

When the mind is full of the cares of a family, or of a business, or the heart hardened by a long course of sin, or the conscience benumbed by repeated acts of resistance, or the soul grown carelessly familiar with all the most solemn topics of religion, is it then a more suitable or likely time for beginning attention to piety?

*Early piety is propitious to our temporal comfort*, as well as to our eternal welfare. "Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 3.8. If, on the contrary, it were inimical to all our interests in this world; if it prevented us from ever gaining wealth, and doomed us to abject poverty; if it drove us out from society, and confined us to convents and monasteries, yea, to caves and dens of the earth; if it made us objects of universal dread and detestation; if it impaired our health, and required us to end a miserable life by the agony of martyrdom; if it converted earth into a wilderness, where not one spot of verdure, nor one spring of consolation was to be found; if, in short, it transformed our world into a purgatory, and our sojourn in it, into a term of unmixed torment; still, if it were necessary for the eternal salvation of our immortal soul, we should be fools to neglect it; how much more then, when it blesses us for time, as well as makes us happy for eternity; when it softens the cares, sweetens the comforts, protects the interests of earth, as well as guides us to the felicity of heaven. It guards our health, by keeping us from those vices which impair it; plants a fence around our property, by saving it from those sins that waste it; preserves our peace of mind, by restraining us from those actions which disturb it; makes us frugal, industrious, and trust-worthy; and thus spreads its wings over all that is most valuable in life; while, on those very wings, it raises us to glory, honor, and immortality.

*It is the most happy life*, and can you be happy too soon? Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. Its privileges and its duties, its present influence and its future prospects, all lead to happiness. If it could make Clementine and Martha peaceful, composed, happy in death; if it could enable them, and thousands like them, to turn with a smile from the altar to the tomb, to accept with tranquility the shroud instead of the bridal attire, and to quit with unmurmering acquiescence the most brilliant prospects, for the dark valley of the shadow of death; if its capacity and power to bless could not be destroyed even by these circumstances; if it can make the soul joyous under the uplifted dart of the King of Terrors—can it be otherwise than a never failing spring of delight amidst the scenes, the trials, the comforts, and the activities of life?

*It is the most honorable life*: and can you be invested with its rich and valuable distinctions too early? It is said, that "Jabez was more honorable than his brethren. 1 Chron. 4. 9. And why? Because he was more pious. God bears the same testimony, where he says, "Since thou was precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved