

to this miserable existence, as if they had no further responsibility, as if no suspicion of the wickedness of such spiritual suicide ever flashed across their minds.

Such conduct in any other connection might provoke a smile, but when it touches the glory of God, the culture of the soul, and the everlasting issues of eternity, it is enough to provoke indignation, mingled with profoundest pity. Oh, that a human soul can be so lost to its own glory, so blinded to its own interest as thus to play the fool by grasping at shadows, to the neglect and hazard of the eternal substance! You would not do it in anything else. You know that the "soul of the sluggard desireth and hath not;" you know that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" you know that laziness never thrives, and yet you neglect the most necessary precautions for the salvation of the soul. If Christians, you keep beyond the range of those associations, exercises and influences which nourish and invigorate the spiritual life. And what else can you expect but hunger and thirst and barrenness? Do not suppose that a change of minister will mend the matter. The most thrilling eloquence could only galvanize you into a spasmodic activity. Do you suppose that some great wave of revival can do the work for you. Religion is not a matter of impulse and excitement; it is a matter of conscience, and those have most of it who for conscience toward God try to make the best use of their advantage, whether they feel like it or not.

Do not say you cannot find time for this and that duty. You are undoubtedly busy, but you can be, and may have to be a great deal busier than you are now. If you cannot find time to think of God and care for your soul now, with a small family, what will become of you ten or twenty years after this with a large family?

If a small business now takes your whole time and strength, how will you manage with ten times as much to look after? But I shall not insist. You know the trouble is not want of time, but want of will. You know that the secret of your spiritual weakness and discontent is just that you have not yet overcome the reluctance and restraints of a corrupt nature, and thereby reached facility and comfort in the way of holiness. How long shall these things be? It may seem a small thing to omit morning prayer or stay away from the prayer-meeting on a stormy night, or to absent yourself from church because you have a head-ache or a fit of indigestion. One such omission is undoubtedly a small thing, but the causes of such omissions if due to bodily infirmity, have a strange ten-