

religion. Is not the Sabbath to you a dull day, the Bible a dry book, religious conversation unpleasant, prayer a task, and the company of the pious irksome? But heaven is all sabbath, all worship, all holiness—its inhabitants all righteous; and their talk and actions all have reference to God. Heaven is happy because it is holy, and because God is there. But if you do not love holiness and God, it would not be a happy place for you. You would wander about a miserable, solitary thing, damping the enjoyment you could not share, and polluting the temple in which you alone would be unable to worship. Therefore, unless born again, you will never enter. You cannot, I know, change your own heart, but the Spirit of God can. And Jesus died to obtain for us the gift of the Spirit. And this gift is freely bestowed on all who sincerely apply to the Saviour for it. O then earnestly pray for the Spirit of God, that you may be born again. Come to Jesus with the petition of David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And for your encouragement, think of the gracious assurance of Christ, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Read John 3:1-21; Rom. 8:3-9; Eph. 2:1-6; Psa. 51:10-12; Luke 11:1-13.

DO NOT LINGER!

READER—I give you good counsel this day. Do not turn from it. Do not be angry with me for plain speaking. I bid you give diligence to make your calling and election sure. I bid you not to be slothful, not to be careless—not to be satisfied with being a little better than the world. I solemnly warn you not to attempt doing what never can be done—I mean to serve Christ, and yet keep in with the world. I call upon you, and beseech you, I charge you, and exhort you—by all your hopes of heaven, and desires of glory—do not be a lingering soul.

Would you know what the times de-

mand—the shaking of nations—the uprooting of ancient things—the overturning of kingdoms—the stir and restlessness of men's minds? They all say—Do not linger!

Would you be found ready for Christ at His second appearing—your loins girded—your lamp burning—yourself bold and prepared to meet Him? Then do not linger!

Would you enjoy much sensible comfort in your religion—feel the witness of the Spirit within you—know in whom you have believed—and not be a gloomy and melancholy Christian? Then do not linger!

Would you enjoy strong assurance of your own salvation, in the day of sickness, and on the bed of death?—Would you see with the eye of faith heaven opening, and Jesus rising to receive you? Then do not linger!

Would you leave great broad evidences behind you when you are gone?—Would you like us to lay you in the grave with comfortable hope, and talk of your state after death without a doubt? Then do not linger!

Would you be useful to the world in your day and generation?—Would you draw men from sin to Christ, and make your Master's cause beautiful in their eyes? Then do not linger!

Would you help your children and relations towards heaven, and make them say, "We will go with you?"—and not make them infidels and despisers of all religion? Then do not linger!

Oh! let none of us linger. Time does not—death does not—judgment does not—the devil does not—the world does not. Neither let the children of God linger.

Reader, are you a lingerer? Has your heart felt heavy, and your conscience sore, while you have been reading this? Does something within you whisper, "I am the man?" Reader, listen to what I am saying—how is it with your soul?

If you are a lingerer, you must just go to Christ at once and be cured—you must use the old remedy. You must turn again to Christ and be healed. The way to do a thing is to do it. Do this at once—do it now!—*Rev. J. C. Ryle.*