

2. But how can the disciples be brought into that state of mind, in which to create the necessary interest in the accomplishment of this work? Duties have been neglected—churches and individuals, in many instances have settled down in a state of apathy, looking and waiting for some distinguished preacher, or for something to transpire, they know not what. Some members are removing to other parts. Some are going home to heaven, and others are going back to the world. What can be done to break the lethargy—to stop the retreating army?

One says, if we had a better place for the congregation to meet in, more would come and listen to the truth; another, if we were only able to employ a preacher of distinguished abilities the cause would advance; and a third, has strong hopes that the next protracted meeting will give the cause a new impetus! Now all these hopes are vain. It is true, one or more of these causes may give you a momentary start, and you may appear to be improving; but no permanent success will attend you until the church begins at home—gets every thing right within. When this is the case—when every member of a congregation discharges the duties devolving upon him, in his closet—in his family—in the church, and in the world, then the church will grow whether they have an evangelist or not—whether they worship in a chapel, meeting house, school house, common dwelling, or a field. They will need no extra protracted meetings or foreign human aid to build them up. How weak the faith of that congregation which is continually deploring its want of a fine meeting house, an eloquent preacher, &c. Its faith is in men and the works of men, and not in God and his truth! Were each disciples to discharge all their own duties, eloquent preachers and convenient places of worship would follow as their legitimate fruits.

But we recur again to the inquiry. What can be done to create the proper kind of interest? In giving a direct answer to this question we are presuming on one fact, namely, that in all the congregations meeting regularly, there are some few at least that take a deep interest in the cause, and are willing to do any thing for Zion's sake. This being presumed, we answer, that a full, honest confession of transgression (doing what we ought not to do) and disobedience (neglect of duty) will always create an interest in the confessor. Nothing relieves the burdened heart or wakens up the lethargic soul like a full and unreserved confession.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. xxviii. 13. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and my iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," &c. Psalm xxxii. 5. With the teaching of David and Solomon agrees the beloved apostle John: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9. The duty and necessity of confession is taught in all the ordinances of Heaven. Every sacrifice brought to God's altar was a confession of sinfulness. Though not a word were uttered, the man who stood at the altar with his lamb, &c., with his hand upon its head took its life, he declared that he was guilty, that he deserved death: through that sacrifice he expected deliverance from guilt. In our immersion we confess the Lord, and as often