

the first points, but for *you*, by the words of Jesus Christ himself, "The first of all the commandments is, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Is it that most Christians teach such strange doctrines that they go against your reason? You are not bound to believe them unless they are clearly taught in the Scriptures; and even then, if you cannot understand them, take what is plain and live by that; and wait till God by his spirit teaches you more. Be assured that he will teach you, if you give yourself up to be led by him. Religion does not consist in believing a creed, but in submitting the heart to God, and leading a holy life through faith in Jesus Christ. He himself declares, "The words that I spake unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Is it that you have no wish to be a Christian? that you do not care for all these glories that God has offered; nor fear the woes that he has denounced against disobedience? If so, yours is a sad case, for God accepts no unwilling service. Before the Lord Jesus will do anything for you he will ask, "Dost thou desire to be made whole?" Surely you are not so happy and satisfied with your state that you have no wish to improve?

Is it not that *you have no faith in Christ*? You believe fast enough all that relates to your own gain and pleasure, but you do not believe his words. But remember his awful language of authority, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: *the Word that I have spoken, that same SHALL JUDGE HIM in the last day.*"

And why have you no faith in him? *Is it not that you love and practise SIN*? You seek your own pleasure, in eating and drinking, in amusement, perhaps in horrible fornication or uncleanness, perhaps in cheating and covetousness, perhaps in lying and slander, perhaps in hatred and envy, perhaps in hypocrisy and double-dealing;—perhaps in none of these, but in some other evil thing that you do not dare to bring to the light, and yet will not give up.

*It is this that really keeps you from being a Christian.* Whatever it be, flee from it as you would from a raging fire or a flood of many waters. Pray to be delivered from it, as you would if you were drowning in a shipwreck. "*The wages of sin is: DEATH.*"