

thee." Isaiah 43. 4. The pious are honorable in their *birth*; for they are born from above, born of God, and are his sons and daughters by regeneration. They are honorable by their *titles and relations*; for they are the citizens of Zion, the servants of Christ, the wards of angels, the children of God. They are honorable by their *character*, for they are the possessors of truth, the conquerors of Satan, the competitors for the crown of glory, and the imitators of God. They are honorable in their *destiny*, for they are going on to sit down with Christ on his throne, even as he overcame and is sat down with his Father, on his throne. They are honorable *now*; their glory shall shine forth at the *last day*, when the honors of earth and time shall set amidst the smoke of a burning world; and their honors shall flourish upon their brow with amaranthine beauty and freshness *through eternity*.

*Piety is the most useful life*: and can you too speedily begin to be a blessing to others? Religion will keep you from doing harm by the poison of bad principles, or the silent pestilence of an evil example. It will keep you as you pass along the path of life, from seducing others into the bye-paths of immorality and infidelity; from increasing the groans and multiplying the tears of humanity: from blasting the temporal interests and ruining the immortal soul of your fellow creatures. "My principles," said a dying infidel, "have poisoned my friend, my extravagance has beggared my wife, and my example has corrupted my boy." Horrible confession! Religion would have prevented all this. It leads none by its influence to the hospital, to the work-house, to the jail, to the hulks, to the gibbet, or to that last general and eternal receptacle of lost souls—the bottomless pit: on the contrary, it tends to keep from all these. It is a source of instruction to the ignorant, of alms to the needy, of consolation to the wretched, of virtue to the immoral, of holiness to the wicked, and salvation to the lost. It blesses by the silent yet potent influence of example; by the efficacy of prayer; by the diffusion of property; by the active power of a holy life; and the *passive* power of a happy death. Would you begin the world and pass through it, then, a blessing to your species, "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth."

Religion in youth will, if you should live to be old, *accumulate upon you, the comforts, the honors, and the respects of an aged disciple*. Yours will be the hoary crown of righteousness, the old man's glory. Yours will be the calm summer evening of a long and holy day. The young will look up to you with veneration, the middle aged for counsel, and all with affection. There is something both of awful and of amiable goodness in a disciple of Christ, that has passed in honor the probation of seventy or eighty years. Not only is he esteemed and valued in the church, but even the infidel is abashed before his august and God-like presence.

It is a powerful motive to early piety, *that it would gladden the hearts of your parents* by putting an end to the most distressing solicitude concerning you, answering their most fervent prayers, gratifying their most