

mechanically with little or no inspiration. There is usually resignation to a kind of fatalism wherein the subject accepts fortune or loss with much the same flat emotional response. In some cases, such a person finds relief and fulfillment in diversions of various kinds, e.g. hobbies, sports, t.v., etc. There is some effort to maintain a "front" that would satisfy the observer, but inwardly, the lights have gone out.

In most cases, the cynicism spreads to the individual's personal walk with Jesus Christ. Bible reading and prayer may continue, but God is doubted too.

Os Guinness in his very helpful book, In Two Minds, describes the process that leads to such doubt:

What has happened to create this doubt is that a problem (such as a particular weakness of character or a bad experience) has been allowed to usurp God's place and become the controlling principle of life. Instead of viewing the problem from the vantage point of faith, the doubter views faith from the vantage point of the problem. Instead of faith 'sizing up' the problem, the situation ends with the problem 'scaling down' faith. The world of faith is upside down, and in the topsy-turvy reality of doubt a problem has 'become God' and God has 'become a problem.'³²

In the case of the frustrated minister, the problem is the prison of circumstances and people (imagined or real) that prevents him from achieving any of his objectives. If he does not come to his spiritual senses, he may resign himself to a life behind spiritual bars and blame God for putting him there.

³²Os Guinness, In Two Minds, (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1976), p. 175.