

mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?" One never can feel safe or happy until he knows JESUS CHRIST is his last friend.

II. In the second place, there is found in this verse AN UNDOUBTED PROOF OF THE DIVINE SINCERITY.

He who speaks here is profoundly in earnest. He really desires admission when He knocks for it.

1. You see this in the fact that *the entire proposal comes for Him*. The man does not go forth after JESUS; JESUS presents himself unasked, and oftentimes unexpectedly, at the door of the man's heart. The first thing heard is His knock. The Redeemer journeys all the way down from heaven before even one word of real desire is uplifted after Him. The grace of this transaction is absolutely marvellous. Angels earnestly desire to look into it.

2. You see this sincerity likewise, in *the successive and persistent endeavors to bring this friendship within reach of the soul*. First, JESUS comes—that attracts little or no notice. Then He knocks—no man appears to hear Him. Then He stands waiting. Strangely enough, out and in by the same door passes the owner without a word of welcome. Then JESUS speaks; not to ask entrance, nor to become obstructive, but to call attention to the fact that He is there, and without giving offence suggests the errand He came on—"Behold, I stand at the door!" But not yet, not yet does a hospitable hand turn so much as to lift the latch. Then that same kind, quiet voice begins to offer promises and utter assurances of good will. O, the amazing hardness of the heart which obstinately remains closed! Confessedly it is the sinful dulness of our minds that renders us so listless, so reluctant, and so torpid. But surely this determinate waiting proves how sincerely GOD desires that every man should be saved.

III. In the third place there is found in this verse THE ASSURANCE OF THE ENTIRE FULLNESS OF THE ATONEMENT.

There is no restriction in the offers of Divine grace. "Whosoever will, let him come." There is no limit on the human side, none on the Divine.

1. There is no limit *on the human side*. If any man will open his heart, the Sav-

jour will come in. No matter if the church be dull and cold, GOD deals with individuals in this engagement. No matter if the community be dead in worldliness and sin, GOD will accept any one, man, woman or child, who will be ready to meet His call. No need of waiting for a revival that will shake a city or a continent; heaven is to be peopled with souls redeemed one at a time. Hence the invitation reaches any one who will hear it. Be he poor or rich, be he illiterate or educated, be he young or old, be he even vicious or moral—if he will only rise and open the door of his affections, if he will only render a willing obedience in faith, if he will only repent of his sins and forsake them, no possible hindrance can for so much as one moment lie in his path.

2. There is positively no limit *on the Divine side either*. The offer is made in terms utterly without restriction. To every person who will receive Him, JESUS says, I certainly will give Myself; I will come in and sup with him and he with Me. Now this is all that the most eminent Christian ever had in his most transcendent experiences. Hence this is to say that our Divine Redeemer pledges to any individual, no matter how humble or unknown, any man who will believe in Him and love Him as his Saviour, all that the Apostle PAUL ever felt when he cried out, "O, the depth!" all that the Apostle JOHN ever enjoyed when he lay on his LORD's bosom at the Last Supper. The expression found in one of JESUS' parables is literally true: "Yet there is no room." Room in the Redeemer's love, room in the Church's charity, room in the Saviour's sacrificial merits, room in all the perfect enjoyments of heaven.

IV. In the fourth place we find in this text AN EXPLICIT RECOGNITION OF HUMAN FREE-AGENCY UNDER THE PLAN OF SALVATION BY GRACE.

A startling spectacle is this which rises on our imagination as we contemplate the figure here employed. The Son of GOD stands as a suppliant beside His own creature! He comes to the heart and hesitates; then He knocks and waits; then He speaks and lingers; then He promises and listens; but not one step further does He go. Not one step further will He go, although the angels sing sad-