

est stages accompanying it. The Gospel of Christ is the crown of civilization—that which magnifies its worth a thousand fold, and qualifies man for living as a man, thinking and acting as a man, and enjoying himself as a man.

The true knowledge of the Gospel of Christ is the key to everything that is both great and good in the world, for by it we learn our duty which we have to perform to God, to our fellow men, and to ourselves. Learn, then, how much of the happiness, the comfort, and the security you enjoy here, the Gospel bestows upon you:—and, were its true spirit and sound teaching more attended to than they are by many, how much better these might be, in a worldly point of view, than they are!

But it would indeed be doing a great injustice to the Gospel, were we to stop here, and not attempt to describe other advantages to man, far more precious and valuable than earthly good, which the Gospel confers upon him, and which nothing in the world but the Gospel of Christ can confer upon him—although enough may have been said for its usefulness to its propagation among the heathen, if even earth were all. Man, however, is possessed with a rational and immortal soul, to the welfare of which he has to attend here, else through sin, both original and actual, it, along with his body, will be most miserable throughout eternity. The justification of God, through the Divine Saviour, has to be secured by men in this life, by their believing in Christ, else no pardon will they get, if they refuse to listen to Him,—a fearful truth which the Gospel reveals,—but to which all men have to attend while the means are in their power, who wish their soul to be safe in the great day of the Lord. On this all-important subject, the sacred oracles of truth are most clear and pointed, and they convey knowledge to the mind of man which baffled the keenest intellects of the ancient heathen world, for many centuries, to find out. The knowledge of the only living and true God was lost to them, through the sin of man, and nothing but a direct revelation from God himself could restore to man what he so much needed to know.

Blessed be God, we, living within the bounds of Christendom, have this in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which serve as our ever faithful finger post, directing us in the way to heaven. While these holy books, then, as we have seen, give us the best advice for conducting ourselves with the greatest propriety here, so that we may make the most of this life—their superior excellence and usefulness consists in their informing us of how we may become blessed and glorious, when this, our present state of existence, shall have come to an end. This was the chief purpose for which they were given us—and this will be the chief use we will make of them, if we be true to ourselves.

They tell us that by nature we are all unrighteous, that we are all sinners before God, that we are also helpless of ourselves to extricate ourselves from the fearful state in which sin has placed us, but they do not thus leave us without hope, and in despair, for they also inform us, that through the rich mercy and grace of God, a fountain has now been opened in the person of Jesus Christ, the ever adorable God-man, in which the most guilty of human sinners may wash by faith, and be clean. “The blood of Christ,” says John, (1st Epistle 1 chap. 7 v.) “cleanseth us from all sin,”—and Paul says, (Rom. 8: 1) “There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.”

Is not this, then, glorious news to be published over the whole earth, so that every human creature may have joy and peace in believing? This is the Gospel of Christ in its purity and essence—this is the truth of God. Every other system or scheme of human redemption in the world—and it is to be deplored that there are many such systems—which is opposed to the scheme contained in the simple words, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,” (Acts 16: 31) is false and pernicious, and will at last be found to be worse than delusive.