

piety deep and ardent. Nothing will supply its place, nothing can make amends for its deficiency—talents cannot, learning cannot. A holy, humble, self-denying, persevering, and active piety is indispensable.

The first step therefore, we take in promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, should be to see that our own hearts are right with God, that we ourselves are subjects of his grace, and that we are walking with God.

This piety, this consecration of ourselves to the service of God, is the religion which is inspired by the cross. "Ye are not your own," it says to us, for "ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and spirit which are his." If we possess the religion of the cross, we shall be holy in heart, we shall hate sin, and it is at the cross we learn the evils of sin, and our obligation to holiness, there we see what sin has done, there we see what Christ has done to put it away. He bore it in his "own body on the tree." And in the contemplation of the cross of Christ our piety will receive new influence and impetus; and while we view this as the procuring medium of all the blessings of salvation, we shall find that its frequent contemplation will have a direct influence on our hearts. Here every Christian grace receives strength and effectiveness. As we meditate upon the glory of Christ, the perfection of his works, the value of his atonement, faith receives a strength that nothing can shake. Here, too, as we enter into a sympathy with our suffering Lord, as we contemplate the agony and death of the Son of God, we see an eternal infamy stamped on sin—it contains all the elements of misery, every feature of deformity, and when it exceeds sinfulness is seen, amid the sweat, the blood, and the death of Christ, there flow the tears of a cordial and unfeigned repentance. Here, too, the desires after holiness gather intensity. Here love, and joy, and hope, humility and praise, all commingle; gratitude awakes, resolution grows strong, a sense of obligation is deepened, and warmed with the religion of the cross, the Christian engages anew to live to him who "died for him." Here, too, we learn the love of God. We were a part of his rebellious subjects, and were under a righteous condemnation, but according to his mercy he saved us by the wonderful expedient, the death of his Son. To reconcile us, to save us from sin, and to bring us into a near and intimate and indissoluble relation to himself, he gave up his well beloved Son to the shameful and painful death of the cross. This was to destroy sin in us, and to save us from its dominion, and by the sanctifying influence of his Spirit on the heart an antagonist influence is raised against the works of the flesh, the natural corruptions of the human soul. Henceforward the unceasing desire should be to "apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ." This was what the piety of the Apostle led him to desire and pursue. From the cross were drawn those overpowering motives to holiness and consecration of himself to Christ. Here he loved to dwell—in it he gloried—by it he was crucified to the world. Under its influence he became a benefactor of his race. His piety, so deep, so active, was shaped by the cross, it was the mould which gave it form; and being moulded and influenced by it, he counted not his life dear to him, so that he might fulfil its ministry and testify to all, the grace it displayed. And this is the piety still needed, that which will give us sympathy with Christ in his sufferings, and conformity to his death. If we expect to be useful in enlarging the borders of Zion, in extending the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, we must walk with God, we must possess a piety elevated and ardent, we must live and walk by faith; the standard of our religion must be the Bible, and then shall we be unmoved by the frowns and unenticed by the vain pleasures of the world.