

the world, pressing after an imaginary point of acquisition which may never be reached, and which, though it were reached, shall fail to yield the expected rest and satisfaction. Let me warn young men particularly of the danger arising from worldliness, and of the illusive nature of the associations by which they connect wealth and happiness. Remember the order in which Christ has placed things connected with the life that now is and that which is to come. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Unsettledness in life furnishes another pretext for the neglect of church fellowship. Young men may not have arranged their plans of business, nor fixed their places of residence; they have it in view to enter upon an honorable relation in life, intimately connected with their future happiness; and they wish to be in a more settled state ere they can take the solemn step of fully incorporating with the church. Thus is the duty delayed, and we observe, with much regret, often delayed to a time when application for the privileges of the church assumes a doubtful character, having an appearance of being prompted more by a compliance with the custom of society, to avoid singularity, than an immediate sense of obligation upon the conscience. Let young men ask themselves, in the event of settlement in life, a just excuse for the neglect of other religious duties? If not, why plead it here, where, if comparisons were at all admissible, the obligation is the strongest possible? Will the performance of a plainly required duty to the Saviour, and an avowed relation to him, hinder settlement in life, or diminish the happiness of an honorable relation in prospect or in enjoyment? The excuse should be turned into an argument on the opposite side. Honor God, and he will honor you. Do your duty to Christ, and commit all your ways to him; his counsel will guide you, his providence order your lot, his blessing sanctify your relationship, and prosper your undertakings, his grace sustain you in trial, and his presence go with you at last to give you rest.

In meeting these and other objections which young men present to the claims of the church, the most charitable construction has been put upon their professions. But it is of the utmost importance for them to inquire whether, under all these difficulties and others, there do not lurk and operate sidiously excuses which cannot be presented in their own name, and of which the mind may not even have a distinct consciousness. Is it not possible that individuals may be unwilling to be brought to close and faithful dealings with their own minds, in the matter of their personal faith and piety? May there not be a secret, though unavowed fear that close connection with the church will cast a gloom over their minds, and be inimical to their happiness? apprehensions, than which nothing can be more unfounded. May individuals not entertain secret desires after liberties that are incompatible with the circumspection of character required by the law of Christ, or be indulging in practices that they know to be inconsistent with the Christian profession? Excuse me, if the supposition be thought severe; for I fear that in some, if not in many, cases, it is founded in truth. Such is the clearly revealed obligation of young men who acknowledge Christianity, and are professing to look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life, to enter into the fellowship of the Church; and such are the imminent dangers prevented