

cerity was tested at the end of the halter; and why were they not justifiable? You will reply, doubtless, as I should, that there is light enough, even from the works of God, to teach any person that he is. Before these men could have become Atheists, they must have closed their eyes to the light of day, and their consciences to the light of heaven. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Their sincere belief of error arose entirely from their sin. They wanted no God, and they would believe in none. They heartily desired that he should not be, and they sincerely believed that he was not. Their sincerity, therefore, is found, on examination, to be not their excuse, but their fault; not their misfortune, but their crime. Instead of palliating their guilt, it is itself the most portentous mark in the long catalogue of their sins.

And what is true in this case, is true in all analogous cases. Sincerity in the belief of essential error is never any excuse for such error. So far from justifying those who embrace it, it aggravates their condemnation. Take the Deist, who, professing to believe in God, rejects his word. Will his sincere rejection of Christ and the gospel save him? How strange it would be, if a sincere rejection of Christ, and a sincere acceptance of him, should lead to the same results—should entitle to the same blissful rewards!

No, reader, we must sincerely reject error, and sincerely believe and embrace the truth. And we must be careful not to mistake human error for heavenly truth—man's wishes for God's revelation.

PRAYER, OR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

This is the spirit of the spirit of true religion. Without communion with God there is nothing gained by faith or hope, by promises, or commands, by professions, confessions, or institutions. This is the *sanctum sanctorum*, the holy of holies, the inmost temple of religion. This was lost by Adam, and if we do not gain this by Messiah, we have gained nothing but a name. But *what is communion with God?* Let us ask, for illustration, *what is communion with man?* The reciprocation of common sentiment and common feeling. Language fails to define its intimacies. Two spirits in conversation with each other is its best illustration—two spirits of kindred thought and kindred interests pouring into each other the overflowing of congenial views, feelings, desires.

Speech with us is the channel of thought. In this channel betwixt man and man flows every sentiment, feeling, and desire. And it is not only the circulating medium of spirits on earth, dwelling in houses of clay; but it is the medium of converse 'twixt God and man. Arrayed in words of human language the Eternal Spirit appears to man not now only; for in Eden, blooming in primeval beauty and innocence, the voice of God, in harmonies sweeter than nature knows, fell upon that ear not yet polluted with the serpent's poisoning breath. Since then, God has spoken to man through the mediation of angels,