

No Danger of Over-Loving.

There is an error, strangely prominent and widespread in the belief that a person can be too loving, can love another person too dearly, can have too deep, too intense a love for a fellow-creature. This is a baseless error, utterly at variance with the teachings of Scripture, as it is with the better promptings of the human heart. There is absolutely no such thing as over-loving, no possible danger in that direction.

The only passage in the word of God which can, by any torturing of phrase, be construed into a warning against the danger of over-loving, is the declaration of our Lord, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." But in this declaration it is the *precedence* and not the *measure* of love which is warned against. Jesus is to have the first place in the affections of his every disciple; and if the choice ever comes between giving up an earthly dear one and giving up Jesus, the disciple must cling to his Master rather than to his fellow. This, however, no more forbids the fullest possible measure of human love in its sphere, than it forbids all human love for the command to the love of God is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;" and if the love of God and the love of our fellows are in necessary conflict, then all human loves must be wholly trampled out of the heart; and that we know is not required of us by the word of God.

Nor to give our Savior the first place in our affections; and to give the whole heart to that Savior, only leaves the heart larger and freer for every proper and natural human affection. And when the heart is once opened to a human love there is no possible danger of its being too full of that love. Nor does any one proper human love interfere with any other proper love. The more one loves, the more one can love. The more love a husband gives to his wife, the more love he has to give to every child of theirs. The more he loves any one of his children, the more he can love every other. And the more he loves as a husband and a parent, the more he can love as a true and devoted friend.

The Bible is overflowing with injunctions to the extremest measure of human love. "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." What husband ever loved his wife more than Christ loved the church? "Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself." Not many men would be in danger of transcending that measure of love, even if it were the ultimate attainable limit—as it is not. Wives are enjoined "to love their husbands, to love their children," with no suggestion that they are in danger of over-loving. "A friend loveth at all times;" and "there is a friend that sticketh closer"—loveth more dearly—than a brother. "Love is strong as death." "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." It was with no reproach of Jonathan for any excess of love as a friend, that David mourned over him in tenderness: "Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." "Let us love one another," says the disciple whom Jesus loved; "for love is of God—it is a good thing from a good source, and we never need be afraid of having too much of it—and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." And Jesus himself in prescribing the duty and the measure of his disciples'

love for each other, says: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you." Until our love for each other—for every one whom we have any right to love at all—is as great, as strong, as full, as abounding, as Christ's love for us, we have not yet come to the standard of love to which we are called by our divine Master.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." It cannot be overdone. Of course it must be real love, pure love, unselfish love, love subordinate to the love of Christ; but when it is a proper love there cannot possibly be too much of it. No man can love his wife too much. No wife can love her husband too much. No parent can be too loving toward his or her children; nor can children be too loving toward their parents, or toward each other. No friend can transcend the right measure of love to his friend. In whatever else we have erred toward those who are rightly dear to us, we have not loved any one of them too much. God never yet rebuked the love of one of his children for another one of them. He never yet took away an object of human affection—a husband, a wife, a parent, a child, a brother, a sister, a friend—because too much love was given to that dear one; for too much love in its sphere is not possible—according to the commandments and the standard which God himself has given for our guidance.

You cannot love too much; but you can love too little. There is the danger. Look out for it! Love your wife all you can, and do not be afraid to tell her the fullest extent of your love. And let no wife fear that she shall have or evidence too much love for her husband. Love your children more than you yet have done; and never hesitate to say to them how much you love them. Be profounder and more devoted than ever in your love as a friend, and when you have reached the measure of Jonathan's love for David, remember that the measure of Christ's love for his friends is yet before you as a privilege and as a duty. The more you love your earthly dear ones, the better prepared you are for a larger measure of love for your loving Savior. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."—*Sunday School Times*.

The "Worsted Church."

From a letter in the Boston *Traveler* we take this description of a singular church in New Hampshire:

The object of the present letter is not to describe the beauties of this locality, but to speak of a very unique church at Hill's Corner, about four miles from Canterbury, and were its existence more generally known, it would be a great resort. Its exterior is that of an ordinary country church. It is sometimes called the "Worsted Church." Its interior is a perfect mosaic of needle work of vines, flowers and decorations, composed of worsted in all colors and designs. Few persons would believe without actual observation that such charming effects could be produced with such material. Crocheted lambrequins cover the curtains at each window, and hanging baskets filled with zephyr wool flowers depend from the centre. Harps, crosses, anchors, wreaths of flowers and festoons of vines are placed between large tablets of artistic designs gracing the walls like ancient tapestry, and inscribed with Scriptural selections. These tablets and inscriptions are composed of various-colored crimped tissue paper upon a background of cloth. The lettering is well executed, and no two inscriptions are in the same character.

An immense hanging ornament of flowers and drapery is suspended from the center of the ceiling, with two large arches of flowers spanning the interior of the church, which, with other decorations, produce an effect,

strange, curious, and wonderfully artistic and beautiful. The flowers look so fresh that the beholder is almost tempted to put forth the adventurous hand and pluck a regal lily, a blushing rose, a radiant dahlia, a modest forget-me-not, a little margarine, or the lily of the valley with its fairy bells. One says immediately upon entering the edifice, "Here is a life work!" Who is the artist and why such skill? Is this the freak of an erratic mind? Is this spot the Mecca of some sad pilgrim, some disappointed soul, who would devote to its shrine all the wealth and genius nature and circumstances had conferred upon her? Such is the thought, and such seems to be the fact.

A young lady, a native of Canterbury, the daughter of a well-known and celebrated physician, was left at the death of her father in comfortable circumstances. She was a lady endowed with more than ordinary natural abilities, with fine artistic tastes and musical acquirements of no common order. These qualities combined with pleasing address, made her a favorite with all classes of society. She left home to visit friends in a distant State, and while there formed an attachment for a gentleman in that place, whom she married. After the happy life of a few years she was left a widow and childless. Thus bereft and alone her mind naturally turned to the home of her childhood and to the memories that clustered about her native place.

She returned to Canterbury and took up her abode in a room over the entrance of the old church mentioned, then unused for religious services, and began work upon the interior. Day after day, week after week, and month after month, she worked often far into the night, creating designs of rare beauty and matchless art. In a true missionary spirit she commenced services by reading Beecher's sermons to the villagers who came to worship on each Sunday. Thus the years passed on until a person in whom she confided persuaded her that an investment she had of several thousand dollars would pay her better interest in his hands. She let him have it, and lost her money. Such, at least, is the current report. This loss, it is said, so preyed upon her mind that it developed a mild form of insanity.

The church was closed, and the visitor was admitted after rapping at the door, by receiving a key lowered from an upper window on the outside. He was compelled to wander alone through the silent building and view the wonderful adornments unaccompanied by the presence of her who had been the creator of them all, where she worked in the spirit of the old monks who devoted years to illuminating missals, and reminding one of Matilda of Normandy, who wove the celebrated Gobelin tapestry, that is the wonder of the world even to the present. The little church is orthodox with an annual fund of about \$150 to support evangelical preaching. This sum she spent with her own income in remodeling the edifice, putting in carpets, an organ, &c. She remained over five years and read Beecher's sermons weekly, till she became sick and enfeebled, and some of her auditors thought the words of the great preacher too liberal.

The sanctum so long occupied by the lady artist and teacher, extends across the entire front of the church over the entry and is some ten feet by thirty. It looks as if the occupant had just stepped out a moment. Everything in the room is in perfect order. It is nicely carpeted in warm colors, and tastefully furnished and arranged. The windows are draped to correspond with the interior of the church. A close inspection discloses other appointments of housekeeping. Two square divans finely upholstered and fringed, are filled with clothing and table ware, and in one corner that looked to be a tastefully draped pedestal supporting a pyramid of green moss, inscribed in white with the letters "I. H. S." in monogram, is seen on pushing aside the drapery, to be a neat cupboard with shelves of crockery. The perfect blending of colors would delight an artist. These appointments form a strange combination, but make a comfortable home.—*Christian Monitor*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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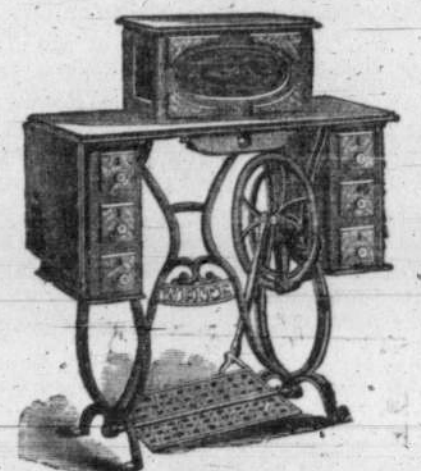
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