

ruinous, and to exercise double diligence to keep your hearts and minds in the love of God. And there is another cause of alarm; for if it be true that in this life God's people shall have tribulation, then a course of uninterrupted prosperity may well lead to the inquiry, "Am I one of His people? Am I not deserted by God, and left to pursue the pleasures of the world as my only portion? Have I not grieved the Spirit of God?" Ah! while many are disposed to reason that all their outward prosperity shows the love of God, and indicates a degree of piety which does not call for discipline, and thus flatter themselves with self-righteous thoughts, I cannot but think that they take just the wrong view of their condition, and that if they had more of the Spirit of Christ they would tremble lest God had left them to themselves, and lest in such circumstances they should go back, if they have not already, to the beggarly elements of the world. This much is certain, that prosperity is attended with many dangers, and that a high degree of Christian attainments, as well as incessant watchfulness is indispensable, in order to bear it without injury. And unless you are uncommonly diligent in using the means of grace, and anxious to resist the corrupting tendencies of prosperity, you may be sure that it has already injured you, and unless there be some marked improvement you may confidently anticipate either a continued religious declension, or some fearful blow which will dash your earthly hopes like a potter's vessel.

4. The value of religion is poorly appreciated by the world.

I may be told that in dwelling upon such a theme as that of the text, I do nothing to recommend religion to those who are strangers to it, that it never will induce a man to follow Christ to tell him that in this world he shall have tribulation. This he will consider a fatal objection. But the question is not whether the Christian will have tribulation, but whether he will be happy or not in tribulation. I tell the worldly man that tribulation will make him wretched, but that it will make the Christian happy. Yes, happier than he could

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