

whispers to them. Even in Winter, when the snow drifts, and the wind is cold and the woods are bare, and everything is asleep and resting till Spring, the robin-rebreast and other birds are kept alive day and night. Even the little flies and midges do not die, but appear again in Summer. If you walk by the sea, too, you will observe a great number of birds that swim, and dive, and fly about happy in spite of cold or rain, or storm! Now God loves you far more than these, for He never called them His *children*, nor made them to be with Himself and to love Himself; and so God, who makes them so happy, surely wishes you to be far more happy? And does He not make you so every day? For there is not one in which you are not ready to laugh, and sing, and play. But He wishes to give you more joy than you ever yet had, and to give it to you *as long as you live!* "The chief end of man is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever."

But how are you to be happy? That is the question? I wonder what answer you are inclined to give to it. Shall I guess? It is this, I think, "We would be quite happy if we had our own way, and could do just whatever we pleased! Oh! if there was no one to find fault with us, and if we were never meddled with, but could go where we pleased, and do what we pleased, and get all we liked just by wishing it! Yes; *to have our own will in everything, that would make us happy!*" Have I not guessed well? Are not these your thoughts?

Now I do not blame you at all, my dear children, for thinking this; it is very natural for you to do so, because you are too young to know how mistaken you are unless you believe what those tell you who are older and wiser, and who can instruct you from God's Word of Truth, and from what they themselves know to be true; and you are too young to know how many people have tried the way of self-will and self-pleasing to be happy, and have never been so after all. But I will tell you a story which perhaps you have heard before.

There lived a little gold fish in a globe of water, and a little canary in a cage, which hung over the fish. One day the fish heard the bird sing, and it said, "Oh, how happy would I be if I could only *have my own will*, and get out of this cold water, and be in a cage, and sing like that bird? But here I must live, and swim round and round this narrow globe of water; *what a pity I cannot do as I please!*" Soon after this upon a very hot day in the Summer the canary saw the gold-fish swimming about in the water, and looking so clean and bright, and cool. "Oh," said the canary, "how happy would I be if I could only *have my own way*, and get out of this nasty cage, and