

tions. It will affect and modify, and materially influence the whole of his life and conduct. Yet it will not be felt, to interfere in any injurious way, but the contrary, with the employments and duties of ordinary life. When that desire, that ruling principle is implanted in a man's heart—in the heart of a man, who though on worldly principles, had been in the habit of acting with uprightness and diligence in the duties of common life, he has got no absolutely new thing to do. He has not to enter on any mental process to which he had before been a stranger. There had always been an under current of thought and feeling passing through his mind; and that has only changed its character. Before, it was vain, or it was ambitious, or it was sensual and selfish. Now it is godly. The pursuits of life go on, as they did before. The mind is not more distracted, than before. Yet is a new and holy and religious character imparted to every action of the daily life. The rule of action is different. The motive which leads to action is different. The end to be attained by it is different. The man, may, it is very possible, be doing the very same thing, engaging in the very same employments; and yet there is this great and essential difference, that whereas, whatsoever he did before, he did unto men, or unto himself, now he does it heartily unto the Lord.

It were easy to multiply examples, all tending with sufficient clearness, to establish the same thing, as that I have now brought forward, viz: that the influence of any one dominant passion or principle, though its power be continually, or almost continually felt, over our minds, and though it affects the whole of our conduct, does not necessarily withdraw us from common duties, and employments. I shall only call your attention to another instance of a nature as intelligible and more pleasing. Let us enter into one of these happy families, and blessed be God, amidst all the wickedness which abounds in the world, there are still many such, in which domestic love and kind affection rule with gentle sway in the hearts of all the inmates. And as far as we may be able, let us take a survey of their daily doings, and look into the inward springs of action, by which they are moved, and the thoughts and feelings, with which the ordinary labors of the household are accompanied. Look to the father, on whom, by the arrangements of a wise Providence, is laid, the duty of carefully providing for his family, by hard, and it may be, almost incessant toil for the supply of their daily wants. He rises early to the labor, to which Providence hath called him, and during the long day, his mind and body both, may be occupied with a hundred different things, with an endless variety of cares and duties and employments. Yet, does not one thought, one principle, one affection, lead him to all this unwearied exertion, which, in a great measure at least, prompts him to all his varied occupations, and which, if not continually and immediately present to the mind, is yet ever acting upon it, and ever stirring him up to fresh and unwearied activity? Is it not the

thought of the confiding partner, or the helpless little ones, whom he has left behind him, and who depend for all their comfort on the diligence and assiduity of his labors? Is it not that family affection, which God hath put deep and strong in man's heart, since on it the very foundations of human society were to rest? Does that thought, that affection, I ask you, disturb or distract him in his worldly employments? Nay, does it not cheer and bless and stimulate and dignify him in all his exertions? Say then, if—we need not say, instead of, but—superadded to these, there were also, the principle of godliness in his mind, the ever recurring thought of the great Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good gift, and of the merciful Redeemer, who died that he might live, would that enervate or would it strengthen, would it disturb or would it stimulate him? Would it not strengthen his hands, and encourage his heart? And just as the principle of family affection rendered every part of his daily toil or labor of love precious in the eyes of his confiding household, so would the principle of godliness, render it also a religious work, accepted of God, and to be approved by Him, in the day, when he shall judge the world in righteousness, and give to every man according as his work has been.

Look again to the mother. Her duties and employments and cares are altogether different. But they are not less important, or difficult, or numerous, or requiring less constant exertion, or less of self-denial and patience. In the quiet retirement, as it may seem, of a small and humble family, how many busy duties, may not she have to perform? Think of her assiduous and untiring watchfulness, her meek and wakeful tenderness, her wise and affectionate forethought. Think of the thousand efforts, she every day makes, to amuse, to occupy, to improve those whom God hath given her. Think of the self-denial she exercises in giving up for them all her own tastes and feelings; if indeed that may be called self-denial, which is scarcely felt as such, so pure and perfect is a mother's love. Think of the numberless plans she daily forms and executes for the peace and comfort and happiness of her household. How strange would seem to her the suggestion, if in the midst of her many cares and her many toils, anyone should hint that the continual presence of her husband and her children in her thoughts, would disturb, and distract her in the discharge of her duties. Why, that she would say, is to me the very spring of action, prompting me to all I do, and making me happy in the doing of it. And why, my friends, should the loving God, be less powerful or more distracting in a christian's heart, than is such love as I have now described in a mother's heart?—God is entitled to a place in our affections, beyond and above what any or all created things can claim, both as being infinitely excellent and lovely in himself, and being to us the source of blessings, the number and the greatness, of which are beyond all reckoning of ours. And why, is the supreme love, to which he is entitled, and which he justly claims from us, as created by his power and upheld by his bounty, and