

wilderness was adorned with the best material the earth could afford; so the good conscience is not content till the Christian is a temple to God adorned with the highest excellence and beauty. David said that he would not offer to God what cost him nothing. The woman that anointed the Saviour poured on his head a whole box of the costliest spikenard. So with good conscience. It bids the preacher not only to preach, but to labor in season and out of season. The hearer not only to hear, but to hear *swiftly*; not only to give, but to give cheerfully; not only to be honest, but in all promises to keep to the strict day, and date, and letter of the promise. The good conscience aims high; it does not look at others, but at Christ; it is not content with as little grace as will suffice, but seeks the highest attainable. It asks not where is there a safe path, but where is there an honorable path; it is not content with what is good, but seeks what is *best*. Here is its language:—"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In which of these four classes do you stand?

### III. THE ADVANTAGES OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

III. The advantages of a good conscience are many, and the reasons why we should seek it stronger than we can state them. A man can buy his land, his house, his liberty, his life, too dear, but not a good conscience.

(1) A good conscience is a skilful *physician*. There are some diseases of body that can be reached only through the mind—conscience; only by "cleansing the bosom of the perilous stuff that weighs upon the heart." The cure lies here, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then the peace of God fills the heart, and that sound heart becomes health to the body.

(2) A good conscience is a pleasant *bed-fellow*. See Jesus asleep in the boat, and Peter in prison. There were no thorns in the pillow, for conscience smoothed the bed, and gave God's beloved sleep. On one occasion, Whitefield and another minister were travelling by stage through one of the rural districts of England. It was their lot to pass one night in a roadside inn, where there happened to be a noisy gathering of profane people, whose oaths and ribald songs reached the room to which the ministers had retired. "I must go and speak to these men," said Whitefield. "What is the use?" replied his companion. The noise, however, became so offensive at last, that Whitefield went and rebuked the godless merriment. He returned to his room, to find that