

your own experience. We have capacities for the perception of moral truth; we know the difference between right and wrong; we naturally approve the one and condemn the other; and our natural perceptions are cleared and elevated by the light of christian truth: our duty is plainly pointed out, and enforced by the most awful sanctions. Nay, more than this; while removed from the influence of temptation, we wish to obey the word; we wish to walk in the paths of the great and the good: and yet we are infirm of purpose, and cannot do what our heart approves and our conscience dictates.

The sensualist surrenders his liberty to base appetite; binding day by day fresh fetters about his limbs, till they have no power of movement. His course of life is often followed by judicial blindness: his mind loses its upright attitude, and becomes tortuous, because it finds no rest; and he casts about his soul the mist of scepticism to keep off that light of truth his eyes can not endure. A religion without power over the heart is deprived of its best evidence; and hence he learns to doubt the truth of a system of which he feels not the benefit, and to turn away from that doctrine by which his own life is condemned. A character like this is of no unfrequent occurrence in the ordinary commerce of life.

But I will suppose you sincere believers in the word of God, and not weighed down by the habitual burden of any flagrant sin. Still, if you look at yourselves, you will find that you not only come immeasurably short of the standard set up by the Word of God, but far short of that you could yourselves set up by the natural light of conscience.