

and according to that we must keep the Sabbath. That standard requires that we refrain from working with our hands, and it enjoins on us, also, if we would be esteemed as consistent in our Christian profession, to attend the public worship of God in the sanctuary. If we attend to all this, it is sufficient. This is all that custom, at present, demands. But is this the observance by which religion demands that we sanctify the Sabbath and keep it holy? To rest satisfied by merely doing this, is to turn religion into solemn, but impious, mockery. There can be nothing more certain than that God forbids worldly conversation, as well as work, on that day; and that He intended its sacred hours should be employed in spiritual exercises. But where, and by whom, will you find the continued effort made to render obedience? In our Christian communities, every hand is at rest. Custom requires it to be so. But how is the tongue employed? Is it in praise? Is it regarding the interests of Christ's kingdom, and in prayer for its advancement? Go from house to house; listen to the crowds of worshippers as they approach the sanctuary; meet them as they return from the House of God; and what do you hear? Would you learn from the conversation that the Son of God ever lived on the earth and died on the cross for men? Would you suspect that those multitudes had any apprehension of being soon cut down by death, to render account before the tribunal of God? No. The conversation is worldly. It is business, the latest news, and, not unfrequently, large portions of it of a character still more abhorrent to the God of the Sabbath. Is this honoring the Lord of the Sabbath, and shewing that, with grateful hearts, we commemorate the glorious event which saved our world? Most certainly it is not. And yet, in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary, the influence of custom has succeeded in satisfying the largest number that no guilt is incurred by thus profaning the sacred hours of holy rest. And very ill, indeed, would they take it to be told that, while thus acting, they were not entitled to the Christian name. Dear brethren, if you love your own souls—if you would not, at death, be forsaken of heaven and earth—banish, O, banish this fatal error from your minds. It is no religion that will allow you thus to rest satisfied by attending to religious duties as the custom of the community requires. Wherever true religion exists, there is there an abiding earnestness of soul. There is a living and walking as seeing Him who is invisible. To that man it matters but little what the world may think of Him. He must bear the reproaches and ridicule, and, if need be, the hatred and persecution, of men. He will serve God and do what he can, should all his neighbors not only be indifferent, but do their utmost in opposing. O, with what glory and beauty would the Church of Christ stand forth before the world, were all who

profess to be within her fold thus animated. and with what vigor and success could she invade the strongholds of Satan! Speedily would the dark places of the earth become bright and happy, and would the bliss of Paradise be, in some measure, restored to our fallen and miserable world, were every professed follower of Christ inspired by the spirit and animated by the feelings which that profession implies. Were professing Christians truly in earnest, and resolved on serving God, the world would see and be obliged to own the power, the excellence, and the glory of the gospel of Christ. Any why is it not so? It is considered low and contemptible—not to speak of its being dishonest—for a man, in his dealings with his fellow-men, to pretend and say what he does not mean. The man who is known to profess friendship where no such feeling exists, and to make promises with no intention to fulfil them, is despised by all but the wretched crew who are as degraded as himself. Fallen as our world is, the majority of men have some regard to their promises, and would wish to make them good if difficulties, hard to be overcome, stand not in the way. But, were the case otherwise, and were men so lost to all honor and truth as to be indifferent regarding every obligation to a fellow-man, surely, in dealing with the Almighty God, the most reckless and hardened will be careful not to approach with false pretensions, and with a known lie on his lips. A fearful admission it is, but one that must be made by a great multitude of professing Christians, that they deal with God in a way they would not with any of their fellow-mortals. To the Great Sovereign of Heaven, before whom, in a few days, they must stand to receive the sentence of life or death, they feel no dread in making solemn promises which they make no serious effort to perform, nor feel much concern while conscious they are acting in direct and wilful opposition to the pledge deliberately given. O, brethren, you all bear the name of Christ, and, unless you would deal with God in a way you must admit would be base and dishonorable towards a fellow-man, make sure of it that you are sincere in your efforts to act up to what your profession demands. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from all iniquity." By calling yourselves Christians, you acknowledge that it is right and binding on you to obey and serve Him, and to do and be whatever He is pleased to command. If living in sin—if disregarding any of His known precepts, you cannot be ignorant that your profession is false and a mockery, and as certain you are there is no escape from the bar of the Eternal, where you must answer for the insult to God by these false pretensions. If you would not encounter all this, and, as condemned criminals, stand as a spectacle to men and angels, hasten, flee to Him who is willing to give you a new heart and a right spirit, and thus enable you, in