

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Proverbs 22:15

We profess to believe in an Almighty, All-present, All-seeing God; and we should be highly offended if a person said to us, "You do not believe that God sees everything, that he is everywhere present, that he is an Almighty Jehovah:" we should almost think that he was taking us for an atheist. And yet practical atheists we daily prove ourselves to be.

For instance, we profess to believe that God sees everything, and yet we are plotting and planning as though he saw nothing; we profess to know that God can do everything, and yet we are always cutting out schemes, and carving out contrivances, as though he were like the gods of the heathen, looking on and taking no notice; we profess to believe that God is everywhere present to relieve every difficulty and bring his people out of every trial, and yet when we get into the difficulty and into the trial, we speak, think, and act as though there were no such omnipresent God, who knows the circumstances of the case, and can stretch forth his hand to bring us out of it.

Thus the Lord is obliged, (to speak with all reverence,) to thrust us into trials and afflictions, because we are such blind fools, that we cannot learn what a God we have to deal with, until we come experimentally into those spots of difficulty and trial, out of which none but such a God can deliver us.

This, then, is one reason why the Lord often plunges his people so deeply into a sense of sin; it is to shew them what a wonderful salvation from the guilt, filth, and power of sin there is in the Person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the same reason, too, they walk in such scenes of temptation; it is in order to shew them what a wonder-working God he is in bringing them out. This, too, is the reason why many of them are so harassed and plagued; it is that they may not live and act as

though there were no God to go to, no Almighty Friend to consult, no kind Jesus to rest their weary heads upon; it is in order to teach them experimentally and inwardly those lessons of grace and truth which they never would know till the Lord, as it were, thus compels them to learn, and actually forces them to believe what they profess to believe.

Such pains is he obliged to take with us; such poor scholars, such dull creatures we are. In order, then, to teach us what a God he is, what a merciful and compassionate High Priest; in order to open up the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of his love, he is compelled to treat, at times, his people very roughly, and handle them very sharply; he is obliged to make very great use of his rod, because he sees that "foolishness is so bound up in the hearts" of his children that nothing but the repeated "rod of correction will ever drive it far from them."

--J.C. Philpot - 1802-1869