

Though the change from day to night, is by a motion so gradual as scarcely to be perceived, yet when night is come we behold it very different from the day; and thus as people become wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, customs rise up from the spirit of this world, and spread by little and little, till a departure from the simplicity that there is in Christ, becomes as distinguishable as light from darkness, to such who are crucified to the world.

Our holy shepherd, to encourage his flock in firmness and perseverance, reminds them of his love for them, "As the father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love;" and in another place graciously points out the danger of departing therefrom, by going into unsuitable employments; this he represents in the similitude of offence from that useful active member, the hand; and to fix the instruction the deeper, names the right hand, "If thy right hand offend thee cut it off and cast it from thee"—If thou seekest offence in thy employment, humbly follow him who leads into all truth, and is a strong and faithful friend to those who are resigned to him.

Again, he points out those things which appearing pleasant to the natural mind, are not best for us, in the similitude of offence from the eye, "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee." To pluck out the eye, or cut off the hand, is attended with sharp pain; and how precious is