

HEARTS AND MINDS.

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HEARTS AND MINDS.

PHIL. IV. 7.

THEY who have by grace known the Lord Jesus, and the power of the Holy Ghost to the saving of their souls, have learnt something of the subtlety of their evil hearts. In some small degree they have found how true is the statement of Jeremiah, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." The carnality and enmity of the natural man has been discovered to them, and that in some instances by bitter experience. When such revelations of the true nature of self are felt, how sad and depressed the soul becomes, and what unhappy moods betake it. But oh! how sweetly blessed it is under such circumstances to have the assurance that God and his Christ are deeply interested in us, and that He, to whose eyes all things are naked and open, is sympathizing with us, and He will keep our *hearts* and *minds* in (*en*) Christ Jesus.

Now, amongst all the many and varied trials to which the believer in Jesus is subject, there are two which are very special and peculiar in their character. They are spiritual trials—temptations in holy things;

the one assails him in the assembly of God's people when gathered together in the name and round the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, to worship God in spirit and in truth. At such a time Satan, the great adversary of God's beloved ones, ever presents himself. As when Job went to worship, the devil was there too that he might draw his heart from God, so now when God's children assemble by the power of the Holy Ghost for a like purpose, the same enemy of souls is present to arrest the mind and heart from the true and only object of worship. His effort is to introduce thoughts about himself—thoughts concerning self—thoughts about those assembled with us, and of things far away. All of which trouble the soul of him who desires to see Jesus, and who desires in all humility and subjection of spirit to wait upon the Holy Ghost, that HE might reveal the person and preciousness of Jesus—that HE might take of His things and shew them unto him, so that as the soul apprehends the greatness of Jesus and the fulness of his salvation, it may bow in solemn and happy adoration, and out of the abundance of his heart tell forth his praises in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, and that with grace and melody in the heart to the Lord. And I would here observe, that it is just as the heart realizes the all-sufficiency of Christ; it is just in proportion as the soul sees that "Christ is ALL in ALL"—all in all as to salvation and in every other respect, that there can be a *real* spirit of worship in the believer's heart. Moreover, when Christ is thus revealed, then there *must*

be a spirit of praise and adoration to Jesus. It is impossible that it should be otherwise.

Now Satan's effort is to hinder this as much as he possibly can. When the Father is being worshipped in spirit and in truth is the time of all times that Satan will put forth all his greatest efforts to harass the Christian and despoil him of his heart's desire. Such has ever been his aim, and will be so until he is chained up and finally cast into the lake of fire prepared for him and his angels. Then there will be worship pure and hearty without any sin or hindrance—then there will be a full flow of praise and thanksgiving apart from all that which now mars our worship.

To Thee, e'en now, our song we raise,
 Though sure the tribute mean must prove :
 No mortal tongue can tell Thy ways,
 So full of life, and light, and love.

Yet, Saviour ! Thou shalt have *full* praise :
 We soon shall meet Thee on the cloud,
 We soon shall see Thee face to face,
 In glory praising, as we would.

It is but "a little while," and we shall be in that happy place, so we will wait patiently until He gathers us all to Himself in glory; and by faith we will lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises, which He has left on record for our joy and comfort as we pass along this wilderness scene of trial and temptation, looking off all unto Him who is the author and finisher of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. HE has been made

perfect *though suffering*, and He has a word of peace, and comfort, and sympathy for every one, in whatever difficulty he may be. He has a mind that can and does know all things, and which embraces every event and circumstance of our lives; He has, moreover, a heart that can and does sympathize in every trial and sorrow; and He has, too, a touch that is keen to a degree and susceptible of every feeling of our infirmities. He is the Head of the Body—the Church—and fully and most practically enters into the truth of that saying, If one member suffer all the members suffer with it.

He himself has been tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin, He can therefore practically enter into our troubles, and will not allow His members to be tempted above that which they are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it. Thus it is in the particular case before us; those who know what it is to have the thoughts and heart distracted by all sorts of things; those who have experienced what it is to sigh in the power of the new life after God—the living God;—those who know what it is to have an ardent desire to hold close communion with Jesus, and to have Satan introducing all sorts of other and opposing thoughts and desires, and whose consciences tell them how easily they are led away from the one theme of love and praise, will rejoice in the blessed assurance, that He who has conquered Satan and subdued all their enemies is on their side, and that greater is He who is for them than all that are against them. “If God be for us

who can be against us?" Blessed indeed it is to know that He *will* keep their hearts and mind in Christ Jesus.

In our translation it is *through* Christ Jesus, but the Greek word is *en*, which is *in*; this, I think, gives a fuller and deeper value to the precious promise: God will keep or *garrison* our hearts and minds *in* Christ Jesus. We have been *created in* Christ Jesus,—we have been made *new* creatures *in* HIM:—old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. The new thoughts and new desires of the new creature after God, are all known to Him, and HE keeps and secures them *in* Christ Jesus. The Holy Ghost dwells in the bodies of believers, and he carries up to God all our worship and prayers. He presents them to our great High Priest, who presents them to the Father, purified from all the evil with which they are mixed.

Do you then, dear reader, know anything about these harassing trials, these disturbing things, which tend to draw your heart and mind from the one object of worship? Oh! think of our loving and sympathizing High Priest, who once suffered for our sins, having been delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, but who is now alive—and alive for evermore;—who is at God's right hand, making intercession for those who in heart desire to glorify Him, but on account of manifold temptations fail—constantly fail—to do so. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me," says our God; and in thus praising, we feel we most often fail when we are met to worship; then

it is that Satan appears to hinder us. But Jesus is the trespass-offering,—Jesus is the sympathizing High Priest,—and He has given to us the Holy Ghost to help our infirmities, and to shew us Jesus in His many aspects. God knows all our thoughts and desires after Him, He notes them too in His book of remembrance, and not one shall be lost, for He will keep our *hearts* and *minds* in Christ Jesus.

Let us, then, beloved reader, look away from ourselves, our troubles, and difficulties, and let us wait patiently upon the Holy Ghost to show us Jesus, and to lead us into the spirit of praise and worship.

II. There is again a second trial of a very peculiar kind in connection with the reading of the Word of God. How frequently it occurs that the Christian in reading the Holy Scriptures, either in private, or at meetings for examining them in the fellowship of saints,—how often it occurs that that book is perused for the sake of the *intellect*. It is read for the purpose of getting the *head* filled with light and knowledge; and sometimes that others may think we know more of divine truth than they do,—not however that the heart might become affected by the truth. Hence it is so many Christians have so much knowledge, without any *power* with it. It comes out cold and dry, without the least commendation that it has been learnt in the soul by the Spirit of God. There *is* too an effort to see Jesus in the Word—in every sentence of it—but it is not in order that the sight of Him might influence the heart, and that its affections might be drawn out towards HIM, so that

the life and conversation might be more and more conformed to His image. When the Scriptures are read, it is God speaking to the person reading. It is God's way of communicating His heart and mind to His children. How seldom this is realized by believers. It is a very peculiar trial, and one which, when detected, causes much anxiety and discomfort to the soul. Those who have experienced this know best its bitterness.

Now Christianity is a practical thing. It is not a mere theory. It is most practical, and is to be lived out in the daily life of him who is a partaker of it, and who calls himself a Christian. It is not merely for the intellect,—it is for the *heart* and the *life*. He who has Christ dwelling in him ought to reproduce Christ in his daily walk. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked." (1 John ii. 6.) He who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost; he who is begotten again by the *word of truth*, should manifest to the world, for the glory of God, that he is no longer of the world, but a saint (a separate one), even as Christ was separate from sinners, and not of the world. It is by the *word of truth* that sinners are begotten again, and it is by that same *word of truth* the Christian is to walk in all holy conversation, bringing forth the fruits of the Holy Ghost to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

The believer knows this, and so does the devil, whose effort is by every possible means to hinder the Christian from *living out* the divine life. He well

knows the power of Christian example over the world; and as he knows he is unable to destroy the eternal life of the believer, his aim is to prevent its manifestation, lest others should be influenced by it. Lazarus, walking in resurrection life, was causing many to believe and follow Jesus, hence the effort to put him to death. Now, thanks be to the Lord, there are many Christians who have no taste for any other reading than the Word of God itself. They have lost their relish for other things, and Satan, seeing that he is unable to take the book from them, endeavours to stop the blessing. He says they may read the book, but I will do what I can to prevent them from getting the truth into their souls. If they will read, it shall only be for the head and intellect. This is his aim, and it is a snare which many beloved saints of God have fallen into in these latter days, and that unawares. Oh, it is a most subtle thing,—it is most ensnaring. And when by the Spirit of God the conscience of the believer is awakened to its power, and to see the snare into which he has fallen, then begins the trial I speak of. Then the mind and the heart become disconcerted. The thoughts of the mind are concerned about the heart, and the heart about the thoughts. The thoughts complain that the heart is not affected by the knowledge which they have by much hard study obtained, and has not so influenced the will and the affections, as that the thoughts might have been brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. The heart, on the other hand, is distressed, and complains that the mind has thought of *itself*, and for *itself*, so that the presence of Christ by

the Holy Ghost has not been realized. Thus the conflict goes on in the inner man, and this I repeat is a trial of no ordinary kind, and is known only to those who have been awakened to it by the Spirit of God. May many be made alive to this terrible and most subtle snare of Satan, in these last days of increasing darkness, who have not yet been entrapped by this crafty design of the great enemy of God's people.

Peculiar however as this trial may be, it is one the Lord can meet, and which He has met in His love and tender care. The promise before us is that which exactly meets the case. It is the heart and the thoughts which are troubled, and it is these which God has promised to keep in Christ Jesus. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 5). It is the peace of God—the peace of the God of peace—that shall keep them (or as it might be better translated, garrison them) in Christ Jesus.

Oh, how gracious of our God! how gentle, how tender is His heart to His erring ones! How loving and sympathizing is His care over those in trouble of soul. He meets them in the most tender manner possible. He does not say GOD will keep your hearts and minds; oh, no! He knows their frame; and as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him; and to say GOD will do this thing might embarrass the tried one. It might, while the soul is in the consciousness of failure in this most sacred of things, forget the trespass offering, and might be led to

think of God as one who was angry. The Holy Ghost the Comforter knew well all this, and so directed the apostle to write, "the PEACE of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." And thus he "remembered us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever."

Now there is just one condition which is most needful to be fulfilled, before it is possible that the soul of the tried one can receive the benefit of this full and blessed promise. It is this,—*"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."* *"Be careful for nothing:"* this is the secret;—it is a great secret; yea, I believe it is one of the greatest of secrets, and which secures peace and comfort to the troubled one. It is one, however, in which the Christian is most slow to be instructed, if indeed he ever does fully learn it in a practical way. As a rule, instead of being careful for nothing, and casting all his cares on Him who cares for him, he is careful about everything;—careful about himself and all the evil which he finds within; careful about the world; careful about Satan. Now God would have his children set free from all such trials. He tells them that sin has been put away by the sacrifice of Jesus, and that it shall not have dominion over us. He tells us that the world has been overcome, and that faith in Jesus gives us the victory too. He tells us that Satan has been subdued, and that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. He bids us not to be careful then about these things; He has settled

them; and all we are to do is not to fear, not to be troubled, but to *rejoice* in the Lord,—REJOICE always, —REJOICE evermore. Oh, what love! what grace! Jesus has borne all our sins in His own body on the tree; He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and tells us to be careful for nothing, but look to Him, and rejoice in Him; and that if we will *delight* ourselves in Him, He will grant to us the desires of our hearts.

If then, dear reader, we will be careful for nothing; if we will but look away from all these things unto Jesus, then God will undertake for us, and the peace of God shall keep or garrison our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Only remember, He will do it *all* himself and by himself; He cannot do it with any help of ours. God, as another has well said, “must have our weakness.” He cannot go on with *our* strength. Oh, then to be nothing and God in Christ all in all.

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THE

LAST INTERVIEW WITH A SERVANT OF
CHRIST, LATELY DEPARTED.

SADLY altered was the poor, worn-out body, pillowed in an easy chair, but his spirit rejoicing in his much-loved Lord. He said, "two months ago, when I felt this sickness was unto death, I asked Him to reveal Himself to me in increased loveliness and nearness.—*He did, He filled me with Himself*—I scarcely now think of the blood—I know it has done its *blessed, blessed* work for my soul; it is His *love*, His beauty, His perfection, that fills my heart and vision." He then spoke of feeling a little better that day; "But, ah! that is no pleasure to me." Then, clasping his dear, thin hands together, he said, while tears flowed down his face, "My precious Lord Jesus, *Thou knowest* how fully I can say with Paul, to depart and be with Thee is far better! Oh, how far better! I do long for it! They come and talk to me of a crown of glory—I bid them cease; of the glory of heaven—I bid them stop. I am not wanting crowns—I have *Himself! Himself!*" To another, he said, that "the manifestation of Christ Jesus was *such*, that it was like a re-sealing."

“ MY BELOVED.”

OH ! Christ ! *He* is the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love !
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above ;
There to an ocean fulness,
His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh ! *I am my Beloved's*,
And my Beloved is mine !
He brings a poor, vile sinner,
Into His “ house of wine ;”
I stand upon His merit,
I know no safer stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face ;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace,—
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand ;
The Lamb is all the glory,
Of Immanuel's land.