

to deal faithfully with them, but it is often a very difficult thing to obtain access to those who are in health, when we would speak to them of the things which concern their peace. The very persons who appear to be most attentive hearers and admirers of discourses from the pulpit, are often most unwilling to receive the words of warning and counsel addressed to themselves personally; they admire the earnest denunciation of sin in the abstract, but they would fain avoid the presence of him, who would apply those words by saying, "thou art the man." It would be interesting, were it not painful, to observe how such persons, when they cannot avoid seeing their minister, contrive to evade the anticipated stroke. They offer suggestions, which give a new direction to the conversation; they introduce topics upon which you cannot refuse to converse, without apparent rudeness, and by manifold devices they deprive themselves of the benefit which they might have received from the faithful treatment of a skilful physician of souls, while *he* is grieved by the consciousness, that his interview has been in vain, and by the conviction it may be that one who professed much interest in spiritual things is in truth undecided in his course, if not actually opposed to godliness. Nevertheless our duty is clear, we are still to persevere; they who are least inclined to receive our admonition have the most need of them, and we recall the exhortation in the Ordination Service, "see that you never cease your labor, your care and diligence, until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty, to bring all such as are committed to your charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you either for error in religion or for viciousness in life."

The question may sometimes suggest itself, with respect both to our private and our public ministrations, when we find persons obstinately determined not to give heed; ought we to continue to repeat the same things? is it not "casting pearls before swine?" There are persons, and sometimes they may be a majority of any given congregation, who are only hardened by the repetition, who appear virtually to say, 'the more frequently you urge what you declare to be my duty, the more determined am I not to accept your teaching, or to comply with your exhortation.' The instruc-

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