

keenly that they are encouraged to pour oil into his wounds by proceeding to say that "that's not the worst of it," that there is trouble in such a section—that so and so thinks the minister gets too much pay—that no one knows what is done with all the money that is collected, and so on in this amiable fashion battering the minister with volley after volley of irresponsible folly so that unless he were somewhat stout of heart and patient of spirit, he would soon feel himself more hurt and wounded than the man who fell among thieves journeying between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Again, there is a class of men who go to church out of compliment to the minister—if they are not in their pews, their absence is to be understood as an awe-inspiring token that the preacher has incurred their displeasure. It will be a warning to him in future not to trifle with Behemoth. As we contemplate this class we feel that it would be a poor world without them. Where would the church be "without these people?" In amazement we pass on to the next class which consists of those who practise great self-denial in occupying a pew at all, because in listening to the sermon they are deeply impressed with the feeling that they could do it so much better themselves, if only they had the opportunity. For this class we have profound sympathy.

Instead however of enumerating the various and mixed motives which induce men to assemble in church it may be more profitable to direct attention to the object we have in view in assembling together.

Our object and aim should be to engage reverently and devoutly in the worship of the great name of God. We should feel that we are assembled not to listen to sweet music or to hear an eloquent sermon only, but to hear what message from God may be delivered to

us, and to engage in a solemn act of worship—we should seek to have our consciences awakened, our understandings instructed, and our spiritual natures revived. And to this end we should make due preparation for the worship of the sanctuary. If the minister should come unprepared, people would notice it and condemn it; but which of us condemns himself as he ought for appearing in the presence of the Most High in solemn acts of worship—in invoking His presence and imploring His aid while our thoughts are frivolous and vain, and our hearts unprepared for drawing near to Him with reverence. We should remember that in meeting together, we should seek to be spiritually impressed, and strive to avoid everything that might interfere with, or be repugnant to the sacred association of the House of Prayer. The greatness of the themes to which our thoughts are there directed should duly impress us. The subjects of inquiry are the greatest, the most glorious who can occupy the human mind—the Supreme Being, the consummation of a Good, Jesus Christ the Redeemer, the Holy Spirit the Comforter; sin, redemption, death, the future retribution, such are the questions to which your minds shall be directed when you assemble together. Who that approaches them rudely and unpreparedly can expect to profit. Divine Faith can rarely find an entrance into such souls. It is true there is such a potency in truth that sometimes it strikes the careless and indifferent so as to arrest the attention, and even change the whole course of their lives, but such cases are rare in comparison with the multitude of instances in which to dull ears unintelligent or pre-occupied minds, Wisdom lifts up her voice in vain. He then that would with profit engage in the worship of the sanctuary must needs purge his vision with "enphrasy and rue" in order that the divine light may shine into his soul. Preparation then is