

ment which is hindered by so doing is essentially spurious. Still it becomes us to take heed, lest some rash speeches lead us to oppose God in His work. If He visits us with revivals, we may expect crude statements made, and some wild-fire exhibited even by men under the teaching of the Spirit, though, like Apollos, they may need some one to show them the way of God more perfectly.

The danger specially is, that in urging personal responsibility and pressing for immediate decision and action, the everlasting electing love of God, the substitution of Jesus Christ in room of His people, the place and work of the Spirit, and the truth that salvation is wholly of favour, be not afforded due prominence. We need a revival of religion; God grant us an extensive one immediately! We have no evidence as yet of declension in our Church. If one might judge from the number of places of worship erected, and the general willingness to spend on religious objects, he would conclude that religion is surely prospering, and there seems to be a decided religious movement in some places. Yet when one looks at the character of our political representatives as a class, he cannot avoid feeling that religion is at a low ebb in our land. Or even when he steps behind the scenes in all denominations, and asks, not how we stand when measured by each other, or as compared with past ages, but as compared with Jesus Christ, he will feel sadly, that our religion needs more vitality. Our membership are not making (as a body) that progress in divine knowledge and conformity to the life of Jesus which they ought, and which would present them as living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men, and make others glorify our Father which is in heaven. It is to be feared that private and family devotion are often neglected, and that the religion of many is kept for Sabbath use, or it may be even restricted to the hours of worship, instead of seasoning the whole business and intercourse of life. The time of our Church courts is largely occupied by minor matters, while the state of our own souls, or of our congregations, too seldom form the subject of consideration, and it becomes us to rouse ourselves and others to seek more of the spirit of Jesus, that we may count it our meat and drink to do the will of our Father, who is in heaven, and to finish his work.

I do not suppose that we are behind others, and I hope that we are making progress, though very slowly. I have no sympathy at all with the idea, that what religion gains in expansion, it loses in depth. It must be so with any material substance, but it savours of infidelity to say this, of either the fertiliser of humanity—that river which makes glad the city of our God, and which flowing out from the mercy-seat—the throne of God and of the Lamb—carries with it, from the altar, the blood of atonement, and forms the sea of glass, mingled with fire, on which John saw the Saints; or of the effects which the Spirit produces. Religion, indeed, in our day, takes the direction not of contemplation, but of intense activity. There is contemplation and research, both profound and successful, but this is not common, and there is cause to dread, that with the tendency that there is to put everything in the crucible, men may, in their crude and hurried processes, largely lose the gold, and keep some baser metal; and we are not without some indications that this is being done. This only shows still more our need of a revival. Nothing else can save us. A revival in our families and congregations, so that we shall mourn, every family apart, and every individual apart—every one mourning for his own iniquities. Blessed be God, troublous times did not hinder the building of the walls