

he had been stating. This exhortation is given in the next verses which have been injudiciously separated from the third chapter, but which, obviously, are most intimately related to those which immediately precede them.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, &c. We have here an evident allusion to those sufferings of Christ, of which he had been speaking. And those, we saw, were not the sufferings which he endured as an atonement in our stead, but those which he endured as a martyr, and as our example. And as “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Tim. 3, 12; he calls on them to arm themselves with the same mind, which empowered Jesus to endure “The contradiction of sinners against himself,” and to come off more than conqueror. Arm yourselves with the same spirit of religious liberty that does not choose in matters of conscience to be “the servants of men;” with a heroic courage that will refuse to yield to the lusts of fellow-men, that allegiance that is due only to the will of God; with that enduring firmness that will not shrink from the vengeance of those who would enforce dominion over our faith and conscience, by punishing our bodies.

“For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” Observing the connection of thought, we at once understand the reference to be not to mere common afflictions, but to the persecutions of christians as such. It is only the man who can endure these rather than sin, that can cease from sin. The man that can suffer all things, lest he should hinder the Gospel of Christ; that can “resist even unto blood-striving against sin,” can cease from sin. And such is the only one that can do so, in such a world as our’s. Armed with the mind with which Jesus passed through sufferings, a renewed man can cease to sin. And with this heroic decision even a renewed man must be armed in order that he may be able to cease from sin.

“That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” He cannot live to both at the same time, for God and the world severally claim the undivided heart, and the undiminished service. To choose to work the will of the Gentiles would be to “walk in the lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquettings, and abominable idolatries.” And surely “the time past should more than suffice” “to mistake licentious indulgence for true happiness, and abominable idolatries, for true religion,” and to submit to the dictation of those infatuated men who think it strange that you do not run with them, “to the same excess of riot, speaking speaking evil of you.” Besides to work the will of the Gentiles would