

service except it be manifested. Wherein, then, is it seen in our lives. Mere benevolence, manifested in gifts of charity, is not the love which is awakened in the soul by the love of God. Heathens and infidels can be benevolent. It is no mere natural love, no mere friendship love. The love of God in the human heart is a higher thing than that. As it flowed in upon us, so it should flow out in streams of beneficence. It should speak out in all loving, forgiving, tender messages. It should manifest itself in all rich, self-denying gifts to Jesus Christ and His cause. Do not sing of what you would do if the "whole realm of nature were yours," but now and here, in home, in church, in school, if you have the least portion of the love of God in you, let it be manifested. It will be recognized and will awaken a response in some soul.

2. *The nature of love is shown in the objects which it embraces.* "Not that we loved God." No one finds any difficulty in loving the good. The Pharisee can love, as much as such a one is capable of that affection, a Pharisee. But he looks with very unloving aspect on one whom he regards as a sinner. The teacher or parent finds it easy to love the pupil or child who is solemn and still, and "good," who never steps out of the way, never breaks anything, never forgets his manners, &c.; but the child who seems a born breaker of rules and regulations, it seems more difficult to love. He has many dismal prophecies pronounced in his hearing of what he will come to, and love reaches him most frequently in very unacceptable measures. So, when he grows up, he finds his faults magnified, his sins made much more of than the greater sins of older men sitting at his side in church and in society, and the love of Christ is entirely concealed from him so far as many christian people are concerned. Let this "Not that we loved God" ring in our ears. He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. It is when our brother or sister have fallen into sin they need the love of Christ to lift them up again. In how many cases is it true, that it is only when they have transgressed that any notice is taken of them. So long as they did well they were forgotten. But now, having fallen, they present an opportunity for us to show our indignation against wrong. Let it not be so. Let the church of Christ be distinguished for this, for which her Lord and

Master gained a name which is above every name, that she serves the needy ones, that she rescues the perishing ones, that she spreads the veil of charity over the defects and failings of sinful men.

3. *The effect which the love of Christ, flowing through human channels, has upon human character.* The study of the gospel, and of the teaching of Jesus Christ, helps us to understand the problem of human nature. Many good and wise men are from time to time speaking upon the education of the people, and the reclamation of the sunken and criminal classes of the population; and they tell how crime must be crushed out by severe penalties, and vice must be exterminated by human legislation. Forgetting in their wisdom the fact that sin and crime are not, never were, and never will be, extinguished by severe penalties; that such treatment only adds fuel to the passions, and deepens the hatred of authority. History, experience, and the gospel, alike teach, that human hearts can only be touched and conquered by Christ-like love; and by such the hardest hearts that ever were found in the human breast have been won to gentleness and obedience. "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Therefore, we should bring the love of Christ to bear upon every fallen or sunken life that comes under our influence, upon every hard heart, upon every life that stands outside of the christian circle. This is Christ's method of salvation. It is not man's. Being Christ's, it is difficult, it requires time and patience, and self-denial, and unwearying effort. It is not a summary method of chains and prisons and laws. It is a method which requires the exhibition of the very spirit of Christ himself. Therefore, it is rarely used. With Him salvation means character, and character cannot be made to order. The church finds it easier to get a law passed prohibiting and forbidding, and tying up. So it is easier, but it is not so effective. It is a question to be considered at this present time, whether the church would not have more influence in the great social questions of the day, if she pressed home upon the conscience of the people the love of God and the law of God with greater earnestness and fidelity, and placed less reliance on, and spent less time upon the securing of mere human ordinances. Let her preach, for example, the law of the Sabbath before legis-