

ter, in the strict meaning of the term, but their proper appellation is *self-deceivers*. A hypocrite is one who wilfully and designedly makes a profession of religion, and attends on its ministrations and services, for the purpose of being thereby assisted to secure some object of worldly wealth, or of dignity, public or private trust, or of some other merely secular description. But the self-deceiver really wishes to be religious, but only on his own terms, of still retaining and indulging in his selfish designs and practices. Not prayerfully and earnestly searching the scriptures to obtain a knowledge of the Spiritual and renewing character of christianity, and its indispensable requisites of vital faith, love, and obedience, he yet securely expects salvation, and eternal life, though still remaining in a merely natural, or carnal state. If not divinely awakened to a sense of his danger, and failing to the end of life, to obtain that essential spiritual knowledge, he blindly clings to the same delusive expectation, and notwithstanding all his external profession, and his numerous services, however sincere, he is eternally ruined. Not having received and retained "the spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" and therefore cannot obtain an entrance into His holy and spiritually perfect kingdom.

But turning from the deplorable case of such self-deceivers, mention may next be made, of some of the principal means to be used, by those who have been divinely awakened to a convincing sense of their guilt and danger, and of their absolute and urgent need of the regenerating grace and power of "the spirit of Christ," to make them truly His people,—subjects of His spiritual kingdom, and inheritors of everlasting glory and happiness.

The first, or most important of the exercises of such awakened persons, for obtaining the desired consolation, as indeed for all others, throughout the christian course, is earnest, persevering prayer; for Scripture declares, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." "If ye who are evil, give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him." And let not any such praying and seeking souls faint or be discouraged, if they do not receive an immediate answer of pardon and peace, for the Lord