

towards you should not be suspended or weakened in your hearts. He speaks to you in His word, He judges the thoughts and intentions of your heart. Would you rather hear Him judge you, than ask Him to deliver you from what is too mighty for you? Or will you say like Israel, "I have loved strangers and after them I will go." (Jer. ii. 25.) You know that this thought does not come from Christ; you have not consulted him, although you may, perhaps, have dared to ask Him to bless your intentions and direct you. You know that the word judges what you are still keeping in your heart, and what has power over you; you are the slave and not the master of your thought. No, that thought is not from Christ, and while you allow it, you are neglecting God and His word. Well, you are bringing on you the chastening of God. God is full of mercy and has compassion on us and on our weaknesses. He is tender and pitiful in His ways; but if we are determined to follow our own will, He knows how to break it. He governs everything, and He governs His children in particular. He is not mocked, and what a man sows he will reap later on: (Gal. vi. 7.) The worst of all chastenings is that He should leave us to follow our own ways.

The second point I wish to lead you to remark is the government that God exercises with regard to His children. He warns them by His word, and if they do not listen, He interposes in His power to stop them, in order that He may be able to bless