

Highland shieling that pure and holy happiness which Royal palaces and noble halls have not always and everywhere possessed in this world of ours. Therefore home, instead of being an obstruction to religion, ought to be its nursery and its support. Instead of repelling, home ought to welcome true religion. Home ought to be to every one a sweet spring by the wayside of life, at which you are not always to dwell, but at which you are to drink and then continue your journey rejoicing. Be it remembered that the Saviour's first miracle was wrought at a poor man's home in Cana of Galilee. I think it a most exquisite trait in the character of Him who is the reflection of all that is exquisite, perfect, and beautiful, that He stopped on his dreary road to rejoice with them that did rejoice before he went forth to suffer for those who sinned. In so doing he demonstrated to mankind that to rejoice and be glad with those who are innocently happy is as much a duty as to unite with the sad and the sorrowful our sympathy for their affliction. Let me entreat you, then, my friends in this district—where the temptations to broken and deserted homes are not so many as in great cities, in not a few of which occurrences of a sad character, in their nature and results, often happen—let me nevertheless entreat you to make home the anchorage of your affections, and to make nothing on this side of Heaven, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, the anchorage of your whole mind and heart and soul.

The second injunction in my text is, that 'they that weep should be as though they wept not.' There was, my friends, a certain class of philosophers of old who thought weeping unmanly. The Stoics condemned weeping, and denounced it as useless and wrong. But it is said the Saviour wept. *That* is an answer to the Stoics. The tears that Jesus shed upon the streets of Jerusalem, and upon the grave of Lazarus, have diluted all the tears that have since been shed. A man's sorrow, even in its most poignant and keenest agony, is borne less heavily, because 'Jesus wept.' We are to weep—that is, we are men—we are not made of granite or iron. Why, instead of weeping being cowardly or unmanly, I have read that the hero who has led the world to hope and has been the conqueror of many fields, has had a heart soft, sensitive, and susceptible as that of a woman. It is *not* unmanly to weep. It is *not* unchristian to weep. But we ought to 'weep as though we wept not.' Perhaps some of you are weeping over those who have been removed from among you. Bereavement is bitter to be borne. Tears are pardonable over the cold ashes of them that you love. But if you feel that the gem that has ceased to shine on your hearth upon earth has become a fixed star in the firmament of Heaven; if you feel (what I am persuaded of) that those who have left us (in the language of

the good and great Dr Chalmers) 'have not gone to a different place, but are only in a different condition;' if you believe, as I think Scripture indicates, that those who have left us encompass us like a cloud of witnesses—hover over us in shining battalions—and are the spectators of our triumphs and our struggles—if you believe all that, then be persuaded that you are not separated from them forever! That footfall which sounded so musically on your threshold on a Christmas eve, you will hear again; that face which was so welcome, but now lies in the shadow of the tomb, will reflect the everlasting sunshine again; that voice which was so dear and sweet, and which was as delicious music to your heart, you shall hear again; broken links shall be renewed—lost links shall be restored! My dear friends, if we estimate aright the height and the depth of the happiness we have in reversion, we should look not with carelessness but with less intensity upon earth's brightest joys and upon earth's proudest and most resplendent positions. If, then, these things be so, weep—that you cannot help—but do not weep as unbelievers who disbelieve all, but as Christians who can see a sanctified end and issue to all. I daresay you have read the lines of the American poet on this subject—I have often done so with very great pleasure—and they express my own sentiments so beautifully, that I cannot help quoting them to you:—

'There is no flock, however tended.

But one dead lamb is there:

There's no fireside, howe'er defended,  
But has one vacant chair.

'The heart is full of farewells for the dying;

Of mournings for the dead:

The heart of Rachel for her children weeping  
Will not be comforted.

'Let us be patient. These severe afflictions

Not from the ground arise;

But oftentimes celestial benedictions

Assume this dark disguise.

'We see but dimly thro' the mists and vapors

Amid these earthly damps;

What seem to us but sad funeral tapers,

May be Heaven's distant lamps!

Let us, then, weep as though we wept not!

Let me turn now to the next injunction of the text—that we are to rejoice as though we rejoiced not. My friends, there is less religion in a gloomy face than in a bright countenance beaming with innocent happiness. I had almost said there was no religion in a gloomy face. Do you feel that if you are unhappy? It is not because of religion, but because of the want of it. The very essence and aim of Christianity is to make men happy, and that happiness consists in being loving, loyal, and obedient. The Apostle distinctly says we are to rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and therefore rejoice we should, as God would have us. Is there not in this earth, my friends, anything to make us joyful? To speak only of dumb Nature: who