

ous, and the dishonest. They are not right within. They are not for God and for the truth, let it cut how it may. They are not manly. They do not bare their breasts to the knife. They do not say "Search me O God, and *see*, and *lead* me in the way everlasting." They do not make their objections as led by the Spirit, and as depending on the Spirit, but they make them in order to self-justification. Their object is not to vindicate God, but to apologize for themselves. It is with them, self, *self*, SELF, all the way through.

How does this come about? How does it occur that many professors of religion, many, many in this evil day are in this second class?

There are several reasons, but they all resolve themselves into one—the *fallacy of living on an old experience*.

If you talk with certain professors of religion, you always find them going back to a point in their history which they call their conversion. On this they stake everything. They take it for granted that their conversion was right, and therefore they are right. But what was the conversion? In nine cases out of ten a mere spasm, a convulsion of the unregenerate moral nature—a mixture of conviction, passion, and self-righteous resolution—the shudder of a serpent who is trying to right himself by straight lines. That is all.

Now think for a moment of the straight lines that radiate from God. Those straight lines never cross nor cut. Suppose you, my brother, are right—a little straight line—then you will live in God's straight line and no other can cut you. But suppose you are wrong, a crooked line, a serpent—for the serpent is the emblem of the crooked line in the Scripture—then the straight lines must cut you, and the more you twist, the more they must cut you, until you drop in inch pieces through the siftings of the pure white light of God. My brother, if you are resting on a false experience, you cannot be easy or happy under God's truth. In spite of yourself, you will doubt and you will suggest doubt—you will question and criticize and cavil. The only thing for you is to get rid of that experience—to sponge it from your record—to forget you ever had it, and to begin with Christ. *Dead men do not stir*. If ever you

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