

"The Almighty Lord make thee know and feel, that there is none other Name under heaven given to man, in Whom, and through Whom, thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We know that we are only echoing in this prayer the re-iterated statements of Holy Scripture.

Holy Baptism, grafting us into a living Saviour, brings us into a "State of Salvation." The Church, into which we are brought by our Baptism, is (as Acts ii. shows) the body of those "who are being saved."

But then let us go on to think of the very imperfect state of grace in which a large proportion of professing Christian people leave this life—They are in "state of salvation," but they are very far from being absolutely saved. Think further of the most imperfect development of Christian character which marks a large number of those who are called away from this earthly life.

Surely all this implies the need of an extensive work of education, development, and therefore progress to be carried on in the Intermediate Life, the Life in Hades.

I am well aware that the popular conception is that when a person who is in a "State of Salvation" dies, and enters on the Intermediate Life in Hades, all differences and distinctions of spiritual character and Christian attainment will be for ever done away, and that all will be alike perfect.

For example: we are asked to believe that the penitent bandit who at the eleventh hour of most sinful life turned to Jesus on the Cross, and recognized Him as His Saviour-King, will evince the same spiritual character, and therefore occupy the same blissful condition, and locality in Paradise as that occupied in later years by St. Paul and St. John.

But as the Rev. Arthur Chambers has shown in his "Life after Death," "The only supposition under which it would be possible to conceive of this being the case, is that the act of dying works a moral miracle." This however, is inconceivable.

"The fact is, God's moral miracles are wrought not in the act of dying but in the act of living. Moral perfection is no more reached at a single bound, than is physical and intellectual perfection. No mere change of locality will effect it."