

so holy a solemnity. If the men of the world would do this, that they may, by possibility, obtain a corruptible crown, oh how much more should we keep under the body and bring it into subjection, that we may not risk our glorious and incorruptible prize.

But dear friends, let us not be content with preparation, with that which the hypocrite can emulate, a mere outward work ; let us see to it that our fasting springs from hatred of sin and love for Jesus, that our single object is to weaken our carnal nature, and break (in the strength of God) the chain of our lusts. What shall our fasting avail, if there be no true conviction of sin? What shall our fasting avail, if there be not the entire renunciation of sin and the turning of the heart to God with mourning, prayer and inward self-abasement and humiliation? What shall our fasting avail, if we apply not to the blood of sprinkling, that we may be cleansed from our iniquities? We may abstain to starvation, but if we seek not that renewal of heart and mind which is the work of the Spirit of God, we shall only increase the burden that is sinking us into condemnation. We may fast till nature is exhausted, but if we plead not for pardon, through the blood-bought merits of the Redeemer, without thought of any other merit, everlasting destruction will be our answer.

O dear friends, fasting as well as every other duty, is only valuable if it helps us to fasten upon Christ. If it nourish in us self-trust, if it lift the heart in pride, it becomes a curse. It is only a blessing, as it cherishes humility and godly fear.

Let this "Lent" then be a season for the outpouring of the soul in prayer before God. Let it be a season for more of secret and intimate communion with our own souls and with our Heavenly Father. Let us watch ourselves more closely and note our besetting sins, and with deep self-loathing seek the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit ; let us cry mightily for strong consolation in looking to the sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, for grace to realize Christ wounded for our transgressions, Christ bruised for our iniquities ; upon Him the chastisement of our peace. His stripes our healing. His death our salvation. His exaltation our hope. Then we shall perceive that the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all, and that every one who believeth hath everlasting life.

W. B. MONTREAL.

No grief was like that which He grieved for me,
 A greater grief than can be told :
 And like my grief for Him, no grief should be,
 If I could grieve so as I would ;
 But what I would, and cannot, He doth see,
 And will accept, that died for me.

GEORGE HERBERT.

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