

trusts in Him. It produces a new life in him which shall never die. The Word of the Lord liveth and abideth for ever in the soul which has entered by Divine power, and becomes the happy means of conveying to him all the blessings of salvation, grace, and glory,—present comfort, as well as future and everlasting joy. Happy the man who has received it by faith! He will find the pleasures of religion not only sweet but lasting; securing him a treasure, which the poorest man that possesses is richer than all the gold of the world could make him; and which the rich man that possesses will find, of all his possessions, to be so inestimable, that he will say, in the language of the text, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold."

I now proceed, in the third and last place, to remark that the strong desire which the words before us express for the Scriptures on the part of the Psalmist, shews the feelings with which we should regard it.

A desire for gold exists more or less in the minds of all. In some this desire is their governing principle of action, originating their movements, stimulating their energies, leading to sustained efforts of patience and perseverance, which no disappointments nor difficulties exhaust; and nothing can satisfy them, but a possession of the object on which their hearts are set. In others, again, this desire rises into the strength and intensity of a passion, prompting them not only to spend wearisome days and sleepless nights, but to form deep laid schemes, to enter upon anxious speculations, to prosecute hazardous enterprise, and to undertake, as many are now doing, a voyage into a distant and unexplored region, where, as adventurers, at many a painful sacrifice of time and chance-directed labour, and incurring the most imminent risk of danger to life and property in a lawless state of society, they continue their daily *diggings* for gold. And richly will he deem himself rewarded for all his previous anxiety and toil, and great will be his feeling of ecstasy, who, by some fortunate accident, catches a glimpse of shining ore, first seizes the precious lump, and finds himself in possession of the longed-for treasure.

In like manner a sense of the value of the Scriptures, and a desire to gain an intimate acquaintance with their precious contents, is an invariable concomitant of every Christian mind. Where this desire has no existence at all, what can be a surer mark of irreligion or worldliness, or of a merely nominal profession, which suggests, perhaps, the propriety of possessing a copy of the Word of God, but allows it to slumber in inglorious neglect in their repositories, or on their shelves, or keeps it in some elegant form as a piece of gilded furniture, to embellish their apartment, but never thinks of it, nor handles it, but when they carry it to church, or find it there? But all who are Christians, not in name only, but

in sincerity and on principle, will, like the Psalmist, prize the Scriptures as an inestimable treasure, and cherish a desire to be more acquainted with the precious contents of that sacred volume. And this desire they will manifest by a frequent and periodical perusal of it; by storing their memories with a knowledge of its facts, and feeding their souls with its heavenly truths; by cleaving unto it as the ground of their trust, and as the source of their happiness; by appealing to it as their guide in the discharge of duty, and their counsellor in the midst of difficulties; and by keeping it so constantly before them, that their sentiments, their habits, and their pursuits, are moulded by its silent but predominant influence. In short, they will shew the value they set upon it, by making it the ground of their confidence. As the man of the world, who, by years of anxiety and labour in foreign climes, has earned a competency of gold, will carefully take the most prudent and rational means to secure the possession, and will return home to his native country, to spend the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of the comforts and elegancies which it will afford him, so the Christian who knows the Scriptures, not in word only, but also in spirit, and who by faith has come to participate in the blessings it contains, will take every means, by meditation and prayer, to retain and perpetuate what he has got. The feelings of every Christian are so akin to those of the Psalmist, in his estimation, the Word possesses so inestimable a value, and he cherishes so great a love for it, that, were all the books in the world to be lost, or laid in one mighty pile for conflagration, he would be happy in the retention of it alone. And as life advances, and his experience ripens of its refreshing comforts, and its elevating power, he can testify his sense of it, and the value he sets on it, no otherwise than in the language of the text, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold."

Is this, my friends, the language of your hearts? It is the language of a very advanced and experienced servant of God, who had long drawn water from the wells of salvation, and whose lengthened and varied experience enabled him, in a peculiar manner, to know and to testify how sweet and refreshing it was to the taste,—one who, seated as he was on a throne, and surrounded by all the splendours of royalty, knew, and could testify, that the treasures of the Bible were immeasurably better as a source of human happiness, than all the pleasure derived from the possession of gold. You may not, in point of spiritual any more than of earthly experience, have risen so high as the Psalmist; but still, if you are the people of God, His word possesses attractions to you, and opens sources of pure and elevated enjoyment, and is felt to exercise such a happy influence over you, that you prefer it to all other books. You repair to the perusal of it not under a cold sense of duty merely, but