

that although men are living sinful lives, their affections are pure. Such ideas are quite contrary to our Lord's teaching. There is no evading the principle laid down by Christ, *that conduct is the grand test of character*. If the general tenor of a man's life is carnal, worldly, irreligious, and profane, we may easily judge of the state of his heart; for the tree is known by its fruit.

Our Lord has taught us our duty in relation to our fellow-men in the Sermon on the Mount. Men might differ as to what is just and fair in regard to their fellow-men. But Christ lays down our duty in this respect in the golden rule—"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." There seems to be an opinion very prevalent too among men, that to do justly means that we are to be truthful, candid, and fair in our business transactions with our fellow-men. It is true that it does mean this, but it means a great deal more. We too often lose sight of the fact that we are our "brother's keeper." We forget that our neighbour has claims upon us that reach far beyond mere honesty in business transactions. If we neglect these we are not only coming far short of our duty, but we are doing him a positive injustice. We should be united together as one great family, by the bonds of love and sympathy. I mean love in its highest and purest sense, and which the apostle says is to be "without dissimulation." One man leans upon another for support, and we have no right to suppose that we have fulfilled our obligations when we have meted out to others justice with a stinted hand or with mathematical accuracy. This would be mere Pharisaical righteousness. But the command of God is more searching than this. A man might do justly by his fellow-man in a legal sense, and yet not have a spark of love for him in his heart. But Christ commands us to love one another, and in that command a *good deal* is implied,—yet it is only when it is bestowed freely that it can be said to be acceptable before God.

But we are not to do justly only, we are also to love mercy. The importance attached to this command, may be judged of by the striking way in which it is stated by the Prophet. You will observe that he does not say we are to *show* mercy. No, that is not enough. We are to *love* it. A man may show mercy in order to gain for himself a reputation. But true mercy must spring from true love. Pride, or the desire of being highly thought of by others, may influence many to show mercy. Some, again, may be induced to do a kindness through self-interest. But the Christian should be actuated by higher motives than these.

One of our ancient moralists, Cicero, if I remember rightly, tells us not to show kindness to a youth, nor yet to an aged person. "Show not kindness," he says, "to a youth, for the chances are he will forget it, show not kindness to an aged person for the chances are he may die before he has an