

your present interests, is in suspense, you always feel anxious. If you have no control over the event, you feel more anxious. You cannot rest till it is decided. Suppose, for instance, that your property, your reputation, or your lives, depended on the verdict of a jury over which you had no control. You would not say, while they were deliberating, It will avail nothing for me to be anxious; I will therefore feel easy and unconcerned. You could not feel unconcerned: you would be anxious till the decision was known. To apply these remarks to the case before us: you know that God now commands you to repent, and threatens you with everlasting punishment unless you obey. You profess to believe that you cannot obey without the assistance of His grace. At the same time, you must be sensible that it is altogether uncertain whether you will ever receive this assistance; that is, altogether uncertain whether you shall perish in your sins, as thousands do, while few find the way of life. Now, if you really believed this, you would be in a state of constant anxiety until your destiny was decided; until you knew whether you should obtain Divine assistance or not. Shall I be saved, or shall I perish? is a question which you would be constantly and anxiously asking. But you do not now ask this question. You do not feel this anxiety. You are habitually easy and unconcerned; a demonstrative proof that you do not believe this excuse, that you suppose salvation to be in your own power. Deceive not yourselves, then, and insult not God with an excuse which you do not really believe, and which, if it were true, would transfer all blame from sinners to God, and prove that He alone is guilty of all the wickedness which is perpetrated by His creatures. He knows what you can do, and He does command you to become religious to-day, and you must obey, or take the consequences. It is painful, my friends, to address you in this language: but when I deliver God's message, I must deliver it plainly; I must, to the utmost of my power, apply it to your consciences, in all its unbending, unaccommodating strictness; turn it which way we please, it will say nothing but this—Repent, or you perish. And what, after all, is there so very irksome, or disagreeable, in a religious life, that you should wish to defer its commencement? If you must begin some time, why not begin to-day? Will you reply, I know not how to begin? God's voice, if you listen to it, will inform you. It tells us that there is a veil upon our hearts—a veil which prevents us from discerning the path of duty: and it also tells us that when our hearts turn to the Lord, that veil shall be taken away. Turn, then, to God. Go to Him, as His servants, for direction, and He will teach you what you must do. If I mistake not, many of you are like Agrippa, and for a long time have been almost persuaded to be Christians; but you hesitate, you linger, you dread to take the first step. Perhaps, when you are just on the point of yielding to conviction, the question, What will the world, what will my companions say? occurs to you, and causes you to fear. You dread the remarks, the ridicule which it would draw upon you; and therefore do violence to your convictions, or lock them up in your own breast, till they die away. In this manner thousands gradually and insensibly harden their hearts, till the truth ceases to affect them. Let such remember, that the fear of man bringeth a snare; that Jesus Christ has said, Whosoever is ashamed of Me, of him will I be ashamed at the last day. If you cannot bear the reproach of men, how will ye bear his condemning sentence, and the everlasting shame and contempt which will follow it? It will then be known that you had serious thoughts, but that you banished them through fear of men; and sinners themselves will despise you as a coward, who did not dare to do what he knew to be right. Dare, then, to do your duty, to obey your conscience and your God, to be religious; for you cannot be a Christian in disguise. You must come out, and be separate, or God will not receive you. Take then, at once, some decided step, and let it be known what you mean to be; and you will find that this, and all the other objects of your fear, are mere shadows, and will feel ashamed that they should ever have influenced you for a moment. If your heart still lingers, press