Obedience the Test of True Religion

Every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. Luke 6:44.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith” (2 Corinthians 13:5). Some conscientious souls, on reading this, immediately begin to criticize their every feeling and emotion. But this is not correct self-examination. It is not the petty feelings and emotions that are to be examined. The life, the character, is to be measured by the only standard of character, God’s holy law. The fruit testifies to the character of the tree. Our works, not our feelings, bear witness of us.

The feelings, whether encouraging or discouraging, should not be made the test of the spiritual condition. By God’s Word we are to determine our true standing before Him. Many are bewildered on this point. When they are happy and joyous, they think that they are accepted of God. When a change comes, and they feel depressed, they think that God has forsaken them.... God does not desire us to go through life with a distrust of Him.... While we were yet sinners, God gave His Son to die for us. Can we doubt His goodness? ...

But a faithful performance of duty goes hand in hand with a right estimate of the character of God. There is earnest work to do for the Master. Christ came to preach the gospel to the poor, and He sent His disciples forth to do the same work He came to do. So He sends forth His workers today. Sheaves are to be gathered for Him from the highways and hedges.

The tremendous issues of eternity demand of us something besides an imaginary religion, a religion of words and forms, where the truth is kept in the outer court, to be admired as we admire a beautiful flower; they demand something more than a religion of feeling, which distrusts God when trials and difficulties come. Holiness does not consist in profession, but in lifting the cross, doing the will of God.... “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his
commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected” (1 John 2:4, 5).

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