



## Articles and Sermons :: What is highly esteemed among men, God abhors (humanity without piety) - Finney

### What is highly esteemed among men, God abhors (humanity without piety) - Finney - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2007/4

"Many have what they call humanity, without any piety; and this is often highly esteemed among men. They pretend to love men, but yet after all do not honor God, nor even aim at it. And in their love of men, they fall below some animals. I doubt whether many men, not pious, would do what I knew a dog to do. His master wanted to kill him, and for this purpose took him out into the river in a boat and tied a stone about his neck. In the struggle to throw dog and stone overboard together, the boat upset; the man was in the river; the dog, by extra effort, released himself from his weight, and seizing his master by the collar, swam with him to land. Few men would have had humanity enough--without piety--to have done this. Indeed men without piety are not often half so kind to each other as animals are. Men are more degraded and more depraved. Animals will make greater sacrifices for each other than the human race do. Go and ask a whaleman what he sees among the whales when they suffer themselves to be murdered to protect a school of their young. Yet many mothers think they do most meritorious things because they take care of their children."

### Re: What is highly esteemed among men, God abhors (humanity without piety) - Finney - posted by PaulWest (), on: 20

This little Finney excerpt struck something deep within. I am reminded of my beloved dog...whom we lost recently.

Quote:

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What vintage Finney! This is precisely why I love reading him. If anything, when I think of my dog, I think of unsuppressed love, devotion, excitement. I remember what his adorable, happy face looked like when I would come home from work, he would be bright (yes - my dog's face would light up, smile, the tail would go berserk!), and this would be on days when my wife would be less than thrilled to greet me! Maybe she had had a bad day at the hospital. Who knows. Though I never doubted her love, yet she could not find it in herself like the dog to energetically praise me at the door, with exuberant kisses, and a pronounced *ebullience* in heralding my arrival home!

Now, I realize that God has programmed dogs different from humans... but I truly believe Finney is on to something when he makes a curious comparison of the two in terms in the light of "unpious humanity." Dogs cannot be religious, yet they overflow with selfless compassion and love; men are able to be religious, yet I've never seen a man display such a measure of consistent devotion and an inexhaustible energy of pure gladness as my dog (and any dog, basically) would.

I don't think God will measure our levels of compassion by our dogs - talk about setting an unreasonable standard! We'd all be in big trouble! - but any sane person must admit that unchristlike humanity - which is so highly regarded in the world (i.e. celebrities posing for the cameras whilst raising world relief funds for hunger, unloading huge chunks of money for AIDS research, Hollywood icons rescuing flood and earthquake and tsunami victims, giving millions and millions to feed African babies, etc.) isn't perhaps as chalked up in God's eyes as they think it is. Every Christian knows this. I mean, comparing man with the animal kingdom alone would be reason enough to surmise that God is not at all impressed with our transient, and often hypocritical tokens of human love. This can be said *even if the issue of sin was never brought up*. It's so obvious that man desperately needs *something* he cannot do himself...if he is to be made right in God's eyes. We fall short in everything.