

generally read in private and in the family; religious books are circulated of the highest excellency, and put within the reach of the poorest. On thus taking a general survey of Christian activity, it does appear that the followers of Christ are not idle, that they are not indifferent to public duties, and to the just claims of eternity upon their persons and their substance.

The Church, as a whole, never was perhaps in any age, even in the times of the Apostles, externally in a purer state than it is at present. There never was a purer Gospel preached as is generally preached in the pulpits of the Evangelical Churches of this period; nor was discipline ever more justly or more faithfully administered than it is at present. We do not by this mean to say that in all things we are externally perfect. Far from it. The Gospel might, we acknowledge, in many instances be more simply stated and more directly and tenderly pressed home upon the heart and conscience than it is, and the office-bearers of the Church might be much more faithful in their personal dealing with the indifferent, the unfaithful, and the erring. We, however, would say, that looking at things in the general, there is much to satisfy the Christian heart. When, however, we turn from the general aspects of things to the special—from the figures and statements of public reports to the substances and the personalities which these are supposed to represent—we find, alas! much to mourn over, and little to boast of. When we analyze the personal elements of which the Christian community is composed, we do not, it is true, find any great defect in doctrinal knowledge or apprehension of truth in the abstract—and it would be hard to say of most that they were not Christians, or that they had not well grounded hopes of salvation through the crucified Redeemer; still we should find, as a very prevalent characteristic of the Christianity amongst us, a lack, if not a deplorable lack, of what we would term, a *personal realization of Christ*. Christ in us the hope of glory is not the prevailing, or very conscious, experience of many professing believers. Christ on the cross, Christ in the grave, Christ risen and ascended into His glory; all these things that are *without* us may be the grounds of much confidence and hope to the minds of many, while at the same time there is no sense of their power in the inner man—in “the heart of hearts.” Men do not, so much as one would wish, speak with that holy boldness of their faith, their love to Christ and the brethren, their hope of the everlasting redemption, their assuredness of the promises of God to them, and as we find was the custom of the Saints in Apostolical times, or in the times when the Church has been blessed with special outpourings of the Spirit. Now we would say that there never can be a living piety of sufficient life to do the work of God where there is not a personal realization of Christ, of which the spontaneous expression is, “Christ is mine and I am His.” Not until this takes place is there a living experience of a true and abiding *unity* to Christ, or is the conscious likeness of Christ formed in us. It is this personal realization of Christ which is the chief mark of all God’s *working men*, and of his distinguished servants. It has enabled disciples of old to speak boldly for Christ—to glory in His Cross, and to suffer for His sake. And only this same realization of the Saviour will enable any man to deny himself the comforts and the pleasures of this life, and to take delight in doing the will of God. Personal piety and personal dedication to God is the want of our Church, and that too among all ranks in an equal degree; among young and old, rich and poor, ministers and people. We except none, and so we call upon all alike to consider this matter, and to lay it well to heart, that such remedial measures may immediately be adopted as will rescue us from our dangerous slumbering and sleeping. It is not, let it be noted, wickedness so much that we have to complain of in the Church: it is rather a spirit of worldliness which threatens to dominate over everything spiritual—which, while it would by no means give up religion, but rather would