

1. Let me then say, for one thing, the doctrine of the text must be true, *because man is what man is.*

Now, what is man? There is one broad sweeping answer, which takes in the whole human race,—man is a sinful being. All children of Adam born into the world, whatever be their name or nation, are corrupt, wicked, and defiled, in the sight of God. Their thoughts, words, ways, and actions, are all more or less defective and imperfect.

Is there no country on the face of the globe, where sin does not reign? Is there no happy valley, no secluded island, where innocence is to be found? Is there no tribe on earth, where, far away from civilization and commerce, and money, and gunpowder, and luxury, and books, morality and purity flourish?—No! reader, there is none. Look over all the voyages and travels you can lay your hand on, from Columbus down to Cook, and you will see the truth of what I am asserting. The most solitary islands of the Pacific Ocean; islands cut off from all the rest of the world; islands where people were alike ignorant of Rome and Paris, London and Jerusalem: these islands have been found full of impurity, cruelty, and idolatry. The footprints of the devil have been traced on every shore. The veracity of the third of Genesis has everywhere been established. Whatever else savages have been found ignorant of, they have never been found ignorant of sin.

But are there no men and women in the world who are free from this corruption of nature? Have there not been high and exalted souls, who have every now and then lived faultless lives? Have there not been some, if it be only a few, who have done all that God required, and thus proved that sinless perfection is a possibility?—No, reader, there have been none. Look over all the biographies and lives of the holiest Christians. Mark how the brightest and best of Christ's people have always had the deepest sense of their own defectiveness and corruption. They groan, they mourn, they sigh, they weep over their own short-comings. It is one of the common grounds on which they meet.