

and conquered. To be saved was the chief object that engaged his thoughts, and to the attainment of that object all the energies of his converted and sanctified life were faithfully devoted. He perceived his danger, saw his duty, knew his work, and gave himself to the faithful performance of it, in the spirit of one who seemed to be pursued by the avenger of blood. He knew that the law could not justify, for no one is able to keep it perfectly. He experienced the killing power of "the letter," but was not a stranger to the life producing energy of "the Spirit." He felt that religion was no vain superstition, no cunning device of man, but a heavenly reality; and he was deeply impressed with the conviction that salvation possessed an individual character, which made it every man's business, that it was what every man needed, that, in short, without which no man could be happy. Though his enlightened and sanctified conscience told, nay, well assured the great apostle, that he was a true child of God, "an Israelite indeed," and was "accepted in the beloved," yet he fully felt the force of the words "Be ye saved." This was Paul's work, a work that always, and under all circumstances, engaged his wakeful attention, a work that called forth all his powers, a work which he found to require meditation, watchfulness, prayer, faith, self-denial, humility, meekness, and earnest zeal. We, too, ought to regard this work in the same light, and go about it in the same spirit. However lightly we see others treat it, we ought to feel that it very deeply concerns ourselves. We ought to make it our peculiar work, a work which demands from us and from all a special regard and interest. We ought to attend to it with an earnestness which will clearly show that we understand its true nature, and vast importance, and that we feel the necessity of performing it aright. It will not answer our purpose to say that we cannot do it. It is utter folly, it is even a monstrous sin, to plead as a justification for neglecting it, a want of ability or of opportunity, or the combination of adverse circumstances. Such foolish excuses are very common, but they are ill-founded; and they afford but a most miserable refuge to those who knowingly desert their religious duties. We are sinful dust and ashes, we confess; but even this very humiliating fact ought not to prevent us from trying to do what God commands us to do, and in the doing of which we may firmly rely on His faithful

promises. It is He who, as God our Saviour, says "Be ye saved." These are indeed the solemn and soul stirring words in which the chief business of our life on earth is set before us. We cannot say that we are not the individuals to whom they apply. Others have heard them and obeyed them, and have received their rewards. In all ages of the Church, even from the acceptable sacrifice of Abel, down to the last soul that has been converted to the Lord Jesus, this same work to which we are now called by no less an authority than the Ruler of the universe Himself, has been done by God's people. Let us then remember that in doing this great work, "we are compassed about by a" glorious "cloud of witnesses:" and even these noble witnesses were "men of like passions" with ourselves. The example of Prophets and Apostles, of Old and New Testament worthies, of godly men and women, who have through faith inherited the promises, and entered into the rest that remaineth to the people of God, appeals to us in no feeble tone, and gives forth no uncertain sound. Difficulties not less and not fewer than those which impede us, surrounded the ancient pilgrims of the true faith, yet those faithful ones did not forsake their work, merely because it was encompassed by obstacles to remove which required more than human power. He who had called them to the work enabled them to do it. Let us also remember that God does not ask us to attempt an impossibility. He not only "made known his ways unto Moses," but likewise "His acts unto the children of Israel." God does not confine His grace to one generation or to one class, or limit it to individuals. The same divine Spirit changed the heart, enlightened the mind, sanctified the life, and saved the soul, under both dispensations, the Old and the New. The Spirit that triumphed on the sunny peaks of Carmel, and in the splendid palace of Darius the Mede, that quenched the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar and converted the men of Nineveh, will enable us also to deny ourselves all ungodly lusts, crucify the flesh, overcome the world, and lay hold on eternal life. No one can fail in the work of salvation who is led by the same Spirit. God has not left us in doubt, darkness, or uncertainty, as to our duty in reference to the salvation of our souls. And surely, with the light which He has been pleased to give us in this respect, we are not so ignorant of the plan of salvation as not to