

nal garb of morality or religion,) continuing in effect to hate the ways and the presence of him in whose favour alone is life and peace, they must finally have sunk down into the awful place whence his blissful presence shall be forever withdrawn, and where the fire of eternal wrath shall dry up every fountain of joy.

But the Gospel of Jesus Christ is well described in his word, as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" (1) and this Gospel it was which aroused them from their slumber. It had long been neglected; or perused, either with a careless and listless inattention, or with utter ignorance of its spiritual import. But now its truths came "as arrows of the Almighty;" now its declarations shone forth as traced in characters of celestial brightness; the condemning law of God uttered its denunciations as with the trump of an archangel; and how should those who heard the accents of Eternal Truth pronouncing that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" (2) that "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" (3)—how should they any longer cherish the delusive hope that any goodness or righteousness subsisted in them? or, how should those whose ears were opened to the divine denunciation, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," (4) and "cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them," (5) fail to perceive that the most entire corruption and inability or settled indisposition to do good, is accompanied with an awful sentence of just and eternal indignation?

Thus far, then, was the Word of Truth already experienced to be the power of God, producing a thorough conviction of sin, in its condemning and its polluting character, and tearing away that cloak of self righteousness which cleaves so closely to the human mind, unawakened by the Spirit of God.

A ruinous and wide spreading error on this subject is abroad in the world, coeval with the fall of Adam, and deeply rooted in the heart of every natural man; until taught by the Spirit of Truth, he will not admit his utter helplessness and depravity; but the Gospel is addressed to none other than the depraved and helpless, Jesus Christ came "to seek and to save that which was lost;" (6)

(1) Rom. i. 16.

(2) Jer. xvii. 9.

(3) Rom. viii. 7.

(4) Ezek. xviii. 20.

(5) Gal. iii. 10.

(6) Luke xix. 10.