

## Becoming Heavenly Minded 3

September 2017

Sunday School #3

### Review

- I. Spiritual Mindedness is voluntary thoughts.
  - A. Owen is pressing diligently to prove that the yearning and inclination for spiritual thoughts well up from the interior work of the Holy Spirit.
  - B. Just as the garden tells you much of the soil, so too do your voluntary thoughts tell us much of your spiritual condition.
- II. Demonstration
  - A. Genesis 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
  - B. Matthew 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.
  - C. Matthew 12:33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.
  - D. “Out of his good treasure a good man brings forth good things. The first opening of it, the first bringing of it forth, is by these thoughts. The thoughts that arise out of the heart are of the same nature with the treasure that is in it. If the thoughts that naturally arise and spring up in us are for the most part vain, foolish, sensual, earthly, selfish, such is the treasure that is in our hearts, and such are we; but where the thoughts that thus naturally proceed from the treasure that is in the heart are spiritual and holy, it is an argument that we are spiritually minded.”
- III. Reminder: They must be your natural thoughts.
  - A. Not thoughts inwardly forced upon you.
  - B. You can become grieved in an ungodly way or temporarily embarrassed and thus inwardly force yourself to dwell on spiritual things.
    1. Water naturally goes down, but with a super soaker you can force it in an unnatural direction. Likewise with your thoughts and mindset.
      - a) E.g. of ungodly grief leading to unnatural spiritual mindedness: Psalm 78:34-37 When He slew them, then they sought Him; And they returned and sought earnestly for God. Then they remembered that God was their

rock, And the Most High God their Redeemer. Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, And they lied to Him with their tongue; For their heart was not steadfast with Him, Nor were they faithful in His covenant.

b) Difference between the flow of a natural spring and a thunder shower.

(1) Natural spring= constant although sometime interrupted

(2) Thunder shower= in a violent rush, but soon dried up

C. Not thought outwardly forced upon you.

1. Preaching of the Word

a) Matt. 13:20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

b) When the doctrine of the word falls on such persons as showers of rain, it gives a course, sometimes greater, sometimes less, unto their thoughts towards spiritual things; but they have not a well of water in them springing up into everlasting life. Wherefore, after a while their minds are dried up from such thoughts; nothing remains in them but earth, and that perhaps foul and dirty.

IV. Owen cites at least these two verses justifying such analysis. In his work, he specifically mentions hypocrites performing in a National Church. Apparently, if you were good at the liberal arts, then you could serve in the Church. He is not trying to break a bruised reed.

A. 2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

B. Psalm 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

### **Main Lesson**

### **Owen's Design**

“So many are barren in this duty (of spiritual mindedness) because they know not what to fix upon, nor how to exercise their thoughts when they have chosen a subject for their meditations.”

- I. The Spiritually minded observe the special calls of God's providence.
  - A. An observation of God's special providence requires an understanding of the meaning of the event.
  - B. Owen states that in each event the wise can see the meaning. He speaks of this as 'a voice' in the providence, "There is a voice in all signal dispensations of providence: "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it," Micah 6:9.
  - C. For example, God cries aloud in every chastening providence. God, "makes a declaration of his name, his holiness, his power, his greatness. This every wise, substantial man will labour to discern, and so comply with the call."
  - D. Owen goes on to prove that God is greatly displeased when his call is ignored. Cf. Isaiah 26:11.
  - E. Conclusion: "If, therefore, we would apply ourselves unto our present duty, we are wisely to consider what is the voice of God in his present providential dispensations in the world."
    1. In fact, Owen considers this a settled matter saying, "Hearken not unto any who would give another interpretation of them, but that they are plain declarations of his displeasure and indignation against the sins of men."
    2. Support for this position?
      - a) Romans 1:18ff= wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness
      - b) Not sure about this one. You tell me.
        - (1) "Doth he not also signally declare the uncertainty and instability of earthly enjoyments, from life itself to a shoe-latchet? as also how vain and foolish it is to adhere inordinately unto them?"
    3. Some examples of chastening providences today?
- II. Suppose, then, this to be the voice of providence, suppose there be in it these indications of the mind and will of God, what are the duties that we are called unto thereby?
  - A. A diligent search into ourselves, and a holy watch over ourselves, with respect unto those ways and sins which the displeasure of God is declared against.
  - B. A diligent endeavour to live in a holy resignation of our persons, our lives, our families, all our enjoyments, unto the sovereign will and wisdom of God, so as that we may be in readiness to part with all things upon his call without repining. This, also, is plainly

declared in the voice of present providences. God is making wings for men's riches, he is shaking their habitations, taking away the visible defences of their lives, proclaiming the instability and uncertainty of all things here below; and if we are not minded to contend with him, we have nothing left to give us rest and peace for a moment but a holy resignation of all unto his sovereign pleasure.

1. Further warning:
  - a) Proverbs 1:24-31
  - b) Isaiah 65:12; 66:4
- C. A further exploration must be taken.
  1. When calamity hits, the Christian will blame the godless. However, Owen argues that the godless will be chastised in the final judgment (1Thess. 1:6-10).
  2. Therefore, we must consider that the present calamities are beginning with the household of God.