

the anxiety of our hearts to obtain salvation. People who are sincere will manifest their sincerity in undergoing great tribulation, if necessary, for the sake of being saved. This mortal life is of small consideration, compared with eternal salvation in the kingdom of the Father. There is nothing pertaining to the things of this present life that is worthy of being named, in contrast with the riches of eternal life. Jesus, in speaking upon this subject when he was on the earth, asks this question: "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" There is nothing so precious, nothing of so great importance, as that of securing, in this life, the salvation of our souls in the world to come. Far better is it if we can gain salvation by passing through various scenes of affliction and persecution in this world, than to give way to its pleasures and vanities, which can only be enjoyed for a season, and afterwards lose that eternal reward which God has in store for the righteous.

It is true we look upon our future reward in quite a different light from the religious world generally. We look for something tangible, something we can form some degree of rational conception of, having a resemblance in some measure to the present life. But how very imaginary are the ideas of the religious world! I do not now refer to the heathen world, but to the enlightened Christian nations, the two hundred million of Christians now existing on the earth. If you ask these people about the future state of man, some will give you one idea and some another, all more or less, perhaps, differing from each other, but in the main they all agree, namely, that

it is a state entirely spiritual, that is, unconnected with anything tangible like this present life, an existence which cannot be conceived of by mortals.

You may think I am misrepresenting our Christian friends. I will therefore say that for many years now I have been engaged, more or less, in the study of religion, and have therefore read quite extensively the ideas of the religious world. I have not accepted the ideas of a few individuals belonging to the various sects, but I have appealed to their standard writings, their articles of faith, which are adopted by the various religious bodies and known as their creeds. For instance, in the articles of faith of a great many of the religious sects, an idea like this is set forth—that there is a Being who is entirely spiritual, called God, and that Being is described as consisting of three persons, and these three persons are without body, without parts and without passions. Such is the God that is worshiped by the Methodists—a people whom I highly respect, and whose meetings I attended in my early youth more than those of any other religious denomination. The three persons that compose this one God are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all of whom are said to be without bodies or passions; and in connection with this, one of the cardinal doctrines of their faith, they tell us that one of this holy Trinity, namely Jesus, was crucified, dead and buried, and that on the third day he arose again from the dead and ascended into heaven.

When I was a boy, attending the Methodist meetings, I, as many now do who are of maturer years, accepted sincerity for truth. But when I grew to manhood my attention was called to this article of faith; I tried in all earnestness to