

man cannot. It is therefore equally foolish to neglect the use of means, and to trust wholly in them. Both are also alike sinful. The one is *presumption*—the other *atheism*. Now the same principle holds good in respect of spiritual things. God has given us what is termed “the means of grace,” such as His Word, the sacraments, and prayer. We have no warrant whatever, to expect any saving blessing except in connection with the use of these. How great, then, the folly, the sin, and the danger of those who despise them; yet without the blessing of the Holy Ghost, they can profit us nothing. In like manner, we must do what within us lies for the conversion of the ungodly. If we do not, shall we be free of the blood of those who perish? We are nowhere in the Word of God warranted to expect that sinners shall be converted without our efforts, yet when good is done by us, we must say, “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto God be all the praise.”

IV. The harvest is an illustration of the importance of improving present opportunities. “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. * * * A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.” (Eccies. iii, 1–2.) It is, therefore, vain for any one to sow in the time of harvest. He who would do so, would justly be looked on as a madman. But ah! madness of a more awful kind they manifest who put off attending to the things which belong to their eternal peace to a dying hour. Now, dear reader, is the seed time. Let us improve it, for it is fast passing away for ever. The good husbandman is not only careful to sow at the proper time, but also to sow good seed, knowing that the crop corresponds to what is sown. How careful then, should we be over our hearts and lives!—“Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.” (Galat. vi. 7–8.) What is reaped is greater in amount than what is sown. It is the same with regard to the future state. The miseries of the lost shall far exceed in greatness the pleasure which sin

gave them on earth; while all that the righteous have done and suffered for Christ here, shall be nothing in comparison with the fullness of joy and pleasure for evermore which will be their portion hereafter.—“What art thou sowing?” Reader! remember that thou art not either sowing or not sowing. *Thou art always sowing* either to the flesh or to the spirit.

V. The harvest is an emblem of the resurrection. From the resemblance which they bear to one another, the burying ground is very appropriately termed in German, “God’s acre.” The Apostle Paul in I Corinthians, xv., likens the resurrection of the body to the growth of the seed.—The grain which is put into the earth rots and seems to perish. But at length the blade shoots up through the earth, then the ear is formed, then the full corn in the ear. So, in like manner by the same Almighty power which works this wonderful change, shall the body be brought to life which may for ages have been mingled with its mother earth. On this subject many questions may be asked which cannot be answered. Let us rest assured that what the mouth of the Lord hath spoken shall come to pass, though we do not know how it shall do so. The body which shall come from the earth at the last day, shall be a raised body, not one created anew. What shall take place on the bodies of the wicked we are not told, but we learn from the Word of God that those of the saints shall undergo a glorious change. How much more glorious is the perfect plant than the seed from which it sprung! This is, however, but a most imperfect emblem of the change which shall take place on the bodies of the saints at the resurrection.—They “are sown in corruption,” they “are raised in incorruption,” &c. (Corin. xv. 42–44.) Reader, art thou a believer? If thou art, thy vile body shall be one day changed and fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body. Is not this a delightful thought? Never shall thou need food and drink to nourish and refresh thee. Like the keeper of Israel, thou shalt never slumber nor sleep. Never shalt thou be laid on a bed of languishing, having wearisome nights appointed thee. Never shall age make the keepers of thy house tremble, and thy strong men bow themselves. Never shall it bedim thine eye, nor make thine ear