

verted, and as it is indispensable to the former, that the church be healthy and vigorous, I would humbly offer a few observations in the department of edification. The subject to which I would at this time invite the attention of your readers, is that of ADOPTION.

Man in his primitive state was not the subject of adoption. The result of the creative energy of Omnipotence, he stood forth in natural simplicity and beauty, a child of God, Gen. i. 31, Eccles. iii. 29, Mal. ii. 10, Luke iii. 38. While in this state, he seems to have enjoyed the fullest measure of felicity; loving God and loved by him; at peace with God, himself and the whole creation, having no wish ungratified, made only a little lower than the angels—crowned with glory and honor, and set over the work of God on earth. Can we imagine anything that could enhance his bliss? But alas! "man being created in honor, continued not." And as it is a truth of universal application, that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God;" so if our primitive parents had continued under the guidance of that Spirit which at the first quickened them, they would have continued the children of God. Satan assailed our mother Eve on a most vulnerable point. He presented the acquisition of knowledge, and consequent elevation of character, as the alluring object; "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," said the tempter. Now to make progress in knowledge was highly necessary for man, even in his first estate: witness the lesson given Gen. i. 28, to the end. The sin of our parents consisted in believing, and acting upon testimony, in direct contradiction to the word of Jehovah.

And so sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Man became alien from the life of God—dead in trespasses and sins—all corrupted their way. The earth was filled with violence through them. So spiritual darkness and death enveloped our fair world; for man, the natural lord of it, and repository of the will of God on earth, had become an alien, and an outcast from the family of God, and but for his mercy must have sunk down to swell the number of the tenants of that place prepared for the devil and his angels.

Darkness and death have a very close affinity; the former is directly and immediately induced by the latter; it is its inseparable and necessary concomitant; and hence the Spirit of God has used these terms as figures, to indicate to us the deplorable nature of that state into which man fell through sin. To be alien from the life of God is equivalent to being outcast from his family. All who serve him not "are of their father the devil;" and "do the deeds of their father," as Jesus told the Jews, and Paul told the Romans that he "had proved both Jews and Gentiles all under sin—none righteous, not one."

But thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift of love and mercy,—the life has been manifested—the light has shone in darkness. It was necessary in the wisdom of God in his plan for the restoration of fallen man that his Son should be the "light of the world." That he, the "true light"—the Sun of Righteousness, should arise and shine upon those who sat in the region and shadow of darkness and death, that all men through him might believe, and believing have