

The Tender Heart

A sermon by Richard Sibbes on 2 Chronicles 34:26-27

Doctrine 1: God graciously fits _____ for persons, and His word to a people that are upright in their hearts

“Where there is a true desire to know the will of God, there God will give men sincere prophets that shall answer them exactly; not according to their own lusts, but for their good.”

Paul says a similar thing in 2 Timothy 4:3 when he talks about how those people who are ruled by their _____ will gather around themselves false teachers who will feed those passions.

“This is God’s mercy to those that are true-hearted. He will give them teachers suitable to their desires; but those that are false-hearted shall have suitable teachers, who shall instruct them according to their lusts.”

Application: This should teach us to labor for _____, to have our hearts upright towards God

Those who desire to come to Christ and to know Him more will not be abandoned or _____ but God will see to it that they are instructed in the Truth.

An upright heart towards God is here in this passage called a tender heart. There are two elements to having a tender heart towards God: _____ and _____

1. Inward tenderness of heart is a _____ of oneself before God

2. Outward tenderness of heart was seen in Josiah’s tearing of his clothes and _____

An inward tender heart will _____ itself externally

Question: Can a man really do something on his own to cause God to do good to him?

Answer: “No. One thing is the cause of another, but all come from the first cause. So tenderness of heart may be some cause of removal of judgment, but God is the cause of both, for they all come from the first cause: which is God.”

A tender (broken) heart before God, that despairs of itself and clings to hope in God leads to the _____ of divine judgment. BUT the tender and broken heart started with God...

“where there is grace, mercy shall follow...God crowns grace with grace.”

Doctrine 2: It is a _____ disposition of a true child of God to have a tender, soft, and melting heart

“All by nature have stony hearts in respect of spiritual goodness...There is nothing in the world so hard as the heart of man. The very creatures will yield obedience to God; as

flies, and lice, to destroy Pharaoh; but Pharaoh himself was so hard-hearted, that after ten plagues he was ten times the more hardened.”

Those who are _____ children of God have hearts that are tender (hearts of flesh)

How are hearts _____ to be tender? *“A tender heart is made tender by Him that made it.”*

Question: “Does God immediately make the heart tender, and change it, without any help from means?”

Answer-Part 1: “Means do not make the heart tender, but God through the use of means softens it by His Word.”

Answer-Part 2: “Tenderness of heart is wrought by an apprehension of tenderness and love in Christ. A soft heart is made soft by the blood of Christ.”

“Christ is the first gift to the church. When God has given Christ, then comes the Spirit, and works in the heart a gracious acceptance of mercy offered. The Spirit works an assurance of the love and mercy of God. Now love and mercy felt, work upon the tender heart a reflective love to God again.”

Therefore, for a tender heart to be “preserved” and kept in a tender state there cannot be a _____ of the means.

“It is He by His Spirit that works upon the heart, and preserves tenderness in us; and He will work only by His own means.”

A tender heart will be _____ towards God’s Word

“There is a gracious echo of the soul to God in whatsoever He says in His Word.”

The Spirit uses these means to 1. Keep us _____ & 2. To keep us clinging to Christ by _____

Question: Is it possible for _____ to have hardness of heart?

“The heart of a man that is reprobate is totally, wholly, and finally hardened, and it is joined with security and insensibleness; it is joined with obstinacy, and with contempt of the means of grace. But the child of God has not total and final hardness of heart, but has a sensibleness of it, he feels and sees it. Total hardness feels nothing, but a Christian that has hardness of heart, feels that he has it.”

Question: What if I feel and know I have _____ of heart and want it to change?

Answer 1: “As when things are cold we bring them to the fire to heat and melt, so we bring our cold hearts to the fire of the love of Christ; we consider of our sins against Christ, and of Christ’s love towards us; dwell upon this meditation.”

Answer 2: “Use the means of grace; be always under the sunshine of the gospel.”