

Quotes on The Heart

by

Richard Baxter

To have an heart that cares not for wealth or honours, but can rejoice in poverty and daily reproaches, is a thousand times greater mercy, then to have all the wealth and honour of the world.

O brethren, watch therefore over your own hearts: keep out lusts and passions, and worldly inclinations; keep up the life of faith, and love, and zeal: be much at home, and be much with God. If it be not your daily business to study your own hearts, and to subdue corruption, and to walk with God – if you make not this a work to which you constantly attend, all will go wrong, and you will starve your hearers.

A custom of vain words is a sign of a vain and empty mind: was the heart but full of better things, the tongue would be employed in better speeches. Either the head, or heart, or both is empty and vain, in that measure as the tongue is vain.

In a perfect man God hath the whole heart: and in an upright man he is nearer to the heart than anything else. In a perfect man there is a perfect subjection to God: and in an upright man there is none hath Dominion but God: he is highest, and his Rule prevaieth in the main, though some things that rebel are not perfectly subdued.

It is God's prerogative to have Sovereign Interest in the soul: To be esteemed and loved as our chiefest good and to be depended on as the principal cause of our well-being. The heart he made for himself and the heart he will have; or else whoever hath it shall have it to its woe. He will be its *Rest*, or it shall never have Rest: and he will be its *Happiness*, or it shall be miserable everlastingly.

Christ's office is to recover God's Interest in the souls of men. Now his Interest lyeth in our Estimation, and our Love; and these the world hath dispossessed him of. It is therefore the

work of Christ to pull down this Idol, and set up God in the throne of the soul... therefore it is Christ's End to overcome the World, and cast it out of the hearts of men.

It is the highest ambition, the greatest desire of a self-denying soul, that God's Name may be hallowed and honoured, whatever become of his own Name or honour; and that the Kingdom of God may flourish, in which he desireth to be a subject; and that the will of God may be done, and the will of himself and all the world conformed and subjected to it.

It was not long that Christ had been in the world before *Herod* sought his Life, and caused him to flee into *Egypt*. And as soon as we are capable of assaulting the world, we must actually fall upon it, and seek the extirpation of all its Interest from our hearts, where Christ sets up his throne.

You see that God and the world are enemies; not God and the world as his *Creature*, but as his *Competitor* for your hearts, and as the seducer of your understandings, and the opposer of his interest, and the fuel and food of a fleshly mind, and that which would pretend to a Being or Goodness separated from God, or to be desirable for itself, having laid by the relation of a *means* to God. To be a Friend to the world in any of these respects is to be an enemy to God. And God will not save his enemies, while enemies.

Of those who know the history of the gospel, how few are there who know the nature of that faith, repentance, and holiness which it requireth, or, at least, who know their own hearts? But most of them have an ungrounded trust in Christ, hoping that he will pardon, justify, and save them, while the world hath their hearts, and they live to the flesh. And this trust they take for justifying faith.

I tell you again, you should not have one wish or desire in your souls, till you can prove or find that God would have it so: and if your own wills be made the absolute rulers of your ways, you make gods of your selves, and God will deal with you accordingly.