

Father is watching over your safety. He neither slumbers nor sleeps; trust Him, and let your weary spirits rest. You are compassed about with a great fight of afflictions, suffering it may be, and it may be want is perpetually harassing you; be it so, but still be patient, all things are yours, and you will obtain them all when it is fitting that you should. God, your Father, withholds nothing, the possession of which would not be presently injurious. You have heavy bereavements, perhaps, nay without a perhaps, for we have all an increasing property in graves, yet be not swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. God is your Father,—of Him you cannot be bereft. You have death to meet to-morrow, it may be, still, tremble not at the prospect, for death is yours. Your Father has conveyed it to you in love, as a portion of the inheritance. Alas, you have yourselves to mourn over, and that is the worst part of your disconsolation, the sorest of your troubles. A weak heart, a bounding temptations, negligence and imperfection,—in devotion and duty weep over these. There is no other grief so worthy of your tears. But never forget that great and many as may be your defects, still you are the sons of God. And your Father will not leave you a prey to sin, He will not suffer you to be caught in the snares of Satan. Be humble, abase yourselves down to the very dust, for we all think too proudly of ourselves. But let God, our Father, be exalted by our humiliation, and let us trust him the more, because we distrust ourselves. We must either go softly and meekly always, or troubled and mourning often; for if we will forget and exalt ourselves, fall we must, and falls always infer hurt and suffering. Still, as sons of God, He will help us to rise again, and set us once more on the right path. His paternal solicitude will either defend us from danger, or extricate us from its consequences. The Lord Almighty is our strength, we will trust and not be afraid. Who shall separate us from the love of God? I am persuaded, says the great Apostle in answer to such a question, and his persuasions were indubitable verities—I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

But still further, now are ye the sons of God, and this relationship implies the nearest and most confidential intimacy. Moses, verily, says Paul, was faithful in all his house, as a *servant*, but Christ, as a *son* over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end. The servant must execute his Master's pleasure, but the son is partaker of His Father's counsels. Accordingly, Our Lord himself says: Henceforth, I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what His Lord doeth, but I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of My Father,

I have made known unto you. Observe then, the order of this mutual confidence: the family of Our Great Father. Christ, Son, by right of birth, and to you who are adoption, Sons, also, He makes known Father's will. Thus it is, that the secret the Lord is with them that fear Him, and will manifest His covenant unto them. You will not from all this, conclude that mysteries of the unseen world are to be open to you to your inspection, by vision or revelation. Your time for that high privilege has not yet come, for you are still far from your Father's hearth, nor have commenced that education in holiness, which must prepare you for an immediate intercourse with the Divine Majesty. These trembling hearts of yours would shrink back from the audibility of a voice, which is as the voice of a multitude of waters, and from the glories of the personal presence, which is infinitely more resplendent than that seen in His brightness. But Ye Almighty Father has already opened up and communicated His mind to His children, in His Word. That contains His secret, and unfolds His covenant, which He has taught you to know. And, no doubt, there is a mystery here too. For this is an open secret, men may read it; why, then, speak of it as a special display of confidence and fatherly affection towards you? Yes, blessed be God, the Bible, like the world, for whose enlightenment it was given, is an open secret. There is no cloud of obscurity spread enveloping over these pages which unfold the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. Revelation is there, to be seen and read of all men, but is it so seen and read, or when inspected, is it understood? Alas, over how many hearts is there not still a veil, untaken away, in the reading of the Gospel, as well as of the Law. This is the veil of prejudice and perverted affection, by which men's eyes are hindered that they cannot see the truth in its beauty. Accordingly, a further manifestation is requisite, and to you, the Sons of God is it given. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, says Our Lord, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. You still apprehend a difficulty, and so did some of the disciples. For Judas, not Iscariot, inquired, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world? His eyes, too, were still hidden. But Jesus answered, if a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. And the Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Such then, is Our Lord's own account of those paternal confidences towards you, His sons, by which you become partakers of His