

The same truth is also declared in such expression as "Ye are the lights of the world,"—light which does not concentrate itself within itself, but radiates all outward, penetrating everywhere, and clothing all things with beauty.

The Kingdom of God is besides likened to leaven—a little leaven. Leaven contains a most active and self-assimilating principle, with which there is no rest—no cessation from working, until the whole lump in which it is enclosed be leavened.

The examples of Christ and his Apostles strikingly confirm these teachings of their words. They were eminently men full of life and energy, fighting the good fight. They all consecrated themselves to God for man; they shone as lights in the world; and they worked as long as life lasted to conform men to the likeness of God.

But why should we press further this manifest truth and duty? Who can deny that true religion can only condition itself by a life consecrated to the personal service of Christ? All this is generally, if not universally accepted by Christian men and women; and under the influence of such a conviction many devote themselves with zeal to the work of God. Still it is to be lamented that we have so few working Christians,—so few who will deny themselves much or anything at all to help on the salvation of sinners. Many know the right and approve it, disprove the wrong and yet do it. There must be some delusion in the minds of such in regard to this matter, else why this apathy and idleness that we find so common a feature of much of the Christianity of our day?

We can only suppose that in the case of many apparently sincere and warm-hearted believers the "fruit meet" is wanting in their lives, from a misconception of what the Christian life ought really to be. There is a kind of *pietism* in the Church in which many good people indulge to the detriment of personal activity. They confine their attention to inward experiences—to the world of ceaseless activity, which may be found on reflection within their souls. Here, there are temptations, trials, and conflicts, times of darkness and of light, of shadow and sunshine, with constant calls to vigilance and humiliation, to sorrow and rejoicing. This contemplative kind of experience may often pass for personal activity, and give an *idea* of work, when in fact nothing has been done outwardly for Christ at all. The subject of it may on the contrary be all the time living a very defective Christian life. We are tempted to think that some such delusion as this may account for the apathy and indifference which we often find in good christian people, to the personal work for Christ which the Church has to do in the world.

It may also be that some sincere believers have false conceptions of the kind of christian activity which is really required at their hands, and have thus fallen short of that devotement of person which Christ demands. Such persons are often satisfied with a passive, or, at most, an unobtruding christian deportment,—a life in which there is nothing to which any one can well take exception. They do many things that are good, and may give liberally of their substance for the cause of Christ. It cannot be said of them that they *commit* any sin.