

Becoming Heavenly Minded 9

Review:

- I. The Being and Existence of God
 - A. What is the being of God?
 1. Not just bare existence.
 2. Who he is.
 - B. Not philosophically considered
 1. "...many who are not direct atheists, yet live without any solid, well-grounded assent unto the divine being; they do not so believe it as to be practically influenced with the consideration of it."
- II. Calvinism is natively experiential. Before it is a theological system, Calvinism is deeply affectional, God-centered, cross-magnifying religion. A man may loudly trumpet his adherence to the distinctive tenets of Calvinism, but if his life is not marked by delight in God and His gospel, his professed Calvinism is a sham. In other words, there is no such thing as "dead Calvinism." Such is a theological oxymoron for one simple reason: Calvinism claims to be biblical religion, and biblical religion is not only profoundly theological, it is deeply experiential and engagingly affectional! Wherever men and women claim to be Calvinists, their lives and their ministries will pulse with life—the life of living, Spirit-inspired, Christ-glorifying, God-centered truth.

Main Lesson:

- I. First, The pattern which we ought continually to bear in our eyes, whereunto our affections ought to be conformed, is Jesus Christ and the affections of his holy soul. The mind is the seat of all our affections; and this is that we ought continually to design and endeavour, namely, that the "same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus,"
 - A. Phil. 2:5.
 1. To have our minds so affected with spiritual things as was the mind of Christ is the principal part of our duty and grace;
 - B. nor do I think that any man can attain any considerable degree in spiritual mindedness who is not much in the contemplation of the same mind in Christ,
 1. 2 Cor. 3:18.
- II. To this purpose ought we to furnish our minds with instances of the holy affections that were in Christ, and their blessed exercise on all occasions.

A. The Scripture makes a full representation of them unto us, and we ought to be conversant in our meditations on them.

1. What glorious things are spoken of his love to God and his delight in him, whence also he “delighted to do his will, and his law was in the midst of his bowels,” Ps. 40:8,—seated in the throne of his affections!
2. What pity and compassion had he for the souls of men, yea, for the whole human kind, in all their sufferings, pains, and distresses!
3. How were all his affections always in perfection of order, under the conduct of the spirit of his mind!
4. Hence was his self-denial, his contempt of the world, his readiness for the cross, to do or suffer according to the will of God.

B. B.B. Warfield: *On the Emotional Life of Our Lord*

1. Compassion and Love.

- a) This emotional movement was aroused in our Lord as well by the sight of individual distress (Mk. 1:41; Mt. 20:34; Lk. 7:13) as by the spectacle of man’s universal misery (Mk. 6:34, 8:2; Mt. 9:36, 14:14, 15:32). The appeal of two blind men that their eyes might be opened (Mt. 20:34), the appeal of a leper for cleansing (Mk. 1:41),—though there may have been circumstances in his case which called out Jesus’ reprobation (verse 43),—set our Lord’s heart throbbing with pity, as did also the mere sight of a bereaved widow, wailing by the bier of her only son as they bore him forth to burial, though no appeal was made for relief (Lk. 7:13).
- b) How close to one another the two emotions of love and compassion lie, may be taught us by the only instance in which the emotion of love is attributed to Jesus in the Synoptics (Mk. 10:21).

2. Indignation and Annoyance.

- a) It is Mark, for instance, who tells us explicitly (3:5) that the insensibility of the Jews to human suffering exhibited in a tendency to put ritual integrity above humanity, filled Jesus with indignant anger.
- b) On another occasion Mark (10:14) pictures Jesus to us as moved by a much lighter form of the emotion of anger. His disciples,—doubtless with a view to protecting him from needless drafts upon his time and strength,—interfered with certain parents, who were bringing to him their

babies (Lk. 18:15) “that he should touch them”. Jesus saw their action, and, we are told, “was moved with indignation.” The term employed here expresses, originally, physical (such, for example, as is felt by a teething child), and then mental (Mt 20:24, 21:15, 26:8; Mk. 10:41, 14:4; Lk. 13:14, cf. 2 Cor. 7:11) “irritation”. Jesus was “irritated”, or perhaps we may better render, was “annoyed”, “vexed”, at his disciples. And (so the term also suggests) he showed his annoyance,—whether by gesture or tone or the mere shortness of his speech: “Let the children come to me; forbid them not!” Thus we see Jesus as he reacts with anger at the spectacle of inhumanity, so reacting with irritation at the spectacle of blundering misunderstanding, however well-meant.

c) Rebuke: Luke 9:51ff

3. Joy and Sorrow.

a) Sorrow

- (1) We call our Lord “the Man of Sorrows”, and the designation is obviously appropriate for one who came into the world to bear the sins of men and to give his life a ransom for many. It is, however, not a designation which is applied to Christ in the New Testament, and even in the Prophet (Is. 53:3) it may very well refer rather to the objective afflictions of the righteous servant than to his subjective distresses.
- (2) His advent into the world was announced as “good tidings of great joy” (Lk. 2:10), and the tidings which he himself proclaimed were “the good tidings” by way of eminence. Is it conceivable that he went about proclaiming them with a “sad countenance” (Mt. 6:16)?... We do read that, in contrast with John the Baptist, he came “eating and drinking”, and accordingly was malignantly called “a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners” (Mt. 11:19; Lk. 7:34); and this certainly does not encourage us to think of his demeanor at least as habitually sorrowful.

b) Joy

(1) Joy he had: but it was not the shallow joy of mere pagan delight in living, nor the delusive joy of a hope destined to failure; but the deep exultation of a conqueror setting captives free. This joy underlay all his sufferings and shed its light along the whole thorn-beset path which was trodden by his torn feet.

- III. If this pattern be continually before us, it will put forth a transforming efficacy to change us into the same image.
- A. When we find our minds liable unto any disorders, cleaving inordinately unto the things of this world, moved with intemperate passions, vain and frothy in conversation, darkened or disturbed by the fumes of distempered lusts, let us call things to an account, and ask of ourselves whether this be the frame of mind that was in Christ Jesus.
 - B. This, therefore, is an evidence that our affections are spiritually renewed, and that they have received some progress in an assimilation unto heavenly things,—namely, when the soul is delighted in making Christ their pattern in all things.