

nal understanding first attained, and thereafter the body of a right conduct added. When the least faint glimmer of the gospel begins to shine in the understanding, it forthwith impels the man towards a righteous course. The impulse is feeble and the effort infantile, but both the knowledge and the obedience have begun. That infantile effort to turn from evil permitted some more light to enter the mind, and in the increased light the man made another step of progress in the path of righteousness. Both, and both together, emerge in embryo under the great Creator's hand, and both grow together up to the stature of a perfect man in Christ,— a man who knows God's will and therefore does it, does it and therefore knows it.

To open their eyes, although a figurative expression here, scarcely requires any exposition. It is that aspect of the Spirit's regenerating work which concerns the knowing of saving truth. It is the work of regeneration as it affects the understanding: it is that unction of the Holy One which enables the renewed to know all things that God has revealed for His own glory and men's good. The practical turning on the other hand, being perhaps more difficult of comprehension, is here more fully expressed. There is only one turning, but you turn *from* two things and *toward* two things. At least two expressions are employed to indicate what you turn from, and as many to indicate what you turn to:

*From* Darkness and the power of Satan: *to* Light and God.

The things on this side seem two, and the things on that side seem two: yet on either side there is substantially only one. God and Light do not here represent separate and different objects, for God is Light. Darkness and the power of Satan do not here represent separate and different objects, for the power of Satan is darkness.

According to the word of Christ, the Master, the foremost part of the servant's work is to turn men from darkness and the power of Satan. When the Saviour's word goes forth upon the world, it finds every man standing with his face to darkness and his back to light; therefore the true foundation of all preaching is *turn*. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" was the key-note of Old Testament preaching, and "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," was the harbinger of the gospel in the fulness of time.

Observe how and where we obtain the information that we are all at first in sin and under condemnation. It is not announced by an angry judge, we gather it from the breathings of a compassionate Redeemer. It is a friend who tells us the terrible truth that we are lost in our own sin, we should therefore all the more willingly take it in and take it home. He who tells us knows all the case. He knows what is in man to deserve the sentence, and what is in God to inflict it. "Hear ye Him"

Suppose two prisoners—such as the baker and the baker of Pharaoh in Joseph's time—have both forgotten their sorrows and dangers in a long, deep, sweet sleep. They are both, and both alike, for the time, as unconscious of danger, as free from fear, as if they had never been de-

prived of liberty. For the moment neither captive knows or feels that he is in prison. But both will discover it soon. When they awake, they will know it all. Now suppose that two messengers from the king are sent simultaneously to these two men in their separate cells, bearing to each his sovereign's final decree, and that the messengers bearing those decrees find the prisoners asleep, and awake them. Both the one and the other are by the call of a royal messenger awakened to the conviction and consciousness that they are surrounded by strong prison walls and kept in by iron bars. Both make the same discovery as to their present personal condition. But the sound which reveals to this sleeper his captivity is his own death-warrant, the sound which reveals to that sleeper his captivity is the invitation to instant escape by the messenger of the king. Both learn that they are in prison, the one by being shut up to doom, the other by being led into liberty.

See from that case how good it is to learn even a terrible truth, if we learn it in a day of mercy, and from a Saviour's voice. It should be sweet even to learn how low and dark a dungeon we lie in, when we learn the fact from Christ's command to come out of it into glorious liberty. It is by the invitation to safety that we discover our danger. Prisoners of hope are we: the messenger who bears the King's free pardon opens the gates and bids us flee.

Suppose a captive in an inner prison with many successive circles of strong walls around him, and suppose further that he has never been led or carried through these outer gates, but has been born and reared within the fastness. If he is led out at last into liberty, he will discover the number of the retaining walls and the thickness of each. The discovery will be pleasant, although it is the discovery of the strength of his prison, when his escape first reveals the depth of his bondage. Thus the man whom the Son of God makes free, discovers the strength of his prison-house. It is in going out of it that you learn how deep and dark it is.

In the spiritual darkness Satan's power is put forth. That power seeks the darkness, the darkness favours that power. They work to each other's hands. When you turn from the darkness, it is to the light, when you wrench yourselves out of the tempter's power, it is to come to God. Perhaps some are thinking about this grand decisive change. They are afraid of remaining in the darkness, but, alas! they are also afraid to come to the light. They are afraid of being longer in the power of Satan, but there is one thing of which they are still more afraid, and that is to come near to God.

The prodigal was for a long time unhappy after his money was all spent. When the pleasures of sin were exhausted, he endured its miseries many a day, because he dreaded more to be seen at home a beggar, and to meet an angry father's face, than to endure hunger and filth and nakedness in a foreign land. Perhaps some of our readers are in the condition of the prodigal during that interval between the time when he fell into beggary and the time when