

unbelief, your want of faith in those things which in speculation you never doubted. You believe with the understanding, but not with the heart. With the understanding you believe in God and a moral law, in the dignity, the peace, and blessedness of a life devoted to the will of God and the cultivation of your moral nature. But with the heart you believe in worldly possessions and worldly lusts, and in the superior benefits to be derived from a life devoted to selfish and worldly ends. It is not your skepticism that is in the way. No speculation, no inquiry, no mere act of the intellect, will bring you any nearer to the point. You must compel yourself by an effort of the will to realize in practice what in theory you believe. It is not an act of the understanding, but an effort of the will, by which you give the heart to God.

You cannot, indeed, by merely willing it, become at once an altered man. But you can, at any moment, change the direction of your purposes and endeavours. The change of character is always a slow and gradual process, but the change of mind, on which that change of character depends, may be instantaneous. In fact, it always is so. Every resolution is, in its nature, instantaneous. There may have been a long preparation for it in the mind of the individual, a long struggle may have preceded it, but the act itself is instantaneous and complete. When John the Baptist preached repentance in the wilderness of Judea, and baptized those who came to him, in token of that repentance, neither he nor they expected that the use of that rite would be followed by an immediate and entire reform. Nevertheless it expressed, in most cases, no doubt, an immediate and entire change of purpose; and the execution of that purpose was no doubt aided by the use of that