

Let it be remembered that this glorious state is influenced by the transactions of earth. There is a bearing which the present has on a future reward. "That they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Their works are not represented as going before them, nor can they form an introduction for them to the Father of mercies. They never build a way on which the soul may travel up to heaven. Works do not constitute the ground of acceptance with God, but are the proofs of love—evidences of a heart grateful for the rich depths of love divine. The Redeemer's worth alone opens the heaven's gates. Salvation is due to the Lamb. If we would ever enter heaven, it must be by grace; but there is a place which the doctrine of good works occupies. The rewards of heaven shall doubtless be in proportion to the fulness of service, the devotedness of heart and life and all, to him that hath redeemed us with his blood. Faithfulness to Christ will not be forgotten; the "well done good and faithful servant," shall greet the ear and fire the heart. "Their works do follow them." He that winneth souls is wise, and they that are wise and turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars in the firmament of glory. In whatever sphere the follower of the Lamb moved while here below, if there faithfully at his post he fought the battles of the Lord, and toiled on to build up the Lord's house, the reward of work shall be enjoyed, and the struggle shall end in wearing a crown. Happy is that servant that watcheth and worketh; work for Christ is honorable, and shall meet a full, a large reward; it shall not be forgotten, for even a cup of cold water only given to a disciple, shall in no case lose its reward.

In working for Christ, the heart must belong to Christ. Work, however religious it may appear, is not approved of till the arm that works is warmed by a heart that beats with love to Jesus. The whole of our labors, presented as an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, are received, when by the hand of faith we bring a heart washed from sin in the Redeemer's blood. The Lord is our righteousness, and what we bring is as a drink offering of thanks to his name.

There are those who have no works of the right sort to follow them, their deeds are deeds of darkness; sin has been followed through life, then shall their sins not follow them after death? Can they effect a separation of their souls from their works? Sins follow the soul into eternity, and can only secure a frown from the God of light. The followers of iniquity shall be followed by iniquities to the bar of God. How dreadful to die with the whole weight of sin on the soul. Past transgressions rise in dread array, they cry for judgment, their voice cannot be hushed, they follow to the righteous tribunal and secure condemnation. Forsake then, sin, lest it follow you in sad consequences to all eternity. Turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon you. Some refuse to class themselves with workers of iniquity, but who, nevertheless, cannot be viewed as prepared to die. They stand all the day idle, heedless about the gospel, careless about their souls. Remember, that not to do, is to bring condemnation: inasmuch as ye did it not. Awake then, arouse thee to action, flee to the cross, work while it is called to-day, the night cometh when no man can work.

Let bereaved friends take comfort from the text, when they have evidence that those from whom they are severed rested on Jesus. Hear the voice that would urge you to make sure of eternal glory. Follow those who have fallen asleep in Christ.

"Then haste, oh haste, to the prize press on,
Follow the path where they have gone,
On to the river though tempests rave,
Strength shall be given to breast its wave,
On! to the city, with golden gate,
Till "the door is shut," ye are not too late.
On! to the throne where the Crucified
Hath a place for each at his pierced side;
On where your loved ones have sped before,
Where the arrow that severed, shall strike no more."