

HOW THEY FELL.

Fallen men and women are found in every community. Some are falling every day,—falling from purity, from virtue, from honor, from positions of trust,—falling into sin, into dishonor, into contempt, into wretchedness, into habits of dissipation,—falling from heaven into hell! Falling, and bruising and crushing others as they go down. Alas for those who fall! Alas for those who suffer with them in their ruin!

How do men fall? They enter into temptation. They dally with sin. They go creeping, sliding toward to verge where ruin waits. They do not go by a single desperate leap into the hell of dishonor and perdition. Sin works like a slow poison. It is often the work of months and years. It is like a stream that slowly undermines the foundation, while the building gradually bows to its fall, until it tumbles over into ruin.

Most fallen men and women fell before the community were aware of it. The first fall is the fall of the soul's integrity. That takes place within. Men cannot see it until the outward, overt act reveals it. The heart's hate and the heart's lust precede the act of the murderer and the adulterer. The community is often startled by the shameful fall of trusted and honored men; and the marvel is that they could fall, cruelly crushing others who stood trustingly around them. Examination reveals their rotten hearts. A moral cancer had been eating out the fibre of righteous principle, and under the stress of the first severe blast of temptation they went down like a rotten tree.

A single evil thought may be the fruitful seed of an awful harvest of infamy and death. No one is safe who is not *altogether right*, and trying to maintain his integrity in the strength of God. To be almost right is to be wrong, and to be wrong is to be in peril of unmeasured evils.

The great lesson of the multiplying moral disasters of our day is,—

“KEEP THY HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE.”

Trust in God, and do His will. “Resist the devil.” Watch and pray. Watch the beginnings. When the “letting in of waters” has begun, the chances are against recovery. To yield righteous principle in little things,—to be disloyal to conscience only once, may compromise your good

name and blast your reputation for ever; or it may be the beginning of a downward career that will end in perdition.

Harbor no evil thoughts. Play not with snares. Look not upon the fascinations of sin. Parley not with temptation. Make no terms with Satan except such as his Conqueror made in the words, “Get thee behind me!”

Be positive in the stern integrity of a child of God. Be an earnest, honest, straightforward, outspoken Christian. Let everybody see whom you serve. God is “able to keep you from falling;” trust, therefore, in His strength, and not in your own.—*Evangelical Messenger*.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

The knowledge of Christ is a flower that never fades; carry it in your bosom and it will fill your life with fragrance.

It is a light that cheers the darkest night; the longer it burns the brighter it grows, and fierce winds only make it shine more clearly, it turns a hovel into a palace, makes a rough road smooth, is easily carried, and costs nothing.

The knowledge of Christ is a purse full of gold; it will pay your way in all the strange places of life, and fetch you comforts more choice than any found in kings' houses; it will open gates closed to the wise of this world, and, unlike earthly treasures, the more you spend the more you have.

It is a well whose crystal streams makes all around beautiful and pure, refreshes the weary passer-by, never knows the drought of summer, and from life's morning to its latest eve flows steadily, carrying joy and song throughout its course.

It is a sunbeam from paradise, a smile from the face of God, the song-book of saints, the harp of angels, the Bible of the New Jerusalem, the key of heaven's treasury, and the passport into the presence of the King. It makes rainbows on storm-clouds, transforms tears into pearls, and thorns into apple-trees, and causes the desert to blossom as a rose. It makes the heart larger than a kingdom, richer than a bank, brighter than a palace, and happier than a grove in which a thousand birds are singing.

Get this knowledge above all things, increase it, teach it, live it, and prize it above rubies, for it is your happiness, your glory, and your life.—*Sel.*