

## LOOK TO THE FUEL.

A WORD TO PUBLIC WORSHIPPERS.

By the Rev. Richard Glover, M.A.,  
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We ought to try to make the most of the holy time we spend in the House of God. A habit of formal attendance is worse than useless.

Our worship should be real. Each congregation should aim to win the character of being a *thoroughly hearty one*. The services in our Church should be as far removed as possible from that unreality and freezing coldness which characterizes too many. Prayer, praise, and preaching ought to be becomingly *fervent*, so that devout formalists may be put to shame, and that true worshippers may feel that it is good to be amongst us.

To this end there should be something like *special preparation* for the sanctuary. Ministers, it is true, are chiefly responsible for kindling the flame; but the people themselves can do much to arrange and prepare the fuel.

And this is the meaning of my word of exhortation to public worshippers. I would ask them to *look to the fuel*. Don't throw water upon it. Don't bring it damp. Bring it into the sanctuary in such a state that it may be prepared to catch the spark applied, and to kindle it into a glowing flame.

You damp the fuel if you breakfast so late on Sunday morning that you have had no time, or little and hurried time, for private prayer or family prayer.

You damp it if, before coming to church, you secularize your mind by reading the Sunday newspaper; or if, on the way there, you converse on business or politics, or the news of the day, or perhaps the convivialities of the night before.

What wonder is it that a man is cold, and listless, and dumb in the worship of God, who has just previously secularised his mind in this way; or that he has made impression impossible by thus secularising it a little more?

If we would enter into God's worship with heart and feeling, believe me, it must be by the exercise of watchfulness and self-denial here! We must guard most carefully against all such temptations, and "prepare our hearts to seek the Lord God of our fathers."

It will not be difficult to the ministers or the choir to kindle the hearts of those who have done this to the work of prayer or praise; while such invitations as "Let us pray," or "Let us sing," will fall on other hearts as on ice or lead. The "doctrine" from the pulpit, too, will, through the warm atmosphere of congregational devoutness, "distil as the dew on the tender grass"; while the chill mists of formality will make it "come down as hail on the forest."

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