

BE TRUE TO GOD.

"They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

The want of moral honesty is the principal impediment to the progress of religious truth now, as in the days of the Nazarene. Many who heard him speak and beheld his prodigies, were convinced of the truth of his claims as a teacher "sent from God"; but his doctrines so conflicted with the popular customs they could not be accepted, only at the cost of social position. The integrity of his hearers was put to the test; and the honest among them made the requisite sacrifice, and publicly accepted his teaching; but those who loved the praise of men more than the approbation of God, suppressed their convictions, and hypocritically adhered to the popular multitude. It is just so now in regard to all attempts to reform the absurd and conflicting creedal systems of our age. A large majority of modern preachers, and of the intelligent lay members of the churches, are as fully convinced of the fallacy of modern theology, and the impotency of modern pulpits in reforming the world, as the writer; but their love of popularity and ease, and lack of trust in God, cause them to remain through life in a false and hypocritical position – their life a continuous lie.

Christ said to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savor, it is fit for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot." Here we have the estimate Jesus placed upon those Christians who suppress their convictions for the sake of popularity. He compares them to a man who lights a candle and puts it under a cover to conceal its light. He says, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you; so did their fathers to the false prophets." "Ye are they who justify [R468 : page 5] yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly

esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). But to those who are ostracised for defending the truth he says, "Blessed are ye when men shall hate and revile you, and separate you from their company, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven."

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