

Articles and Sermons :: "The end of the commandment" J N Darby

"The end of the commandment" J N Darby - posted by davidc (), on: 2011/12/6 6:47

I read this this morning, and was exceedingly blessed

Notes of a discourse on 1 Timothy 1

Wherever the Spirit of God reveals truth, it is the revelation of Christ to the soul. It is essentially practical. It fills the soul, the affections, with Christ. The Lord said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." The foundation once laid, God forms and fashions the soul by the revelation of Christ, at the same time delivering us from present things, and associating us with Himself.

What characterises the Christian is that which takes him out of the world altogether (he has his relationships to fulfil in this life), makes him an epistle of Christ, manifesting the life of Christ, and leading him to long for the time when he shall find himself in the Father's home, like Christ, with Christ for ever, nothing more to jar. God has associated him with Himself and with that place; and our part is, as Christ's was here, to manifest that our place even now is there. Aye, our place is in the last Adam, not in the first.

This "charge," the "end of the commandment," was Timothy's commission. His mandate, as it were, was to make manifest this place which saints had in association with the life of Christ. He speaks of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." We are called to inherit blessing, to inherit it from one who dwells in blessing. "The glorious gospel" tells me how man is brought back to God, and thus shews the triumph of God and blessing over evil.

The first beginning of the history of man gives us the triumph of evil over natural blessing. Consequent on this came judgment. Next comes the law, a requisition from man who had pretensions to good. A rule was given of righteousness (if man could make it out). There was no triumph of good here, but a requirement from man of what man ought to be. The law was not given to Adam, the law was given to sinners - to fallen man. The law would have been of no use to Adam before the fall; he would not have understood, "Thou shalt not steal," etc. The law brings out evil to our consciences. Who has loved God today as he should have done? Who has loved his neighbour as himself? It is not the blessed truth of the triumph of good over evil; but it is most useful to bring to the conscience these two things - first, not only that we have sinned, but why you and I have sinned. Shall I tell you why? Because we liked it. "In me, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing"; and, what is more, when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.

315 If we are to be with God, we must be fit for Him. When Isaiah saw His glory, he felt he was a man of unclean lips. I cannot go back to paradise and natural blessing; I cannot stay where I am; but I must be able to look into the light of that glory, and say it is my joy, or I cannot walk with God who is light. To this end I must learn what verse 5 speaks of - "the end of the commandment," love, faith, and a pure conscience.

A good conscience is only conscious of what the pure heart should be in the presence of God, having an entire unclouded confidence (faith unfeigned) in God - "That your faith and hope might be IN God." If I fail, I fly back to God; if I am weak, I fly back to God with faith unfeigned in Him, as the One who has delivered me; counting upon God, as the One that is for me, to bring me back to my place.

Verses 8 and 9. The law never gives life; the law never gives strength; the law never gives an object. If the law could have given life, righteousness would have been by it. The law gives no power against sin, but slays. The law gives no object. But when we turn to Christ, in His Person we find the one good, all purity, all goodness, perfectly divine.

Oh! if I could get such - as Paul says, "win Christ" - One above all my wretchedness; One who comprehends me, but in so doing brings such grace and peace; One who was brought into the midst of all evil, but who was superior to it. When He is once known, we do not want to excuse sin, we want to get rid of it. Does He hide sin? Nay, He would have truth in the inward parts (not the truth of doctrine now). When once thus known, God is trusted in all love. In the Gospels we have a full, perfect exhibition of the triumph of good over evil.

See the woman taken in adultery; see the leper who was not only defiled, but whose touch defiled another, but not

Christ. What grace (however imperfectly) to know God! I discharge my heart into the bosom of Him whom I can trust. To whom could I ever tell out all sin? Not to any friend out and out, but to Him unreservedly. And mark how He carries me on. Having opened my heart by the goodness He has shewn me in bringing me into His presence, I learn sin put away by Him who needed not to be spared, but was able to bear the full brunt of God's wrath.

316 Oh! that one work by which He put away sin! God being perfectly glorified by that which met sin! Not as the Jewish sacrifices did - sin and sacrifice - sin and sacrifice - and sin again; but done for ever! I get then this truth, that in virtue of what Christ has done, the Christ is set at His right hand, God having stepped in, and in this blessed One met sin and put it away. It is done! If it is not done, when is it to be done? Can Christ die over again? It never can be done. He cannot return from glory to do it. It is done, and now we see why it is called "the gospel of glory."

I am brought into light. No light is like the light which shines at the cross. Your sins were as scarlet, they are made white as snow. I am brought in conscience through a new and living way into God's presence, and spotless. By the Comforter sent I get the power of it. The true conscience is one that knows nothing in the heart but what the Holy Ghost puts there.

The estimates of the conscience are always according to the presence it is in. Duties flow from the place we are already in. Some think the knowledge of grace releases us from duties; but nay, it founds them. A child of God for ever, I have the duties of a child for ever. A pure heart will reject what is contrary to the Holy Ghost. In a good conscience Christ is all. Whenever I have failed, I have left Christ out.

Faith unfeigned trusts Him ever, and keeps a good conscience; a perfect and pure heart confides in that love; and when did it come? It sprang from Himself. By Him we believe in God, and what He expects from us is that we should know not only we are blessed in Him, but with Him. His perfect love is shewn by bringing us into blessing with Himself. Driven out of earthly paradise by sin, we are brought into heavenly paradise by redemption; and He leads our thoughts, desires, and affections after it, founded on His perfect work; a faith unfeigned giving us the knowledge of His heart, a heart to enter into all our sorrows and trials.

The smallest thing let in contrary to Him jars. We belong not to ourselves; we are Christ's, not our own. We ought not to have good consciences if indulging in what is contrary to Him.

317 I ask, if He came this night, would He find you with a whole heap of things to huddle out of your heart, or is it ready? Is your heart waiting, full of affection for Him? There is no truth so powerful to empty the heart of all that is contrary to Him. If waiting, how much freer and looser should we sit from all on earth. The Lord apply the question to your hearts, whether, if He came, you could open to Him immediately, and so look with joy unclouded to see Him.