

are the children of God. But we would ask, Are the subjects of such exercises undecided? Do such manifest a desire to unite the conflicting claims of God and Mammon? Do they not rather, with a dignified step, march forward in the path of religious duty, saying with Ryland,

"Through floods and flames if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."

Nor is it under the influence of excited feeling merely, that persons are to profess religion. If such be the case, we may soon expect to see them returning back to the world, and thus manifest that they are like the stony ground, in which the plant withers for want of depth of earth. What evidence, we would enquire, can such an individual possess that he is pious? He may talk a great deal of the past—he may even boast that he knows when, and where, and by what means he was converted—that he possesses an unshaken hope of heaven,—but if he be unwilling to deny himself, and take up his cross daily—if he can turn with indifference from the precepts of the bible, he can have no evidence that he is pious? He may hope, indeed, for heaven, and so do men in general. But what can be more delusive than such hope, while the word of God is at variance with his principles and conduct. If we can see no more beauty in Christ, and the world of glory, than in the riches, the honours, and pleasures of this world, we have reason to tremble. We may pretend to stand on a neutral ground, but that is impossible. God has said, he that is not for me is against me, and such may expect to be addressed by the Almighty, as was the Laodicean church,—“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot.—So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” God has been graciously pleased to inform us how we may know that we have passed from death unto life, and it becomes us to take heed to his word, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, lest we be deceived in the greatest of all matters.

Christian decision is important in order to our usefulness. Our gracious Father, in calling us from darkness to light, did not merely design that we should reach heaven when we die, but that we should be welcomed there as those who had been useful in this world. Hence the Saviour declared that the King would say to those on his right hand, “come ye blessed of my father,” “for I was an hungered and