

while they are really indulging a bad state of mind, and setting a dangerous example to others. And in matters of personal self-indulgence there is often a compromise of this kind made with sin, instead of a complete renouncing of it, which as long as it remains will make us weak in what is good, and keep us on the borders of known sin.

Sometimes sin will leave upon us a habit of holding to nothing, and never keeping the same mind for any length of time. This comes of that double-mindedness which St. James mentions as a great fault, when we have been trying to serve two masters, and so have not held fast to Him whose will ought always to be our rule of life. If repentance is not very thorough, these unstable ways are likely to remain with us in many things; and whenever they are found they are at least a sign that something is not right, and leaving them off will be a step toward regaining what we have lost by sin.

Sometimes it will stay by us in the shape of hard thoughts of others, or readiness to think evil of them, or again in envious, grudging ways, which keep us from showing true Christian love to them, even when they do not amount to wilful and deadly sin. A very deep and thorough repentance searches these out, but the common repentance of half-worldly Christians leaves them very nearly where it found them, and needs many sharp trials at God's hand to purge them out.