

much afraid God will cast me off; and the sinfulness of my heart does not trouble me so much."

"My dear Mary!" said I, with astonishment and pain, "how is this? I expected different things! Evidently your seriousness is diminished! You care less for salvation than you did! What has altered your feelings since I saw you?"

"Why, when you left me the last time you were here, and told me to repent that day, I was dreadfully troubled. I felt that my heart was opposing. God; and I was afraid to think of living without Christ, another hour. Your last words, 'to-day, to-day,' rung in my ears! I could not get rid of them. But pretty soon, Miss S. S. came in, about an hour after you went away; and I told her how I felt. But she told me not to be discouraged, only to keep on seeking the Lord. She said I was doing very well, and I ought not to feel so; and if I did not get discouraged, I should soon find religion."

"And you believed her?" said I.

"Yes, I believed her; and I have felt better ever since—a great deal better."

"Felt better! Mary!—You are resting on a lie! You are miserably deceived! Doing well? How can you be doing well, while an impenitent sinner, rejecting Christ, and exposed every moment to the wrath of God forever? Your friend, as you call her, has been doing the work of the great deceiver! She did not talk to you as the Bible does, 'to-day, to-day, if ye will hear his voice!'"

I aimed to arouse her; but it was all in vain! Her anxieties departed! She ceased to pray! and in a few days more, she was as careless and worldly as ever.

It is not true, that a convicted and praying sinner is doing well, while without faith in Christ. Something more is needed. He must repent and believe. And certainly, if prayerless, he is doing ill.

This young woman, who misled the yielding and affectionate Mary, was a professor of religion; and one of those, who are very apt to be busy, in times of revival. Doubtless she meant well; but her influence was very unhappy. No one is ever safe in giving any counsel to impenitent sinners, unless he is careful to talk, just as the Bible talks to them. Blind guides do mischief. †

Westminster Congregational Church

395 Westminster Rd, Canterbury, CT 06331

Not Discouraged.



YOUNG woman of very yielding and amiable disposition, who belonged to my congregation, became alarmed about her condition, as a sinner; and set herself to seek the Lord. I visited her, and conversed with her, repeatedly. Her seriousness became more and more deep. I left her, one day, with a very strong expectation upon my mind, that the next time I should see her, she would be at peace with God. I thought so, because she seemed to realize, that God's law justly condemned her, as a sinner; that she was dependent upon sovereign grace; and that she ought to repent and flee to Christ. I thought so also; because she appeared to me just as others, with whom I was conversing every day, had appeared, immediately before their hopeful conversion to Christ. She seemed to me to know and feel the truths of the gospel, which are addressed to unconverted sinners; and therefore, I believed the Holy Spirit was with her to lead her to salvation. I left her with the urgency of the text, "behold now is the accepted time," pressed upon her conscience and her heart, with all the emphasis my words could give it.

The next time I saw her, a day or two afterwards, her whole appearance was altered. Her solemnity was gone. Her anxieties were evidently diminished. She met me with a smile that surprised and pained me. And, directly the contrary to her former habit; she began to speak of some common matter. Said I:

"Have you given Christ your heart, Mary?"

"Oh no, not yet," said she; "but I don't feel so bad as I did."

"Why not?" said I. "What reason have you to feel any better?"

"I don't know, as you would think I have any reason; but I hope I shall be a Christian, by and by. I don't feel in so much haste as I did; and I am not so

much afraid God will cast me off; and the sinfulness of my heart does not trouble me so much."

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