

So far as his own happiness was concerned, the attractions of the heavenly world were vastly the more powerful ; for he says that to depart and be with Christ is *better beyond expression* — using the strongest superlative in the Greek language, and to which we have no phrase exactly corresponding, but which Dr. Doddridge renders by the words *better beyond expression*. When he thought of the glories of the heavenly state, and of being admitted to the immediate society of Christ, his heart was drawn upward by an almost overwhelming force. But when he thought of leaving his Christian friends and converts in a dangerous world, and that by his continuance with them he might help them in their spiritual warfare, and be the means of the conversion of others, he felt the ties that bound him to his friends, and his duty holding him to the world with an equal power ; so that, upon the whole, he could not decide in which direction he was more forcibly drawn.

The attractions of heaven and of earth are the two great influences by which men in all ages, and especially Christian men, are governed. Very few indeed are in doubt which is the stronger force ; for, alas ! most of us know very well that our hearts cleave to this world with almost irresistible impulse, while heaven seems distant and but feebly attractive. Still we shall find, now and at all times, some at almost every point along the scale between the extremes of entire devotion to the world and entire devotion to God ; and it may not be unprofitable to spend a few moments in drawing some illustrations of the mode in which these two influences operate from the laws of attraction which control the heavenly bodies, as they are developed by the researches of modern astronomy. Most of these illustrations are derived from the manner in which the earth, moon, and sun operate upon one another