

that God requires and expects his covenanted people to inquire. It is true that saints do not make the same inquiry that sinners do. The latter ask what they must do to be saved, whereas the inquiry of Christians is, "Wilt thou not revive us again?" It is a blessed state of things when the people of God are inquiring. It is good for themselves, and it has a most benign influence on others. When the people of God inquire, presently the impenitent begin to inquire. That question, "Wilt thou not revive us?" is soon followed by the other, "What must I do to be saved?" Yes, when saints become anxious, it is not long ere sinners become anxious. The inquiry of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" was preceded by the inquiry of the one hundred and twenty, who "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Generally, I suppose, that is the order. First, saints inquire, and then sinners. And whenever, in any congregation, religion does not flourish, one principal reason of it is that the saints are not inquiring. They do not attend their inquiry meeting appointed for them. The saints' inquiry meeting is the prayer meeting. In that, Christians meet together to inquire of the Lord "to do it for them," that is, to fulfil the promise about the new heart and the new spirit, of which he had been speaking. Now, when this meeting is crowded and interesting—when the inquiry among Christians is general, and earnest, and importunate, the sinners' inquiry meeting usually becomes crowded and interesting.

O that I could make my voice to be heard by all the dear people of God in the land on the subject. I would say, "You wonder and lament that sinners do not inquire. But, are you inquiring? You wonder that they do not feel. But do you feel? Can you expect a heart of stone to feel, when a heart of flesh does not? You are surprised that sinners can sleep. It is because you sleep along side of them. Do you but awake, and bestir yourselves, and look up and cry to God, and you will see how soon they will begin to be roused, and to look about them, and to ask the meaning of your solicitude." O that the saints would but inquire! That is what I want to see.—*Nevins*.

CHRISTIAN KINDNESS.

God glories in the appellation, that he is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, and therefore to minister in the office is to become like God, and to imitate the charities of heaven; and God hath fitted mankind for it; he most needs it, and he feels his brother's wants by his own experience; and God hath given us speech and the endearments of society, and pleasantness of conversation, and powers of seasonable discourse, arguments to allay the sorrow, by abating our apprehensions, and taking out the sting, or telling the periods of comfort, or exciting hope, or urging a precept, and reconciling our affections, and reciting promises, or telling stories of the divine mercy, or changing it into duty, or making the burden less by comparing it with greater, or by proving it to be less than we deserve, and that it is so intended, and may become the instrument of virtue. And certain it is, that as nothing can better do it, so there is nothing

greater, for which God made our tongues, next to reciting his praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have, than that we should bring joy to our brother, who with his dreary eyes looks to heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids close together, than that my tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease; and when he perceives that there is such a thing in the world, and in the order of things, as comfort and joy, to begin to break out from the prison of his sorrows at the door of sighs and tears, and by little and little melt into showers and refreshment? This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel.

But so have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance a while in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer. So is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fetters and chains of sorrow, he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted; and God is pleased with no music from below, so much as in the thanksgiving songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons.—*Jeremy Taylor*.

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

We never, in the whole course of our recollections, met with a Christian friend, who bore upon his character every other evidence of the Spirit's operation, who did not remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. We appeal to the memories of all the worthies who are lying in their graves, that, eminent as they were in every other grace and accomplishment of the new creature, the religiousness of their Sabbath day shone with equal lustre, amid the fine assemblage of virtues which adorned them. In every Christian household it will be found, that the discipline of a well-ordered Sabbath is never forgotten among the old lessons of a Christian education; and we appeal to every individual who now hears us, and who carries the remembrance in his bosom of a father's worth and a father's piety, if, on the coming round of the seventh day, an air of peculiar sacredness did not spread itself over that mansion where he drew his first breath, and was taught to repeat his infant hymn and hush his infant prayer. Rest assured, that the Christian, having the love of God written in his heart, and denying the Sabbath a place in his affections, is an anomaly that is nowhere to be found. Every Sabbath image with every Sabbath circumstance is dear to him. He loves the quietness of that hallowed morn. He loves the church-bell sound which summons him to the house of prayer. He loves to join the chorus of devotion, and to sit and listen to that voice of persuasion which is lifted in the hearing of an assembled multitude.