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senses, and being ever open to our view, takes so wide a sway in the heart. How think you, brethren, must we correct this influence, and by faith overcome the world, unless we habitually turn our attention to religion and eternity? Let us beseech you, then, to make them familiar with your minds, and mingle them with the ordinary stream of your thoughts: retiring often from the world, and conversing with God and your own souls. In these solemn moments nature and the shifting scenes of it, will retire from your view, and you will feel yourselves left alone with God; you will walk as in his sight; you will stand, as it were, at his tribunal. Illusions will then vanish apace, and every thing will appear in its true proportion, and proper colour. You will estimate human life, and the worth of it not by fleeting and momentary sensations, but by the light of serious reflection and steady faith. You will see little in the past to please, or in the future to flatter; its feverish dreams will subside, and its enchantment be dissolved. It is much, however, if faith do not, upon such occasions, draw aside the veil which rests on futurity, and cut short the interval of expectation. How often has she borne aloft the spirits of good men, and given them a vision of better days, and brighter hopes? They have entered already the rest which remained for them; they have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of the just men made perfect, and to God, the Judge of all. From these seasons of retirement and religious meditation, you will return to the active scenes of life with greater advantage. From the presence of God, you will come forth with your passions more composed, your thoughts better regulated, and your heart more steady and pure. Do not imagine that the benefit of such exercises is confined to the moments which are spent in them; for as the air retains the smell, and is filled with the fragrance of leaves which have been long shed, so will these meditations leave a sweet and refreshing influence behind them.

If your religion be genuine, it will be often the source of the warmest and most interesting feelings. It will be a spring of consolation within, which will often be full, and pour itself forth. If the gospel has not taken a share in the feelings of our hearts—if it has not moved the great springs of our hopes and fears, we may be assured

of your wishes. An ordinary mechanic devotes more of his time to the labour of his hands than to any other concern ; but it is not his laborious employment that interests his heart, it is his desire of procuring subsistence, and of warding off the inconveniences of poverty and want.

Finally, brethren, let each of us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not ; let us not shrink from the severest test to which conscience and the word of God can put us. If we be, indeed, found sincere after thus searching our hearts, our faith will grow more firm, and our consolations more steady ; or, if it appear that we have been hitherto deceiving and deceived, (awful idea !) we shall at least have an opportunity of once more lifting up our eyes for mercy, and of reading our danger in our sin, not in our punishment. But we hope better things of you, brethren, and things which accompany salvation. Have you fled from the wrath to come, and laid hold on eternal life ? Have you scriptural ground for rejoicing in the prospect of meeting the assembly of the just made perfect at the great day, when you shall have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Then, brought out of much tribulation, and redeemed from every nation and tongue, and people, his elect shall be gathered, he shall give up the kingdom to his God, and God shall be all in all. Alas ! the voice of individual praise is weak and feeble : but how will the hearts of the redeemed swell with adoration and delight, when, while they are praising him, he shall receive from millions of beings, and millions of worlds, the same incense !



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