

220 Quiet Talks on Personal Problems

If the inner Voice has said to me not to do a certain thing, and I do, I break off the intimacy of contact with the One who is wooing me into the inner intimacies of His friendship. I become less sensitive to His voice. The next time I will not hear so easily what He is saying. It does not affect my salvation, of course. But then, who would use the friendship of Jesus as a convenience or as insurance!

If witnessing a play tends to make me get used to sin, and so think lightly of it, or to make impurity less repugnant to me, or to loosen to any degree my hold upon the highest ideals of life, clearly to me it is not good, and so it is positively bad.

There is with many a fear of being thought peculiar. Yet one of the fine, distinguishing marks of Christ's followers is that they are a peculiar people. That does not mean peculiar in an offensive sense, in criticising all who differ with us, nor in setting up standards for others; not peculiar in oddity of habit or expression of opinion; but peculiar in the purity of the life, the loveliness of the spirit, the sweet charity of forbearance and thoughtfulness of others, in modesty of bearing, and in the earnest willingness to help and serve.

But these questions can never be settled satisfactorily by a negative policy. It will not do merely to cut things off from without. They must be *pushed off from within*. Jesus said that when the unclean spirit is cast out of a man he comes back, and if the man is empty within