

be assured that the most diligent search will be amply repaid. By this means you will become perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work. Search them daily—search them attentively—search them teachably—and search them prayerfully. Thus you will have the word of God dwelling in you richly, which by the teaching of the Spirit will build you up in the righteous ways of God.

But we would secondly exhort you to the important duty of consideration; many of us, it is too evident, live in the neglect of this commanded duty. It ranks among the first of those duties which precede a thorough reformation. Moses, who understood this duty well, and exemplified it by his refusing the honors of a state, and acting as his history relates—prayed and exhorted the people of his charge to consideration. "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." In order to obtain wisdom, and properly to understand this heavenly science, he sets them to consider their last days, their last end, and surely there ought to be much weight in this argument, when we recollect what has been the last end of many inconsiderate characters. We know that the sins of some men have been, and still are open before hand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after, that is, the eternal doom of some has appeared both to themselves and to others about them to be sealed; and that before their wretched spirits had taken their stand before the dread tribunal bar or judgment seat of Almighty God: Whilst others pass out of the world without these apprehensions; but their sins follow them to the bar, and like evil angels fasten upon them and drag them down to hell. Poor wretches, they did not dream of this awful end, and now they begin to consider when it is alas! too late.

God charged his ancient people with the greatest insensibility because they lived in the neglect of this as well as other duties. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider—Is. 1. 3. We would have you, brethren, to examine into the present state of your mind, and ask yourselves as in the presence of God, if you could die easily and contentedly as you now are, and if you find that you could not, (unless you be under some severe temptation) you may be assured, if the root of the matter be at all in you, you are in a very unfruitful state, and so bringing no glory to God, and doing little or no good to the generation in which you live. We would have you also to remember that the good works of some are manifest before hand, in the peace and quietness, and happiness which they experience before they bid the world farewell. It appears to themselves and to all about them, that God is with them, and they will soon be with God. Thus a reward is given them before they leave the world, for their works of faith and labours of love.

We would, dearly beloved, lastly, exhort you to abstain from every thing that might in the least degree mar your confidence at a throne of grace. Lay aside every weight and all your easily besetting sins, and run with patience your heavenly race. Forget also your own people and your father's house; and if this conduct of yours should displease them, God will be pleased with you, and that will do more than compensate for the loss of their favour. And what blessings will then be experienced. You will appear beautiful in the eyes of the King. And then will the voice be heard—Who is this who cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? Who is she that looketh forth as the morning? Who are these who fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Finally, you shall come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon your head; you shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

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