

receive the due reward of our deeds." (V. 41.)

3. In his reproving the conduct of the other robber, and his anxiety for his welfare. His remonstrance was addressed to him in the hope that it might restrain him, and lead his old associates in vice to consider.

III. HIS STRONG FAITH.

Had this robber believed at the tomb of Lazarus; when the thousands were miraculously fed; or when the midnight storm was hushed on the lake of Galilee, we might not have wondered; but he exercised a living faith in the Savior at a time when the confidence of the very disciples, who had witnessed all the wonders He had wrought, was completely shaken; when all His followers had forsaken Him and fled; when our Lord was dying the same death with the robber himself—betrayed, deserted, derided. Even here he believed:

1. That Christ had a kingdom.

2. That He would hear requests.

3. That He would grant blessings. All hail, thou dying thief! Does the Bible anywhere furnish a more striking example of wondrous, triumphant faith than thine?

IV. HIS PRAYER.

"Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." We would have restrained this guilty penitent, and told him it was now too late; that he must not intrude on Christ in His sufferings; and that his day of mercy was past. But he would not be restrained. If he must perish, he is resolved that he will perish pleading for mercy. His prayer was:

1. Short; but a single sentence.

2. Humble; he only asked to be remembered.

3. Reliant: Remember all my past bad life, but remember, too, that I am dying trusting in thy grace.

4. Earnest; the petition of an awakened sinner on the brink of eternity.

5. It included all he needed.

V. CHRIST'S ANSWER.

During the mockery and taunting of

the multitude our Lord remained silent. But when one trembling petition reached His ear, He at once turned round His thorn-pierced head and looked upon the petitioner. His great heart melted into tenderness, and for a moment a gleam of joy must have burst upon His spirit in the midst of its awful gloom, as with a word He rolled open the gates of Paradise, saying, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

"Paradise," a word signifying an enclosed garden or park, is found three times in the New Testament: once in our text, once in 2 Cor. xii: 3, as the "third heaven," and once in Rev. ii: 7, as being the place in which "the tree of life" grows. From the last chapter in Revelation we learn that the tree of life is where the throne of God and of the Lamb is, where His servants serve Him, where they need no candle, etc. That is to say, the word "Paradise" is used in the New Testament as a synonym for "Heaven." It is with the Savior—"with me." Jesus says, "To-day," etc. Oh! there is a gospel ring about that word. "To-morrow" is always Satan's time; "To-day" is always Christ's. "To-day if ye will hear his voice," etc. Picture the opening and closing scenes of that great day. What a morning, and what an evening! In the morning, Jesus in the earthly Jerusalem, surrounded by a frenzied mob shouting for His blood, condemned, beaten, dragging His cross out through the gates as He goes to die. In the evening, surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of the heavenly hosts, He passes through the gates of the upper Jerusalem, and all the bells of the city are ringing, wild with joy. But He goes not alone: the Lord and the ransomed robber go together.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. If Christ heard prayer when passing through His awful suffering upon the cross, will He not hear, now that He is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior?

2. The conversion of this man shows