

**THE ACTIVE
CHRISTIAN: A SERIES
OF LECTURES**

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The Active Christian: A Series of Lectures by John Howard Hinton

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JOHN HOWARD HINTON

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CHRISTIAN: A SERIES
OF LECTURES**

THE
ACTIVE CHRISTIAN:

A
SERIES OF LECTURES.

BY
JOHN HOWARD HINTON, A. M.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION:
With an Introduction by the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, D. D.

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INTRODUCTION.

Man has been formed for activity ; and if he is renewed in his mind he will be an *active Christian*. The whole of his religious activity is commonly called *holy living* ; and he who does not exert the faculties of his mind in conformity with the moral law, cannot be the subject of spiritual life.

“ Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? ” is an inquiry which arises from the heart of every converted sinner ; to which the answer has been given in numerous ways, that we should do good unto all men as we have opportunity, and especially to the household of faith. No one should regard himself as a Christian, or as a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus, who is not actively engaged in doing his will. If a man loves Christ he will keep his commandments ; and if any man loves him not he is accursed.

It is clearly shown, in the following work, that the foregoing statements are true ; and that the great business of every Christian, while dwelling upon earth, should be, to glorify God, by promoting the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. The author inculcates the important doctrines, that in every case the new birth results from the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit of God ; who moves the persons employ-

ing the appointed means of converting sinners, no less than the minds of sinners converted : that the new birth is a great and necessary moral change, in which the soul commences a never ending course of holy activity : and that those who labour, agreeably to the divine will, for the conversion of sinners, may confidently expect a large share of success. "Some exertions will fail, and any exertion may fail; but *all* will not fail." "We shall have many failures, but more successes; we shall behold too many spots of barrenness, but we shall see a general fertility; much seed will perish, and many green ears be blighted, but those who sow shall reap; and he who hath gone forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. On the whole, therefore, the success attending labours for God will not only be satisfactory, but abundant. It is too little to say that it will be enough to recompense the expenditure; it will be sufficient to inspire a grateful and overflowing joy, like the joy of harvest."

The writer of this introduction would not become answerable for every expression which Mr. Hinton has used; nor does he profess agreement with him in every shade of thought; yet he cannot refrain from recommending "The Active Christian" to all who would well consider the talents for usefulness which have been given

them, improve those talents, and employ them effectually in saving their fellow man. The style of the author is simple; his thoughts are clear, and every page of his LECTURES may please and profit the candid reader.

Some will doubtless accuse the author of attributing too much to human means, and will represent him as "a new light divine" in the Baptist Church in old England; but he ought to be regarded as more Calvinistic and scriptural in his sentiments than most of the persons who will accuse him. When Paul apologizes for having spoken of "saving some," and of having "begotten" men "through the truth;" and when Paul and Peter are convicted of heresy for not explicitly referring to the agency of the Spirit in every instance in which they speak of one person's converting and saving another, then we shall be disposed to censure our author as an Arminian. That he does not teach the efficiency of God in doing those actions for men which the Saviour says proceed out of their own hearts, and beyond which we need not look for a cause, we joyfully proclaim. Of a physical regeneration, and of moral agency by machinery, he is not an advocate.

EZRA STILES ELY.

Philadelphia, April 4th, 1833.

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