

spreading forth on the right and on the left, according to the promise made to Abraham, and the blessings he was earnestly seeking for. I mention this to remind you of one fact: it is a great blessing, and one of the greatest that can be bestowed upon a mortal being, to receive the sanction of the Almighty, the voice of God to man, saying that he shall inherit eternal lives. The gift of eternal life is the greatest of all gifts that can be bestowed upon mankind.

When we step forth into other communities, or contemplate the past, and view our forefathers, what will be their situation? What their doom? I can tell you, and you will allow me to judge the matter; not, however, that I am going to judge them and pronounce sentence upon them; but their situation is plain to those who understand.

My father and grandfather—my ancestors were some of the most strict religionists that lived upon the earth. You no doubt can say the same about yours. Of my mother—she that bore me—I can say, no better woman ever lived in the world than she was. I have the feelings of a son towards her. I should have them—it is right; but I judge the matter pertaining to her from the principles and the spirit of the teachings I received from her.

Would she countenance one of her children in the least act that was wrong according to her traditions? No, not in the least degree. I was brought up so strict, so firm in the faith of the Christian religion by my parents, that if I had said, “Devil,” I believed I had sworn very wickedly, no matter on what occasion or under what circumstances this might occur. If I used the name of Devil, I should have certainly been chastised, and that severely. Would my father or mother allow any of their children to say, “Darn it?” Were they ever allowed to say, “I vow?” No. If we had said either

of these words, we should have been whipped for it. I don’t say that we did not say such things when out of the sight of father and mother; but if by any means it came to their ears, we were sure to be chastised.

Did I ever hear a man swear in my father’s house? No, never in my life. I never heard my father or any person about his premises swear as much as to say, “Darn it,” or “Curse it,” or “the Devil.” So you see I was brought up pretty strictly. My mother, while she lived, taught her children all the time to honor the name of the Father and the Son, and to reverence the holy Book. She said, Read it, observe its precepts, and apply them to your lives as far as you can: do everything that is good; do nothing that is evil; and if you see any persons in distress, administer to their wants: never suffer anger to arise in your bosoms; for, if you do, you may be overcome by evil. I do not know that I ever wronged my neighbor, even to the value of a pin. I was taught, when a child, not to take a pin from the dooryard of a neighbor, but to carry it into the house and give it to some of the family. Never did my mother or father countenance any of their children in anything to wrong their neighbor or fellow being, even if they were injured by them. If they have injured me says my father, let me return good for evil, and leave it in the hand of the Lord; he will bless me for doing right and curse them for doing wrong.

I have merely mentioned my own parents and their teachings to their children to bring before your minds the thousands and millions and thousands of millions of the inhabitants of the earth who have lived and passed off this stage of action, and the millions that are now living, eating, drinking, and busily engaged in the almost endless pursuits of mortal