

nation to sin, there can be nothing in him, independent of God, to oppose and overcome this inclination, and introduce a contrary one. To suppose there could, would be to suppose, there might be two opposit inclinations existing in the mind at the same time, and both predominant. But then, it does not hence follow, that there is nothing for him to do, or that nothing, which he does, can render his case more or less hopeful. The contrary is most evident. Where God sends the gospel, men are not left to themselves. They have not only the external means of religion, but also the awakening and convincing influences of the Spirit, which are common to all, who attend upon these means.—Hence the gospel is called “a ministration of the Spirit;” and they to whom it comes, are said “to have the Spirit ministered to them, and to have received the Spirit in the hearing of the word of faith.” Some who were stiff-necked and obstinate are charged with “having *always* resisted the Holy Ghost.” They must therefore have always had it. Christ says to the Laodiceans, “Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him.”

Under the impressions of gospel truth, and the awakening influences of grace, there are things which sinners may do. They may renounce the gross forms of vice; they may lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and frame their doings to turn to the Lord; they may read and hear the word of salvation, and they may call upon God for his mercy and grace; and the desires and prayers awakened in them by the word and spirit of God, they may hope, will be regarded. In this way, there is more probability of their saving conversion, than if they should cast off fear, restrain prayer, and give themselves up to work all iniquity with greediness. Of the Jews, it is said, “When God slew them, then they sought him, and turned and inquired early after him; but their hearts were not right with him, nor stedfast in his covenant; yet he being full of compassion so far forgave them, that he destroyed them not,” but prolonged their space of repentance. “There is a day when God may be found. In this day let sinners