

2. Joy

THE tendency to think of religion as a gloomy thing is too common. The Christian who considers it a virtue to wear a sad countenance and to frown upon the innocent enjoyments of human life often injures the cause of Christ. It leads the world to think that religion is good enough for dyspeptics and invalids, and nervous women, but not fitted for one in whom the full tide of life abounds.

True religion should bring with it the highest kind of joy. The Gospel itself is a message of joy; so the angelic messenger proclaimed, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The fruit of the Holy Spirit's work in the heart of man is "joy." "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The life of heaven is joy. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy."

A religion which knew nothing of joy would be unsuited to our race; for mankind everywhere wish to be happy. There is a desire in every