

he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand."—"If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."—"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Our Lord said of the whole church of the Laodiceans: "Thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." They were each and all *deceived*, and knew not their own low and miserable character and condition. There are in scripture, numerous cautions and warnings against being deceived on religious subjects. The highly inspired Paul says,— "Let no man deceive himself;" and uses the terms, "deceitful lusts," and "deceivable of unrighteousness."

In the subsequent portions of the text, there are two opposite descriptions of character and conduct set forth; and the final and eternal results as to each. There is the person who "soweth to the flesh," and shall reap the harvest of "corruption," or as is meant, the "second death,"—everlasting punishment; and the other who "soweth to the spirit," and "shall of the spirit, reap life everlasting." In the previous chapter the same contrasts are shown in the words,— "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

The figurative language of *sowing* and *reaping*, is strictly appropriate, and well adapted to illustrate and make deep and abiding impressions regarding the whole subject. To *sow* means following the pursuits, and transacting the concerns of natural life; and to *reap*, signifies *punishment* or *enjoyment* in another world. What gives the most awful solemnity and importance to the announcements of the text, is, that the great and omniscient God, the final judge and dispenser of *reward* and *punishment*, is intently looking on, and cannot be deceived; and will not be "*mocked*" with any *pretended*, instead of *real* services.

According to the order in the text, attention may first be given to ascertain who they are, who may be said to be "sowing to the flesh;" and next in describing the various modes and forms in which they perform the work. By "sowing to the flesh," is here