

is it then that such an all-important blessing should be so little valued as it is by many—and that such a bright light should even be hid to many individuals,—but the reason is plainly given by the Apostle in the text—"it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." When an individual or a people are so devoid of heavenly grace as wilfully and deliberately reject the Gospel, they have come to that fearful state of mental depravity beyond which, human beings in this world, can proceed no farther. By doing so they voluntarily deprive themselves of the only means, which God has appointed and provided, whereby they can obtain justification here—and the state of glory hereafter—which is sure to all those who love His Son Jesus Christ, and serve Him in His Gospel.

In this blessed assurance the infidel has no comfort nor satisfaction. When difficulties and troubles come upon him here he cannot look for ease and relief in the promises of the Gospel, and say with the Apostle—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth—and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—(Heb. 12: 6);—nor with the Psalmist—"Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy Law,"—(Ps. 94: 12);—and when his heart and flesh do faint and fail,—when the King of terrors appears to summon him into the presence of his Maker and his Judge—even Him whom he has rejected and denied—he cannot then claim the support of the Saviour's arm to lead him through the dark swellings of Jordan,—for by his creed he acknowledges no Saviour. He will not then hear addressed to him the comforting words—"Because I live, ye shall live also,"—(John 14: 19)—because he cannot say with Job (19: 25) "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."—Nor can he exult with our Apostle in the end of the 15th Chap. of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, and say—"O death, where is thy sting?—O grave, where is thy victory?—The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law,—but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord, Jesus Christ."

By his own voluntary choice he has deprived himself of any hope of the mercy of God, through the Saviour,—for in his estimation there are neither of these,—and when he dies, he imagines that the life of his soul terminates with that of his body.—Surely "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." For the gratification of worldly pleasures and sinful indulgences for a short time, they have closed their eyes against the truth, and shut out its light from their heart, and preferred this miserable creed

of Satan for their benefit to the glorious Gospel of Christ. Such is the extreme length of wickedness to which any person can proceed in this world,—and the most effectual way that can be taken to ruin both soul and body throughout eternity.

But while few are bold and graceless enough to maintain their adherence to these doctrines openly—sad is it to be said that a much larger number do not deny them—by the kind of work they exhibit to the world. Practical infidelity is not mitigated by a profession of Christianity—but is aggravated to those who know the truth, and yet will not attend to it. Few there are who can plead ignorance to it, as an extenuation of their guilt—compared with those who sin with the knowledge and consciousness that they are doing wrong,—which is deliberately doing despite to the Spirit of grace,—and is storing up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath.

When the house of God is merely attended for fashion's sake, or when the slightest excuses are made available for non-attendance.—and when the religion which we profess is not brought to bear upon and influence our whole conduct—our every-day life and conversation—Christians we may be in name, but the first principles of Christianity we have yet to learn. To do justly—to love mercy—and to walk humbly before God, is especially enjoined upon all who profess to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth,—and love to God and man, from the principle of true piety, cannot be exhibited under false colors, with a view to deceive.

To the individual who has chosen God as his portion, and who is under the control and guidance of the Spirit of God, our Gospel—the glorious Gospel of Christ, is prized as an inestimable treasure—and is treated as such,—for from it he derives spiritual sustenance—health and strength to his soul, sufficient—when administered by the Holy Spirit—for its nourishment and comfort, until he shall be freed from everything earthly, and shall enjoy the blessed privileges, and pure joys, which are at God's right hand for evermore. To him it is not hid, because he is not under the control of the god of this world,—but he follows another master, who cares for the welfare and happiness of his faithful servant, whose yoke to him is ever easy,—and whose burden is ever light.

In conclusion. As the intimation from heaven, that reconciliation between God and the faithful believer in Jesus is now effected through His atonement, is the best which has been disclosed to man since the fall—and as the greatest honor is conferred by God upon those earthly creatures of His, whom He has appointed to announce this glorious "good news" to their fellow-men, so the greatest responsibility rests upon them to perform their duty faithfully.—And it is also the duty of those to whom the Gospel is