

Well may we exclaim in the expressive language of the thanksgiving—

“Almighty God, Father of all Mercies, we thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory.”

Let us in the next place consider, what are the manifestations and evidences of being influenced by love to God. These may be determined by observing how affection towards an earthly object is wont to exhibit itself, for there are consequences uniformly following the existence of genuine love.

We seek after, and take pleasure in the society of those, whom we really love ; if we should be separated from them, we delight to think of them and of whatever recalls them ; our anxious care is to comply with their wishes, and avoid what displeases them ; the objects of their love and regard are dear to us for their sake ; no selfish principle influences our conduct towards them ; our sole study is to do whatever gratifies them.

Let us, my brethren, try by these tests the reality of that love to God, which we all profess that we feel, but which, alas ! is more frequently the expression of the lips than the language of the life.

Is your delight to hold communion with Him in prayer—to spread out before Him all your griefs, all your desires ? Do you love to approach Him as a fond parent, assured that He will grant whatever is for your good ; and that if your request is refused, the denial

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