

or the whole catalogue of wilful and habitual sinners answer to this question? or what shall we suppose that God will say to them? "Judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard,"—between the equity of my laws, and the impropriety, the folly, the madness of your conduct. "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done to it? wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" What answer can be made to this affectionate expostulation? With real and heartfelt contrition, for their past offences, let them humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, with mourning, fasting, weeping, and lamentation; with a hearty resolution, not to lengthen the catalogue, but to forsake the wickedness that they have committed: and with supplication to the God of all mercy, in the pathetic language of the prophet—"Be not wrath very sore O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever; though we have done wickedly, behold, see, we beseech thee, we are thy people." Thus would they learn "to love him, because he first loved us," and to express their love by keeping his commandments, living like men who do not place their happiness in the fleeting, perishing things of this life, but who "look forward to the coming of our Saviour, that he may not blot their names out of the book of life, but may confess them before his Father and before his Angels." May the name of every individual of the human family be thus written:—From this day then, for the sake of him who died for you, and for the sake of your own immortal souls, begin to lead a Christian life. Remember that "now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation." Ask yourselves the question, has this blessed day dawned on my soul? It is a question too interesting to be carelessly disregarded, or industriously avoided. Do the Holy Scriptures and your own hearts assure you that you may obtain the blessings of redemption, and, were you now leaving the world, could you say with good old Simeon—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Those who wish to die a happy death will be anxiously solicitous to possess themselves of this assurance—an assurance warranted by the gospel, to strengthen our faith, to animate our hopes, and to invigorate our resolution. May God, of his mercy, grant that all to whom the gospel is preached, may so lead their lives on earth that they may walk without fear "through the valley of the shadow of death," through our Lord Jesus Christ."

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