

sities of the soul. There is nothing above it, there is nothing before it. It is the essential, it is the all in all. Give me this, and I am born and renewed. Withhold it, and though I have all things else, I must perish day by day. Give me this, and I ask for no stronger reliance. Withhold it, and I lean upon a broken staff. All the ritualistic appeals of Scripture, all the lofty imagery that inspires the emotions, that makes glad the affections, all converge to illustrate, to dramatize, and to enforce this. So Christ upon the cross addresses us now. He symbolizes in himself the great mercy-seat of God, sprinkled with His own innocent blood, indicating the unwearied devotedness of the Father. What a lesson, for man to ponder in his cowardly malice, his fretting forbearance, his perpetuated hates! Nothing can restore the world to its preordained beauty and dignity, but the personal indwelling of the Divine Spirit. Men, scrambling for wealth as though a golden sepulchre were the brightest vestibule to the courts of God; men, sporting with the frivolities, trifling amid the most sacred purposes of life, as though this were the true path to enjoyment, do but wander each hour from the real dignity and beauty of their birth. There is a sacred elevation of spirit, the prerogative of every affectionate soul, attainable only by the most strenuous exertions for the nurture of the highest instincts of our nature; an elevation, which the worldly and unpardoned soul, can, even in its best moods, but dimly see; and which the poor, indolent Christian, can but feebly experience. We have earthly men, who turn their backs upon the cross; but we have, also, sluggish and poverty-stricken Christians, whose faces are languidly set towards Calvary, revealing but little of the energy,