

character would they bear? What sign would distinguish them?

*These are inquiries for the conscience of each of us. We cannot be neuter in this matter. We cannot be idle in this market-place. It may be but in comparative feebleness; but still each of us, within the range of the action of Christendom, is either helping to disclose God's way, or to ripen the vine of the earth for the wine-press of wrath.*

The Lord tells us that the sign on which our faith must rest is that of a *humbled* Christ, such a sign as that of Jonah the prophet. Our faith deals with such a sign, because our need as sinners casts us on a Saviour or a humbled Christ. But hope may feed on a thousand signs. Our expectations are nourished by a sight of the operations of the divine hand displaying every hour the ripening of the counsels and promises, in spite of the world, and in the very face of increasing human energies.

These signs may be watched, but watched by the saint *already in the place and attitude assigned him by the Spirit*. They are not to determine what is his place, but they may exercise him in it. His place and attitude is beforehand and independently determined for him—*waiting for the Son of God from heaven*.

This posture the Thessalonian saints assumed on their believing the gospel (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). The Apostle seems afterwards to strengthen them in that posture, by telling them that from it they were