

have been poured over him, his character appears marred and clouded by selfish and worldly influences. But trials clear away the obscurity, and give distinctness and beauty to his piety. It is necessary often that the waves should roll over him again and again, before his soul becomes thoroughly permeated, and his character wholly transparent. But if God means to make him an instrument of eminent usefulness on earth, or eminent in glory in heaven, he will not lift him out of the waters till the work has been thoroughly accomplished.

3. *The third character I would symbolically describe is the semi-transparent.*

Through a semi-transparent or sub-transparent mineral objects may be seen, but there is no distinctness of outline, as in gypsum, selenite, and quartz.

The semi-transparent character is no uncommon one, even among professed Christians. Light enough is transmitted from such, and through them, to lead us, in the exercise of charity, to place them among the really pious; yet every thing about them is indistinct and cloudy. They have no clear and definite ideas of the doctrines of the Christian system, and there is a correspondent looseness in respect to Christian duties. Their religious experience, both at its commencement and subsequently, has no strongly marked features. There is no clear line of demarcation in their minds between worldly morality and Christian ethics. Hence they conform very much to worldly maxims and practices; so much so as to raise doubts of their piety in the minds of many; and yet they will cordially unite in every good work, and thus often do they clear their characters from suspicion. There is so much of flexibility in their principles and character, that you cannot tell where you will find them in times when decision and independence are needed. In short, it