

throughout eternity in the inheritance which Christ gives to his faithful servants. But if on the other hand you feel that you are not your own, but his who bought you with his blood, and that he has the most sacred claim that you advance his work as you have opportunity and ability; and if from his own declaration you see that what you thus do he is pleased to consider as done to himself, and to reckon it for your future benefit, what a change would this produce in all your calculations! Instead of regulating them, as if your own interests were entirely distinct from the interests of Christ, and as if what you gave for his cause deducted so much from what you possess and was thus lost to you, you would feel that what you have is his gift, and that he has never relinquished his interest in it, so that you ought as faithful stewards to return to him as he requires, instead of thinking that your spare time and fractional droppings were enough for his service, you would feel that he, who gave you all that you possess, and gave himself for your salvation, has a claim the most sacred, that you serve him with the best of all that is under your control, and to the full extent of your ability. You would thus learn to identify your own interests with the interests of Christ, and, instead of engaging in his work with reluctance, you would rejoice in every opportunity afforded of doing what you can for his sake, and with David would feel grateful that God by his grace has inclined your heart, thus cheerfully to engage in his service.

By thus attending to the mind of God as made known in his word; by reflecting much on the love revealed through Christ; and by balancing time with eternity; and all in relation to this work, would you not be solemnized by the consideration of the sacredness of the claim, and the imperative-ness of the duty? Would you not be urged to earnestness in prayer for the Holy

Spirit to remove what darkness may obscure your perceptions of the importance of this duty, and to expand your heart with the love of Christ, that you may know what it is to be willing to serve him, and cordially respond to all his calls as ability permits. These means persevered in, with the desire to be conformed to the mind of Christ in all things, would be found happy instruments for advancing you in the love of Christ, and in obedience to his will. While you increased in the other attainments of the Christian character you would abound, in this grace also.

The subject which we have thus endeavoured to illustrate is of the utmost importance, not merely from the benefits which this grace brings to the objects of its exercise, but from its connection with the present comfort and final salvation of those who practise it. The connection, however, we must remark, is not one of merit and reward, as if by your benefactions you could merit the blessings promised; but your benefactions *may* be symptomatic of the state of your heart in relation to him, who has given you all that you have, and procured for you blessings infinitely more valuable than all that pertains to time. To withhold more than is meet is a sure indication either that the mind is not sufficiently enlightened respecting the duty, or that the heart is more strongly attached to the world than to him who died for us. And all who understand the claims of God that we give him the heart, must see that in this state there cannot be experienced the enjoyment of his service—there can be no progress towards the stature of the perfect man. There may be success in the world, but there cannot be spiritual prosperity. “He that soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall also reap bountifully.” Spiritual progress and spiritual enjoyment are thus dependent, by divine appointment, on the