

John Chap 14. "verse 8."

"Philip saith unto Him, Lord shew
us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

However inattentive to the impressions
of religion mankind may generally
be, it is probable that there is not a
human being in existence who has
not, on some occasions of his life, felt
the full force of the sentiment in the
text. — The wise and the ignorant,
the busy and the gay, the prosperous
and the unfortunate, the good and
the bad, have all their hours of deeper
and finer feeling in which their minds
rising above common pursuits, become
sensible that a Father.

in heaven must be found to
complete the measure of their
enjoyments, to alleviate their sorrows,
and to pardon their sins. The language
of ^{the text} Philip, therefore, My brethren, is the
language of human nature; and
it strikes upon our hearts as the
voice of a being, who, wandering
over a dark world, where error
misleads, and where vice betrays,
where misery pursues, and where
even prosperity cloy, lifts, at
times, an anxious eye to the heavens
which surround him, and exclaims
that all is yet well; that nothing

is yet to be complained of, if he
can find a Father. "Lord, shew us
the Father, and it sufficeth us." The
answer of our Lord to the request of
his disciples is conveyed in language
so lofty, and is yet so gentle and con-
-descending, that it could have pro-
-ceeded from no other than one who,
with all the feelings of the Son of
Man, knew that he was the Son
of God. - "Jesus saith unto him, have
I been so long time with you, and
yet hast thou not known me, ~~Philip?~~
He that hath seen me hath seen
the Father: and how sayest thou,
then, shew us the Father?"

on a future occasion, I propose
to examine these words as they
apply to him who spoke them. At
present it may not be an useless
employment of your time, if I point
out a more general answer which
the request of Philip might have rec^d;
an answer not indeed so applicable
to the circumstances in which he
stood, nor so satisfactory in itself,
yet more adapted to the general
circumstances of mankind, and
which has at least the advantage
of being ever ready at hand, if
we will but open our hearts to
receive it. —

There is no absolute necessity for
a messenger from heaven to inform
us that we have a Father; whatever
we see, or hear, or feel, brings us
assurance of this great and consolatory
truth; and the sun which blazing
above our heads, and "the moon and
the stars which he hath ordained,"
address us in words which "have
gone out through all the earth,
and to the ends of the world." — There
is surely no truth more obvious to
the human mind, than that this
magnificent universe which we
inhabit is an orderly and sys-
tematic scene.

that there is no confusion or disorder in the great outlines of nature; and the farther philosophy inquires, the more contrivance and artifice it discovers in every minute particular. - This is a fact, this suffices us. It shews us the Father; it shews us the mind by which nature is governed; and tells us, in language which cannot be misunderstood, that whenever we move, Wisdom embraces us. But it is not merely inanimate nature by which we are surrounded. The world teems with life;

and innumerable orders of living beings rejoice in the light of day. It is not design and intelligence alone which the volume of creation offers to our eye. - We likewise read in glowing characters the traces of benevolence; and the Father of existence is also the Giver of good. - Does ^{not} this suffice us, my brethren? or, if man requires more particular proofs that he has a Father, has he not received them? - Has he not been made but "a little lower than the angels and been crowned with glory and honour? Is he not made to have

dominion over the works of the
divine hands, and are not all things
put under his feet? Are not
the highest sources of happiness open-
ed up to him in the attainment
of knowledge, in his social affec-
tions, and in the practice of virtue?
Are these, and all the other en-
joyments of his nature placed within
his reach, and yet can he be blind
to the bounty from which they flow?
Can he, for a moment, suppose
that God careth not for him, or
that he is thrown loose upon a
world

where he is forsaken and neglected?
— True; he must often labour with
the sweat of his brow, but that
seeming curse commonly proves a
real blessing. — True; he is sub-
ject to pain, to sorrow, and to
death, but the rays of patience
and hope gild the clouds of his
heaviest day, and the best and
happiest affections of his nature are
called out under the salutary dis-
cipline of affliction. — The evils of
life are confessedly a dark part
of the divine administration; yet
we commonly

conceive it to be darker than
it is, and, unwilling at any time
to acknowledge that we require
chastisement, we are too apt to
think ourselves harshly dealt with
when we are in truth receiving
the most unequivocal proofs of
our Father's love. — "affliction cometh
not forth out of the dust, neither
doth trouble spring out of the
ground." — There are purposes fre-
quently indeed obscure, which the
most severe calamities are in-
tended to answer. — There is one
purpose which they always may

effect, the improvement of our
moral nature — Besides the qua-
-lities of patience and fortitude, which
are exercised only in the season of
sorrow and of danger, how often
does it happen that our religious
sentiments are for the first time
acquired, or are fully confirmed
in those trying moments alone? —
And, while the bounty of our
heavenly Father is too often
received with thoughtless ingra-
-titude, how many fly to him for
comfort, when they have no other
hope on which they can depend? —

Shall we speak then of the evils
of life as affording a presumption
that we have no Father who careth
for us, when it is apparent that
many of his children discover Him
only amidst the gloom of these
evils? — Is it a proof that our ^{Heavenly}
Father desires not our good, because
he desires that we should find our
good only in finding out him? —

The enquiry, then, which man on
some occasions so earnestly makes,
may receive an easy answer. "Shew
us the Father," we say, "and it
suspecteth us." The answer is,

you behold him; not, indeed,
face to face, for can man look
on God and live? but you see him
in the manner best adapted to
your feeble powers, to the station
which you hold among his crea-
tures. You behold him in his works,
in the happiness of the beings which
he has formed; in the course of
human affairs; even in the midst
of your affliction. Does not this
suffice you? Is it not enough
to inspire us with gratitude, to
dispel doubt, to enjoy resignation
to awaken hope, and confirm
font —

What proofs or evidences indeed
can we desire? Because God does
not make himself more fully
known to us, shall we not thank-
fully receive the knowledge which
we have? Is it not an immense
privilege of our being that we know
any thing of the Father at all; and,
when we consider the prodigious
disproportion between the Creator
and the creature, how wonderful
is even that little knowledge which
we possess? How much this know-
ledge has been improved by the

revelation of Christ, I propose
hereafter to explain: but, at present
can we be deaf to the voice
of nature herself? — and is it
possible that we should not be-
hold her august form rising
and addressing us in the very
same words of reproof with which
our blessed Lord addressed his
disciple? "Have I been so long
time with you, and yet have ye
not known me? He that hath
seen me hath seen the Father;
and how say ye, thou, shew us the
Father? —

Men are no longer satisfied with surveying the outward appearances of things; they follow nature into her deepest recesses; and look in the material system and in the course of human affairs, they are eager to explore those leading and general laws, by which many detached and apparently contradictory particulars may be connected and reconciled. — The attempt is great and worthy of man; and the success which it has met with in every department of human

Knowledge encourages him to proceed. Yet why should it have happened, that the most of all the occupations in which the mind of man can be engaged, should ever be suspected to have any alliance with the lowest and most degrading imagination which he can form; and why should those whose great object it is to elucidate the fair volume of creation, while, with one hand, they point to the order and wisdom which it displays, be supposed capable

of forming the vain and impious
design to blot out, with the other,
the name of its gracious author?—
Why should Philosophy and Religion
which are so closely joined, ever be
imagined capable of division; or
why should those who are followers
of the one ever miss the path which
leads them to the other?— It is
sad to think that "offences have
come"— "But we to those by
whom the offence cometh!" May
that paternal arm which has
hitherto been

held over us, still cover our heads
with its protecting shield. Yet
the decree may have gone forth
and the hand-cutting may al-
ready have appeared upon the
wall.— "Thou, too, hast been
weighed in the balance, and art
found wanting".— These reflections
call upon us all to be serious.—
They call upon those who are ad-
vanced in life to root out from
their minds every sentiment or
opinion which may oppose itself
to the knowledge of God, to open
their hearts

and to contemplate, with renewed
spirits, that mighty display of
wisdom and love which everywhere
surrounds them. — If they have not
yet known the Father, these re-
flections call upon them to know
him now; and they send them
not to any hidden fountain of
knowledge, to any dark inquiry,
but to that book of nature which
is open to every eye, and which
many are so curious to explore. —
Parents are called upon to in-
-press these principles ~~affix~~ on the

hearts of the young; — "to shew
them the Father." — and while
they supply them with the means
of instruction in every branch of
liberal knowledge, to point out
to them those traces of wisdom
and benevolence in nature, of
which all science is full, and
without which the perception of
which all science is unsatisfac-
-tory and dead. — Teach ^{them} ~~your~~
~~children~~ to have minds supe-
-rior to that miserable folly

which would represent religion
as the refuge only of the weak and
ignorant; shew them, by your own
example, and by the examples
of the great and good in every age,
that it is ^{the} true source from whence
proceeds every thing that is good.
inspire them above all things, with
the love of God; "shew them the Father
and that will suffice them". — And
let us all pray unto God, that he
will send us all things that be
needful, both for our souls and
bodies,

and that he will be merciful
unto us, and forgive us our sins;
and that it will please him to
save and defend us in all dangers,
and that he will keep us from all
sin and wickedness and from everlast-
ing death. — These things, by truth,
let us trust that He will do of
his mercy and goodness, through our
Lord Jesus Christ. —

Watertown { Oct. 15th 1837
Ridge Church }
Ridge Church } July 9th 1843
Watertown { March 31st 1844