

the world the fact and responsibility of the present as well as the reality and rewards of the future, and the Divinity of our holy religion in its complete aptness and universal sufficiency to mould and guide the believer through the duties, trials, and responsibilities of the present life, and secure for him the blessings and the joys of the life to come. Those who live the life of the godly are so many living, working, tangible, rational, and sympathising witnesses of the existence of God—of his being and perfections, and are the visible representatives of his moral nature and holy and pure character; and the life and death of such do more to convince a sceptical and an irreligious world of the truths of a future state, human responsibility, the necessity of Divine religion, holiness of character, faith, virtue, and pure morality, than ten thousand volumes of speculative theology and finely spun theories of personal accountability and sentimental religion. For who can estimate the silent yet powerful influence which a consistent and godly life exerts over the feelings, the conduct, and the faith of others, and also in restraining from vice, and leading to virtue many who yield to no other power?

What gave pre-eminent force and power to the Saviour's teaching and doctrine was that he went about *doing good*. This is the secret of all effective teaching, and in this respect our Lord stands out in convincing contrast to all other teachers, delineators of life, morals and religion, at once showing the completeness and sincerity of his teaching, and the Divinity of his person, doctrine, and work.

Chief among the instrumental causes which aided the propagation and wide-spread of the Gospel during the first ages of the Christian Church, stands out in well-defined prominence the disinterested, holy, and pure character of the Apostles and Christian teachers and their followers. This was one agency which the Holy Spirit acknowledged and blessed in the glorious work of reclaiming a world sunk in Jewish intolerance and heathen idolatry and superstition, and this is still an agency which the same Divine Spirit acknowledges and blesses for sanctifying and maturing the individual character, and for commending his own truth to the ungodly and indifferent. The world may withstand precept and oppose doctrine, but yields to the force and power of a holy, pure, and disinterested life, if not at once, yet gradually and imperceptibly, and is led ultimately to ac-

knowledge the Divinity of the precept and the correctness of the doctrine. It would seem, in order to give greater prominence and force to this principle of action, to be the nature and tendency of the human mind, under the present order and law of things, that the disinterested, holy and pure character, never begins to exert its full influence until after death. The force of such character is more powerful in its influence after the removal than during the presence of the individual. Thus it was with the great leading minds of history, the moulders and leaders of the human mind. It would seem that the presence of the person is a clog to some extent on the influence of the mind. The influence of Moses was more powerfully felt after his death than during his life,—the *memory* of Moses was more powerful than the *presence* of Moses. It is pre-eminently so with the holy David, though by the force of circumstances during his life he was able to exercise much influence over mankind, he was never able to command that regard that he now does: for who can estimate the influence which his life as delineated in the Book of Psalms exerts over the millions who daily read these never dying embodiments of all the phases of the real Christian life. It is so with the great worthies whose lives are recorded in the Bible—of Abraham, Joseph, Joshua, Job, Daniel, and kings and prophets—men of whom the world was not worthy—who had to wander in deserts, and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth, but who now, through the remembrance of their holy lives, exert more influence upon the world than the unalterable laws of the nations of antiquity. This is equally true of those noble souls who, under the palpable darkness of Heathendom, tried to evolve the universally felt need of that unseen light of truth, from the finished volume of human error, who struggled with ignorance, superstition, vice and irreligion, in endeavouring to lay before mankind a rule of faith and conduct, and the best method for ascertaining that rule. During their life they were unappreciated, scoffed at, despised, persecuted and slain, but after their bodies were consigned to the dust, their spirits arose from the dead and soared above the chaos of ignorance and human passion, and exerted an influence on posterity which eternity alone will reveal! And is not this the most marked and distinguishing feature of Christ and him crucified. In life he was