

Bible closes with the utterance of man's last and deepest need in the rapturous words, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The great question of the ancient schools of philosophy was, What is the chief good? Socrates said: "The highest good consists in knowledge"; Aristotle, "Nay, rather, in practical activity"; the Cyrenaics sought it in the sensations of pleasure; the Cynics, in the absence of pain; the Stoics, in the rational nature; the Epicureans, in the delights of life. These men gave to the subject the most strenuous human thought: none reached an answer others could accept. We know that we have the answer, the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit; an answer upon which we rest in the full assurance of faith, the full assurance of hope, the full assurance of understanding; one which contains the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which none of the princes of this world knew, namely, that man's utmost need is supplied, his supreme good is found, in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity. All the broken cisterns of life are hewed out in seeking substitutes for this; all the enduring glories of heaven are forgotten in the beatific vision of His face. I would bring together all the wealth of language to tell you of that goal of life; I would exhaust the forces of feeling to utter the beauty of that object of desire, but it would be vain. In its contemplation the mind is overwhelmed; if we attempt to compass it, imagination retires; to express it, language is dumb. But when we shall by grace attain it, when we are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb, then shall begin the glad New Year, the happy, happy happy-making time when we shall greet each other with an universal kiss, and find all wishes answered in the presence of the Lamb.

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