

that at some time in those years to what my parents told me of my relation to God I said "Amen": that at some moment my heart and will responded without knowing it to the claim set up upon me by my loved ones, and I know at that moment the will of the child said "Yes" to the will of the King; and the King took the child into His kingdom and the child was born again. I say that without hesitation. I say it for the encouragement of others who may not be able to find a date when they were converted; but I say this to you also, Be very, very careful that you are converted. If you put the question back on me to-night, "How do you know you are born again?" I do not know how I am born again by my experience of thirty years ago, but by the present throbbing of God in my life and soul, His Spirit bearing witness with my spirit here and now. I am His, and none can deny me the witness of His Spirit. And I think there is nothing more dangerous than that people should build upon an experience thirty years old, and think they are Christians now because something happened to them then.

Wandering and Return.

What next? I wish I could miss the next one. In 1879, from its beginning to the end of 1880, while I was at school preparing for teaching, and beginning to teach, there came nearly two years of wandering from the Master; two years of heart backsliding; two years in which my Bible was shut; two years of sadness and of sorrow. I am not going into any detail, but I am bound to mention these things. I have a double experience about those two years in my life. To-night I know what they are—an ever-deepening sorrow, and yet an underlying gladness. I feel I would give anything if I could

blot out those years of wandering from my Lord. I know that He has blotted them out from His record, but I cannot forget them—the years in which by my speech and levity, and denial sometimes, I dishonored my Master. I would give anything to blot them out, and yet as a worker for God I am sometimes glad they are in. How I have been helped to help the backslider, because I have been able to say to the backslider, "When you go back He will welcome you. He welcomed me and took me back to His heart."

How did I come to wander? I was busy with my studies, but I was in connection with people who would not give me work. Just at that age of life, when the hand ought to be busy, and the heart occupied, and the life devoted to service, I was shut out from Christian service, and away from service. In the midst of busy work, studying, I lost my hold of my Lord. I do not say that service is the only condition of safety. I do not say but that under the circumstances I ought to have been loyal to Him and depended upon Him, and not upon service; but I mark a peril, and I want to say to you, Christian men and women, see to it that your young people are at work for God. I do not want anything to do with work for God that does not find work for your young people and take an interest in them. I got away from my Master because I was shut out from my Master's service, and I got into those two years of carelessness and heart backsliding; but thank God! not for them, but for the experience they gave me at the last of the tender heart of my King and Master.

Another word about those years. How did they end? These people with whom I was associated found out something about my backsliding and my wandering from my Master, and