

The Fruits of Sin and the Fruits of Holiness

(A Posthumous Sermon)

Preached at Gower Street Chapel, London, on Lord's Day Morning, July 25, 1869

"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:21-23

How few, speaking comparatively, of the living family see and admire the infinite wisdom of God in devising, executing, revealing, and applying the wondrous scheme of redeeming love. They freely acknowledge God's power; his mercy, his goodness, and his love have each their tribute of thankful praise. But how few seem to enter into the infinite wisdom of God in the contrivance and execution of that wondrous plan whereby he saved sinners. And yet how full the Scriptures are of it. How the Apostle breaks forth into a burst of holy admiration: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." How he says: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." And so he is termed "the only wise God." Now how does the wisdom of God shine forth in this way to draw forth such admiration from the mind of the Apostle? Assuming the entrance of sin into the world, the fall of man, and the state to which sin had reduced man, there were two problems to be solved, and both of such a nature that nothing but the wisdom of God could properly solve them. These two

problems were: first, how man as a sinner—and by man I include all those in whom the purposes of God were fixed—how man as a sinner could be pardoned without any infringement of the justice and holiness of God. The other problem was, assuming the entrance of sin and the depravity of human nature which ensued therefrom, how could man be made capable of inheriting the blissful presence of God if he were pardoned?

To make this matter clear, we find these two problems continually cropping out in our society. There is a large class, especially in London—called the criminal class—men who live by depredation, who have no honest means of livelihood, but live by robbery, theft, and cheating of every kind, so as to prey on the very vitals of society. Now here are two problems connected with this criminal class: what is to be done with them? When they are detected, apprehended, and proved guilty of some theft, or violent highway robbery, or some breach of the law, what is to be done with them? Will you forgive them? Well, if you forgive them, you encourage others to join this horde of criminals; you make society itself scarcely endurable; you fill the country with alarm; you encourage thousands of reprobate characters to join the criminal class, and you give property into their hands to be preyed upon, and spoiled, and robbed. Well, then, you cannot pardon them. So you punish them: and you shut them up in prison for certain periods of time, according to their offences; or if guilty of murder, you hang them, and justly hang them, according to the righteous sentence of God and man. Now, you see if man were pardoned, there would be an infringement of God's justice; and yet if no mercy were shown—and the law has no mercy—if no mercy were shown in the case of those spiritually criminal, where would be that blessed attribute that lay in the bosom of God, and where would be the display of his sovereign grace?

Now take the other problem as regards society. You put the man into prison; you try to reform him; he has his chaplain and his Bible in his cell, and tracts to read, and a number of people trying to reform him. But for the most part he is incorrigible and irreformable, and he comes out a greater villain than he went in. Then what is to be done with him? He may be deterred from crime by punishment, but it has no effect upon his moral nature: he is a criminal still, because a criminal in heart; and therefore, the man is just what he was before.

Now see God's way of solving these two problems, because we are all a criminal class; we have all the halter round our neck; we have all openly or in secret committed crime that has brought us under the stroke of God's justice; we all deserve to be sent headlong into the bottomless pit; there is no man, woman, or child here that does not deserve eternal perdition. We are a criminal class, even if kept from open crime. Then what is to be done with us? Are we all to be tumbled headlong into hell? Is there no mercy to be shown? Must the whole human race perish under God's deserved wrath, and none escape? Where would be God's mercy, goodness, and grace, if we were all sent headlong to perdition—tumbled into hell without mercy? No; the goodness and mercy and grace of God could never suffer that; and therefore a way must be devised, whereby mercy can have its claim. And this problem was solved by the incarnation, suffering, blood-shedding, and death of his dear Son. That was God's way of solving the problem—to show his hatred of sin in laying upon his dear Son what we should have endured had he not stood in our place and stead.

But now there is the other problem to be solved. Here is this same pardoned sinner. We will say God has pardoned him, washed him in Christ's blood, and clothed him in immaculate

righteousness: can he take him to heaven just as he is? Is he fit for heaven because pardoned, because washed in the blood of Christ? Is there no internal meetness for it, no work of regeneration necessary, no conformity to the image of Christ required? How does God solve that problem? By sending the Holy Spirit into man's heart to transform him and make him a new creature in Christ—to give him a nature capable of heavenly bliss—to qualify him for heaven by making him meet for the inheritance, as well as washing away his sins and clothing him in a robe of righteousness. And thus God has solved those two problems. Had I time, I could show you the connection between the two—how it is the same way of salvation that pardons and forgives, as has the means of communicating that new creature and that heavenly birth whereby the soul is made meet for its eternal inheritance.

In opening up the words of our text this morning, I shall endeavour to show

I.—*First*, what are the fruits of sin, which are here spoken of as twofold: shame and death.

II.—*Secondly*, what the gift of God is, to bring us out of this shame and death, which is, "eternal life through Jesus Christ."

III.—*Thirdly*, what are the fruits and effects of the communication of this eternal life: namely, to make us free from sin, to become the servants of God, to have our fruit unto holiness, and the crowning end to be everlasting life.

I.—The apostle here appeals to men's consciences; and there is no more powerful way of eliciting an answer to truth than finding an echo in one's own breast. He says to these Roman

believers, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" Can you look back and see what fruit you have gathered from those boughs? It was a large, and, as you thought, a goodly tree; it spread itself in all directions; there were fruits that grew upon every branch, either in promise or possession. Now take a view of what fruit you gathered from that tree when you lived under its shadow and when you fed upon its fruit; when you took up your abode there night and day and wanted no other shelter and no other provision. Now, he says, your eyes being opened to see what fruit that tree bore, you found there was nothing but shame; that shame hung upon every branch; and the fruit that was sweet to your taste when you fed upon it, turned into ashes in your mouth; and looking back upon it, you can see nothing but what covers you with shame and confusion of face. And what else? Why death. All you gathered from that tree was what Eve gathered when she ate the forbidden fruit. You gathered death: death temporal, in the separation of body and soul; death spiritual, in being alienated from the life of God; and death eternal, in being cast into the lake of fire. And this is all the fruit you have gathered from those things in which you walked and lived.

But to make the matter a little more clear, I shall take up several characters, and take them up to a certain point and period when they began to be ashamed, and began to see what fruit they had gathered from those boughs, and what the end of sin was in death. And I shall take them in separate cases, and bring them up to that point when shame began to enter their hearts.

1. And I take first of all, the man that lives in open sin: one of those profane, ungodly, harum-scarum men whose delight is in all manner of sin and ungodliness. Many of these are manifested to be vessels of mercy. The end proves that God

has had thoughts of them of good, not of evil; that their names were written in the book of life; that in the midst of their vileness and profanity, still the eye of God was upon them. During this time, they knew no shame. They are thought to be very jolly companions; they can sing a song, and often not of a very moral character; and they can utter a joke, and they can pop out an oath, and they can drop an ambiguous expression, and they can stare modesty out of countenance, and they are, as they think, fine fellows, hectoring about as though this world were everything and eternity nothing. All this time they are strangers to any sense of shame, or any apprehension of death. They are destitute alike of any shame as to their own conduct, or any fear of the consequence of death cutting them down at a stroke and consigning them to the lake of fire. And so they go on, without shame or fear. There may be some here who have lived this sort of wild, profane, ungodly life—I like to throw my net as far as I can, to catch as many fish as possible;—there may be those here, who have gone on in the way I have described up to a certain time, and yet, in the infinite mercy of God, have been brought to faith and repentance.

2. Now I will take another character—a man upright, consistent, very different from those wild, profane, ungodly creatures of whom I have been speaking; a man with something like a religion so far as it went, consistent in character, life, and conduct. And yet, all the time this man might have been guilty of many secret sins—a prey to secret lust, carrying on ungodly practices in secret, a sly drinker, a real hater of God and godliness, having great contempt for gospel truth and those who love the ways and works of the gospel, but still maintaining a whitewashed outside profession; keeping the outside clean, and yet with all manner of abominations working within. Now this man knows no shame. Now and then he may have a prick of conscience,

or wish it might be better with him, or hope some day to return and reform; but at present he goes on in his secret practices, without shame or fear of death.

3. Now I take a third case—a man with a strong pharisaical profession of religion; built up on the platform of self-righteousness; a Pharisee to the back-bone; consistent in life, abstaining from practices generally denounced, and maintaining integrity and uprightness in all his dealings. This man knows no shame before God on account of any ignorance he may have of God's truth, any alienation of heart from his ways, any secret contempt of his servants, any delight inwardly in sin though not outwardly practised, or any sight or sense how in God's sight the Pharisee is a smoke in his nostrils—"a fire that burneth all the day."

4. Now I will take another character, just to complete my circle of faces, to make up my drawing, and to present it in as many lights as I possibly can: a man in a profession of religion; and he shall be a Calvinist, an ultra-Calvinist, if you like; a man strong in his knowledge of the doctrines of grace as any real partaker of the grace of God, and as bold an advocate for them, and yet destitute of the life of God, with no divine teaching to make his conscience tender, having no implantation of the fear of God in his soul, no knowledge of the only true God or of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; but bold, arrogant, presumptuous, built up in doctrine, and nothing but doctrine, without anything of the love or fear of God in his soul. This man knows no shame, and is not ashamed of his arrogance, nor his bold claims upon God, nor his ignorance of divine teaching or divine testimony, nor his want of godly fear, nor his want of marks and evidences of the teaching of God in his soul. He has no shame. He is as bold as brass. And as to death, he has no fear about it. He has a vain confidence which he thinks will carry him through

it. But as to knowing anything of spiritual death in the alienation of his heart from God, or any apprehension of the second death, such things rarely trouble his thoughts.

I have taken all these four characters up to a certain point; I have taken them to the line of death. I have brought them along the broad road, each one really in the broad road, though in seemingly different paths; and I bring them to a certain point, and there they all four stand. They are different as regards many things externally; and yet, viewed by the eye of God, all dead in sin, and therefore destitute of any experimental knowledge of Jesus. Now, having brought them to that line, there I shall fix them.

II.—And now I shall, with God's blessing, begin to open something about my second point, which is, the gift of God in eternal life, and this gift of God being through Jesus Christ our Lord. It hath pleased the Father that in his dear Son should all fulness dwell, and the fulness of life, for he is the life; and in this fulness we receive grace for grace. Now it is his gracious purpose and heavenly will that life should be communicated to these four characters whom I have brought up to a certain point as in the vision of Ezekiel, where bones in some measure came to bones and flesh to flesh, but life has not entered into them.

Now I come to the point when this eternal life, which was given them in Christ Jesus, was breathed into their souls out of the fulness of Christ and God said "Live." And I shall take this life in its workings in them and upon them, and show, as the Lord may enable, how it operates in their minds and works in their hearts, what it leads them to do and feel, and how it brings them over the line of death and lands them in the line of life, where they are in grace manifested, and will find in the end everlasting life in the mansions of heavenly

bliss. Now for the most part I believe God works very gradually in the soul. I am in no way a friend to what are called sudden conversions; not that I deny or dispute them; but taking the majority of God's people, the life of God is communicated in a very secret way to them. There must be a moment when it is communicated; but we know it more by secret movements, sensations, and feelings, than from being able to say exactly when or how this life was communicated. One of the first things this man begins to feel is a sense of shame. As his eyes begin to get gradually opened and something comes over his mind that he never knew or felt before, a kind of softness and tenderness never before experienced, he begins to look about him and feel for the first time some measure of shame. The ungodly know no shame: as the prophet says, they have a whore's forehead and refuse to be ashamed. When, then, there comes some feeling of inward shame before God, it looks something like the beginning of a change which may issue, and often does issue, in a manifestation of divine life. Whilst sin is at work in us, there is no shame. When a man is drinking his glass, or when he is practising some secret lust, or when engaged in some covetous bargain, or entangled in some light and gay company, the sense of shame is drowned in the excitement of the moment. The lust is so strong, or the pleasure so great, or the excitement so attractive, that all sense of shame is drowned. But by-and-by, the man begins to awake. His lust is over; the excitement is gone; his drunkenness, like Nabal's, is out of him; and now the man begins to feel a sense of shame. And as he is ashamed of himself, assuming that the life of God is in his soul, he begins to feel shame before God. Ashamed of himself, he looks up as he never looked up before, and sees there is a God above, and that this holy God has been viewing him in all his accursed practices, taking notice of all his doings. And he looks up and sees the holiness of God, what majesty there is in him, and

what a pure God he has had to deal with; he sees how this God is looking into his heart and searching out all his ways, and has been watching him in his mad fits, in his drunkenness, in his whoredom, in his oaths and curses, in his "jolly life," as he called it; that the eye of God has been all the time marking this. And he looks up and sees that he has a just God now to deal with; he is in hands from which he cannot escape; and there is an arrow of conviction planted in his conscience. He begins to bleed, inwardly bleed, and his conscience begins to be very sore; and overwhelming feelings of shame and confusion cover him, and he does not know what to do with himself. His sin is so great he thinks he never can be forgiven, and he cannot help crying for mercy. Now this man has passed over the border of death into the line of life. And he begins to confess his sins with real shame of face; and not only so, but to forsake them, because if ever he is tempted to do the like again, shame comes over him so much more than before, conviction speaks so loud and clear, and the arrows seem shot in so much more closely, and conscience testifies so much more emphatically, that he is compelled to give up these things which bring him into such straits and trouble.

Now I shall take the other character. Here is a man who has been living a very consistent life, with a smooth outside profession, but a victim to secret lusts: a sly drinker, unclean though maintaining a decent exterior, and doing things that conscience when asleep never testified against. But now, conscience being awakened, and the arrows of God in him raising up conviction, his sins begin to be manifested in their true light. "Well," he says, "it is true I have not been an open sinner, but O I have been worse: I have been a secret sinner. I have not gone to those outward lengths others have gone to; but O if men could see my secret sins and practices in the dark, and know what wicked thoughts I have been

continually harbouring, and what books I could read, and how I fed my imagination with every vile, adulterous, and obscene thought, and how, if not moved to sin outwardly, I feasted upon these vile things inwardly, they would think me worse than those who have sinned openly." And the man feels ashamed of himself, and wonders how he could have been such a beast, such a black, vile, filthy creature; how he could give way to such evil in his heart and yet maintain such a decent outside. And with this begins to work death. "The end of these things is death." Perhaps he is laid upon a bed of affliction and the gaunt spectre draws nigh. "O," he says, "there is only a step between me and death; and suppose this slender thread were cut, and God said, 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee,' where could I stand before this holy God? O my sins! my sins! my crimes! my crimes! They are more in number than the hairs of my head. How can I stand before this holy God? O how I blush with shame, knowing what I have been, and that I have done the things, thought the things, imagined time things I have done! O what will become of my soul?" Here is a man with death in his conscience, and with spiritual death in feeling alienation from God. And here he is in that sense spiritually dead; and he looks forward and says, "What is it to die? That is but little. But O to be swallowed up for ever in eternal torment, and to be cast into the lake of fire, and there to lie for ever under the wrath of God; how can I endure all that?" Now as these thoughts roll over his mind and agitate his soul, he begins to see "The end of these things is death." "All my secret lusts," he says; "all my vile imaginations: what is the end? Death! death! death! Death temporal, death spiritual, death eternal. The end of these things is death."

Now I will take the man bitter in Pharisaisim, full of his own righteousness, with no knowledge of salvation by the blood of the Lamb, but resting wholly upon the work of the

creature. Now when the law begins to enter that man's conscience with any divine power, laying bare its spirituality and what the law really is, O he finds he has been only looking to the shadow of the law, and did not know the substance; looking to the letter, and not knowing the curse, and power, and authority of it; and he begins to see and feel, "O, if I stand upon this foundation, I must be for ever lost." And as the man already described was weaned out of his secret sins and hid his face in shame before God; so this Pharisee, when driven out of his Pharisaisim, begins to see and feel such shame as a person would feel turned naked into the street. He blushes before God on account of what he feels he has been, and his Pharisaic self-righteousness appears to have been one of the greatest of his sins.

And now I take the man—for I cannot go through all as clearly as I could wish—now I take the man built up in doctrine, in vain-confidence, in arrogant, presumptuous profession; knowing nothing of the fear of God in a tender conscience, nor of any work or teaching of the Spirit in his soul; and having brought him up to the line of life, I shall take him over the line and show how God works upon his conscience. Now this man, after a time it may be, comes under the sound of experimental truth, or is cast into the company of God's people who speak a little about the secret dealings of God upon their soul. At first he begins to rise up in rebellion against it all, denounces those who give in their adherence to the doctrines of grace, and tries to stave off any working of conscience, by appealing to this man's authority and the other man's authority, and trying to beat down all this by pouring contempt upon it. But, somehow or other, the word begins to find an entrance into his conscience; it is too powerful to be resisted when the servant of God speaks with authority. It comes, according to God's determination, with secret power into his heart; and when he hears the people of

God talk, and sees the grace of God in them, and finds they have something which he has not, and feels he is destitute of the main thing, he begins to look at his religion, weigh it in the balance, and it seems very wanting of that which satisfies God, and can satisfy a conscience, made tender in God's fear. Well, now he is brought over the line, and he begins to look at his arrogant presumption and vain-confidence as one of the worst of all his sins; that he, without any, or with little experience of the things of God in his soul, should take so high a stand, that he could lay hold of doctrines with a presumptuous hand, the power of which he never felt in his soul, and build himself up in the letter of the word without knowing anything of the teaching of the Holy Spirit in his heart. O he will view himself as a presumptuous sinner, and fear lest the lot of the presumptuous sinner should be his—taken from God's altar to die. And how he is ashamed of his boasting profession; what death he sees to be in a profession without any experimental knowledge of the truth of God; and what death in the letter of God's word, even in the sublimest truths of God's everlasting Gospel, unless they are brought into the heart by divine power—he sees there is death in them. And he has been presumptuous, as described, in laying hold of God's truth with his own hand; God never having brought it with divine power into his soul. Now he is thoroughly ashamed of himself, and does not know where to hide his head; and when brought into the family of God, will get into some corner pew, as having been such a presumptuous sinner. "No," he says, "I deserve to be doubly damned: damned for my sins, and damned for my presumption." This man is brought over the line of life.

Now, having brought these into the line of life, God will deal very tenderly with them. He won't deal with them after their sins, nor reward them after their iniquities. God's way is to bring them down into the dust, and when he has brought

them there, he won't take them out of the dust and cast them into hell. He abases the proud, but he exalts the humble. You get your mouth in the dust; you confess your sins before God; you lament them, bewail them, and forsake them: God will never take those sins and tie them like a millstone round your neck and hurl you and them into the depths of an unfathomable sea. He that confesses and forsakes his sins shall find mercy. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." But if we go on sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, this is not the character spoken of in the word, whose sins God pardoned. But if, with all your sins, temptations, and all that conscience testifies against, you can only put your mouth in the dust, confess your sins, mourn over them (which is God's own gracious gift), and forsake them, God will not impute those sins to you, but put them away, cast them behind his back, and give you, sooner or later, sweet testimony that he has pardoned you for Christ's sake.

Then here comes in the profane wretch: his ungodly life and what he has done in the days of his ignorance will not be imputed to him. He was brought out of sin that he might be a monument of eternal mercy, a trophy to the Lamb; and he will never be put to shame. He is ashamed of himself, but God is not ashamed of him. He is ashamed of his sins, but they are cast behind God's back.

So with the man who has been living in the secret practice of sin. That man may take a very low place; he will never forgive himself; whenever he thinks of his sins, it will be with shame and confusion; he will loathe himself in his own eyes and abhor himself in his own sight; and the more God forgives him, the less will he forgive himself; the more God's mercy shines into his soul, the more will it lead him to

repentance; the more he views the sufferings of Christ, the more ashamed he will be of his iniquities, and the more he will mourn to see and know **[what]** he has been and is what he is.

And take the man who is brought out of Pharisaic profession into some knowledge of the way of salvation. Though that man always feels ashamed of himself as a Pharisee, and looks back at the time and says, "O what a fool I was to be such a blind Pharisee, so obstinately determined against God's way of salvation; I can never forgive myself for my Pharisaic pride;"—yet God will not impute that to him, but freely forgive him, because he has cast all his sins behind his back, and drowned them in the depths of the sea.

And so even with that last of the characters I have described, because the rarest to be called by the grace of God: even that man's arrogance and presumption will not be imputed to him, if he is brought to renounce, to confess, and to forsake it, to feel really ashamed of himself and his ways, and loathe himself on account of his arrogance and daring presumption, God will not impute that sin to him; with all his others, it is cast behind God's back.

Now is there a man or woman here present who has ever known anything of the movements of divine life in his or her bosom, who does not look back with shame to the things he or she has said and done? "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" Why, you had little enjoyment even at the time; it was all poison, and all they did was, when you awoke out of your sleep, to fill you with shame and confusion. The end of those things carried nothing but death. So we find to this day. Whatever be the allurements of sin or the temptations in which we are entangled, when we are brought out of the excitement of

them, when awakened out of them, there is nothing but shame for us, and with shame, a sense of death; that all we have done has been to deaden our souls, cause God to hide his face, withdraw the light of his countenance, and bring a sentence of condemnation into our own heart.

III.—Now it is by these various ways that God appears to make us free from sin, and to make us servants of himself, that we may bear fruit unto holiness; and the end be everlasting life. When we are sick of sin, then there is a measure of freedom from it. There is a being made free from the guilt of sin by the application of atoning blood; a being made free from the filth of sin by the washing of regeneration; and a being made free from the power of sin by the dominion of grace, from the love of sin by the love of God shed abroad, and from the practice of sin by the possession of godly fear. And thus we are made free from sin so far as we are made partakers of the life of God, so as no longer to walk in sinful ways and practices, because we are made free from it by being brought into the practice of grace.

God's people are made free from sin, liberated from it by blood and regeneration, and the word of God upon the soul, and his fear planted in the heart, and the teaching and testimony of the Holy Ghost within, and by the power God puts forth in subduing it. They are led to do the things pleasing in his sight, to seek to know his will and do it, to keep his precepts as well as to believe his promises; to be given to him body, soul, and spirit; to be unreservedly his, that he may dispose of them according to his sovereign good pleasure. God has not sent his dear Son that we might serve sin and Satan and the world, but that we might have the blessed privilege and holy freedom of serving God, attending to God's word, listening to God's voice, seeking God's glory, doing the things that God has bidden, abstaining from the

things that God has forbidden; that we might live a life of faith and prayer; might walk in sweet communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that we might fight against sin and Satan, resisting even unto blood; and not being entangled in things that bring guilt upon the conscience, reproach upon the cause, and trouble to the family of God with whom we are connected.

How careful we should be in our walk and conduct, in our life and conversation, in all our movements in the Church and in the world, to live as becometh the Gospel, in all holy obedience to God's revealed will; and to make it manifest we have a work that God has wrought in our heart, that gives God the glory, and does not put shame and disgrace upon the doctrine we profess.

This is having fruit unto holiness. The very word "holiness" is lost out of the churches. Our godly Puritan ancestors contended for "holiness;" but from how many preachers do you hear the word "holiness" drop? Why, is it not legal in our day to talk about holiness? "O," says one, "you talk about holiness: you are one of the legal tribe: away with all your fleshly godliness!" But God's word is not to be talked down thus by clamour, and its head cut off by the stroke of a preacher, be he an able man or a weak man. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and that word will stand, let man call it legal or not. Some of these men who have been cutting at holiness may find they have been cutting at God's truth, and they may find it a barrier they will never pass. It is a grief to God's people that they cannot be holy: they love holiness because they have a holy principle in them; and if they could, they would be as holy as God is holy, and never sin again: holy in thought, word, and deed, and live a holy, godly, and unspotted life! It is their grief and burden they cannot do so. When men begin to talk against

holiness, they are Satan's servants and not God's. The Seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." It is our grief and trouble and burden that we cannot be holy. As Hart says,

"But I would be holy."

Now God sends his word, his chastising strokes, his afflictions, to make us partakers of his holiness. If we have not our fruit unto holiness, how can we believe the end will be everlasting life? Are we to live in sin and die in sin? Are we to live unholy and then go to God who is holy? Are we to believe the end, the blessed end will be everlasting life, and have no fruit unto holiness? God has put them together: dare you rend them asunder and say, "O we want everlasting life; but as for fruits of holiness, we don't care about them?" Is not the word of God plain and positive here?—"Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Take it as God has revealed it; rend it asunder if you dare. Will you take God's book to tear leaves out of it? Take God's word as God has revealed it; take God's precepts because God has revealed them; take God's promises because God has given them; take God's truth because it is in the word of God; and take what God gives because God has given it. This is the feeling of a reverent mind; this is the feeling of a believing heart; what God has given, that I must take. And those who thus walk will find the end everlasting life. They will find they have not believed in vain, nor walked in vain, nor fought in vain, nor struggled on in vain; but the end, everlasting life, will crown all.