

is possessed of a will, which is a propelling power within himself. Good and evil are placed before us, and we have to choose between them. Light and darkness exist; and if we are not influenced by the one power, we shall be by the other. When we entered into the fulness of the Gospel—into a sacred and holy covenant with God, we virtually agreed to surrender our will to him; we agreed to place ourselves under his direction, guidance, dictation, and counsel, that our will should be merged in his. Hence we are in duty bound, and it is for our best interest to strive to attain to that state of mind and feeling that we shall have no will of our own, independent of the will of our Father in heaven, and say in all things, "Father, not mine, but thy will be done." Let me speak, therefore, not according to any selfishness that is in me—not to speak simply my own feelings, but that the mind of Christ may be in me, that I may speak as he would, were he in my place this morning, and act as he would if he were in my circumstances. Nor have we the promise of our Father that he will dictate in us, unless we arrive at this state of feeling.

If our spirits are inclined to be stiff and refractory, and we desire continually the gratification of our own will to the extent that this feeling prevails in us, the Spirit of the Lord is held at a distance from us; or, in other words, the Father withholds his Spirit from us in proportion as we desire the gratification of our own will. We interpose a barrier between us and our Father, that he cannot, consistently with himself, move upon us so as to control our actions. He may set bounds around us and hedge us in round about, that beyond a certain point our will cannot be gratified. When he cannot influence our wills in any other way, by bringing a combination of circumstances to

bear upon us to circumscribe us, he may eventually bring our wills into subjection, like we would corral a wild horse, or one that has grown cunning and is unwilling to be caught and bridled, and keeps out of the way of his pursuers. They are under the necessity of taking him by guile, by alluring him into some large field or corral, to gradually hem him in, until he is brought into a small compass, where, before he is aware of it, he finds himself taken. Our Father operates in a similar way.

I might say also that our Adversary profits by a similar example, understanding the same policy to a degree. When he would involve us in his snares, he is careful to do it in a way we shall not know it until our feet are in. This arises from our limited capacity—from our weakness, and the weaker power becomes a prey to the greater.

Our Father in heaven is laboring for our exaltation; his work forever and ever is doing good: good is the part he has chosen; evil he escheweth. He seeks to unite and concentrate the faith and feelings of intelligent beings to improve them, to teach them the benefits of doing good, and the consequences resulting from doing evil, that the one principle tendeth to dissolution and to eternal death and disorganization, while the other principle tendeth to life, to perpetuate the organization which has already been effected, and bring it to the highest state of perfection; or, in other words, to secure to intelligent beings the boon they most earnestly desire—namely, the continuation of lives.

What desire has been planted in the human breast that is equal to the desire of life? What will a man not give in exchange for his life? To us, the words of the Savior—"For what is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange