

to be healed. Conviction is to gendur not perdition, but correction. It points out our real ill that we may call in the help that can deliver us out of it. True conviction of our state before God assures us that not any mere reformation of our habits and lives will suffice to reach and remove our moral malady. Would we have our hurt healed not "slightly" but rightly, our prayer must be—"Create for me a clean heart, O God." This is *thorough* dealing in things spiritual. The Bible is unique in the dark disclosures it makes of human sin and misery, in the righteousness God requireth of men which is far other than that of the Pharisees, and yet in the mighty invitation with which it beseeches men to become partakers of God's righteousness. Is it profitable for reproof, being quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, "and in being a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart?" It is that "correction" may also by it be brought up for our profit, for "blessed are the poor in spirit for their's is the kingdom of heaven." To what man will God look? To him that is of a humble and contrite spirit. To him experiencing the profit of "reproof" cometh also that of "correction," for good things, like evil, come not to men singly. By conviction of what God is and of what we ourselves are by nature, are we prepared to appreciate what deliverance from the guilt and power of sin means.

The Word of God is profitable for Doctrine inasmuch as it teaches us "repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ." It reveals our ills to us in such a manner that no one but God can avail to heal our hurt and to correct our errors. We must become in a very literal sense the children of God ere we can do aught aright either in this world or the world to come. We are profitably convicted and corrected when we are sincerely persuaded that without Christ we can do *nothing*, neither *to-day* nor forever. "This is the *record* that God hath given of His Son."

"He that believeth *hath* everlasting life." The child of God *begins* the heavenly character *here*. In earthly conditions he is called upon to be a true son of God "in thought, word, and deed." For this end he requires a guide-book to strengthen him in meekness, and enlighten him in darkness and perplexity. The Word of God is adequate to supply this requisite.

4. It is also profitable for "discipline in righteousness." What righteousness? Ceremonial? No. This we shall never believe for the honour of the Bible itself, although the whole earth should become enamoured of candles, and incense, and ecclesiastical millinery. Let people love these, as by use and wont they may have become endeared to them, provided they do not idolize them as ends, or even as indispensables in religion. The righteousness which the Bible would discipline us in is something far other and more lasting than dress and genuflections—something that will be with us when these are far from us—how far! Often does biography sadden us when we think of the melancholy services great minds have been bound to by an inappreciative world. Indignant grief takes possession of us when the practices of many show their belief to be that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction in ceremonial righteousness." What a heresy! How much is a man better than a candle, or robe, aye or than ecclesiastical polity even?

It is not even secular righteousness in the technical sense in which the Bible profitably disciplines us.

It may be wise in sense-bound men to welcome the Bible and religion by observing that they promote temporal well-being. They, however, receive them only as being useful for earthly ends, which are the only ends they can see and live for. Qualities of mind and heart are promoted by religion which it is easy to see have an important bearing upon worldly prosperity. All other things being equal, a religious community is, in virtue of being such, temporarily a thriving one.

Religion enjoins upon men thrift, perseverance, honesty, and thorough-