

N. I remember most of these texts now, though I confess I have not of late thought much about them.

C. But to come still closer to your own case. He positively declares that no drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God; and that those who take his name in vain he will in no wise hold guiltless. Besides, your sin of drunkenness leads you into many others: namely uncleanness and profaneness, and to tell a number of abominable lies to screen you from punishment. Now, the Word of God says, all such people shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. And do you think he will not be faithful to his word? O take care my lad! Consider your ways, and no longer provoke his wrath, for be assured, he will find it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

S. I wish, with all my heart, I was a better man than I am; really, corporal, I have been so long wicked, that I despair of being otherwise.

C. That is a dreadful conclusion, too common among us soldiers; but fit to be adopted only by the lost spirits shut up in endless woe. It never ought to be admitted by the most profligate sinner, especially in a land of gospel light, where the sceptre of divine mercy is freely held out to all.

S. I there were a probability of my making any progress in reformation, I might, perhaps, be induced to mind it a little more. But what hope can there be for such a wretch as I, who have lived in sin from my very infancy? Do you think that reading the Bible from morning to night would do me good?

C. That is rather a strange question: but if you set about reading the Bible in good earnest, and pray fervently for the Divine blessing upon what you read, it may be greatly to your profit.

S. Pray fervently! why, corporal, I cannot pray at all. I question whether I ever prayed in my life.

C. I believe you never did truly; but if the Lord convince you of your danger and misery as a fallen being, you will soon learn to pray; besides the Bible contains great encouragement to praying, with many special directions to this duty, and the example of many excellent saints to go by; that of the publican will suit you best.

S. I think I remember it. Was it not, 'God be merciful to me a sinner?' That will just do for me.

C. Then go and use it every day, but beware of resting (as too many do) in a bare repetition of the words, without the least conviction, or the smallest concern whether they are heard or not.—