

is the fruit of divine power. But meanwhile death itself is always deliverance, because, having a new life, it is our being disencumbered from the old man which hinders and hems our way. It is our being with Christ. How sweet and refreshing is the thought ! When once we have seized the difference of the old and new man, the reality of the new life we have received in Christ, the death of the old will be known and felt to be true and real gain. No doubt, God's time is best, because He alone knows what is needed in the way of discipline and exercise to form our souls for Himself, and He may preserve us to know the power of this life in Christ, so that mortality should be swallowed up without our dying.

But if death is the ceasing of the old man, it is but the ceasing of sin, hindrance, trouble. We have done with the old man, in which we were guilty before God—righteously done with it, because Christ has died for us—for ever done with it, because we live in the power of the new. Such is death to the believer. "To depart and to be with Christ is far better" (Phil. i. 23). As judgment, Christ has taken it ; as to the power of sin, it is the death of the very nature it lives in. As actual mortality, it is deliverance from it to be with Christ in the new man which enjoys Him. Who, as to the proper gain of it, would not die ?

If we live to serve Christ, the sorrow of this world is worth while ; but it is not the less sorrow in itself, whatever blessing may cheer us through