

What met me there, gave me reason to fear that my religion was only a form. I have to own that I was cold and heartless in all that concerned the cause of Christ, compared to the feelings which I had, in worldly things, even of the most trifling nature.

*E.*—You have reason to be thankful, that you have been made sensible of that want of zeal and devotedness. You know the remedy. The Bible tells you how to act, and it gives the assurance, that, if you follow its directions, the evil you complain of will be effectually removed. You must go with that coldness and worldliness to the throne of grace, and there lay it out in the presence of God. He is more willing to give a new heart and a right spirit than you or any other sinner can be to ask for it. Plead with Him for Jesus sake—continue to plead and He will not despise your supplications.

*D.*—I do wish to be thankful that I was led to consider these things, while I still fear that I feel not that constraining love to Christ, which the Bible tells me must distinguish all his true disciples. I hope I have attained to this much, that I can securely say, "Enough and too much is the time that is past, to have wrought the will of the flesh," and that henceforth it shall be my aim to have my heart and life devoted to my blessed Redeemer, and do what my feeble efforts may to lead others to Him.

*E.*—Let it be your constant and earnest prayer, that God would strengthen these feelings and this purpose. The more wholly you are brought under this influence, and the stronger your desire to benefit your fellow-men, the more your mind will be in harmony with the mind and the spirit of Christ, and the more largely will the peace and the happiness of your soul be promoted.

*D.*—It is a heavy burden on my mind, to feel that the best part of my life was spent in opposing the will of Christ. I imagined myself as good and as religious as my neighbors, and with that I was content. I contributed to religious purposes as others in my circumstances, were accustomed to do, and that was all that concerned me. The plain truth now stares me in the face, that, whatever was the case with my neighbors, I was dead to God and the interests of my own soul. Old age is now creeping upon me, and should I be ever so zealous, it is but little I can do. If I could but redeem the years, that I lost in the follies of the world, I think I would employ them differently. O, that every young man and woman could see the misery, which mispent youth treasures up for the infirmities of old age, then would they be saved the bitter experience, that now grieves my heart. I acknowledge that I might justly be left to seek in vain, what I so long despised; but the blessed Bible tells me there is hope even for me.

*E.*—God's ways are not like men's ways. The penitent sinner, who pleads for mercy,

will not be asked regarding the past. "Who-soever will, let him come and take the waters of life freely." We should often reflect on the past, but the use we should make of every neglect of duty, and every act of disobedience, is to employ them as motives to urge us to greater diligence in availing ourselves of present opportunity. Sorrow for past sins will not benefit, but in so far as it serves that purpose.

*D.*—Is it not strange, that men who profess themselves the disciples of Christ, and declare that their hopes, for the eternal world, rest entirely on Him, can be indifferent to any command or direction of His, that is clearly revealed. Surely, it must arise from real hypocrisy in their professions, or else from ignorance of His will.

*E.*—There can be no doubt, that it must arise from either the one or the other of the causes you have mentioned. But whatever might be said for our fathers, who could not read the word of God for themselves, I do not see how ignorance, of what Christ wills. His people to do, can be pleaded as in any degree lessening our guilt, if living in disobedience. If any among us are ignorant of the obligations which rest upon us, it is because they do not wish to know them. The Bible tells us what Christ would have us believe and do, and it does so in language so simple and plain, that no man can be at a loss to understand. The man, therefore, who can read the Bible, cannot say, but he could know the life of Christ were he truly desirous to do so.

*D.*—How then can you explain the fact, that not only individual men, and esteemed too, as good and pious men, but entire branches of the Church, continue year after year in the neglect of some of the plainest and most solemn commands?

*E.*—You have asked me a question that I find indeed very difficult to answer. This much, however, is certain, whatever may be pleaded for such neglect from the peculiar circumstances of the parties, and the contracted and imperfect views of Christian duty, into which early training may have led them, that, just as soon as their attention is directed to that neglect, and their duty clearly pointed out, there can be nothing further pleaded in their behalf. If then, they treat the matter with indifference, they evidently disown the authority of Christ, and declare themselves to be none of His. There is no doubt, that a real disciple of Christ may thus from the effects of early training and example, be under the influence of mistaken views regarding some parts of duty, but the instant you point to the divine command, and convince that man that it is the voice of Christ that speaks, he will not only admit the duty—he will heartily obey. If he acts otherwise—if while he admits that Christ has assuredly given the command in question, he refuses obedience, or, which amounts to the same thing, evades—