

quently vacant in the "habitation of God's house, the place where his honour dwelleth."

Abundant illustrations of the truth of these remarks can be furnished by the records of any christian society. How many examples do these records furnish of persons who once made a plausible profession; with apparent heartiness gave themselves to the Lord and his people, and vowed to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. But where are they now? And this is just what might be expected. It is the natural result of that law of decay which operates in the *moral* as well as the *physical* world. And such a process will go on in the case of every dead professor—unless divine grace prevent—until no more shall be seen of his profession, than of the dead body, after it has slumbered for years in the dust, and been mingled with its kindred clay.

4. The body without the spirit, or the dead body, is *useless*.

Of what use is the tongue that cannot speak, the eye that cannot see, the hand that cannot handle, or the foot that cannot walk? Of what use is the elaborate mechanism of the human frame that has no motive power to impel it to action? And of what utility is a faith without works, a religion without life? Of what use to the *professor* himself is a religion that can bring no peace to the conscience, or joy to the heart, that can neither justify nor sanctify, that can neither work by love, nor purify the heart, nor overcome the world, that can neither secure the hundred fold in the present time, or, in the world to come, life everlasting? And, then, of what use to *others* is a religion that prompts to no work of faith or labour of love, that breathes no prayer, puts forth no effort, and makes no sacrifice that the ignorant may be instructed, the careless awakened, and souls saved from eternal death? Of what use to *himself*, or the *church*, or the *world* are that person's convictions that yield no fruit either to the glory of God or the good of man? "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Let all who have named the name of Christ, therefore, closely examine their state and character. Let them inquire what has their assent to the great truths of revealed religion done for them, in elevating them above the moral status of those who are strangers to their belief. Let professors of religion inquire as to what their *profession* has done for them. Has it made them better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better masters and servants, better in all the relations of life? If not, their religion is unprofitable and vain. Old Rowland Hill used to say that he would not give a fig for that man's religion whose dog and cat were not improved by it. Those who are yielding themselves to the same unsanctified tempers, and are in bondage to the same proud, selfish and worldly spirit, as in former years, may be persuaded that, though they have a name to live, they are dead—though they have on the livery of Christ, they are in the ranks of his enemies—and though they be professedly on the way to heaven, they are really on the way to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."