

its own proper province, on overt acts of evil—such as occurred at Corinth—brings on the judgment of the Lord in some outward and manifest form. “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” (1 Cor. xi. 30). It is equally the province of the church to judge the doctrine of those within. The Lord had it against Thyatira—that Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, was suffered to teach her seducing doctrine. And the Lord must judge in this case also, if the church tolerates evil doctrine. But the judgment of the Lord is ever supreme, and we are always, individually and collectively, amenable to it. Self-judgment, indeed, would prevent us, as individuals, from falling under the Lord’s judgment in a marked and manifest manner: “If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord” (1 Cor. xi. 31, 32). The rod for wilful disobedience need not be applied, because self-judgment would prevent such outbreaks, the principle of which would have been secretly judged. But although the judgment of the Lord, in the shape of present punishment, would thus be avoided, this does not interfere with the general truth, that “whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (Heb. xii. 6). The difference of the Lord’s dealing, even where there might be outward sorrow, would be very apprehensible to the conscience of those who came under it. To the soul exercised in self-judgment it would