

the measures of that Council are precipitated, and the eternal purpose of God is wrought out; and a goodly price, not of silver or gold, but of *life*, is paid for the redemption of a world of sinners. All the evangelists relate the death; but three suppress the *immediate occasion*. In the suppression, or rather postponement of all mention of that great act and its relation to the central facts of Christianity, we shall see a consistency with the exquisite, the Divine, the human goodness of the altogether lovable Saviour whom our hearts adore.

II. The family is sacred—in the eye of man—in the eye of God. Our Lord had received special marks of confidence, esteem, love, and now, of gratitude, from a family with which the crisis of His own sacred life was so closely connected. Now we find that even in a case in which no such tie existed, the delicate respect in which He held the privacy of the family relation showed itself in declining to let any except three chosen, prudent men come from without into the chamber of death; not to mention His disapproval of the hired mourners; and if family privacy was respected in such a case, how much more was it natural that He should guard it in the case of a highly favoured family!

Let us imagine the opposite course. Immediately after the organization of the Christian Church, a full record is made and published, and read in every believer's house; setting forth the fact that a kindness, done to a family living in a suburban village, had been the occasion of the deadly action of the authorities; and that the gratitude of one member of that family had actually led to the dreadful scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary. Such a publication would have overwhelmed, for the rest of their respective lives, the tender-hearted offerer of the most acceptable tribute that was presented to the Man of Sorrows; her decorous, frank, sensitive sister; and the undemonstrative, but not the less susceptible brother, whose sickness and death had furnished material for the tragedy of earth and heaven.

At the distance from which *we* behold these events we may realise the *honour* which was shown to that family. Wherever the Gospel is preached that family is held in memory and esteem; but distance of time and space exercises an almost magical power