

take up our cross. Let us receive the Lord's words—if we wish to go after Him, we must follow Him, and, if we follow Him, we shall find upon the road that which He found. Of course it is not a question of expiatory sufferings—of that which He suffered from God's hand for sin—but of His sufferings from man, the contradiction of sinners, the opposition of men, abuse, and even death. We know but little what it is to suffer for the name of Jesus; but remember, Christians, that which the Lord says first, "Let him deny himself;" you can always do this by grace. It is by doing this that we learn to suffer with Him, if God should call us to it. And what shall we give in exchange for our soul? . . . . Man's heart, alienated from God, tries to make the earth, where he was set at a distance from God, as pleasing to himself as possible; and in order to accomplish this, he uses God's gifts and creatures to be able to do without Him. It is said that there is no harm in these things; it is said that there will be music in heaven also, but in heaven it will not be employed in order to divert the mind without God. It is a question of the use we make of these things. For instance, there is no harm in strength, but in the manner of employing it: with it one does harm to one's neighbour. Is it not true that the world, which knows not God, uses all kinds of pleasures to enjoy itself without Him? . . . .

For the Christian, too, amusements only lead him away to a distance from God, and destroy his communion with Him. All that is in the world, the