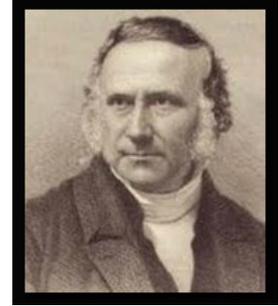


Divided Mind



In a season when the Holy Spirit was poured out, and there was an increasing interest in religion, and an increasing number of sinners awakened to a sense of their lost condition, two young persons, who had become serious and prayerful, were induced to forsake, in part, the services of our congregation, in order to attend those of another church, where there was also an uncommon degree of seriousness, but too much noise and talk on the subject,—too much said about “revival,” “revival.” I feared the result. A divided mind has poor prospects before it. I aimed as prudently as I could, to put a stop to the course of these young persons, but in vain. They were under the influence of a very zealous member of the church, who, perhaps, had more zeal than knowledge.

The result was what I feared it would be. They were both left without grace. They attained salvation nowhere. Almost the entire number of their associates among us, with whom they had been connected in the commencement of their seriousness, became hopefully the children of God, and united with the church. But these two remained the same as before. It appeared manifest to me, all along, that their seriousness really diminished, very much as their attention was divided. And this is what I have often noticed.—If our church-members were wise, they would never lend themselves to do this kind of mischief. They would not be beguiled into it through the desire to be esteemed liberal, and above bigoted notions, or through the pride of being more engaged in

religion than their brethren, and wanting to go “where there is some life,”—“some real religion,”—“ where the Holy Spirit is present.”

In my opinion, these young persons were led away from their duty, and thus grieved the Spirit of God. Many years have passed away since that time; and neither of them has become a follower of Christ.