

paradise; passing from praying to Christ on the cross to praising Him on the throne. He was with Jesus on the cross in shame and suffering, but ere the sun of that day did set he was with Jesus amidst the glories of the Father's house; and how loud would he sing "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood!" "In paradise." Sufficient to say that this is the place where Jesus dwells, where the angels and the redeemed dwell together, where pure and satisfying rest remaineth for the people of God, and where unmingled joy and eternal bliss shall be given them as their portion. Oh! (says one) to be like the malefactor, saved by grace, and with him at last in the paradise above, adoring our one blessed Saviour and singing the songs of His love forever and ever! Friend, raise your cry to the Saviour and keep your eye upon Him and all shall be well.

Now we pass in conclusion to consider a few practical lessons this subject brings before us.

(1.) Notice here the free exercise of the sovereign grace of God. There are two malefactors, the one is taken and saved, the other is left. Again and again we are brought face to face with this doctrine in the Word of God. In Matthew we read: "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left." This doctrine is indeed as solemn as it is true, but let us not forget in connection with it, to settle another question namely, which of the robbers was taken and saved, and which was left and lost? The penitent, praying one, was taken; the rejecting scorner was left. God is sovereign. He is also gracious; and as such, His words to every sinner are, "Turn ye, turn ye for why will ye die." "Look unto Me and be ye saved." "Come unto me and I will give you rest." God lays the duty on our shoulders, and every time we endeavour to make light of it or to dispose of it, we but make stronger the chains that bind us to eternal damnation.