

# THE WESLEYAN.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A COMMITTEE OF WESLEYAN MINISTERS AND FRIENDS IN LOWER CANADA,  
IN CONNECTION WITH THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

"LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER TO PROVOKE UNTO LOVE AND TO GOOD WORKS."—HEBREWS X. 24.

VOL. I.—NO. 24.

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 1841.

[NEW SERIES, NO. 17.]

## DIVINITY.

[FOR THE WESLEYAN.]

### OUTLINES OF A SERMON ON THE LOVE OF MONEY.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil."  
I. TIM. VI. 10.

UNPROMISING of evangelical instruction or spiritual improvement as a discourse from this passage may appear to be, we ought not to turn from it, or omit it, as one in which we have no concern. Brethren, the subject before us is one of great practical importance,—it is the sin—the evil—the mischief of covetousness; and on inspired authority, covetousness is declared to be idolatry. If, however, we are all entirely free from it, and in no danger of falling into it—then, indeed, we may for the present dismiss it. But if St. Paul found it necessary to address these words to Timothy for his instruction and warning, and that of the Ministers and churches committed to his care,—above all, if it pleased the Holy Spirit to inspire these words; then there must have been a necessity for them; and I ask, has that necessity existed more strongly and obviously in any age of the church or the world than it does in the present; or in any nation more than the British Empire, with all our boasted liberality? Has not the love of money in all places, and among all persons, where the use and value of it has been known, been the leading—predominant—acknowledged lust and sin of mankind; characterizing not the rich man only, but the poor man also—the old as well as the young—men of all conditions and stations? And is it not a fact, that most of those self-inflicted miseries which prevail among men, are the offspring of this lust? "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Suffer, then, my brethren, a word of exhortation and caution on this subject.

1. See then before you in this admonitory passage of the Apostle, a striking figure—the figure of a luxuriant tree, or plant. The tree itself is money, or wealth—the fruit is evil of various kinds—the root, covetousness, and the soil in which it grows is the depravity of the human heart. We have heard of the fabled *Upas*, or poison-tree of Java, around which are said to be strewed the bones of pilgrims, criminals, and others, death-stricken by its noxious effluvia. But the tree of which the Apostle speaks is no fable, but grows, luxuriates, and spreads its deadly shade in every continent, island, and part of the world. Or to speak without a figure, as before observed: the love of money, or wealth, where its use and value are known, is common to man in every age and place.

2. But observe—it is not said that money, or the use of it, "is the root of all evil," though the passage is sometimes thus misquoted; but the love of it, and the abuse of it. The intercourse and commerce of mankind could not be carried on without it. Men's wants could not be supplied—their benevolent intentions carried into effect—the interests of religion promoted, without money. It is men in a savage state only to whom the use and value of money is unknown. "Money (saith Solomon) is a defence, money answereth all things." It is not, then, money, duly estimated,

and properly used, that originates so many evils, but it is the love of it—the greedy desire for it, and then the abuse of it. In a word, it is *covetousness—avarice*, which is the root of which the Apostle speaks.

3. Observe also, that though the Apostle says that "the love of money is the root of all evil:" the expression here, as in some other places, must be understood with some restriction. There are, doubtless, other roots of evil in this evil world, and in our evil hearts: as pride, ambition, love of pleasure. Its meaning is, that it is the parent of all kinds of evils; of very many evils; of more, perhaps, than any single vice besides. The prolific source of moral evils, and physical evils—evils temporal—evils eternal. Of this we have daily and mournful proof and experience. We can more easily trace the evils around us to this vice and lust, than to any other. Some love money for its own sake, but most because it ministers to their pleasures, enabling them to gratify "the lust of the flesh—the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." Alas! the love of money, and the love of the world, seems to be natural to every unrenewed heart.

In our further consideration of this subject,—

1.—LET US NOTICE SOME, OF THE MANY EVILS WHICH SPRING FROM THIS ROOT. But where shall we begin the enumeration? Hear again the Apostle: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

1. When this inordinate desire and love is not gratified, it leads to murmurings and dissatisfaction, and tends to excite and inflame the worst passions. Men, chagrined by disappointment, become peevish, angry, and envious. It spoils their enjoyment of the comforts which Providence has placed within their reach, and makes them restless and wretched in their lives, and their families with them. If, therefore, men, whatever may be their station and condition, would consult their own peace of mind, they would strive to repress the rising desire, and not set their hearts on that which they cannot possess, or which, if possessed, would fail to make them happy. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."

2. Another species of evil of which this love is the source, is that *duplicity, equivocation, falsehood, and even perjury*, in which some persons are tempted to indulge, because, by the sacrifice of candour, truth, and uprightness, their cupidity may be gratified, and money and wealth may be acquired. When men "will be rich," as St. Paul says—large sacrifices of principle, integrity, and honour, are sometimes made to its acquisition. But what a sin, what a deadly sin is this! The man who can, for the sake of worldly gain, be guilty of falsehood; or deliberately and wilfully conceal the truth which he is bound to reveal; tattle with his conscience, dishonour religion, if he makes any profession of it, and renders himself obnoxious to the displeasure of that God who requirereth truth in the inward parts.

3. Yet further,—the love of money sometimes leads to downright *dishonesty*. And what is that system of robbery—diminishing without necessity or justice the wages of the mechanic, and the hire of the labourer; overreaching, taking advantage of the ignorance or necessities of others,—which is constantly, and unblushingly practised by some persons in their daily business,—what is it but a system of fraud and oppression, originating in a greedy, covetous desire to lay up treasure upon

earth:—To get money—to get it honestly if they can, but at all risks, to get money. And to what, but to the principle here condemned by the Apostle, are to be attributed the forgeries and robberies, which are daily committed by notorious and unprincipled villains? It is the love of money, or of those guilty pleasures which money only can procure. Such men "are drawn away of their own lust, and enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

4. Again,—The strifes, rapine, confusion, murders, wars, of which we so frequently hear, and which distract and afflict our sinful world, frequently originated in a money-loving heart. "From whence (enquires St. James,) come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not."

5. Once more,—When this inordinate love of money is gratified by lawful gains—by the successful prosecution of fair and honest trade: does it not, in very many cases lead to evil, by supplying the means of gratifying other sinful propensities, and lead to extravagance and profligacy, pride and ambition, and not unfrequently, to ultimate poverty and want?

6. Does it not, we would also ask, tend to harden the heart against the wants and sufferings of others, and prevent the removal of a great deal of misery which might otherwise be done away, or greatly alleviated? Why is it that thousands are ignorant, and hungry, and naked, and destitute, and oppressed; for whom instruction, and food, and clothing, and relief, might easily be procured? Because the love of money predominates in so many hearts. We hear, it is true, of large sums of money being annually raised and expended for benevolent purposes; but were it not for the love of money, they might be increased ten-fold. To devote five, or one hundred pounds a year to charitable purposes, may appear to be an act of uncommon liberality: but what is one hundred pounds to the man whose yearly income is ten times that amount, or what is five hundred pounds to the man whose annual income is fifty thousand? Liberality, to be truly Christian, and to be free from covetousness, must spring from right motives—he exercised in a right spirit, and bear a due proportion to the ability of the giver.

7. Again,—If superstition, idolatry, heathenism, and all the murders and miseries connected with them, and resulting from them, are evils in this world, and lead to misery in the world to come; they are evils, which, if not created, are to a great extent encouraged and perpetuated by this wicked passion. What is it that prevents the Christian churches from carrying out their benevolent plans of christianizing the whole world? Is it the want of duly qualified Missionaries to carry the Gospel tidings, and the blessed word of God to the ends of the earth? No—holy, faithful men, willing to labour and to die in the glorious work, are saying to the Christian churches, Here are we! send us! It is means—it is money, that is wanting. And is it that the members of the churches, and the professors of religion, have not those means within their reach, or have not that money to give? No—it is because they are not fully saved from the love, the covetous love of it; and are, therefore, unwilling to part with it, with the liberality they might, and ought to do. To say nothing of what might, and ought to be done by other Christian nations, Britain and her provinces might as easily appropriate to this heavenly work her millions of pounds annually, as many shillings.