

*THE AMERICAN PULPIT OF THE DAY.*

---

FORTY-TWO  
SERMONS

BY THE

MOST DISTINGUISHED LIVING AMERICAN PREACHERS.

---

FIRST SERIES

---



London :

R. D. DICKINSON, 27, FARRINGDON STREET.

---

1875.

**LONDON:**  
**PIPER AND CARTER, PRINTERS, GOUGH SQUARE, FLEET STREET.**

## THE USE OF FEAR IN RELIGION.

BY REV. W. T. G. SHEDD, D.D.

*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."*—PROVERBS ix. 10.

*"And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."*—LUKE xii. 4, 5.

IT is plain, from the texts of Scripture placed at the head of this discourse, that the feeling and principle of fear is a legitimate one. In these words of God himself, we are taught that it is the font and origin of true wisdom, and are commanded to be inspired by it. The Old Testament enjoins it, and the New Testament repeats and emphasizes the injunction; so that the total and united testimony of Revelation forbids a religion that is destitute of fear.

The New Dispensation is sometimes set in opposition to the Old, and Christ is represented as teaching a less rigid morality than that of Moses and the prophets. But the mildness of Christ is not seen, certainly, in the ethical and preceptive part of his religion. The Sermon on the Mount is a more searching code of morals than the Ten Commandments. It cuts into human depravity with a more keen and terrible edge than does the law proclaimed amidst thunderings and lightnings. Let us see if it does not. The Mosaic statute simply says to man, "Thou shalt not kill." But the re-enactment of this statute by incarnate Deity is accompanied with an explanation and an

emphasis that preclude all misapprehension and narrow construction of the original law, and render it a two-edged sword that pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. When the Hebrew legislator says to me, "Thou shalt not kill," it is possible for me, with my propensity, to look upon the outward appearance, and to regard the external act alone—to deem myself innocent if I have never actually murdered a fellow-being. But when the Lord of glory tells me that "whosoever is angry with his brother" is in danger of the judgment, my mouth is stopped, and it is impossible for me to cherish a conviction of personal innocency in respect to the sixth commandment. And the same is true of the seventh commandment, and the eighth commandment, and of all the statutes in the Decalogue. He who reads and ponders the whole Sermon on the Mount is painfully conscious that Christ has put a meaning into the Mosaic law that renders it a far more effective instrument of mental torture for the guilty, than it is as it stands in the Old Testament. The lightnings are concentrated. The bolts are hurled with a yet more sure and deadly aim. The new meaning is a perfectly legitimate and logical deduction, and in this sense there is no difference between the Decalogue and the Sermon—between the ethics of the Old and the ethics of the New Testament. But, so much more spiritual is the application, and so much more searching is the reach of the statute in the last of the two forms of its statement, that it looks almost like a new proclamation of law.

Our Lord did not intend, or pretend to teach, a milder ethics, or an easier virtue, on the Mount of Beatitudes, than that which he had taught fifteen centuries before on Mount Sinai. He indeed pronounces a blessing; and so did Moses, his servant, before him. But in each instance it is a blessing upon condition of obedience; which, in both instances, involves a curse upon disobedience. He who is meek shall be blest; but he who is not shall be condemned. He who is pure in heart, he who is pure in spirit, he who mourns over personal unworthiness, he who hungers and thirsts after a righteousness of which

he is destitute, he who is merciful, he who is a peace-maker, he who endures persecution patiently, and he who loves his enemies—he who is and does all this in a perfect manner, without a single slip or failure, is indeed blessed with the beatitude of God. But where is the man? What single individual in all the ages, and in all the generations since Adam, is entitled to the great blessing of these beatitudes, and not deserving of the dreadful curse which they involve? In applying such a high, ethereal test to human character, the Founder of Christianity is the severest and sternest preacher of law that has ever trod upon the planet. And he who stops with the merely ethical and preceptive part of Christianity, and rejects its forgiveness through atoning blood, and its regeneration by an indwelling Spirit—he who does not unite the fifth chapter of Matthew with the fifth chapter of Romans—converts the Lamb of God into the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He makes use of everything in the Christian system that condemns man to everlasting destruction, but throws away the very and the only part of it that takes off the burden and the curse.

It is not, then, a correct idea of Christ that we have, when we look upon him as unmixed complacency and unbalanced compassion. In all aspects, he was a complex personage. He was God, and he was man. As God, he could pronounce a blessing; and he could pronounce a curse, as none but God can or dare. As man, he was perfect; and into his perfection of feeling and of character there entered those elements that fill a good being with peace, and an evil one with woe. The Son of God exhibits goodness and severity mingled and blended in perfect and majestic harmony; and that man lacks sympathy with Jesus Christ who cannot, while feeling the purest and most unselfish indignation towards the sinner's sin, at the same time give up his own individual life, if need be, for the sinner's soul. The two feelings are not only compatible in the same person, but necessarily belong to a perfect being. Our Lord breathed out a prayer for his murderers so fervent, and so full of pathos, that it will continue to soften and melt the flinty

human heart to the end of time; and he also poured out a denunciation of woes upon the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii.), every syllable of which is dense enough with the wrath of God to sink the deserving objects of it "plump down, ten thousand fathoms deep, to bottomless perdition in adamantine chains and penal fire." The utterance, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" both fell from the same pure and gracious lips.

It is not surprising, therefore, that our Lord often appeals to the principle of fear. He makes use of it in all its various forms—from that servile terror which is produced by the truth when the soul is just waked up from its drowse in sin, to that filial fear which Solomon affirms to be the beginning of wisdom.

The subject thus brought before our minds by the inspired Word has a wide application to all ages and conditions of human life, and all varieties of human character. We desire to direct attention to *the use and value of religious fear in the opening periods of human life*. There are some special reasons why youth and early manhood should come under the influence of this powerful feeling. "I write unto you, young men," says St. John, "because ye are *strong*." We propose to urge upon the young the duty of cultivating the fear of God's displeasure because they are able to endure the emotion; because youth is the springtide and prime of human life, and capable of carrying burdens, and standing up under influences and impressions that might crush a feeblar period or a more exhausted stage of the human soul.

1. In the first place, the emotion of fear ought to enter into the consciousness of the young, because *youth is naturally light-hearted*. "Childhood and youth," saith the preacher, "are vanity." The opening period in human life is the happiest part of it, if we have respect merely to the condition and circumstances in which the human being is placed. He is free from all public cares and responsibilities. He is encircled within the strong arms of parents and protectors. Even if he tries, he

cannot feel the pressure of those toils and anxieties which will come of themselves when he has passed the line that separates youth from manhood. When he hears his elders discourse of the weight and the weariness of this working-day world, it is with incredulity and surprise. The world is bright before his eye, and he wonders that it should ever wear any other aspect. He cannot understand how the freshness, and vividness, and pomp of human life should shift into its soberer and sterner forms; and he will not, until the

“Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy.”

Now there is something in this happy attitude of things to fill the heart of youth with gaiety and abandonment. His pulses beat strong and high. The currents of his soul flow like the mountain river. His mood is buoyant and jubilant, and he flings himself with zest and a sense of vitality into the joy and exhilaration all around him. But such a mood as this, unbalanced and untempered by a loftier one, is hazardous to the eternal interests of the soul. Perpetuate this gay festal abandonment of the mind; let the human being, through the whole of his earthly course, be filled with the sole single consciousness that *this* is the beautiful world, and will he, can he, live a stranger and a pilgrim in it? Perpetuate that vigorous pulse and that youthful blood which “runs tickling up and down the veins;” drive off and preclude all that care and responsibility which render human life so earnest; and will the young immortal go through it with that sacred fear and trembling with which he is commanded to work out his salvation?

Yet this buoyancy and light-heartedness are legitimate feelings. They spring up like wild flowers, from the very nature of man. God intends that prismatic hues and auroral lights shall flood our morning sky. He must be filled with a sour and rancid misanthropy who cannot bless the Creator that there is one part of man’s sinful and cursed life which reminds of the

time and the state when there was no sin and no curse. There is, then, to be no extermination of this legitimate experience. But there is to be its moderation and its regulation.

And this we get by the introduction of the feeling and the principle of religious fear. The youth ought to seek an impression from things unseen and eternal. God, and his august attributes; Christ, and his awful Passion; heaven, with its sacred scenes and joys; hell, with its just woe and wail—all these should come in, to modify and temper the jubilation that without them becomes the riot of the soul. For this, we apprehend, is the meaning of our Lord when he says, "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." It is not so much any particular species of fear that we are shut up to by these words, as it is the general habit and feeling. The fear of *hell* is, indeed, specified—and this proves that such a fear is rational and proper in its own place—but our Lord would not have us stop with this single and isolated form of the feeling. He recommends a solemn temper. He commands a being who stands continually upon the brink of eternity and immensity to be aware of his position. He would have the great shadow of eternity thrown in upon time. He desires that every man should realize, in those very moments when the sun shines the brightest and the earth looks the fairest, that there is another world than this, for which man is not naturally prepared, and for which he must make a preparation. And what he enjoins upon mankind at large, he specially enjoins upon youth. They need to be sobered more than others. The ordinary cares of this life, which do so much towards moderating our desires and aspirations, have not yet pressed upon the ardent and expectant soul, and therefore it needs, more than others, to fear and to "stand in awe."

2. Secondly, youth is *elastic, and readily recovers from undue depression*. The sceptical Lucretius tells us that the divinities are the creatures of man's fears, and would make us believe that all religion has its ground in fright. And do we not hear



this theory repeated by the modern unbeliever? What means this appeal to a universal and an unprincipled good-nature in the Supreme Being, and this rejection of everything in Christianity that awakens misgivings and forebodings within the sinful human soul? Why this opposition to the doctrine of an absolute, and therefore endless, punishment, unless it be that it awakens a deep and permanent dread in the heart of guilty man?

Now, we are not of that number who believe that thoughtless and lethargic man has been greatly damaged by his moral fears. It is the lack of a bold and distinct impression from the solemn objects of another world, and the utter absence of fear, that is ruining man from generation to generation. If we were at liberty, and had the power, to induce into the thousands and millions of our race who are running the rounds of sin and vice, some one particular emotion that should be medicinal and salutary to the soul, we would select that very one which our Lord had in view when he said, "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." If we were at liberty, and had the power, we would instantaneously stop these human souls that are crowding our avenues intent only upon pleasure and earth, and would fill them with the emotions of the day of doom; we would deluge them with the fear of God, that they might flee from their sins and the wrath to come.

But while we say this, we also concede that it is possible for the human soul to be injured by the undue exercise of this emotion. The bruised reed may be broken, and the smoking flax may be quenched, and hence it is the very function and office-work of the Blessed Comforter to prevent this. God's own children sometimes pass through a horror of great darkness, like that which enveloped Abraham; and the unregenerate mind is sometimes so overborne by its fears of death, judgment, and eternity, that the entire experience becomes for a time morbid and confused. Yet, even in this instance, the excess is better

than the lack. We had better travel this road to heaven than none at all. It is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. When the saints from the heavenly heights look back upon their severe religious experience here on earth—upon their footprints stained with their own blood—they count it a small matter that they entered into eternal joy through much tribulation. And if we could but for one instant take their position, we should form their estimate; we should not shrink, if God so pleased, from passing through that martyrdom and crucifixion which has been undergone by so many of those gentle spirits—broken spirits, holy spirits—upon whom the burden of mystery once lay like night, and the far heavier burden of guilt lay like hell.

There is less danger, however, that the feeling and principle of fear should exert an excessive influence upon youth. There is an elasticity in the earlier periods of human life that prevents long-continued depression. How rare it is to see a young person smitten with insanity! It is not until the pressure of anxiety has been long continued, and the impulsive spring of the soul has been destroyed, that reason is dethroned. The morning of our life may, therefore, be subjected to a subduing and repressing influence, with very great safety. It is well to bear the yoke in youth. The awe produced by a vivid impression from the eternal world may enter into the exuberant and gladsome experience of the young with very little danger of actually extinguishing it, and rendering life permanently gloomy and unhappy.

3. Thirdly, youth is *exposed to sudden temptations and surprises into sin*. The general traits that have been mentioned as belonging to the early period in human life render it peculiarly liable to solicitations. The whole being of a healthful hilarious youth, who feels life in every limb, thrills to temptation like the lyre to the plectrum. Body and soul are alive to all the enticements of the world of sense; and in certain critical moments the entire sensorium, upon the approach of bold and powerful excitements, flutters and trembles like an

electrometer in a thunderstorm. All passionate poetry breathes of youth and spring. Most of the catastrophes of the novel and the drama turn upon the violent action of some temptation upon the highly excitable nature of youth. All literature testifies to the hazards that attend the morning of our existence; and daily experience and observation certainly corroborate the testimony. It becomes necessary, therefore, to guard the human soul against these liabilities which attend it in its forming period. And, next to a deep and all-absorbing *love* of God, there is nothing so well adapted to protect against sudden surprisals as a profound and definite fear of God.

It is a great mistake to suppose that apostate and corrupt beings like ourselves can pass through all the temptations of this life unscathed, while looking *solely* at the pleasant aspects of the Divine Being, and the winning forms of religious truth. We are not yet seraphs, and we cannot always trust to our affectionateness to carry us through a violent attack of temptation. There are moments in the experience of the Christian himself when he is compelled to call in the *fear* of God to his aid, and to steady his infirm and wavering virtue by the recollection that "the wages of sin is death." "By the fear of the Lord, men"—and Christian men, too—"depart from evil." It will not always be so. When that which is perfect is come, perfect love shall cast out fear; but, until the disciple of Christ reaches heaven, his religious experience must be a somewhat complex one. A reasonable and well-defined apprehensiveness must mix with his affectionateness, and deter him from transgression in those severe passages in his history when love is languid and fails to draw him. Says an old English divine, "The fear of God's judgments, or of the threatenings of God, is of much efficiency when some present temptation presseth upon us. When conscience and the affections are divided, when conscience doth withdraw a man from sin, and when his carnal affections draw him forth to it, then should the fear of God come in. It is a holy design for a Christian to counterbalance the pleasures of sin with the terrors of it, and thus to

cure the poison of the viper by the flesh of the viper. Thus that admirable saint and martyr, Bishop Hooper, when he came to die, one endeavoured to dehort him from death by this,—‘O, sir! consider that life is sweet, and death is bitter.’ Presently he replied, ‘Life to come is more sweet, and death to come is more bitter,’ and so went to the stake and patiently endured the fire. Thus, as a Christian may sometimes outweigh the pleasures of sin by the consideration of the reward of God, so sometimes he may quench the pleasures of sin by the consideration of the terrors of God.”

But much more is all this true in the instance of the hot-blooded youth. How shall he resist temptation, unless he has some *fear* of God before his eyes? There are moments in the experience of the young when all power of resistance seems to be taken away by the very witchery and blandishment of the object. He has no heart, and no nerve, to resist the beautiful siren. And it is precisely in these emergencies in his experience—in these moments when this world comes up before him clothed in pomp and gold, and the other world is so entirely lost sight of, that it throws in upon him none of its solemn shadows and warnings—it is precisely now, when he is just upon the point of yielding to the mighty yet fascinating pressure, that he needs to feel an impression, bold and startling, from the *wrath* of God. Nothing but the most active remedies will have any effect in this tumult and uproar of the soul. When the whole system is at fever-heat, and the voice of reason and conscience is drowned in the clamors of sense and earth, nothing can startle and stop but the trumpet of Sinai.

It is in these severe experiences, which are more common to youth than they are to manhood, that we see the great value of the feeling and principle of fear. It is comparatively in vain for a youth under the influence of strong temptations—and particularly when the surprise is sprung upon him—to ply himself with arguments drawn from the beauty of virtue, and the excellence of piety. They are too ethereal for him in his present mood. Such arguments are for a calmer moment and a more

dispassionate hour. His blood is now boiling, and those higher motives which would influence the saint, and would have some influence with him if he were not in this critical condition, have little power to deter him from sin. Let him, therefore, pass by the love of God, and betake himself to the *anger* of God for safety. Let him say to himself, in this moment when the forces of Satan, in alliance with the propensities of his own nature, are making an onset—when all other considerations are being swept away in the rush and whirlwind of his passions—let him coolly bethink himself and say, “If I do this abominable thing which the soul of God hates, then God, the Holy and Immaculate, will burn my spotted soul in his pure eternal flame.” For there is great power in what the Scriptures term “the terror of the Lord,” to destroy the edge of temptation. “A wise man feareth and departeth from evil.” Fear kills out the delight in sin. Damocles cannot eat the banquet with any pleasure, so long as the naked sword hangs by a single hair over his head. No one can find much enjoyment in transgression if his conscience is feeling the action of God’s holiness within it. And well would it be if, in every instance in which a youth is tempted to fling himself into the current of sin that is flowing all around him, his moral sense might at that moment be filled with some of that terror and some of that horror which breaks upon the damned in eternity. Well would it be if the youth in the moment of violent temptation could lay upon the emotion or the lust that entices him a distinct and red coal of hell-fire. No injury would result from the most terrible fear of God, provided it could always fall upon the human soul in those moments of strong temptation, and of surprisals, when all other motives fail to influence, and the human will is carried headlong by the human passions. There may be a fear and a terror that does harm, but man need be under no concern lest he experiences too much of this feeling in his hours of weakness and irresolution in his youthful days of temptation and of dalliance. Let him rather bless God that there is such an intense light and such a pure fire in the Divine Essence, and seek to have his

whole vitiated and poisoned nature penetrated and purified by it. Have you never looked with a steady gaze into a grate of burning anthracite, and noticed the quiet intense glow of the heat, and how silently the fire throbs and pulsates through the fuel, burning up everything that is inflammable, and making the whole mass as pure, and clean, and clear as the element of fire itself? Such is the effect of a contact of God's wrath with man's sin; of the penetration of man's corruption by the wrath of the Lord.

4. In the fourth place, the feeling and principle of fear ought to enter into the experience of both youth and manhood, *because it relieves from all other fear*. He who stands in awe of God can look down from a very great height upon all other perturbation. When we have seen him from whose sight the heavens and the earth flee away, there is nothing, in either the heavens or the earth, that can produce a single ripple upon the surface of our souls. This is true even of the unregenerate mind. The fear in this instance is a servile one—it is not filial and affectionate—and yet it serves to protect the subject of it from all other feelings of this species, because it is greater than the others, and, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest. If we must be liable to fears—and the transgressor always must be—it is best that they should all be concentrated in one single overmastering sentiment. Unity is ever desirable, and even if the human soul were to be visited by none but the servile forms of fear, it would be better that this should be the "terror of the Lord." If, by having the fear of God before our eyes, we could thereby be delivered from the fear of man, and all those apprehensions which are connected with time and sense, would it not be wisdom to choose it? We should then know there was but one quarter from which our peace could be assailed. This would lead us to look in that direction; and, here upon earth, sinful man cannot look at God long without coming to terms and becoming reconciled with him.

5. The fifth and last reason which we assign for cherishing the feeling and principle of fear applies to youth, to manhood,

and to old age, alike: *the fear of God conducts to the love of God*. Our Lord does not command us to fear "him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell" because such a feeling as this is intrinsically desirable, and is an ultimate end in itself; it is in itself undesirable, and it is only a means to an end. By it our torpid souls are to be awakened from their torpor; our numbness and hardness of mind in respect to spiritual objects is to be removed. We are never for a moment to suppose that the fear of perdition is set before us as a model and permanent form of experience to be toiled after—a positive virtue and grace intended to be perpetuated through the whole future history of the soul. It is employed only as an antecedent to a higher and a happier emotion; and when the purpose for which it has been elicited has been answered, it then disappears. "Perfect love casteth out fear; for fear hath torment" (1 John iv. 18).

But, at the same time, we desire to direct attention to the fact that he who has been exercised with this emotion, thoroughly and deeply, is conducted by it into the higher and happier form of religious experience. Religious fear and anxiety are the prelude to religious peace and joy. These are the discords that prepare for the concords. He who, in the Psalmist's phrase, has known the power of the Divine anger, is visited with the manifestation of Divine love. The method in the thirty-second Psalm is the method of salvation. Day and night God's hand is heavy upon the soul; the fear and sense of the Divine displeasure is passing through the conscience like electric currents. The moisture, the sweet dew of health and happiness, is turned into the drought of summer by this preparatory process. Then the soul acknowledges its sin, and its iniquity it hides no longer. It confesses its transgressions unto the Lord—it justifies and approves of this wrath which it has felt—and he forgives the iniquity of its sin.

It is not a vain thing, therefore, to fear the Lord. The emotion of which we have been discoursing, painful though it be, is remunerative. There is something in the very experience

of moral pain which brings us nigh to God. When, for instance, in the hour of temptation, I discern God's calm and holy eye bent upon me, and I wither beneath it, and resist the enticement because I fear to disobey, I am brought by this chapter in my experience into very close contact with my Maker. There has been a vivid and personal transaction between us. I have heard him say, "If thou doest that wicked thing thou shalt surely die; refrain from doing it, and I will love thee and bless thee." This is the secret of the great and swift reaction which often takes place in the sinner's soul. He moodily and obstinately fights against the Divine displeasure. In this state of things there is nothing but fear and torment. Suddenly he gives way, acknowledges that it is a good and a just anger, no longer seeks to beat it back from his guilty soul, but lets the billows roll over while he casts himself upon the Divine pity. In this act and instant—which involves the destiny of the soul, and has millenniums in it—when he recognizes the justice and trusts in the mercy of God, there is a great rebound, and through his tears he sees the depth, the amazing depth, of the Divine compassion. For, paradoxical as it appears, God's love is best seen in the light of God's displeasure. When the soul is penetrated by this latter feeling, and is thoroughly sensible of its own worthlessness—when man knows himself to be vile, and filthy, and fit only to be burned up by the Divine immaculateness—then, to have the Great God take him to his heart, and pour out upon him the infinite wealth of his mercy and compassion, is overwhelming. Here the Divine indignation becomes a foil to set off the Divine love. Read the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel with an eye "purged with euphrasy and rue," so that you can take in the full spiritual significance of the comparisons and metaphors, and your whole soul will dissolve in tears as you perceive how the great and pure God, in every instance in which he saves an apostate spirit, is compelled to bow his heavens and come down into a loathsome sty of sensuality. Would it be love of the highest order in a seraph, to leave the pure cerulean, and trail



his white garments through the haunts of vice to save the wretched inmates from themselves and their sins? O, then, what must be the degree of affection and compassion when the infinite Deity, whose essence is light itself, and whose nature is the intensest contrary of all sin, tabernacles in the flesh upon the errand of redemption! And if the pure spirit of that seraph, while filled with an ineffable loathing, and the hottest moral indignation at what he saw in character and conduct, were also yearning with an unspeakable desire after the deliverance of the vicious from their vice—the moral wrath thus setting in still stronger relief the moral compassion that holds it in check—what must be the relation between these two emotions of the Divine Being! Is not the one the measure of the other? And does not the soul that fears God in a *submissive* manner, and acknowledges the righteousness of the Divine displeasure with entire acquiescence and no sullen resistance, prepare the way, in this very act, for an equally intense manifestation of the Divine mercy and forgiveness?

The subject treated of in this discourse is one of the most important and frequent that is present in the Scriptures. He who examines is startled to find that the phrase, “fear of the Lord,” is woven into the whole web of Revelation from Genesis to the Apocalypse. The feeling and principle under discussion has a Biblical authority, and significance that cannot be pondered too long or too closely. It therefore has an interest for every human being, whatever may be his condition or his circumstances. All great religious awakenings begin in the dawning of the august and terrible aspects of the Deity upon the popular mind, and they reach their height and happy consummation in that love and faith for which the antecedent fear has been the preparation. Well and blessed would it be for this irreverent and unfearing age, in which the advance in mechanical arts and vice is greater than that in letters and virtue, if the popular mind could be made reflective and solemn in this great emotion.

We would, therefore, pass by all other feelings, and endea-

vour to fix the eye upon the distinct and unambiguous fear of God, and would urge the young, especially, to seek for it as for hid treasures. The feeling is a painful one, because it is a *preparatory* one. There are other forms of religious emotion which are more attractive, and are necessarily in their place; these you may be inclined to cultivate at the expense of the one enjoined by our Lord in the text. But we solemnly and earnestly entreat you not to suffer your inclination to divert your attention from your duty and your true interest. We tell you, with confidence, that next to the affectionate and filial love of God in your heart, there is no feeling or principle in the whole series that will be of such real solid service to you as that one enjoined by our Lord upon "his disciples first of all." You will need its awing and repressing influence in many a trying scene, in many a severe temptation. Be encouraged to cherish it from the fact that it is a very effective, a very powerful emotion. He who has the fear of God before his eyes is actually and often kept from falling. It will prevail with your weak will and your infirm purpose, when your motives fail. And if you could but stand where those do who have passed through that fearful and dangerous passage through which you are now making a transit; if you could but know, as they do, of what untold value is everything that deters from the wrong and nerves to the right, in the critical moments of human life; you would know, as they do, the utmost importance of cherishing a solemn and serious dread of displeasing God. The more simple and unmixed this feeling is in your own experience, the more influential will it be. Fix it deeply in the mind that the great God is holy. Recur to this fact continually. If the dread which it awakens casts a shadow over the gaiety of youth, remember that you need this, and will not be injured by it. The doctrine commends itself to you because you are young, and because you are strong. If it fills you with misgivings at times, and threatens to destroy your peace of mind, let the emotion operate. Never stifle it, as you value your salvation. You had better be unhappy for a

season than yield to temptation and grievous snares which will drown you in perdition. Even if it hangs dark and low over the horizon of your life, and for a time invests this world with sadness, be resolute with yourself, and do not attempt to remove the feeling, except in the legitimate way of the gospel. Remember that every human soul out of Christ ought to fear, "for he that believeth not on the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him." And remember, also, that every one who believes in Christ ought not to fear, for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

And with this thought would we close. This fear of God may and should end in the perfect love that casteth out fear. This powerful and terrible emotion which we have been considering may and ought to prepare the soul to welcome the sweet and thrilling accents of Christ, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," with your fears of death, judgment, and eternity, "and I will give you rest." Faith in Christ lifts the soul above all fears, and eventually raises it to that serene world, that blessed state of being, where there is no more curse and no more foreboding.

"Serene will be our days, and bright  
And happy will our nature be,  
When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security."