

ourselves to Jesus, we may rest assured He will keep us in a way consistent with *his* nature and *our* nature, and finally will crown us with immortal glory at the last great day.

The subject of the text, as thus explained, is simply this:—Christian assurance, founded on a knowledge of Christ.

This is not a picture drawn by a poet's fancy, or the dreaming impressions of an enthusiast, or the wild ravings of a fanatic, but the teaching of sound reason,—the language of truth and soberness,—for Christian assurance rests on a solid, immovable foundation, viz.: a personal and experimental knowledge of Christ, who and what He is. "I know *whom* I have believed."

The believer's knowledge of Christ is derived from three great sources:—the Word of God, the experience of others, and his own experience; and from these sources he learns who the Redeemer is, what he has promised, and what he has done as pledges that all his promises will be fulfilled.

Such was Paul's knowledge of Christ, that he felt certain Christ was both *able* and *willing* to preserve safe unto the day of his second coming that which was entrusted to his care. In what did Paul's idea of the *ability* of the Saviour consist? I answer, in a word, in the *Divinity* of the Saviour. He had no doubt in regard to this fundamental doctrine of the Bible. He was very far from committing his immortal interests to a mere man,—however great and good that man might be,—for he knew that his Saviour must be divine, or he could be no Saviour at all. When he committed his soul to Christ, he knew that his soul was safe, because he knew that Christ was the true God, and God over all blessed forever. Not only did he learn this from the teachings of the Old Testament, and from the testimony of the other apostles and disciples, but more especially from his experience of the Divinity of Christ in his own soul. When he was on his murderous errand to Damascus, and was struck down to the earth by a ray of the transcendent glory of Christ,—when he heard the authoritative voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and tremblingly exclaimed, "who art thou, Lord?" and the voice replied, "I am Jesus of Nazareth

whom thou persecutest!"—when his whole nature was changed, the aim and purpose of his life completely reversed,—when the fierce, proud persecutor became the gentle, humble, devoted, self-sacrificing disciple and apostle, how could he *doubt* that he who had wrought this great change in him was *divine*,—was the Christ, the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke. And did he not, in this wonderful event, gain by experience a knowledge also of Christ's *willingness* to save him? What claim had he on Christ? What was there in him to win the Saviour's love, or merit his approbation? Was he not in arms against Him, doing all in his power to arrest the progress of his religion, bringing to prison and death his disciples? Was he not a fierce, terrible persecutor of the Lord Jesus? And yet Jesus met him in the midst of his sin and rebellion, suffered the beams of his countenance to irradiate his soul, threw around him the arms of his love, and by the blazing light of that love *burned up* the fiercer hate of his wicked heart, and kindled in its stead a flame of love and holiness like his own.

Surely in this one event of his life, Paul by *experience*, obtained such a knowledge of Christ's *character*, as to render it most reasonable for him to feel confident that whatever he had committed or should commit into Christ's hands, was *safe*.

Paul knew also what Christ had *promised*: "I give to all my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand. He that believeth on me shall never perish, but I will raise him up at the last day. Where I am, there shall also my servant be. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. In my Father's house are many mansions,—I go to prepare a place for you. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." These are a *few* of the many precious promises of Him who is "the Amen, the faithful and true witness;" and are they not sufficient to engender hope and confidence in the Christian's soul with regard to the future?

Paul knew what Christ had *promised*, and it made him confident that what he had committed to Christ was *safe*.

Paul knew also what Christ *had done*