

knowledge of them without experience—we may comprehend and explain that which we do not possess; but the light Jesus imparts to his followers is the light of experience: they know, because they feel—they believe, because they experience—they have the witness *within*; and the spiritual they possess leads on to light eternal: it begins on earth, it is perfected in glory. My friends, there is also eternal darkness; we warn you that you may escape from it. "Flee from the wrath to come." We read of those to whom the blackness of darkness is apportioned for ever,—but that eternal state of bliss which is in reverse for the people of God has no cloud of error, sorrow, sin, or pain; no darkness of soul or of dispensation, for the former things are passed away, are exchanged for light and joy eternal.

2.—We have now to consider, more briefly, in the second place, what may be affirmed concerning the objects here set before us: God divides the light from the darkness. He is accomplishing this upon earth by a mysterious but infinitely wise process. Much light and darkness dwells in the minds of individuals—in the various religious sects throughout the land, and among the different nations of the world. Whatever true light is in the world, it is of God. He is its Author. By nature all are under the dominion of the prince of darkness, and are enslaved by him. But a stronger than he comes upon him and delivers the captive from the dark dungeons of iniquity. Speaking of some of the most notorious sinners, the apostle says, "Among whom we *all* had our conversation in time past, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others."—Jesus came to be a light to them that sit in darkness; he sends his Spirit with his word to subdue the rebellious heart, to awaken the insensible heart—to pour the light of celestial day upon the benighted spirit—to shew the sinner to himself, and to reveal the saving mercy of God in Christ to reveal the dangers that lie in his pathway to eternity—to give him right views of every essential truth connected with salvation and eternal life—to teach him everything it is requisite he should know and experience ere he can inhabit the realms of light above—in short, to separate the light from the darkness. Hitherto the

very light had been darkness; there had been light in the intellect perhaps, but darkness in the soul (for in many an unrenewed character the one is strangely mixed with the other). There may even possibly exist a theoretic knowledge of divine things where the blackest crimes dwell in the heart and are perpetrated in the life. But where Jesus shines forth in mercy—where the Holy Spirit exerts his power, the light is separated from the darkness; there is no longer that heterogeneous mixture of knowledge and sin, of divine truth in the intellect and sin in the life, which formerly existed. Jehovah has wrought his wondrous work, has divided the light from the darkness, has separated the sinner from his sins, "and behold all things are become new."

Is there a soul in this audience that feels its own state to be a state of spiritual darkness? a soul only saying, "Oh, that God would regenerate me!" Let him turn that wish into a prayer, "Let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."—Yes, while our gracious God, the fountain of light, imparts wisdom and knowledge in answer to prayer, "he upbraideth not," he will never upbraid us for our ignorance, if it be not wilful ignorance *i. e.*, ignorance in which we allow and encourage ourselves. There are those who choose to remain ignorant of religious truths, that by their ignorance they may extenuate their guilt; but ignorance is no excuse for guilt. It is written in holy scripture concerning some who wished not to retain God in their knowledge, that "this they willingly were ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing in the water and out of the water."—They did not wish to know this, or anything else respecting God, or to retain him in their knowledge; what a sad and a ruinous state of mind—yet alas! how many there are now who wilfully put from them the remembrance of Jehovah, desiring not the knowledge of his ways. Will their ignorance excuse their guilt? it will not, because their ignorance is wilful. Let us never shun the light of truth, let us seek to know truth even though truth should condemn us, seeing that there is no state of darkness from which Jesus is not able