

in the spirit, in the other departments of the house of God, passing on from truth to truth, from intelligence to intelligence, until he is prepared to again receive his body and to enter into the presence of the Father and the Son. We cannot enter into celestial glory in our present state of ignorance and mental darkness.

I know that we have been taught from our infancy, and it is now a popular doctrine with all the denominations of the Christians of the nineteenth century, that, when the mortal tenement is committed to the grave, there is an end of all further progress in intelligence and learning with regard to this probation. In support of this idea, they advance the scripture, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Again, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

The worms have work to do in the grave until the body is reduced to mother earth. But the active, intelligent, divine organization that inhabited the body does not descend with it into the grave to work with the worms; but it goes to the spirit-world, and is much more busily engaged there than when it was a tenant in a mortal tabernacle.

Suppose, then, that a man is evil in his heart—wholly given up to wickedness, and in that condition dies, his spirit will enter the spirit-world intent upon evil. On the other hand, if we are striving with all the powers and faculties God has given us to improve upon our talents, to prepare ourselves to dwell in eternal life, and the grave receives our bodies while we are thus engaged, with what disposition will our spirits enter their next state? They will be still striving to do the things of God, only in a

much greater degree—learning, increasing, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

The people called Christians are shrouded in ignorance, and read the Scriptures with darkened understandings.

Do you read the Scriptures, my brethren and sisters, as though you were writing them a thousand, two thousand, or five thousand years ago? Do you read them as though you stood in the place of the men who wrote them? If you do not feel thus, it is your privilege to do so, that you may be as familiar with the spirit and meaning of the written word of God as you are with your daily walk and conversation, or as you are with your workmen or with your households. You may understand what the Prophets understood and thought—what they designed and planned to bring forth to their brethren for their good.

When you can thus feel, then you may begin to think that you can find out something about God, and begin to learn who he is. He is our Father—the Father of our spirits, and was once a man in mortal flesh as we are, and is now an exalted Being.

How many Gods there are, I do not know. But there never was a time when there were not Gods and worlds, and when men were not passing through the same ordeals that we are now passing through. That course has been from all eternity, and it is and will be to all eternity. You cannot comprehend this; but when you can, it will be to you a matter of great consolation.

It appears ridiculous to the world, under their darkened and erroneous traditions, that God has once been a finite being; and yet we are not in such close communion with him as many have supposed. He has passed on, and is exalted far beyond what we