

shed about in our hearts, we have more shame for our sins before God than before men. To have a good conscience we must keep the conscience pure. Paul exercised himself to have in everything a conscience without offence toward God and man. When we have grieved the Holy Spirit, we do not feel the love of God in the same way. A conscience defiled cannot be at its ease before God; and when God enters, there are dark corners that one hides from Him. Impossible then to have that perfect confidence in reasoning with God as with a friend (see 1 John iii. 19-21). If we have beforehand the sense of our feebleness, we shall be forced to seek strength in God.

Can we with boldness recall before God all we have thought, said and done? To be unable to do so, is not to be in the presence of God; to do so is to recall to God His immense grace in having pardoned us. Without Christ, who would venture such things? Sin hidden corrupts the heart, hardens the conscience, and renders us blind and proud. It is of all moment for us that our conscience should be entirely emptied before God. We can afterwards forget these things; we shall not be judged because of it. Be faithful in this sense—to have a pure conscience before God and men.



FRAGMENT.—The presence of God Himself, a Man amongst men, changed the position of everything.