

case of the Seventh Day ? Can we expect the souls so wedded to the world for all the week, to be filled with Christlike Charity—with gushing love and earnest longings after holiness, since, when on the seventh day they do come into the presence of God, it is with hearts all unprepared. Can we, I say, reasonably look for earnest devotion under such circumstances ? No ; that were indeed to expect to “gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.” Alas ! how then can I help being depressed, as I contemplate on this my eight and fiftieth birthday, when the sands of life must needs be rapidly running out, such a cold and lifeless, such a Christ-dishonouring, and soul-perilling state of things prevailing amongst the people committed to my charge ?

III. For mark you further, my yet dearly beloved, that a closed church is the sure token of closed, or at least, of lifeless closets, and of family altars never erected, or at most, carelessly attended. Is it not so ? Am I not speaking the truth of your own experiences. To how much *earnest supplication*—prayers, in fact such as you can expect God to receive—do the bed-rooms of most of you bear witness ? Answer, I pray you, as to God. And for *family prayers* ; how conscientious is the regular attendance of every possible member of the family ? What sincere attempt is there made to realise the Words of Life, as the Book of God is read amongst you ? or to join at these family devotions with real thoughtful earnestness as at the Throne of Grace ? Alas ! alas ! I know that the mere one day of worship, with its small and irregular attendance even then, reveals the sad truth, as regards too many of you, of the coldness and deadness of these other more private duties and privileges. “Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” And when God’s House is obstinately and needlessly, in defiance of all warning and entreaty, closed on six days, how can you expect Him to water your souls, the first moment, that you deign as it were, to beckon to Him ? And be assured that without His special grace and mercy, neither your Sunday worship, nor your closet or family prayers will have any earnest faith, love, power, or unction. “God is not mocked.” I say nothing about your excuses. *Give them to God*, only see that they will stand the awful test of the last day when “every man’s works shall be tried so as by fire.” I humbly trust it is all right with some of you. Yet I am sure it is not, with the great bulk of my congregation. Alas ! alas !

IV. But our time is expiring, we must however, for one moment, see what true ‘Charity’ would cause us to do for our Brother. Ah verily, real Gospel Charity would feed our Brother, it would clothe him, it would visit him ; above all it would give him the Bread of Life. The sincere Child of God loves his brother *in* Christ, and *for* Christ ; hence his first question is not, Is he worthy ?