

These enter early into the mind of the growing boy, and exercise a powerful influence over him. For example, one ideal very common amongst us is that *worldly success is the great object of desire* in life. Men who have been successful in achieving positions of influence and emolument are pointed to as the most successful men in life. Such men may have no moral worth, no moral standing in the community, may have attained their end by recourse to the most contemptible strategy and dishonesty, yet they have been successful, and they are the objects of flattery and envy by the general community. And how readily this pernicious ideal obtains ascendancy over young minds, distorts their moral vision, and inclines them to the world!

Intimately allied to this is the kindred ideal, equally false, that *the highest form of ambition is to become rich*. It is the old gospel of the world—the chief end of man is to become rich—a poor, mean travesty on the grand definition of the old Westminster Catechism, “the chief end of man is to glorify God.” However, this ideal is widespread, and very many Christians have caught the contagion. The glitter of gold, the visible display it is capable of making, and the influence it wields, exercise a powerful fascination on the minds of most Christian people, making the possession of wealth the great desideratum in the world. Though so great an authority as Jesus Himself has declared that no man can serve God and mammon, there are many of His professed followers who, if they do not exactly worship it, think they cannot have too much of it, and would make any sacrifice, reasonable or unreasonable, to obtain it. Mammon is also a mighty power in the church of to-day, and it exercises a most subtle sway. The young are not slow to perceive the limitations of poverty, or circumscribed means. They soon come to see that they have many desires which can only be satisfied by money; others have plenty of it; hence they begin early to look upon it as the only means by which they can gratify their desires, and thus the lust of money is born and developed in them, and the love of it becomes a passion. Moreover, the character of the conversation in the home fosters this sentiment, and again the elevating and ennobling power of moral and spiritual ideas is enfeebled and overlaid by the desire of mammon.

Another false ideal is aptly and forcibly expressed by the rich man in the parable, “Take thine ease; eat, drink and be merry.” It may be described as *self-indulgence*, or self-enjoyment, perhaps the