

It was well known to the saints, who lived prior to the coming of the Redeemer. Moses speaks of it, when he says to the people of Israel, Deut. xxx, 5, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." David refers to it, when he says, the law of the Lord is pure, converting the soul. And Christ, who spoke of it to Nicodemus, expresses his wonder that he should have been ignorant of it, "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?" Paul gives a striking exhibition of the greatness of that power which is given to believers in Christ to become the sons of God, in his epistle to the converts at Ephesus; and it is well that you should look into such living illustrations of the power of the gospel, that so your souls may be charmed out of that satanic delusion that you are, and have been, so immersed in sin, that you cannot be rescued from its dominion. The power and energy of the grace of God was seen in a glorious light in the early ages of the church. The men who had passed their lives in spiritual darkness, the most gloomy and dismal, and whose moral natures were depraved by the indulgence of the vilest desires, became, on a sudden, by receiving the glad tidings of the gospel into their hearts, the holy, the consistent, and the steadfast disciples of the Lord Jesus. We would call upon those persons who imagine that their souls are so immersed in sin, that it is in vain for them to think of turning unto the Lord and receiving mercy at his hand, to look at the condition of the first converts to christianity. They had been immersed in sin as well as you, and they had been as destitute of all power to save themselves, and yet they became all on a sudden remarkable for self-denial, purity, holiness, devotedness to Christ, and unbounded charity to all men. The holy army of martyrs, whose names shall be held in everlasting remembrance, came out from among the blind and the licentious worshippers of the heathen divinities.—Those men, whose simple zeal in the cause of Christ burned with so pure a flame, whose unaffected love to each other formed the whole of the christian society into one happy and peaceful family, and whose heroism in the midst of deaths the most dreadful, excelled all that the most renowned warriors of antiquity had ever exhibited. These men, at once so noble, so meek, and so holy, had been once the devoted worshippers of cruel demons. Paul, addressing his Ephesian converts, speaks of that mighty power by which they had been made

the holy disciples of the Lord Jesus, under the figure of a person passing from death to life: "And you hath he quickened" or made alive, he says, "who were dead in trespasses and sins."—In Ezekiel, the same great truth, as to the might of that power which is conferred upon those who believe and turn unto God, is brought before us in the description of the resurrection of the dry bones. The bones which were seen by the prophets, we are told by him, were very dry; and the question which was put by God to the prophet, was intended to draw his attention to the hopelessness of their being ever revived by any power short of a divine interposition: "Son of man, said the Lord, can these dry bones live?" And although it was an impossible thing that they could have lived from any effect that the prophesying of Ezekiel could have produced, yet, no sooner does the spirit of the Lord breathe upon them, than they are clothed with sinews, and flesh, and skin, and stand up an exceeding great army. We would tell those, therefore, who despair of being able to deliver themselves from the power of sin, that they are quite correct in the estimate they have formed of the inveteracy of that depraved nature which they possess. And we would admit, also, were there no divine power communicated to those weary and heavy laden sinners, who look up to Christ for his pardoning mercy, that all hopes of reformation were utterly visionary, and in the nature of things, could not be effected by them. But I would tell them, that they were guilty of a great oversight, in not knowing the word of God; in not knowing that he bestows upon them a power which is greater than their own, and that this power is able to make them to become the sons of God. We would tell the person who feels his utter inability, by means of his own resolutions, to deliver himself from sin, that he has so far made progress in the knowledge of that path which conducts to everlasting life, for the bible expressly declares, that it is only that principle which is born of God which overcomes the world. But we would ask him to look a little farther, and he will see that a great provision has been made by God for helpless sinners, such as he. Why should he stop, we would ask him, at the very point, when he comes in contact with that divine power which can break the shackles of sin and satan, and set him forth as the free born son of the most High? The fact of his knowing that he cannot deliver himself from sin, and which exists as an obstacle in his way towards a life of holiness, so far from being any obstacle, if he will only look to