

Christian warfare, and to control the activity of the Church ;—and there can be no chance of success—Religion must perish. Its outward organization may survive for a time, but it becomes more than an ally of Selfishness—even more selfish than Selfishness itself. If the proverb be true, “The corruption of the best becomes ever the worst,” what must we think of a selfish Religion? “When the Light that is in us becomes darkness, how great is that darkness!” When Religion, the enemy of Selfishness, becomes selfish, where is the remedy?

2. But selfishness in religious worship is hurtful to us on a second ground, viz., *by the just judgment of God*. I before pointed out how loathsome among men are interested, selfish services, under the guise of friendship, and how certainly the all-knowing God must scorn them. I would dwell a moment longer on this point. Of old, by the prophet Isaiah (xxix. 13), did God complain of His people that “they draw nigh to Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me (*i. e.*, their worship of Me) is taught by the precept of men.” This last point our Lord pressed home against the Pharisees who reduced selfishness to a rule of religion, teaching their deluded followers that they might in one breath be unmerciful to their parents, honour God by an insolent cheat, and gratify their own selfishness; that by an unreal consecration of their property to God—simply by saying “it is Corban,” a gift to the Sanctuary—they were exonerated from doing ought for their parents, were not bound to give over actually the Corban, but might use it for themselves, “Thus” (is our Saviour’s comment) “have ye