

less just and holy, the less merciful and compassionate, when you are sick, and poor, and distressed, than when you are in health, and rich, and prosperous? Has that wondrous fountain of life and blessedness been dried up? Have those "living waters" of salvation ceased to flow?

Ah! you had forgotten that it was *in God* you were to rejoice. You have been trying to rejoice in some "broken cisterns," and no wonder that you find it hard to rejoice *always*; for there is little in earthly possessions to cause joy even while they are yours; and when they take to themselves wings and fly away, what have you left?

God is left; and in him you can always rejoice. You can rejoice that *He reigns*; that his perfect and blessed will *shall* be accomplished by men on earth, and angels in heaven, and wicked spirits in hell. You can rejoice that you are in his hands; that every event of your life is ordered by him, and that he will hide you under the shadow of his wings, and keep you as the apple of his eye. You can rejoice that he is, and will always remain, unchangeably great, and glorious, and happy; that whatever may become of all created beings, notwithstanding all the sin and misery which exist in the universe, there is still one Being who is absolutely and spotlessly holy; who is holiness, and truth and love. And when you have gazed at this glorious Being, till one perfection after another bursts upon you in bolder radiance, each for a moment seeming to swallow up the others, and then all blending in one soft flood of dazzling light, you will be prepared to join in the exulting exclamation of the Psalmist, "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High."—*Boston Recorder*.

RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION.

Persons talking abundantly and very fervently about the things of religion, can be an evidence of no more than this, that they are very much *affected* with the things of religion? but this may be without any grace. That which men are greatly affected with, while the high affection lasts, they will be engaged about, and will be likely to show that earnestness in their talk and behaviour; as the greater part of the Jews in all Judah and Galilee did for a while, about John the Baptist's preaching and baptism, when they were willing for a season to rejoice in his light; a mighty stir was made all over the land, and among all sorts of persons, about this great prophet and his ministry. And so the multitude, in like manner, often manifested a great earnestness, a mighty engagedness of spirit, in every thing that was external, about Christ, his preaching and miracles, *being astonished at his doctrine, anon with joy receiving the word*. They followed him sometimes night and day, leaving meat, drink, and sleep to hear him; once they followed him into the wilderness, fasting three days going to hear him; sometimes extolling him to the clouds, saying, 'Never man spake like this man!' being fervent and earnest in what they said. But what did these things come to, in the greater part of them?

A person may be over full of talk of his own experiences; falling upon it every where, and in all companies; and when so, it is rather a dark sign than a good one. A tree that is over full of leaves, seldom bears much fruit. And a cloud, though to appearance very pregnant and full of water, if it brings with it over much wind, seldom affords much rain to the dry and thirsty earth; which very thing the Holy Spirit is pleased several times to make use of to represent a great show of religion with the mouth, without answerable fruit in the life, Prov. xxv. 14,