

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### HOW A CHILD CAN PLEASE GOD.

THERE is one thought which very few have opened their hearts to, which yet is one of the best thoughts we can think. It is the thought that we have been made, and are kept in life, that we should give pleasure to God.

It will make a great difference in our lives when, instead of doing things to please ourselves, or our companions, we do everything to please God.

I once read a poem, by Mary Howitt, in which this good thought is put into the lips of a very little child. He was called Willie. One day Willie's mamma saw him sitting very silent in the sunlight, with all the men and women and the beasts and birds of his Noah's ark set out in a row. "What are you thinking about, Willie?" said his mamma. Willie answering, said :

"You know that God loves little children,  
And likes them to love Him the same;  
So I've set out my Noah's Ark creatures,  
The great savage beasts and the tame,—  
I've set them all out in the sunshine,  
Where I think they are plainest to see,  
Because I would give Him some pleasure  
Who gives so much pleasure to me."

It is true that it is only a very little child who would think of giving God pleasure in that way. But although the way of doing the good thing is a little child's way, the thing itself is good to do.

It is good for everybody to try to give God pleasure.

There was a great prophet in the world once, in the days before the ark, who tried to do this, and who did it all the days of his life. It was the prophet Enoch. At the end of his life, the story of his life told by God Himself was this: "He pleased God." Not himself, not his friends, but God. I have tried to see what it was he did that was pleasure to God, and I find it was this, that "He walked with God." Now you know why it is you walk with some young people and not with others. It is because you know them and love them, and know that they love you. Enoch knew all that about God. He knew that God loved him and he loved to be in God's presence, and to have God near to him in everything he did. He walked with God: the very way God did—the way of truth and right. "He walked with God:" he had God for his friend, and told Him by prayer all that was in his heart. "He walked with God:" he went about with God doing good, helping the helpless and trying to bring people to God. Every day he would say to himself, "How can I please God to-day?" And day by day he kept doing the will of God, and walking out and in with God for his friend.

But there was a greater than Enoch Who pleased God. You remember this is the very thing which the voice from heaven said of Jesus: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And God was very well pleased with Jesus. He began to be pleased with Him: even when He was a child. It is said that Jesus, when He was a little boy at Nazareth, "grew in favour both with God and man." Could anything better ever be said of a child's life? To be in favour with God! To have God well pleased with you!

That is to be like Jesus Himself. And you may really be like Jesus in this very thing if you do as He did. He set himself so to give pleasure to God that it became his meat and his drink to do God's will.

Now I give you this good thought. I ask you to admit it into your hearts. I advise you to take it for the rule of your lives. Say in your own heart to God, "O my Father, from this time forth I will try to give pleasure to Thee."

In the fairy stories, the young prince or princess, who is setting out in the world always meets a kind fairy who gives a cap, or a ring, or a flower, or a ball, which must never be let go or lost, and it will be help by the way. But this which I am offering you is a better gift than any fairy could give. This will be better than wishing-cup or ring, better than gold or silver. The child who shall say, "I will from this day live to please God," will live a happy, good life. And at the end, God will tell the same thing about the life of that child as He told about Enoch's and Christ's. He will say, "I have been well pleased with this child."

You want to know how you can live this life of pleasing God?

There is one thing we all must have if we would please Him. We must have faith in Himself. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Now as this is the very beginning of the way to please God, I must try to make it plain to you.

"To have faith" means, to believe that God loves you, that He has sent His Son Jesus to bless you, and that He intends you to come up to His home and live with Him for ever, when you have lived your life upon earth.

Next there are some things which are a grief to God—bad things, untruth, hatred, deceit, meanness; these must not be let into the life. There are other things which give joy to God; these you should seek from God in your daily prayers. Obedience and love to parents are things which are well pleasing in His eyes. And He loves to be asked for faith and truth and goodness of every kind.

But the great secret after this is a very simple one; a little child can understand it. It is letting God please you. Indeed, one of the very best ways of giving pleasure to God is just being pleased with the things with which God is pleased. And God has set Himself to give us pleasure by giving us things to be pleased with. He begins by giving us Christ. He Himself, as we saw, is well pleased with Christ. And He says to you and me, "Take pleasure in my Son in Whom I am well pleased." And whoever enters into this and is able to be pleased with Jesus, and with his love, and his life, and his death, in that very way begins to give pleasure to God.

To be pleased with Jesus is a child's first step in giving pleasure to God.

### THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

ROBERT MOFFAT, the missionary, tells that an African chief once came to him lamenting that his best hunting-dog had eaten his New Testament. "Oh! I'll give you another," said Mr. Moffat. "Ah!" said the hunter, "my fear is not

that the dog has spoiled the book, but that the book has spoiled my best dog. The words he has eaten are so full of love and gentleness that they will keep him from fighting or hunting for me any more." But he soon found that the good words had not made his dog better or worse. And many who know well the blessed words of the Bible seem to get no more good from them than that hunting-dog got.

The Bible is God's great medicine-book, but what good can it do you unless your soul receive not its words merely, but the very things these words signify—God's remedies for our diseases?

Mungo Park, the African traveller, says that the African doctors write the names of their remedies on a black board with chalk, add some spells, wash off the chalk into a bowl, and make the sick man drink the dirty water, which they think will cure him. Sometimes their doctors write the names of medicines on dried leaves, which they put into hot water, as we do with tea-leaves; the sick man drinks the infusion, and expects a cure.

You smile at their folly: but are not you just as foolish if you fancy a mere head knowledge of the Bible will heal your soul?

### ROBBY BOB'S LITTLE SERMON.

YESTERDAY morning Robby Bob climbed up into his grandmother's arm chair, and preached this little sermon to the children in the nursery.

"Beloved hearers and chil'ren: I'm a goin' to preach to you about shoes. It was what aunty told me onct, and it was true. Every morning, beloved hearers and chil'ren, there was two pair of shoes standing by every boy's and girl's bed—not the cradles, coz babies don't know enough. Well, one pair of these shoes is nice, and makes you good natured and pleasant, and the other pair is all wrong, and makes you just as tigers. If you put on the good pair, you walk through the day just as good and cheerful as a birdy-bird, and everyboy'll like to hear you comin', and your step'll be just like the music of a beautiful hand organ with little men and women dancing round and round, and everywhere's you go things will seem all right and nice, and you won't even mind having your face washed and your hair curled, if they don't pull too awful.

"But if you put on the other pair you won't have any comfort, and nobody won't want you, and everything will kind o' crack. Now, my hearers and chil'ren, remember these two kinds o' shoes is by everybody's bed every mornin'. You can't see them, but they are there; all you've got to do is to say, I'll put my foot into the good natured shoes, and wear them all day, and not forget it, and you'll do 'plendid. But just as sure as you don't, your feet'll slip into bad shoes afore you know it; and then look out.

"Now, my hearers and chil'ren, I must get down. The breakfast bell is ringin'. I want you all to remember what I have just said to you—and another thing; if you've got on your good natured shoes this morning you'll wait for me till I get my hair brushed, coz I've been preaching, and we ought to start fair if there's griddle cakes."—*Hearth and Home.*