

2. *By moving in and through the world under the influence of sound principles.*

We are required to *use* the world, not to flee from it; hence as it may be so used as to be abused, it is of moment that we should understand the true use. The question "What is right in itself?" is the first and most important one; and our principle ought to be, *to do this* at all hazards and in all circumstances. Nothing that can possibly arise can justify us in doing wrong. If the question be what is right *in the specific case* up for consideration, sound principles will teach us that the maxims and practices of this world are not the standard, but the word of God. There is one great and far-reaching rule of right in relation to all transactions with and conduct towards our fellow-men, with which you are all familiar, and the excellence of which commends itself to every man's conscience,—*"Do unto others as ye would that they in the same circumstances should do unto you."* This is simply another statement of our Lord's summary of the second table of the law,—*"Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself."*

Besides, the right in every case, whether regarding God or man, is well pleasing to God. He loves such a course wherever he sees it; and therefore we may pray for his blessing upon it. One of the modes of detecting the right course where there are nice questions to be decided, is to see if that decided upon or about to be taken, can be brought to a throne of grace with child-like simplicity of desire, and the divine blessing earnestly craved. It is a symptom of a false principle somewhere, if we cannot honestly bring our course before the Lord and pray for his blessing upon it.

Sound principles, moreover, have to do with avoiding as well as with doing. They sometimes require us simply not to do. We ought to talk well when we speak, but there are times to be silent. We ought to act with energy and perseverance in the discharge of our duties, but there are occasions when we are called upon to stop short, and do nothing in that direction. Withal, the Owner and Ruler of the world requires us to "avoid the appearance of evil." There are actions and practices, not wrong in themselves, that may have an evil aspect, may seem to sanction evil practices, and may thus act unfavourably upon