

TWO DIALOGUES BETWEEN A CORPORAL AND A PRIVATE SOLDIER.

DIALOGUE II.

C. WHAT is the matter, Bob? You have not been so cheerful late as you used to be; are you well?

S. Well enough, thank God; but since our conversation the other day, I begin to think more than I used to do, and I want a deal more of your good advice, for I am sadly puzzled.

C. About what?

S. Why, you must know then, that I have thought a good deal about dying; many of my old acquaintances have fallen in battle, been carried off by sickness, and I have been led to ask myself a serious question, "What would have become of me in another world, had I suddenly fallen like them? Did I know my soul would be safe hereafter, I should not mind dying in or out of the world; but I have been, as you well know, such a wicked reprobate now, that my eternal state must be dreadful indeed, and that is what makes me so low spirited.

C. Have you read your Bible, as you promised, and diligently consulted that surest and best of all guides?

S. I have read it at every opportunity I had; but I did not fully understand it.

C. Have you been to the house of God, where it is the minister's duty to explain it, and to instruct such as you how to attain salvation.

S. I have, but do not find myself a whit the wiser. There was a good deal said about a new heart—being changed by grace—made a new creature—and born again; but I really do not understand these things.

C. No, my dear comrade, these things cannot properly be understood but by experience. The Scripture says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14.

S. What must I do then?

C. Pray to God to enlighten your understanding—to renew your affections—and to reform your life. You will then find yourself a new man—a new creature, and know what it is to be born again.

S. Explain yourself a little, corporal; you know I am but a simple scholar.