

portance. Time is short, and life uncertain. I urge you then to settle TO-DAY this question if it is not yet settled. Be not careless. Be not deceived. Your everlasting blessing and happiness, or your eternal shame and misery, hang in the balance. God calls to-day. The Saviour waits upon you. The Spirit strives. But this may be the last opportunity, the last earnest appeal. There may be but one step between you and death. (1 Sam. xx. 3.) You may be standing upon the very last inch of time, and at the verge of eternity. A God of love and grace, "not willing that any should perish," calls you, my reader, my friend. In spirit I place my hand upon your shoulder and ask that you will make this day, this hour, this moment, be the time of your turning to Christ.

"Behold, now is the accepted time : behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow : though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is. i. 18).—A. E. B.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH AND WHAT IS ITS END.

We look around and we see what is called the church. We see great buildings, powerful organizations, societies, committies, ecclesiastics, and a great deal of what is called church work. We see many people whom we know are real believers in Christ connected with many of these churches, but we also see an ever increasing number of people who are

plainly enough unsaved, worldly men and women, people whose lives show that they are not christians at all. We see things done by what are known as churches which are most thoroughly unchristian, and what is worst of all, we see real genuine infidelity under the specious guise of criticism fast becoming fully established in the midst of this which is called the church. And when we go back through the centuries, we see in the history of that which professed to be the church many of these same characteristics, only it is growing worse very fast.

We turn away from all this sad and painful scene to the Word of God. What do we find there? The truth. In Scripture there is the truth as to our path in the midst of this scene.

As you look into Scripture you will find that Scripture is the most wonderful Book on earth, and that it holds up the church as being the most blessed and glorious company of people on earth, yet at the same time a tried, tempted, persecuted, and despised people. Notice some facts or truths which are made plain in the Word :

1. The church is distinct from both the Jews and the world or Gentiles. God has given to us this division in 1 Cor. x. 32 : Jew, Greek or Gentile, and Church of God. Before the Church was formed there was only Jew and Gentile, Rom. viii. 9 ; 1 Cor. xii. 13, in which passages we have precisely the same expressions as in 1 Cor. x. 32, and also in Rom. x. 12 ; Gal. iii. 28 ; Col. iii. 11 ; 1 Cor. i. 24.
2. The Church is the body of Christ, that is, to enable us to un-