

liberty to show kindness not only to Benjamin, but to them all.

Learn 1. That all our sins are known and remembered by God; Psal. xc. 8. Ezek. viii. 12.

2. That sooner or later we shall be punished for our sins, if we do not repeat of them; Luke xiii. 3. Rom. ii. 5.

3. That conviction of sin is graciously designed by God to lead us to Christ; Rom. vii. 24, 25. Gal. iii. 24.

April, 20th.

WHAT DISCIPLES OF CHRIST ARE.

MATT. v. 13-16.

I. *Christians are the salt of the earth, v. 13.*

Salt is useful for its preservative quality, and so also are Christ's disciples. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction, Gen. 18. 32; and it is to the people of God that the world owes its preservation. Salt possesses the quality of penetrating and spreading over the substance which it is meant to affect, like leaven it gradually pervades the whole mass, and just so does Christianity extend over society till it shall at length embrace the world. We scatter salt over that which we purpose by its influence to preserve, and so Christ's disciples were not permitted always to remain at Jerusalem, or in their own country, but were soon scattered abroad over the world, (and even so is it with believers still,) that the genial influence of their principles might be universally diffused. Salt makes savoury many articles of food, which without it would be insipid and unpalatable, and the vital Christianity, which flourishes in many parts of the earth, makes this world pleasant to God, to angels, and to good men. "But if the salt have lost its savour," &c. v. 13. If after receiving a knowledge of the truth we still continue in self-righteousness or in sin, if after our minds have received a certain degree of illumination our hearts still remain unchanged, unsanctified, better for us had we ever remained in total darkness, Pet. 2. 21.—Heb. 6. 8. If the gospel fail to renovate the man there is no other power which can do it; "if the salt have lost its savour wherewith shall it be salted?"

II. *Christ's Disciples are the light of the world.*

Like beacon-lights they soon attract the attention of those around them. Some look upon them with delight as models to imitate, but the great majority regard them with hatred, envy, and censure. Christians are said to be the lights of the world, because their qualities are as different from those of unbelievers as light is from darkness. There is nothing in the world more useful than light.

Most of our knowledge of surrounding objects we owe to its agency. Its nature is to reveal, and the effect of true Christianity is the same. It is meant under the agency of the holy Spirit, to bring sinners to a knowledge of their lost condition, and to point them to Jesus. A light to be useful is placed in the most prominent position, and so is it with the believer. When grace is shed abroad in the heart, it is not for the benefit of the recipient alone, but that its benign influence should spread to all around. It is in vain for the professed Christian to plead for his retirement, modesty, want of talents, or influence. True Christianity will soon make itself be felt: it cannot be concealed, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Christ calls himself the light of the world, John viii. 12. But Christ shines with an inherent, while believers, like the moon and planets shine but with a borrowed, light; they reflect the light of Christ, their spiritual sun.

III. *The injunction which Christ gives to his disciples.*

He enjoins them to let their light shine before men, viz: by every means in their power to seek the spiritual and temporal welfare of those around them. Of what kind the Christian's works should be, we learn from the recorded lives of our blessed Saviour, and his disciples, and from numberless passages of Scripture. From those works the Christian is not to shrink, from fear, indolence, or any other reason. "Whoever, says our Saviour, does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv. 27. And the works of the Christian must not, like those of the Pharisee, be done ostentatiously, for the sake of the praise of man, but with a single eye to the glory of God.

Learn.—1. That Christians occupy in reality the most important as well as the most conspicuous position in this world, Heb. x. 32; 1 John iii. 1.

2. That Christians should endeavour by every means in their power to propagate their holy religion.—Phil. i. 27.

3. That the sole aim of believers in doing good, should be the glory of their heavenly Father.—Rom. xiv. 8.—1 Cor. x. 31.

The Swearer's Prayer answered.

The following anecdote is translated from the supplement to a German copy of the well-known tract, "*The Swearer's Prayer; or, his Oath explained.*" The awful event of which it gives an account, took place in Hamburg in Germany:—

J. G., a day-labourer, who was so much addicted to the vice of swearing, that on every