

Purpose of Heart!

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online: 30.03.2023

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In the closing days of this dispensation, what is the condition of soul most usually met with in the greater number of Christian assemblies? Is it not almost uniformly laxity and lukewarmness, with very little heart for Christ? Yet what our blessed Lord most craves for, (I write with all reverence) is surely the heart affection of His beloved saints. There may be much scriptural knowledge, combined with great zeal for work; but nothing can take the place of deep heart affection: "My son, give Me thine heart" (Proverbs 23:26).

In these last days the enemy is using his utmost endeavors to draw away the hearts of Christians by earthly things. Where he succeeds, the heart grows cold and careless as in the last of the seven letters to the churches (Revelation 2-3) where the Lord is seen outside, in tender grace knocking and inviting individuals to open the door, that He may come in, and they may sup together.

These lines are written especially for those who may be conscious of such failure and lack of love. Perhaps the Spirit has brought home to you your sad condition, and given you the desire to return to your "first love." You realize your utter weakness, but hardly know which way to turn.

Let us search the Scriptures, and see if we cannot find help. Turn to Ezra 7:10, "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it." Then, again, Daniel 1:8, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat." There are other similar Scriptures, but these will suffice. Both Ezra and Daniel had determined in their hearts that they would be true to the God of Israel, whatever others might do, and whatever it might cost them. Their hearts were set on this one thing, and their God did not pass it by unnoticed.

Now let us turn to Acts 11:22-23, where we read that Barnabas was sent to Antioch, in which town many had believed, and on coming he exhorted them all "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." This is what we so greatly need, purpose of heart. Christ must occupy the first place in our hearts.

Read what the beloved apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians in chapter 3: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Christ in glory had appeared to him, and from that moment all earthly objects ceased to have any value for his heart; indeed, he counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. His heart had been captured by the Lord of glory.

You may perhaps think or say, "Ah, but no such glorious vision has been given to me"; true indeed, but on the other hand you have learnt by faith to know Him as your Savior. The trouble is that through carelessness of walk you have grieved the Holy Spirit, and in consequence there has been no growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Someone once said: "You may have just as much of Christ as you want." I believe this is perfectly true; the great point is, "What is your heart set on?" If you desire to know more of Christ, and to enjoy His fellowship and love, you must cleave to Him with purpose of heart.

The reward offered for following such a pathway is wonderful, past all description: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.” Notice that this promise is entirely individual, and thus it is made to you personally.

Many years ago one wrote:

To my mind nothing is more exquisitely beautiful than the thought that God should covet to be the object of the affections of this poor little heart of mine.

He might have called me and left me to die at the eleventh hour, but oh! what grace that He should say, ‘You must choose Me as I have chosen you: you must live to Me as My Son lived.’ It is touching grace. Shall my answer be that I cannot do it? If God is working in me is it difficult?”

Maybe you are much discouraged, having often tried and failed over and over again. Do you know the reason? You have tried to fight in your own strength, and have forgotten that the Lord tells you that “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Even such a veteran as the Apostle Paul needed to be reminded, “My grace is sufficient for thee.”

The Lord grant that these few words may encourage some souls to start afresh, looking unto Jesus, and relying on His strength to enable them to cleave unto Him with purpose of heart.

From *Toward the Mark*, vol. 15 / No. 2, April 2016, pp. 13–15
<https://towardthemark.org>