

intelligent being on the earth, wisdom sufficient to comprehend this, and I do not want the Lord to come in the storm, the thunder, lightning, or whirlwind to tell it to me. I know that I must uproot the plants of evil that are within me, and in their place engraft plants of truth and virtue, and these will grow up within me to eternal life. Is not this reasonable? Is this not a true principle? Yes, and the whole of man's experience, science, and wisdom proves it. I may take, for instance, the beautiful machinery of my watch, and neglect to clean it or wind it up; I may take out the mainspring, the hairspring or the main cog-wheel, and then say, "Keep time for me," and it would be no more inconsistent than to say, "I have naturally within me, through the fall, the principles of death, and they reign within me, and I seek not to put those principles away from me, but wait for the Lord to manifest to me that I am born of him and he is delighted with me." I do not care if I live my whole lifetime without a testimony from the Lord; not that he leaves his children thus; he has never been so hardhearted, so austere a master as to leave one of his children with full purpose of heart to serve him and do his will without a witness of his approval. But, suppose he were disposed to do so, I am under obligations, on the principles of right and wrong, to forsake evil, and to plant within me every principle of purity and holiness, whether or not the Lord manifests unto me that I am his son and that he is pleased with me. I am not pleased with myself if I imbibe and cherish death and destruction; but let me cherish life and salvation, that that promotes the happiness of mankind, and life, peace, and tranquility within myself and all around me, and I shall have my own approval and the ap-

proval and blessing of the Lord whether he tells me so, in so many words, or not.

I am under obligation to take a course which will sustain life within myself and others, on rational principles, without any special manifestation from God. You can all see this; but some think if they do not receive some special manifestation from God that he has accepted them, they are rejected of him. Do you not all know that you are the sons and daughters of the Almighty? If you do not I will inform you this morning that there is not a man or woman on the earth that is not a son or daughter of Adam and Eve. We all belong to the races which have sprung from father Adam and mother Eve; and every son and daughter of Adam and Eve is a son and daughter of that God we serve, who organized this earth and millions of others, and who holds them in existence by law. Now suppose he does not tell us that he particularly loves us and thinks so much of us; or that he delights in Brother James or William, or in Sister Susan or Nancy more than in any other being on the earth, what of it? I do not know that I shall inquire of the Lord whether he loves me or not. I do not know that I have ever taken pains to ask him. I have professed religion somewhere near fifty years, and I do not know that I ever asked the Lord whether he loved me or not. I want to take a course that I can love purity and holiness. If I do this, then I love the Lord and keep his commandments, and that is enough for me. If he is not disposed to like me as well as he did John, "the beloved disciple," who leaned upon his breast on a certain occasion, and tells me to sit yonder instead of here, it is all right, I am as satisfied to sit there as here. I want to preserve my identity