

A FIXED HEART

"My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise"
(Psalm 57:7).

This Psalm leads us to think of David's trials, of which there were many. David was threatened by King Saul, but he did not waiver. He refused to touch the King or to do him any injury, even though David's life was in danger. He sensed his danger and told God about it. In verses two and three we find his testimony. He said, "I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth."

1. David's cry. Psalm 57:1-3.

In verses one, two, and three he is crying unto God.

2. David's complaint. Psalm 57:4-6.

David requested God to "save him from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." He said, "My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth. They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah" (Psalm 57:4-6).

3. David's confidence. Psalm 57:7-11.

This paragraph begins with his statement: "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed."

This is a testimony. It is easy to say such things when life goes smoothly. But David meant them when things were dark with him. In the dark he believed in the dawn. Like flowers that give their perfume after sunset, and are sweetest when the night-dews are falling, David's religion grew more fragrant and strong in the night of sorrow.

In the Scriptures the word heart covers more ground than it does with us. With us the heart is a central part of a man; even in a physical sense it is the center of life. The heart is the fountain from which the blood flows and circulates throughout the whole of our physical being. When the heart stops beating death follows immediately. In a figurative and moral sense, the heart is the center of our being, the seat of life. Out of the heart proceeds every form of emotion, outward and inward, that can make up the life of the soul.

There are two currents. There is one current that is perpetually flowing in; and so the heart is the meeting-place of every impulse and movement of being. Every sense is an avenue to the heart. That which really enters, no matter by what avenue, goes straight into the heart. Then there is the current that is continually flowing out. So the heart has been called the inner workshop, from which every form and manifestation of life is derived. It is not only the focus where the converging currents from without are ever meeting; it is the birthplace of those perpetual streams of thought and word and action that go to make up the activities of life, and from which they are ever issuing.

What a wonderful thing the heart is! As used in the Scriptures, it includes

thoughts and intents as well as affections. It is the seat of sensibility. All our desires lie in the heart. All that is good in a man and all that is bad in a man are first of all an imagination, then a desire, then an intention, then an act, then a habit; and all this chain lies coiled round the heart. All spiritual life begins in the heart. That feeling of uneasiness, that sense of sin, what is it? The Holy Spirit is touching the heart, which is the seat of control. You know the heart influences a man much more than his intellect. Men generally do not follow their thinking, but their feelings.

I. The Heart Needs To Be Fixed.

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

The heart is out of fix. It is deceitful and wicked. The wicked heart destroys man. The message of Jesus Christ is, "Ye must be born again." Man is lost, condemned, separated from God and heaven for eternity. His only hope is in salvation through faith in Christ. The wicked heart destroys man's home. The home that is not centered upon Christ will one day come to want.

The wicked heart destroys the nation. Nebuchadnezzar lifted himself up and asked the people to fall down and worship him. As a consequence, God brought him down. Though he was the king of a great nation, he became like an animal. His body was wet with the dew of heaven. The king suffered, and the nation suffered. Wicked hearts destroy a nation and nations. Our nation is suffering because of the wickedness of men's hearts.

II. The Heart Can Be Fixed.

Thank God for this! How can the heart be fixed?

1. By faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:9-10 says: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." There is but one way for the heart to be fixed, and that is by the touch of the Master's hand. Only repentance and faith can enable one to get right with God. Salvation is not by reformation, baptism, the Lord's Supper, or church membership, but by the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. By the daily cleansing of the soul.

John tells us that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Some will say, "I know I am saved, but my heart is not right with God." All such need the cleansing touch of the Lord. They need to receive the message of His Word and then come confessing their sins and making things right with God.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:9-11). Salvation is eternal, but the cleansing of the heart is a daily need.

3. By the daily contemplation of others.

After fastening your attention on Christ, contemplate the lives of courageous Christians about whom you have known. We cannot help but be blessed when we read about Simon Peter and his answer to the magistrates. He said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." We recall that this man had been weak and vascillating until Pentecost, and then there was a mighty power upon him. Then he witnessed effectively for Christ. It will do us good and will establish our hearts if we will think upon those who have gone before.

III. The Heart Can Be Established.

David had his times of uncertainty and sin, but God placed His blessing upon him, and then he cried out: "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed."

1. Let your heart be fixed on worshiping God.

What a desperate need for this day! The hearts of men need to be set, or established on worship. We need to worship God, not only on the Lord's Day, but on every day. Bow down before Him and give Him your adoration, love, and worship.

2. Let your heart be fixed on serving God.

We can serve God by ministering to others.

3. Let your heart be fixed on clean living.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians 6:17-18). Live so that others can see Christ in you. Turn away from sin, unrighteousness, and wickedness.

4. Let your heart be fixed on glorifying God.

Though hardships, trouble, sickness, or adversity strikes you, glorify God in and through it.

5. Let your heart be fixed on pointing others to Christ.

Your entire life should be a signpost pointing to the Saviour. One of the most encouraging stories in the New Testament is that of Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. He is the man who brought his brother to Christ. He did not seek the leadership of others. He simply introduced people to Christ.

(1) Andrew introduced his brother to Christ.

The winning of Peter to Christ was worth more than anything else Andrew could have done in this life. Winning a soul to Christ may be worth more than hundreds of other things.

- (2) Andrew introduced a lad to Christ.

To his Lord Andrew said: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" This was the occasion of the feeding of five thousand men, besides the women and children.

- (3) Andrew introduced some Greeks to Christ.

When these men came and asked to see Christ, Philip told Andrew, and Philip and Andrew told Christ. Once more Andrew was used to point people to the Saviour. He did not have any special talent except the great one of pointing others to Christ. You and I can follow him, if we will.