

"Lord, I have sinned, and the dismal sum
 To such a number swells, that should this head,
 These eyes, this sinful trunk, a flood become,
 And melt to tears,—their drops would flow in vain,
 To count my score,—
 Much less to pay;
 But Thou, they say,
 Hast blood in store;
 O let that blood my debt repay."

And did He die for *me*, that I might live? Oh, the riches of grace. My sins, which are many, are all forgiven me. I catch at this hope, this sure hope. I trust upon it the whole weight of my salvation. That text, of which a dying minister said, "I always thought it too common to preach from, is now as the whole Bible to me." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

There are many who lose much time and expend much feeling in lamenting that their spiritual experience corresponds so imperfectly with that of other christians, who have made greater proficiency in the divine life, and had more blessed experience of its enjoyments. They forget that the early faith and feeling which belong to true religion, are to be valued chiefly for their *connections* and *consequences*, uniting the soul to a precious Redeemer, and giving a promise and pledge that by a diligent use of the appointed means, and in dependence on the Holy Spirit, their present feeble faith shall grow stronger and stronger, and their love abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all intelligence—in accuracy of discernment. When "Christian" knew that the city in which he lived was doomed to be destroyed, he acted on his knowledge, crying, what must I do to be saved? He looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because he knew not which way to go. In this perplexity, Evangelist directed him to go to "the wicket gate." But he could not see it. Must he go back, or stand still? "No," said Evangelist, "do you see yonder shining light?" "I think I do," replied the man. "Then keep that light in your eye, and go directly thereto; so shall you see the gate." He took the advice, he entered the gate, and went on his way rejoicing.

In like manner, if you follow the light which you do see, you will soon find the gate which you do not see. Paul's expression, "After ye were illuminated," is not to be confined to the first entrance of divine light into the mind. Spiritual light and spiritual illumination are the same in kind, but they differ in degree. The blind man at Bethsaida saw, on the first touch of the Saviour's hand, but he only saw "men as trees walking" before him, so obscurely and imperfectly as to be hardly able to distinguish them from trees, except by their motion. Then Jesus laid his hands again upon his eyes, and caused him to look up a second time, and his sight was perfectly restored, so that he saw every man and thing about him clearly and distinctly. It becomes us to say from the very first entrance of the feeblest rays of spiritual light, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." It is a change from "darkness to light;" but the first discovery of the glory of God is not in "the face of Jesus Christ," but rather in the face of the law, or of the judgment seat, or of eternity. If, then, you have been but convinced that you are a sinner, cherish the conviction, for it will