

DIVINE SEPARATION

Preached at Eden Street Chapel, Hampstead Road, London, on Lord's Day Morning, 13th August, 1843.

"For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." —[Ex 33:16](#)

I THINK the transaction recorded in this chapter is the most remarkable of any that we find in the history of the children of Israel. Consider the circumstances and what preceded this divine interview betwixt Moses and God. It was after the children of Israel had made and worshipped the golden calf, after they had so sadly provoked the Lord by their base idolatry, that he suffers himself to be prevailed upon by the prayers of Moses, the typical Mediator, to shew forth his mercy and grace; and not, as he speaks, to "consume them in the way".

What was it, then, which peculiarly called forth these words from the mouth of Moses? The Lord had said to him: "Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" [Ex 33:1](#)

The Lord put, as it were, by this speech, the children of Israel into the hand of Moses. It is as though he had thus spoken: "I will indeed fulfil my promise. I said I would take them into the land of Canaan; I will do so; but I will do no more; I renounce the direct charge of them; they have so provoked me to anger that, though I will fulfil my promise, so that none shall call me an unfaithful God, yet I will do no more than I have promised to Abraham. Do thou take them up; do thou lead them; do thou receive this charge at my hands; for I relinquish it." Now this was the most cutting stroke that God could have given to Moses: for his soul was so deeply penetrated and possessed, as every child of God's is, with a sense of his own helplessness and nothingness, that such a speech as this from the mouth of the Lord seemed a death-blow to all his hopes; and it was this, therefore, that led him to plead so earnestly with the Lord that he would do **more** than barely fulfil his promise by taking them to the land of Canaan. He says, "If thy **presence** go not with me, carry us not up hence", as though he would sooner stay where he was, and die in the wilderness, without moving a single step forward; as though he would rather God did not fulfil his promise at all, than deny them his presence, and not go up with them.

And thus Moses, as the Psalmist says, "stood before him in the breach". [**Ps 106:23**](#)
He was the typical Mediator; and the Lord condescended to hear his prayer, and assured him that "His presence should go with him, and that he would give him rest". This sweet promise led Moses to put up the prayer contained in the text, that affectionate and powerful plea with Jehovah. "Wherein," he says, "shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

I think, in these words, we may find **four** distinct steps of divine leading poured out.

I.-The original source and fountain of all the blessings the soul enjoys in time or eternity, "**finding grace** in God's sight".

II.-The fruit of finding grace—that the Lord, **by his presence, goes up** with the soul.

III.-The **knowledge** of the Lord's manifest presence, both in the souls of those that receive it, and in the consciences of others. "Wherein shall it be **known here** that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight."

IV.-The fruit and effect of God's manifested presence—**separation**. "So shall we **be separated, I and thy people**, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

I. We will look, then, with God's blessing, **first**, at the original source and fountain of every spiritual blessing that the soul receives in time or for eternity. It is all couched in that one expression, "finding grace in God's sight". It was said of Noah, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord". [**Ge 6:8**](#) The rest of the world did not find that grace. It does not say that Noah obtained acceptance with God on the score of merit, or on the footing of his own good works. The only reason why Noah and his family were preserved in the ark, whilst the rest of the world were swallowed up in the waters of the deluge, was this, that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord".

(i) But the very expression itself will bear to be analysed, for there is a sweet vein of truth in every word of it. First, then, the word **grace**. What is "grace"? It is the free, unmerited favour of God in the person, blood, and righteousness of Jesus, manifested to the vessels of mercy. There is nothing, indeed, more easy than to pick up a few sound notions about **grace**; and perhaps there are few persons in this chapel who are wholly ignorant in their judgment of what "grace" means; but

when we come to a vital experience of it, to a real spiritual knowledge of it, as brought into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, then we see a wide distinction betwixt a mere notional acquaintance with grace in the judgment, and a spiritual and supernatural reception of grace into the soul.

The seat of free-will is not so much a man's head as a man's heart; and, therefore, a few notional opinions about grace in the head can never touch the seat of the disease. If I have a wound in my head, there is no use putting a plaster on my arm; if I have an affection in my heart, there is no use prescribing for a pain in my head; we must have the remedy just where the malady is. Now that wretched spawn of free-will, that proud opinion of merit, that miserable self-righteousness, which is the very element of creature religion, has its seat in the heart; and, therefore, out of the heart does it continually pour forth its poisonous breath. In order, then, to give a mortal stab to this self-righteousness, in order to pluck up by the very roots, and pull away the quivering fibres of this wretched free-will, which is interwoven with every nerve, vein, and artery of our nature, we must have the power of God to come into our heart. In order then, to understand, feel, and appreciate what grace is, we must first learn the depth of our ruin, we must know the plague and leprosy of sin, and thus come into that spot of which the Lord speaks by his prophet—"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores". Isa 1:5-6 To stand before God a mass of filth and corruption; to feel that it is almost impossible that God can ever look down with pity and love upon such a wretch; to believe that there would be as much mercy for Satan himself, if there were not a Mediator who has taken our flesh into union with himself-to have some of these painful feelings wrought into his heart will teach a man his need of grace.

Now, till a man has grace in his heart, there is no use putting a few notional opinions about grace into his head. His heart will still be fortified in free-will and self-righteousness, until a firm stab is made at the conscience, and until there is a real home-thrust by the sword of God himself into the soul, so as to cut asunder the very nerves and sinews of creature merit, and delusive hopes.

It is then no longer a mere parrot sound with him but it is the very marrow of vital godliness lodged in his soul, and sweeter to him than honey or the honey-comb. And if a man does not get hold of grace in this way, he had better be an Arminian at once, and stand forth in his true colours, a free-willer in head as he is a free-willer in heart, a Pharisee to the backbone, without the mask of a Calvinistic professor.

(ii) Now this grace is "**found.**" It is not earned, nor merited, nor worked into; but it is **found;** and if a man never "found" it, he never had it. It is stumbled upon, so to speak, as the Lord sets forth in the parable of the man who found the treasure hid in a field. **Mt 13:44** The man was not thinking about the treasure. He was, we may suppose, ploughing in the field. He had no idea that there was gold beneath the clods. But he finds it all on a sudden, in the most unexpected and unlooked-for manner, and for joy thereof "goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field". So it is with the way in which grace is found. It comes so suddenly, so unexpectedly, and so sweetly into a man's soul, that when it comes he is like a man who has found something which he had no conception of till he had found it. He had no idea what it was, nor how it was to be got, nor whence it was to be had; but when it came into his heart he found that he had a treasure there. The treasure which the man found in the field was much sweeter to him, because unexpectedly found, than if he had earned it penny by penny. Its coming in so peculiar a way, from the surprise and joy produced, doubled and trebled the value of the money. Thus, when grace visits the earth in an unexpected moment, and drops down like the dew of heaven into the soul, it is valued much more than if laboriously earned penny by penny. The sweetness of the gift is doubled by its unexpectedness, and by its coming in such a marvellous and miraculous manner.

(iii) The expression, too "**in God's sight,**" adds great sweetness to the word "**find;**" as though God's eyes never could see anything but grace on behalf of his people; as though, when he looks upon his elect, he does not look upon them as they often look upon themselves, but as they stand in Christ. When we look upon ourselves, we often see ourselves the most stupid, the most ignorant, the most vile, the most unworthy, the most earthly and sensual wretches that God can permit to live; at least, that is the view we take of ourselves when we are really humbled in our own eyes.

But God does not so view his people; they "have found grace in his sight"; he views them as they stand in the covenant of grace, "complete in Christ", accepted in the beloved "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing". Though he sees, so far as to chastise their sins and backslidings, yet, in viewing their persons, he beholds them as they stand in the holiness and righteousness of their Covenant Head. And thus they "find grace in his sight" the eyes of the Father being so taken up with the beauty and glory of his only-begotten Son, that his eyes being perpetually fixed upon Him, they are perpetually fixed upon his people as they stand in Him. And thus he does not see his people as they often see themselves, full of wounds, and bruises and putrefying sores but clothed in the perfection, beauty, and loveliness of their head and husband; and thus "they find grace in his sight".

II.-But what is the fruit and consequence of finding "grace in God's sight", as stated in the text? It is this- that God **goes up** with them- "For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us?" Moses was not satisfied with the **doctrine** that he and the people had found grace in God's sight. If Moses could have been contented with the mere doctrine of justification: if he had been a dry doctrinal Calvinist, we never should have had this prayer from his lips; he would have said "O, all is right; the everlasting covenant stands ordered in all things and **sure:**' God's people can never come short of the promised inheritance: they are all sure to get safe to Canaan; for God's promises must ever stand". But as he was not a dead, dry doctrinalist, he was begging and crying for the presence of God in his soul. He was nor satisfied with a notional opinion about God's presence, nor a doctrinal sentiment about finding grace in his sight- **that** would not do for his poor cast-down soul: but he cried, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence". As though he had said, "Let me die where I am, rather than go forward, if thy presence does not go with me".

And then he says, "Wherein shall it be known?" What proof will there be, what testimony, that we have found grace in thy sight? For, Lord, it does not satisfy our souls that thou tellest us we have found grace in thy sight, unless thou dost something more? Thou must go up with us". He appeals to the Lord himself, and asks him the very question, "Is there any other way whereby it can be known that we have found grace in thy sight? Is not this the grand manifestation of it? Is not this the way that it is opened up and made known to our consciences, in "that thou goest up with us?" You may depend upon it, then, that every soul taught by Moses' God, and blessed with the same spiritual power and presence which he was blessed with will never be satisfied with the mere notion, with the bare knowledge, that God's people have "found grace in his sight", unless the Lord specially manifest it in his heart and conscience, so as to go up with him experimentally in his soul.

But see where Moses and the children of Israel had to go to, and what a path they had to walk in, to get there. A waste howling wilderness lay before their eyes, where were fiery flying serpents, and perpetual drought, with a burning sun above, and a scorching sand beneath, in which they must inevitably and speedily perish unless the Lord gave miraculous supplies. All therefore-their very existence-depended wholly and solely upon this point, whether the Lord went up with them; if he did not go with them, no manna would fall from heaven, no water would gush out of the rock, and Jordan could not be passed, nor the promised land won. So God's people, whose eyes are spiritually enlightened, to see their own helplessness, feebleness, and wretchedness, are brought to feel, the Lord must go

with them every step of the way, and lead them, and shine upon them, or, with all they have known and experienced, they must utterly faint by the way.

What a death-blow does such a text as this give to all dead notional assurance! Who had ever seen the power of God so signally and miraculously displayed as these children of Israel? What an experience they had to look back upon! Can any notional professor in our day bring forward an equal or similar one? Brought out of Egypt with a high hand; carried by a miracle through the Red Sea, their enemies overwhelmed in its deep waters before their eyes; fed by daily supplies of manna, and drinking day by day miraculous draughts out of "the rock that followed them", might they not have folded their arms and said, "We are sure to get to Canaan. Why do we want the Lord's presence to go up with us? Our past experience is enough; and surely, we can rest upon the doctrine". No; Moses could not rest upon a doctrine, however true. He must have the Lord's felt presence to accompany him, or he would rather die, and not go a step further. And thus whatever God's people may have experienced in times past; if the Lord leave them, down they sink into all the deathliness, carnality, and wretchedness which they felt before. He must appear as much to their souls **now** for every fresh difficulty as he appeared to their souls before in former difficulties; nor can they take a single step aright unless he work in them "to will and to do of his good pleasure".

This going up of the Lord, experimentally with the soul, is in some sense a feeling of his presence, some clear testimony that the Lord is upon its side. But how was this brought about in the experience of the children of Israel? By one continual tissue of miracles it was that the Lord manifested his presence among them. It was not trifles that called forth his power, but such difficulties as nothing but a miraculous interposition could remove. And what a wisdom there was in God's leading his people through the wilderness! If they had gone through a cultivated land, where they could have sown and reaped their harvests, and lived on their flocks and herds, would God's miraculous interposition have been continually required? But their being led through the wilderness, "a land that was not sown," **Jer 2:2** made them want a miracle at every step. So it is with God's people spiritually and experimentally during their earthly pilgrimage. Could their own wisdom find out, or their own strength enable them to walk in God's way when found, they would not want to have miracles displayed on their behalf. Free-will, indeed, infidelity and unbelief, reject miracles as matters of spiritual experience. **Their** way is a reasonable way; but the way by which God takes his people to heaven is an unreasonable way. The way in which free-will and self-righteousness walk is a natural way; the way in which God leads his children is a supernatural way. The road which sense and reason treads, is a common-place, every-day,

turnpike road; but the path into which God guides his people is an out-of-the-way, hidden path, which the vulture's eye hath not seen, and so beset with difficulties, that well nigh every step of their journey requires a miracle to be performed. I do not mean an external miracle, such as Christ wrought in the days of his flesh, but an internal miracle in soul experience. There are, for instance, blind inward eyes to be opened, deaf hearts and ears to be unstopped, paralytic soul-joints to be strengthened, spiritual enemies to be overcome, powerful temptations to be subdued, a heart of stone to be taken away, and a heart of flesh given; and God's mercy and grace to superabound over all the boundings of sin. The people of God find every step they take so beset with exercises and trials, and they have such a dead, stupid, unfeeling, unbelieving, proud, ignorant, self-righteous heart, that, though they may see the way in which they should walk, they cannot, in their own strength, take a single step in it; and thus they find and feel that, before they can take a single step forward, God must give their feet and ankle-bones strength [Ac 3:7](#)

Before they can see an inch before their eyes, the Lord must give them spiritual eyesight; so that if they feel any softening, or melting down of spirit, or any sense of God's gracious presence, it is as much an internal miracle wrought in their heart as when God opened the windows of heaven, and dropped down the miraculous supply of manna for the children of Israel. Feeling, then, as all God's people do feel, what an intricate, dark, mysterious path they have to walk in, and how unable they are to take a single step forward, except as God takes hold of their foot, and puts it down for them in the road; and how helpless to lift up a hand, except as the everlasting arms lift it up for them; they are absolutely as unable to go forward in the life and walk of faith, without the Lord's going up with them, as the children of Israel would have been in the wilderness, had the supply of manna and of water been suddenly withheld.

III.-But we pass on to consider the **knowledge** of this. "Wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight". Moses pleads with the Lord upon this footing- "**how shall it be known?**" We find Moses often making use of this argument, as [Ex 32:12](#), "Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains", as though-I speak it with reverence-he would touch God's honour; as though he would say, "Lord, think of thine own character; consider thine own glorious name. What will be said against thee, and against thy faithfulness, if thine anger be hot against them, and thou consume them as thou hast threatened?" He appeals to God's jealousy for his own glory and honour; so that we may paraphrase his words thus, "Lord, thou hast brought us out of Egypt; hast divided the Red Sea into parts; hast led us step

by step up to this moment. Now, Lord, if we never reach Jordan, and never enter the land of promise, but pine and die in the wilderness, because thou wilt no longer go up with us, what will be said by thine and our enemies? How shall it be known that thou art our God? Egypt and Canaan will rejoice when they learn that we have perished by the way".

Now, I believe this is the way in which God's people sometimes plead with him. "Lord, what will the enemies of truth say if thou leavest me when I need thy special succour? If, when I come to die, for instance, thou dost not then support my soul, dost not smile upon my heart, dost not enable me to leave a blessed testimony behind, if I die in the dark, will not the enemies of truth rejoice!" Or, "Lord, if a temptation assail me, and I am suffered to fall; or if my besetting sin attack me, and I am overcome by it, will it not disgrace thy name and cause?" O, how the soul will sometimes plead with the Lord upon this footing, that it will be, so to speak, a stab at God's honour, and open the mouths of his enemies if he do not this and that for the soul.

Such was Moses' plea in the text. "For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest up with us?" The manifested presence of the Lord in their midst was the only satisfying testimony that they had found grace in his sight. And may we not apply this to ourselves? And I am sure that, if you are the Lord's, nothing but his testimony can satisfy your souls. I am sure nothing can ever satisfy me, either as a Christian or as a minister, but the Lord's own testimony in my conscience.

And this, too, is the way by which it is known, not only to yourselves but to others. For when Moses pleaded with the Lord he was not merely speaking of the personal enjoyment of God's presence in his own conscience, or of the manifestation of it in the hearts of God's people among the children of Israel; he was looking at it in a wider and more general point of view even than that, "Wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth"; that is generally and universally to friend and foe, Egyptian and Canaanite, as well as to the children of Israel. Why the enemies of truth themselves are to have an evidence in their consciences that God is with this people; an unwilling evidence I admit; an evidence in spite of themselves. They must see, by the Lord's crowning the word with his blessing, by his building up to himself a church that walks in all the ordinances of his house blameless, which speaks, lives, and acts in the fear of his great name, and adorns the doctrine in all things; by your love to each other; by the image of Christ stamped upon your

hearts, lips, and lives-I say, even our enemies must be silenced, if not satisfied, if such testimony of God's favour and presence are found among you. As David said of old, "Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed; because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me". [Ps 86:17](#) And, again—"The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish" [Ps 112:10](#)

IV.-But what is the grand manifested effect of all this work in the conscience? **Separation.** "So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth". The effect, then, of the Lord's going up with the soul, is separation-and, mark, universal separation—"from all the people that dwell upon the face of the earth". And what is the cause of this separation? Not only because they believed doctrines different from what the Egyptians believed; not merely because they outwardly worshipped Jehovah when the people of Egypt worshipped bulls, monkeys, birds, and serpents; not only because they had the tabernacle, and the sacrifices, and the ark of the covenant. These were, indeed, reasons for separation, but not the chief; not the one which Moses brings prominently forward in the text. That was the going up of God with them, his manifested presence in their assemblies, and in the hearts of his people. It is these alone which can effectually or vitally separate us from the profane and the professing world. Persons may, indeed, and do separate on other grounds. Some, for instance, separate from a place and people, because the doctrine preached by the minister does not suit them. It is a good ground of separation where God has not caused his own blessed doctrine of grace and truth to drop as the rain, and distil as the dew into the heart of the minister, and therefore he cleaves to Arminianism and free-will. But to separate merely for the sake of doctrine is what a man may do and be still dead in a profession.

Many separations and schisms, again, arise solely from party spirit. A church falls to quarrelling upon no point of truth or conscience, but on some unimportant trifle, or perhaps malicious report; and they become so embroiled that reconciliation is out of the question; and so the next step is separation; God's glory never sought, his honour never considered, but a wretched party spirit splitting asunder the church, and forming the only ground of separation. But this is, indeed, a most miserable ground. A separation to be upon good grounds must be a separation for truth and conscience; and not merely for truth and conscience, but also for the power of the gospel. Truth and conscience are, indeed, a good ground of separation if a church walk disorderly, or if it slight and despise either of the ordinances of the gospel; but, to make the ground thoroughly firm and sure, and satisfy the soul completely, we must have something more spiritual and experimental even than

that. The power and presence of God must have left the place before we can comfortably leave it. And this conclusion will not be hastily come to in a tender conscience. The fault will be again and again charged upon self before it is laid anywhere else. But when, after repeated trials, and after continual crying to the Lord that he would bless the word to our souls, and when, after going again and again, we find that no power or unction rests upon the ministry, but that all is barrenness and death, **that** will be a sufficient ground for separation from any ministry whatever.

And this is the way in which God's people, for the most part, are separated from dead professors. He brings powerful convictions of sin into their consciences, and creates a hungering and thirsting after felt pardon and peace, and a feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction with everything short of the power of the gospel in the conscience. They are thus usually internally before they are externally separated; they are often wretched and miserable as craving what they cannot obtain, and for a long time perhaps lay the charge on themselves before their eyes are open to see where the fault really lies.

But to separate will often be a hard conflict; and I confess I like to see a sharp struggle, for I know I had a strong contest about it myself. In these hard struggles we are brought to see and feel things which we never saw or felt before; and when, at last, the cord is effectually cut, you are much surer of your man, and the work is clearer in his conscience than if it had been done in a hurry. I have compared some people's change of religion to a man going to a river to bathe; he stands hesitating awhile upon the bank, and, having mustered sufficient resolution, at length jumps into the water; but he finds it very cold. And what does he do? Why, he sneaks out again, and crawls back upon the bank. So it is with many persons in respect of religion. They jump out of the world into a profession, or out of Arminianism into Calvinism, or out of the Church into Dissent; and when they have jumped in, they find it is not altogether what they expected. Trials, persecutions, temptations assail them; the thing is not so agreeable as they anticipated, and what do they but sneak out again, and stand cold and dripping upon the bank. But, if a man has been led on by degrees, having had "line upon line, and precept upon precept," fastened in his conscience; if the power of truth has been worked into him, grafted into him, planted in him by the hand of God, so as to take a vital root in his soul, he is much more likely to stand in the day of trial than if it had been a thing which he had received in a few hours, a few days, or a few weeks. The religion of the one is like a flower that has a root to it, and which grows in the natural soil; the religion of the other is like a cropped flower, a nose-gay which soon withers away, and is then only fit for the dunghill. "The root of the matter" is in the one, being watered with

dew from heaven; and, the God of all grace communicating increase; he will "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine". This religion will not be a deception, like some of the flowers sold in the streets of London; but there is a root to his religion, and therefore it will not be dried up by the sun of temptation, but, being planted in the house of the Lord, will flourish for ever in the courts, of his God.

We ought, then, to weigh well what is the ground of our separation, whatever it be, and feel well convinced that it is God's work on the conscience, and has sprung from His own teaching in the soul. Persons have said of me sometimes, "O, he will go back; So-and-so has returned after seceding as he has done, and he will do so too". I have sometimes used a homely figure in reply; I have said, "Did you ever see a stagecoach horse, who has been yoked to a coach for some years, until he has been quite broken down, and unable to do his work any longer- did you ever see him voluntarily leave his pasture, where he has been turned out to graze, and yoke himself to the old machine which has worn out his strength?" When a man has had a thing wrought into his conscience with divine power he does not easily forget those lessons. When what he has learnt has been flogged into him, such instruction abides with him, and he is no more able to get that truth out of his heart which God has lodged there, than he is able to get his heart out of his body. If planted there by a miraculous hand, it will abide there by the same miraculous hand keeping it there; as the Lord says, "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day" [Isa 27:3](#)

Wherever, then, there is a true spiritual separation, it is "from all the people that are upon the face of the earth", that is, from all that do not know the power, from all that do not experience or value the teachings of the Spirit; from all that have "a name to live whilst dead"; from all, whoever they be, that have not the power of truth lodged in the conscience. However near they may approach to the truth, however they may assume the form of godliness, if they deny outwardly or inwardly the power thereof, there must be a separation. And God will justify such a separation by manifesting his presence in the minister's heart and in the people's conscience; for his words are: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty". [2Co 6:17-18](#)
But, remember this, my friends-the inward separation must go first. There is no use separating in body unless you are separated in spirit. If any of you are sitting under Arminian teachers, or heady notional Calvinists, there must be a heart and conscience separation first, an inward separation wrought into your soul by the power of God, and that will bring about the outward separation.

Till we have the Lord's testimony in our conscience, there will be little felt in all our movements but bondage and death; but when we have the clear warrant and the plain handwriting of heaven in our hearts, we can separate ourselves as freely and comfortably from the great bulk of the professing church as from the profane world; yes, from all but the living family of God; and to them we shall cleave with affection of heart, saying, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" We shall be willing to suffer reproach and shame; yea, at times, "to endure all things for the elect's sake". We shall be willing to cast our lot among the people of God, and feeling a oneness of spirit with them, and a blessed knitting of the soul to them, we shall say "You are my companions; with you I wish to live, and with you I wish to die; for with you I trust my happy soul will live for ever, to sing the praises of the Three-one God".