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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

THE HUMAN HEART

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Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Matthew 15:19: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

Psalms 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Man is a twofold being--physical and moral; visible and invisible; body and soul. There is something about man the undertaker can't embalm; the grave diggers cannot handle.

As a physical being, man has a heart and by its rhythmic contractions the blood, which is the life of the flesh, is made to circulate through the body and thus life is maintained. And as a moral being, man has a heart also. I am not aware that the Bible ever uses the word heart with reference to the physical organ. This is because the Bible deals with man as a moral being responsible to God.

Psychologists classify the faculties of the soul as mind, heart, and will. Make the mind the seat of understanding; the heart the seat of affections; the will the seat of choice and decision. But the Bible speaks of the heart as performing all these functions. Man thinks with the heart, he understands with the heart; he loves with the heart; he chooses with the heart; he makes decisions with the heart. The Bible makes the heart almost synonymous with human nature, morally considered.

I. Sin is resident in the heart. The heart is the storehouse of moral qualities. The Jews are all wrong about what defiled a man; the thought defilement was something outside a man; they confounded the material with the moral. They washed their hands to keep the germs of moral filth from entering the mouth. But Christ corrected them. Matthew 15:19: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Sin is not something imported; it is inherent. Psalm

51:5 says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

The heart of every problem is the problem of the heart. The heart is the incubator of all evil.

II. Sin originates in the heart. A lustful look is from the heart. Murder comes out of the heart. Theft comes out of the heart. Lies are born in the heart. Covetousness is hatched in the heart.

III. Sin is universal because all men have wicked hearts. You find sin in the rich man's palace and in the poor man's hovel. You find sin in the home and on the highway. You find sin in the office, on the farm, in the mines, and in the store. You find sin in the back alley and on the Broadway. Wherever you have a human heart you find sin. Everybody is a victim of sin. Nobody has escaped its blighting, damning power. Sin has ruined everything but God and the elect angels. We see its effect in the fading flower, in the crawling snake, and in

the scowl of the beast. Sin has made this a groaning creation only to be delivered when sin is destroyed.

IV. The heart is deceitful. Sin is deceitful because it originates in a deceived heart. You can't pronounce s-in without the sound of the hiss of the serpent.

We need a revival of sin-consciousness. We need to be convicted of the sinfulness of sin. We need to realize the danger of sin. Sin is ugly, but it is not ugly to the heart.

The heart is deceitful above all things. The heart pulls the wool over the eyes of our understanding. The heart fools us; it lies to us. The heart will make you blow out the light of warning. The heart will stop your ears to the cry of danger. The heart will fill your mind with trifling and trivial things of time and blind it to the importance of eternal things. Your heart will put you on the road to hell and make you think you are on the highway to glory. Your heart will seat you in the seat of the scorners and make you think you are in wise men's company. Your heart may lead you to kill the saints and make you think you are doing God's service. Your heart will make you think you are better off in bed than in the pew; it will make you think there is more profit in the Sunday paper than in the Bible. Your heart will make you put the stars of Hollywood above the stars of God--the preachers of His word.

The four chief social problems are broken homes, alcoholism, mental illness, and labor-management. And all these are problems of the heart. A bad heart is at the root of every broken home. There are three kinds of homes: A. where the inmates

live on one another; B. where they live with one another; and C. where they live for one another.

Alcoholism! What a problem! What makes a man love whiskey. It is not his need for it. It is a bad heart. While millions are starving for bread, men must have their brew. While children cry for food, men must have their poison. Such a condition is the result of bad hearts.

Mental illness, so-called, is only heart illness. Men are sick of life but not sick of sin. Multitudes do not want to live and they are afraid to die. Dozens of persons volunteered to ride to death with the atomic fleet of 97 warships when the atomic bomb was being tested in the Pacific.

The labor - management problem is a heart problem. If all hearts were right, there would be no conflict between capital and labor. If all hearts were right, the laborer would work to please God and the capitalist would pay to please God. But bad hearts get in control of both sides, and we have strikes and more strikes. In this complex civilization, all life is thrown out of gear. You can't travel because the engineers won't pull the trains. You can't get an automobile because the steel workers won't make steel. You can't warm yourself because miners won't dig coal. You can't bury your dead because the grave diggers are on strike. There is only one place I know of where there is full production and that is in the devil's kingdom in damnation factory.

We need a revival of believing what God says. We need a revival of the fear of God. Ninevah was a wicked city, but there was hope for Ninevah when her people got

down off their high horse of pride and sat in ashes; when the people pulled off their fine garments and put on sackcloth; when they gave God credit for telling the truth about them; when they put away their rich food and began to fast.

Is there any cure for such a heart? Is there any hope for man with such a heart? Can anybody cope with such a heart? Yes, blessed be God, there is one who can handle the human heart. David cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." We read that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia. We read that God purified certain hearts by faith.

THE WAY TO FREEDOM

--Compiled and arranged from various translations by Larry L. Burton, Nov., 1979.

"And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you Free. Jesus saith unto (you), I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me. If the Son therefore shall make you Free, ye shall be Free indeed. Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us Free. Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty; only use not Liberty as an excuse to do wrong, but by Love serve one another. For it is God's will that by doing right you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish man. Live as Free men, yet without using your Freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God. The Just shall live by Faith, (for) without Faith it is impossible to please God, (and) this is the Victory which overcometh the world, even our Faith. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; and Faith worketh by

Love. There are three things which shall remain forever: Faith, Hope, and Love, and the greatest of these is Love. God is Love, (and) it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. (Therefore) if ye fulfill the Royal Law (of Liberty) as it is written in the Scriptures: Thou shalt Love thy neighbor as thy self, ye do well. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for he that Loveth another hath fulfilled the Law, for the whole Law is summed up in one commandment, namely, Thou shalt Love thy neighbor as thy self. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law. By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another. The (first)

fruit of the (Holy) Spirit is Love. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh, (for) where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty. But take heed lest by any means this Liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ . . . and be F R E E."

The sunflower and cotton plant, whose blossoms ever look to the sun, follow it all day long, so the child of God should follow the Sun of Righteousness, Christ.

Rejoice Evermore

By C. D. Cole,

(1 Thess. 5:16).

Christian joy is far removed from the mirth of this world, and there is plenty of laughter in spite of abounding sin and shame and sorrow. There is a veritable army of men and women who draw big wages to make people laugh, but the joy of the Lord does not come that way.

I think we can safely say the devil is concerned for the happiness of his dupes. By keeping his people happy, he hopes to hold them in his kingdom. The devil is in danger of losing the disturbed sinner. I sometimes think he must be the president and general manager of the world's amusement companies.

Let us not be fooled into thinking that everyone who is full of mirth is also full of blessings. Christian joy is not determined by the shape of the face. Some are naturally more cheerful than others, but natural cheerfulness is not Christian joy.

We are commanded to rejoice evermore, and always. Christian gladness is a part of Christian duty. He who does not rejoice in the Lord is disobedient to the Lord. What it takes to make a man happy is a revelation of what he is. Church members who get their joy from the world are very apt to be of the world.

Primitive believers were happier than present-day Christians. The source of their joy was different, too. When the apostles had seen their Lord carried up into heaven, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Lk. 24:52). And following Pentecost, they continued

"daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people" (Acts 2:46, 47). Peter and John left the council, after shameful treatment, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts 5:41). Paul and Silas, while in prison and with "their feet fast in the stocks," prayed and sang praises unto God (Acts 16:24, 25). And at a later date Peter writes: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8).

I think it is conclusive that the early Christians were much happier than Twentieth Century Christians. And why? May some reasons be suggested in the hope that all of us will be challenged, instructed, and corrected.

Why Early Christians Were Happy

1. Lack of joy is due to a lack of interest in heavenly things. The early believers had few interests here on earth. They realized their portion was in heaven. Having no continuing city, they were seeking one to come, "a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." As pilgrims, they desired "a better country, that is, an heavenly." With them, the kingdom of God was "not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17).

2. Failure to witness for Christ is another

He Keeps Me

My Father knows my every need
His hand upholds me still—
He sees my every teardrop,
And keeps me in His will;
When darkness hovers o'er me,
He is my lamp, my light, —
Upheld by His almighty power,
No foe can e'er afright.
And so, I'll trust Him ever,
No doubts, no fears dismay.
I know He's near to bless me,
He'll lead through darkest day.

Selected

reason for the little joy of most Christians. Early believers were bent on making Christ known to others. When scattered, they went everywhere preaching the gospel—they "gossiped" about Christ. It was when they were engaged in speaking of Christ, in the face of bitter persecution, that they were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost (Acts 13:52).

Much of the joyful part of our religion is missed by making joy the immediate and sole objective. Do not most believers read their Bibles, attend church, and pray in order to obtain comfort and find assurance? But this is not the only way to comfort and assurance. Nor do we find comfort and assurance by ransacking for evidence in a mass of past experiences. We are to manifest interest in others by telling them of the blessed Saviour. By seeking the salvation of others we find assurance of our own. By leading others to faith in Christ our own faith is strengthened. In trying to lead others into the sunlight of His love our own hope is made brighter. In talking of Christ to others, He becomes more precious and wonderful to our own soul. There is no joy like the joy of personal witnessing for Him.

3. Conformity to this present evil world is another reason for the little joy among Christians. We are mixed up with the world, and so much like the world, and have so many joys of the world, that we know but little of the joy of the Holy Spirit. We are so bent on making money and finding pleasure, that we have missed the true riches and are poor in the joy of the Holy Spirit.

I am sure that the real Christians of Russia know more of the joy of the Holy Ghost than do the Christians in this land of peace and plenty. The Lord does not let His people down. For every cross there is a compensating joy. If we had more of the martyr spirit, we would have more joy in the Holy Spirit. In becoming popular with the world, the church has lost its power to witness to it. We have lost its respect and confidence.

The Source of Joy

The source of joy is the Lord. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). This means to be in the Lord and find joy in the promises that are in Him. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. 1:20). This means that all that God has promised is in Christ and certain; and that we ought to say, Amen, to the glory of God. The promise of forgiveness is in Him (Eph. 1:7). The love of God, from which we cannot be separated, is in Him (Rom. 8:39). The hope of the resurrection is in Him (Eph. 1:11). All spiritual blessings in the heavens are in Christ (Eph. 1:22). (abbreviated).