and insensible of his danger—and you have a faint comparison of him who is without the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, in a world of snares and dangers—led captive by the Devil—not knowing where he is led, though every moment, every step, takes him farther and farther from heaven—from happiness—from God. Thus the poor deluded being is making a rapid progress, (who would not shudder at the thought!) in the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, to a never-ending destruction, to misery, darkness, despair! Truly, "the way of the wicked is darkness, they know not at what they stumble." And, alas! all have gone out of the right way;—all are by nature in darkness and error! Let us, then, with the greatest gratitude and delight, rejoice that "through the tender mercies of our God, the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace;" that the Son of God was sent to be a "light to lighten the Gentiles, to be for salvation to the ends of the earth, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Rejoice, that his voice of mercy in the Gospel is calling: "Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see;" and that the day is come upon us in which the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. And that the true light of the Gospel dispensation now shineth; and that it shall continue to shine, till "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." That the refusal of its light in this world of gross darkness and misery shall serve in every age to direct, safely and unerringly, weary travellers to the regions of eternal light and joy, where "the Lord himself shall be their everlasting light, their God their glory."

— "Hopeless should we be,
Blest Revelation, were it not for thee.
Hail glorious gospel! heavenly light, whereby
We live with comfort, and with comfort die;
And view beyond this gloomy scene, the tomb,
A life of endless happiness to come."
—*Epitaph transcribed in the "Young Cottager"*

All other systems of religion, apart from the Gospel, are but a confusion of darkness, uncertainty, and error; leaving mankind in the dark, concerning the existence and character of God—the nature of sin—the method of