

*Extracts to be read 2*

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**TWO SERMONS,**  
**PREACHED IN PLYMOUTH, MASS.**  
**JULY 4, 1847,**  
**BY GEORGE W. BRIGGS.**

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# **TWO SERMONS**

PREACHED IN THE

**FIRST CHURCH IN PLYMOUTH, MASS.**

**Sunday, July 4, 1847.**

By **GEORGE W. BRIGGS.**

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THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

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MATTHEW XXII. 39.

THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

Two themes are suggested by the associations of the hour. This day is marked in the nation's history. The memorials of the world's great sacrifice are before our eyes. Thoughts of our Country follow us, while we think of our Redeemer. But I remember that a pure patriotism glowed in the Saviour's breast as a perpetual fire; leading him to speak first to Judea, in the unfolding of his Gospel, through his own, or his disciples' lips, filling him with special sadness at his people's sin; and the two themes are in perfect harmony. I remember, too, when he was ascending Calvary itself, after he had fainted beneath the cruel Cross, and it had been laid upon another's shoulder, as he was bewailed by the people and the women who followed him, that he turned to say — with his Country's woe sharper in his soul than his quickly coming agony — “weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” And the Saviour, in that suffering

hour which the disciple especially commemorates, seems to command the meditations that this day suggests. I obey that command ; and I propose, not with any exact method in my speech, following the gush of feeling more than logical rule, to illustrate the principle in the text by some of the thoughts which the associations of the hour, and the aspects of the time present. For they will all lead us to come at last, in a deeper reverence and a lowlier prayer, to the Redeemer's feet.

It may appear an ungrateful work, in one point of view, to observe how the actions which we call noblest in the life of men, or in the records of nations, lose much of their glory, when measured by the Christian law. We do not judge them thus to depreciate any noble deed. We only desire to see more distinctly the spirit of the Redeemer. We wish to learn what it is to dwell in his perfect love. Let all the Earth worship him ! It is noble to toil for Liberty for ourselves, with a self-sacrificing devotion. Man always becomes noble when he begins to worship a divine feeling, a grand principle, which seems greater than present ease, greater than outward success, greater than life. He is then lifted above the body, above the world, above meanness, and fear, and death, by his faith. The child of the flesh becomes a child of the spirit, with his features already radiant in an immortal glory. So is Genius exalted by the truth it serves. Thus the saint ascends towards the angel, as he receives the life of the God he

worships. However rude the action, however imperfect its form, this worship of truth is always grand. Take the benighted slave, almost crushed beneath his bonds, and let the love of Freedom once stir in his heart, nerving him to self-sacrifice and danger, and instantly he stands up in a nobleness of sentiment that proves him to be a child of God. It was noble to worship Liberty as the Fathers worshipped it. I shrink, indeed, from the bloodshed of those holiest battle-fields; for I cannot forget that Jesus conquers by suffering, never by the sword. But I honor the devotedness that went there; the courage, the endurance, the indomitable soul, that dared every peril, rather than permit any yoke to remain upon themselves or their children. What heroism and moral grandeur made their age, and their names immortal! And, although I may question some of their acts, or feel, that through a want of clear moral sight in their day, the greatest social crime was permitted to remain, to grow into a strength of which *they* never dreamed, instead of quickly perishing, as they fancied — I shall still look to them long, to learn the great lesson of fearless devotion to whatever may come to me as a truth of God.

It is noble, we say, to contend for Freedom as a right for ourselves. Those are the periods in history upon which we love to linger, when Liberty had its champions and martyrs, and nations were moved by a spirit that no power could enslave. Yet it is nobler than this to toil and suffer



for another's deliverance. It is far nobler to bestow Freedom as a boon, when no thought of self nerves the arm, or inspires the tongue. That is a higher life than any Patriotism alone can give. Let me see a nation filled with a pure enthusiasm to extend Liberty to the abject and debased, those bound to it by no tie but that of a common nature, whose *humanity* has been almost crushed by a galling bondage, and I shall see it putting on a glory which no movement for personal Freedom can ever win. One of these forms of action vindicates humanity, and shows its greatness. The other is the spirit of Christ, the love of God, incarnating itself in men, manifesting the beauty of Calvary and its Cross. The first, Eloquence may eulogise, and Poetry may sing — as it has been in all ages. Before the last, I stand in a veneration almost too deep for speech, and humbly worship.

The absence of this disinterested devotion to truth and freedom, is the great failure of the world. Indeed, when I think of this entire disinterestedness of action as alone really Christian, almost all claims to discipleship become questionable in my view. All men *pray* in moments of appalling fear, when an Almighty help must come, or they must perish. How the soul turns to God, when nothing else can soothe its fear! What intense and agonizing cries then pierce the ear of Heaven! How oft, do you find the purer devotion which flies to the Father, as the loving child to its parent's breast, because the intensity of its love

will not permit it to stay away from that loved and blessed home. I need crosses, heavy and great, perhaps, agonies of trial and change, rending the very soul, to drive me to fixed thought upon holiest truth; to constrain me to meditate upon the spiritual world, until it reveal itself to my heart in a living faith. How oft do we find a piety as deep and fervent, which is nurtured only in gladness and joy; the pure gushing of the spirit of praise "in life's most beautiful fortune." Thus it is in the life of nations. Let the yoke threaten ourselves, or our children, and the heroic spirit of former days would move over the land, calling men to a like self-devotion. Another heroic generation would then appear. More than half a century, a Slavery, whose brightest feature is more appalling, whose lightest touch is a more galling woe, than all the Fathers ever knew of oppression, has been existing, and growing, at our door. But we have not risen yet, in a disinterested love of liberty, to say, — Let these bonds fall from human limbs forever. Almost all the great steps in the world's history, when principles have been most nobly vindicated, and truth most gloriously served, were taken, as men were goaded to action by the pressure of wrong upon themselves. The Puritan fought one great battle for freedom. Yet, little devotion had he to the principle, when his own rights had been vindicated. All men plead against persecution, while they feel its lash. Only the royal few have remembered, when their

day of prosperity came, what they once preached in prisons, in the season of their own bitter martyrdom. How all these forms of life which we call so noble, and which *are* so noble, compared with the action of the *world*, seem sadly imperfect when Jesus comes to his judgment! All these stars in the firmament vanish out of sight, when the Sun of righteousness appears.

We have scarcely begun to learn in action, as yet, the power and depth of the simple, vital principles of the Christian heart. Certainly it is so in the life of nations. Observe the text. How simple its teaching, a thousand tongues at once exclaim! Who among the thousand, has fathomed the mystery of a Christian sympathy? For, the force of the Christian commandment, consists not in the fact that it tells us to love a brother, or to remember his suffering. Its force lies in the intense *degree* of love which it commands; a feeling as far surpassing what many call sympathy, in ordinary speech, as the love of Calvary transcends man's instinctive tenderness, when suffering moans its pain directly into his ear. It is not satisfied when we become alive to great theories of benevolence in our thought, while the perception of the world's woe may never call forth a single tear. It enjoins a state in which the thought becomes a feeling, and the conviction of truth kindles into a blazing fire. It is not enough to believe in philanthropic truths, as the world is said to believe them; a belief which rarely agitates the soul, or



inspires to glorious action. We need a feeling which shall cause the remembrance of poverty crying for bread, shivering before the night's chilling wind, or the anguish of men under bitter tyranny, to break our slumbers, till we go forth in a charity beautiful as the morning, to do our part in the work of deliverance. There is a sympathy that puts itself in the place of those who are suffering, whatever the form of their woe may be. The pang of another's heart, agitates its own breast. It not only hears, but *feels* the cry of want. It learns what it means "to weep with those that weep." It feels the stripes laid upon another's limbs; the wrongs heaped upon outraged humanity everywhere. It transports itself in imagination from its own bright form of life, where ministers of joy stand around like angels, to scenes where the miserable and wronged are moaning; where the slave is crushed in his bonds, brooding over his woe, and there is no ear to hear the cry for relief, save that of heaven. It takes its child into its arms — its *own free-born* child — to imagine, in bewildering amazement, the feeling of one whose child is not his own — no free-born gift of God. I will not mock these impulses of a Christian sympathy any more, by vain endeavors to embody its throbbings into words. Will you learn what its nature is? Go and fix your eyes on him "who bare our sins in his own body on the tree; whose life is told in that one divine expression, which declares no mere doctrinal truth, but

describes a sympathy that nothing save Calvary can represent. Look to him who was tried by all our agony, and suffered with all our woe. **■ =**

Observe every expression of the Christian thought, each precept or act of Jesus, look at his flowing blood, look at the memorials of his sacrifice, and you will see that man never realizes this idea, until he learns to make a common cause with the tried and suffering everywhere. Nature and Christianity, indeed, symbolise and proclaim the same great truth. The sun shines, and the heavens are spread over each man's head, and the whole significance of nature — all the truth she images in her beauty and her grandeur of the power and love of God — is for each man's soul. The profound, unfathomable, redeeming life of Jesus, all the gifts and grace of the Holy Ghost, are for each man's heart. We are all "joint heirs with Christ" of the eternal life of God. We are to make a common cause with man everywhere. Many lower degrees of feeling may exist, which have something of moral beauty. Nothing less than this is Christian. Pity for the suffering, simply, is not enough, beautiful as it seems. Its tears are an expression of the compassion which superior beings may feel for inferior creatures, rather than the outpouring of a brotherly heart. A regard to distinguished sufferers, that easy, common virtue, however deep it may be, is not enough. That is not a sympathy for humanity, so much as for the robe that happens to cover it. O!

this word sympathy itself, so lightly uttered, flip-  
pantly repeated by thoughtless tongues, when we  
go back to its original use, contains the whole of  
this Gospel to the race. But, we repeat again,  
only the spirit "of the Lamb that was slain," can  
unfold its mysterious, its uncomprehended love.

Shall we compare the action of this nation,  
whose controlling power, whose intellect and  
strength, are gathered now before the altars of  
Christ, with this fundamental Christian law?  
'The throne of Jesus is set to-day. Dare we go  
to that judgment, except to cry with quivering lips  
for pardon? If the action of this people, in its  
purest day, did not rise to the standard of the Re-  
deemer's word, what shall we say of the present  
hour? There is one instance in our early history  
in which the claims of an enslaved race were set  
aside, that always moves me to sadness. When  
we mourn that Slavery was permitted to exist un-  
der free institutions, we are always told, that the  
Freedom could never have been secured, if men  
had demanded the extinction of that social curse.  
The Fathers doubtless thought so. I go rever-  
ently backward to cast the mantle of filial chari-  
ty over their mistake. But it destroys the moral  
beauty of that Freedom to me. Then was our  
Freedom in some sense built upon the crushed  
forms, and fettered limbs, of my sisters and my  
brothers. Then does the great law, "Thou shalt  
love thy neighbor as thyself," utter against it an  
eternal rebuke. Man hears the shouts for that



apparent and partial victory of Freedom. God never ceases to hear the cry of that outraged and disregarded slave. Here the question recurs again with more fearful meaning,—If that day of the Fathers, for which so many palliations may be found, cannot be entirely vindicated, who will vindicate this hour? If those righteous men of old can scarcely stand, where shall we appear? What vindication is there for us, while Slavery rears its battlements of defence, and the power of Government so oft performs its bidding, and new regions are blighted by its presence, and men rush into bloody and desolating war as the result of attempts to strengthen its dominion, and the day seems hastening, when, by violence and crime, by slaughter and blood, the clank of the chain shall be heard over both the Atlantic, and the Pacific sea!

**N** Who will defend the action of this day? We stand in a Christian temple now, and try our cause by the Christian law. We must not dissemble, or cloak our transgressions, before the face of Almighty God, or the judgment-seat of his Son. My Country is dear to me, as to those who boast of her dominion and outward greatness, but are silent over her sin. But I will not defend her call to her unholy battle-fields, though Liberty be written on her banner, while, as I judge, every blow is struck for Slavery. I will not fail to condemn her wars, or to try her oppressions by the spirit of that Christ in whom she claims to trust.



I cannot stop to enter into details, or to make exceptions now. I can only say, if the spirit of that Christ had been here, the spirit of this simplest law in the text, North or South, the proud and desolating waves of Slavery must long ago have been stayed, instead of ever swelling into an increasing flood. You may say, this is a Christian people. I answer, Oppression is spreading its dominion. Explain away that single, unanswerable fact. The voice of Jesus falls on my ear, saying in mournful, thrilling tones — “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Nay, if the spirit of the Fathers had been here, imperfect as it was, if *that* had been here, tainted by no degeneracy, North or South, the action of the last few years must have been utterly reversed. Men heed no forebodings of coming evil, while prosperity coins everything into gold. But there is one dark picture of the future, which sometimes unfolds itself to my view. I confess, at times, my hope in this nation is nearly gone. Once, in its infancy, when Pilgrim feet pressed the shore, Religion brooded over the land. In the inspiration of great thoughts of truth and God, in the power of divine motives, men became great and glorious. And the tread of those Pilgrim feet shook the world. An age passed by, and Liberty hovered over the nation’s heart. In that inspiration, again greatness came, and a spirit of majesty rested upon that generation. Another age, a far shorter time, has passed. And now, as I look,

it is not Religion, nor is it Liberty, which throbs in this people's heart. We worship a golden idol. Like the Jew of the Saviour's day, we are filled with the lust of extended dominion, and may reject the Lord. Wrong motives move the public mind, whose natural fruit must be degeneracy. The abomination of desolation already stands in the holy place, when a wrong spirit is really throned in the national heart. When that is true, I do not wish to have any man unrol to me the future. I can read it then in the past history of the world. I can read it in the record of each single life, which, from the hour when an evil spirit possessed it, went straight onward, by accelerated steps, to its perdition. The future will then unrol itself as fast as our pained eyes can bear to look upon its disgrace. A thousand may mock at this. Yet such an aspect of discouragement still exists. I do not see, why the same spirit which has compromised truth and freedom, once, and yet again.—aye, one knows not how oft—through the temptations of national prosperity, may not entirely crucify the only Redeemer of this nation at last.

I shrink from the picture whose colors I sometimes know not how to make more bright. Perhaps there is far more of hope than any such dreams allow. The memory of Jesus, at this hour, may rebuke all such despondency. Is there hope? If anywhere, it is there. Not in the cry of Lord, Lord! Not in these formal gatherings at the Redeemer's table! God for-

bid that any man should fall into such a delusion as *that* ! There is no hope in a Christian life which is not higher than has moved this nation hitherto. Amidst all *that*, the sin has grown strong. There must be an absolute penetration of the heart with the spirit of the divine Christian law in the text ; a meditation upon Jesus, which shall never leave his Cross, until its life flows down into the depths of our inmost being. We need a spirit which no obstacles can discourage ; which no other man's imperfections can disturb ; which "remembers the bound as bound with them" forever. Men ask how such great reformations can be accomplished. There is one answer to every such question of uncertainty or fear. He that doeth the will, shall surely know. The spirit of Jesus never sees any difficulties it cannot overcome, when it really lives in human hearts. The missionary sees the woe and crime afar, hedged about by all earthly power. But he walks over the sea in the spirit of his Lord, with his life in his hand. The martyr hears the stroke of the hammer which is fashioning his cross. But he sees no obstacles that are insuperable, to the accomplishment of his purposes of love. A divine sympathy brings with it a faith that it is mightier than the world, as the immortal life of Jesus in the soul tells us that we can never die. The spirit of the Saviour is not here. Come, thou Lord Jesus, breathe upon us at thine altars, and at thy table ! "Even so, quickly come !"



## THE PATIENT WAITING FOR CHRIST.

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### 2 THESSALONIANS III. 5.

#### THE PATIENT WAITING FOR CHRIST.

It is one of the most difficult things in human experience, when the heart burns with intense desire to see some great reformation accomplished, to be reconciled to its slow advances, or its long delay. We know not how to be patient until the coming of the Lord. "Where is the promise of his coming," was the cry that came out of the bosom of the early Church. Believers then imagined that he was soon wonderfully to come, at once to destroy the sins and woes of the world. But the grand revolution which they expected to see, almost as suddenly as the waves calmed themselves at the word of Jesus, never greeted them. War still filled the world with shrieks and wailings. The chain was on the limbs of the slave. The servants of truth perished upon the Cross. And these repeated disappointments of bright expectation sometimes fell gloomily upon their hearts, like the clod upon the coffin's lid, where all earthly hope is buried. Few genera-



tions, since that day, have expected such a miraculous manifestation of the Redeemer's truth. Each age has witnessed something of advance. Yet the same exclamation — "where is the promise of his coming" — has been echoed down through every generation until now. For always the progress lags fearfully behind man's fervent hope.

In one point of view, it is indeed very sad, that those who begin the greatest works, can never see their entire accomplishment. The fathers perished here just as their feet touched the shore. They did not live to see the "Germ of Empire" shoot up into strength and majesty. We perceive to-day, the good results of works long ago commenced. But the noble hearts that commenced them, went down to their graves in faith, and in sadness. So it is forever. A full century we watch the growing plant. He who planted it has long since departed. But the magnificent flower unfolds itself in its splendid hues, for us. "Other men labored, and ye have entered into their labors," Jesus said to the Apostles. And it is for us to say, *ye labor*, and other men still shall enter into *your* labors. It seems sad, in one point of view, we repeat, that the noblest workers for the world generally die with their hopes unfulfilled. And yet it only argues the nobleness of our being. We are capable of immortal hopes, immortal plans of holy charity, even while we share a mortal life. We devise reformations which it may

require ages to accomplish. We are not confined to such projects as may be accomplished while we live; quickly enough to gratify a child's impatience. It is our glory to labor for distant generations, although it involve the fact that we shall never see the end of our working. Let thanks be given, and not wailing, for this; thanks, that we may cherish plans of beneficence, which shall extend onward into the long periods of the Providence of God; thanks, that each ripple which we may send over the great sea of human feeling and life, shall still widen on to the most distant shore of Time.

Our chief trial consists in our failure to remember the truth which a living writer has demonstrated so clearly, — that all great things always have the slowest growth. Observe how true it is, that in proportion to the enduring power of any outward or inward life, the progress must be slow. The plant that lives a day, instantly shoots up into its perfect beauty. By imperceptible degrees, the enduring oak gains that majestic strength which remains undecayed for centuries. The insect which quickly perishes, is perfect at its birth. Man has a long infancy, for the Eternity of God never witnesses the end of his progress. So it is with the advances of the world. One or two generations send the tide of population in full, flowing waves, across the western wilderness; and the silent forest to-day, becomes a thronged city to-morrow. Propose any scheme of outward

prosperity, and men rush to its accomplishment. The iron rails are laid through plain and mountain. The magnetic wire, transmitting intelligence with the lightning's speed, will soon connect the nations. How long, O God! *how long* before the nations shall be bound together by the fine, electric chords of a Christian sympathy, responding to each kindly feeling, to each cry of need or woe, around the circuit of the globe! Trace the history of nations, and always we shall find that the best civilization was of slowest growth. Military greatness may be gained in a single battle. Wealth is heaped together as fast as eager selfishness can gather it. But Art, Science, Moral progress, come with slow, majestic steps, in proportion to their inherent worth. The kingdom of God is like the leaven which is hidden long. No image in nature is true, except those which illustrate such slow advances. When I think of grand moral reformations in the Providence of God, I never think of the isles suddenly thrown up by some volcanic force, astonishing the seaman in the morning, as he looks where it was the unbroken sea at evening. I think of the coral insect, working silently in ocean's deepest caves, succeeded by numberless laborers in long succession, until, at length, broad islands, continents themselves, arise, to stand unshaken while the sun and moon shall endure.

Our views are often shallow in our speculations concerning these great works of blessing, for



whose progress we are longing. Men ask concerning the demons in the heart of the world — “Why cannot we cast them out?” The answer of Jesus returns to us — They only go out “by prayer and fasting.” The all-powerful, redeeming life is not developed yet. The answer comes in that significant question of the Redeemer — “Can men gather *grapes of thorns*?” Deeper than we had fancied the reformation must go; greater than we had dreamed, is the work we have proposed. We cannot speedily accomplish such great redemptions. Let us apply these thoughts to some familiar instances. For it is well, at all times, to have a comprehensive view of these great moral movements, and we also wish, before we close, distinctly to ask, how such views affect the question of any specific devotion to those projects of philanthropy which are now moving the world.

A lamentation is heard because the spirit of Peace makes so little progress. How small its influence upon the spirit of War! Not only are the base and lawless ready for the battle. The conscientious also call it glorious, and go out to its murders. No lofty Statesmanship, no power of Intellect or Genius, can receive one tithe of the honor instantly given to the victorious warrior. We dwell in an almost Heathen darkness, in respect to this vital principle of the spirit of Jesus. The reformation is too great to be accomplished yet. I do not expect the reign of Peace between the nations, until the individuals that compose





them ascend more nearly to a Christian love. Individual hearts must subdue their contentious spirit, by gazing upon the Cross, and the home must have no bitter strifes around its hearth-stone, and societies must hush their bickerings, and the life of the forgiving prayer of Jesus must win many victories, before Governments will disband their armaments. This blest river of salvation, for whose flowing the lowly and the loving pray, is composed of these numberless little rills. When they are pouring down from a pure love in individual hearts, the baptismal flood shall cleanse the world. You who are not dwelling in that forgiving love, are responsible for the delay of that glorious hour. Ay, you who pray for Peace, perhaps, but are unforgiving in your life, may be as guilty as one who sharpens the sword. When you will not let the spirit of Jesus come into your souls, you bring the wars over which you mourn. You are like one lamenting the desolation of a conflagration, whose first spark he aided in kindling into flame. This triumph of Peace is a work too great to be speedily accomplished, according to the unfailing law of all noble progress. We are superficial, when we do not look deeply into the whole spirit of society, to measure the entire difficulty in our way. We are like impatient children, if we are discouraged, or cease from our labors, because, nowhere as yet, can we see the fires really kindled at the forges in which men are to fashion their swords into ploughshares, or beat into pruning-hooks their spears. ))



“ The lamentation is heard again, because Slavery remains unshaken by all these pleadings for Freedom. Government upholds it. New territories are subjected to its blight and curse. The State and the Church, citizen and priest, sometimes rise up in its defence. But again the same general thoughts press upon our view. Slavery has a foundation far deeper than certain laws. What made those laws? It is a greater work to overturn it than simply to change such laws, whatever they may be. Black, indefensible, atrocious as it is, it seems to me no strange product of the general selfishness of the world. All around in society, *within* both you and me, I see a spirit cherished, whose offspring it really is. Our responsibility respecting it is not defined, or measured, by our direct implication in any laws which seem to uphold it. A spirit must come which is ready to sacrifice all wealth, all opportunities for gain or power, at the command of simple justice, before the chain can be entirely broken. Your life does not teach the slave-holder *that*, in a power which consumes injustice from its presence. The tide of Christian feeling hath not risen high enough to sweep this iniquity away. And whosoever fails to diffuse that redeeming power in his life, aids in rivetting the chain. It is not enough to plead in *words* for Freedom, to pray for the destruction of all Oppression, when the spirit of self-sacrifice, the life of the Christ of God, does not go out from our sphere of action



continually. The life then preaches down the only redeeming spirit, more rapidly than any words can preach it up. A vast, a tremendous change must be produced, before I shall see this sure coming of the Lord. 7/

But I hasten to say, that I draw a reason for joy, from these circumstances which many call a reason for despair. These reformations progress so slowly, because they require an apprehension of the doctrine of Christian love, an overwhelming sense of Christian obligation for their accomplishment, which must revolutionize the thought, motive, action of men, in a thousand ways beside. The whole ocean moves to raise the tide at a single point. God is designing now one of those enduring regenerations of the race, whose results shall be unfolding themselves in all ages to come. An outward change in the world may be speedily accomplished. Its Christianization is the work of many generations. Believers ask to day, in an agony of doubt and fear, "Where is the coming of the Lord? War rages like a fiend of hell to desolate the world. Chains are galling into human flesh. We scarcely know, at times, whether Jesus, or his Crucifiers, shall really triumph. But what a work it is to bring a millennial glory upon a benighted world! We are not to sit down in despondency, because a work so vast seems to advance so slowly. Every moment of its delay, will be more than compensated by the greatness of its blessing. We are to deem it



the noblest privilege to do anything towards designs of grace which are so majestic. I suppose that the higher spirits of higher worlds, co-workers there with God, — whose purer vision must apprehend designs of love immeasurably surpassing our utmost thought — may find the same disproportion between their particular workings, and the beneficent unfoldings of mercy which they contemplate. Yet it is a rapture *there* to witness one sinner's repentance; to aid in any single ministry in a grace so infinite. In a kindred lowliness and joy, man must go to the lowliest work permitted him to do.

And this consideration directly leads us to one view which I desire especially to present. I recognise these great discouragements to our occasional hopes of a speedy moral revolution in a corrupted world. I remember that these stupendous crimes — Slavery and War — do not stand alone, disconnected from the world's general life. They are natural fruits of a corrupted tree. There must be a general uplifting of the spirit of the world, before they can be forever destroyed. But why do I remember this? Not for the purpose of questioning, or discouraging, one of these special movements for their destruction; no, not for one moment. No statement surprises me more, than the inference so often adopted, that, because these crimes are very deep, requiring a higher Christian life for their removal, we are to leave them unassailed; pleading only for that no-



bler life which may sweep away these, and all kindred sins, by its power. I adopt an opposite conclusion. I hear no abstract teaching from the Son of God. I see no method of awakening that nobler life, so true in philosophy, so consistent with the teaching of Jesus, as to speak directly to the world's particular sins. Thus is conscience aroused, and made a solemn preacher, through its condemning judgments, of the universal truth. Tell the world of its Slaveries. Arraign its Wars. Speak directly to its appalling sins. Then must it be led to that solemn searching of its own spirit, whose issue shall be the radical conversion of its heart. Assail its Conscience in the points open to your attack. Never let it forget its towering crimes. Let the wrongs of its slaves, let the butcheries of its battle-fields, be burned in upon its heart, like the quenchless flames of retribution. Then it will rest no more, until it clothe itself in the life of the Redeemer. I repudiate the doctrine of non-interference with such special sins, in its every possible statement. I will admit it, when I forget, that, while the special sin is unrebuked, men learn to reconcile its existence with the Christian law. Thus have they learned to suppose Slavery and War were consistent with this holy teaching of the Son of God. Thus have these crimes been left to corrupt the fountains of Christian feeling and Christian life. I will admit it, when I forget that Jesus proclaimed his eternal truths, the Gospel of inward repen-

tance, by searching applications of the truth to the special sin of every heart to which he spoke. I will admit it, when I find its advocates applying it themselves, in respect to the sins they especially desire to overcome. For myself, I say, God speed these great movements against the world's great iniquities. I think they are an ordained action in the Providence of God, as it unfolds its eternal truths. Human imperfection may be connected with them oft. And so, God knoweth, it has often darkened what men call the Gospel itself, by its unspeakable mistakes. Human imperfection stands in the Pulpit, as oft as in any other place beside. I turn to these great philanthropies in the deepest reverence. The name of Jesus is written on their brow. I deem his Church guilty in failing to cherish them in her bosom. I grieve to see this separation between the active philanthropy of the time, and the Church which is gathered in the Saviour's name. It is sad for both. It implies mistake in both. I know not which form of the religious life, when standing alone, is noblest. Yet, when I consider the call of these great Reforms, and the truths they teach, I think the Philanthropy, in its comprehensiveness, is more like Jesus, than the Piety bereaved of love, and leaving its wounded brother on the other side. I remember the test by which that Saviour judges the gathered nations. I remember the Apostolic word—"If any man say I love God, and hateth his brother, the truth is not in

him.” Let us not be driven to either extreme. Christianity shall yet be preached from the same lips, in the depth of its Piety, and the comprehensiveness of its Charity. “On these *two* commandments” — the love of God and the love of man — all religious truths depend. Christianity shall yet become, in this world, an image of the heavenly life; where the love of the Father is nurtured and shown forever, by entering upon eternal ministries of angelic mercy. // —

“The patient waiting for Christ.” The Apostle intended no inaction, no apathy, by that remarkable expression. It was an *Apostle* that used it. The Apostolic life of the early time, expounds its meaning. It implies an apprehension of the entire work to be done. But it was a spirit also that went to its labor, as if all could be accomplished in a day. The Apostles did not wait like sluggish men. They waited, in labors abundant; in perils and dangers; by becoming martyrs in life, and martyrs in death; in a devotion which imprisonment and suffering could never abate, and which inspired a world, as they laid down their lives in the name of Jesus. They waited like the Son of God himself, who went about doing good in a tireless energy, which was an image of the Eternal life of the infinite Father. No man can rightly use this expression of Apostolic trust, until, by an absolute fidelity, he is sure that his hope is only delayed by causes beyond



his control, in the Providence of God. Who of us may venture to take it upon our lips ?

Let us learn to wait as the Apostles waited, and then be disheartened by no delay of the Saviour's coming. One possibility of influence never fails. You may not seem to affect human laws. Governments may not heed your pleadings. But each pure life sends another purifying stream into the great tide of thought and feeling, and does something to give its every drop a brighter hue. That influence shall yet speak in the laws of Senates. The pure lives of single men have at length revolutionized nations. One great life is to regenerate the world. You and I may so work, that the gates of hell cannot hinder our success. We are always to stand in thankfulness that this is permitted us, even if we can do nothing more. I think it is the Saviour's forgiving prayer which has most surely melted the hard heart of the world. Dwell in the spirit of that prayer, and every sword shall be sheathed at last. Let men be thus faithful, and not in vain shall we wait for the Redeemer's coming.