

52. We Should Fear, Love, and Trust in, God Above All Things.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. *Prov. 3, 5.*

Our whole duty to God is summed up in the words: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." We should *love* God. By nature we are in such a depraved state that we are utterly incapable of loving God. By nature we love anything else than God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." By nature we all hate God despite His love toward us, and before we can be made to love God, our sinful hearts must be changed. And if, by the working of God's Holy Spirit, true faith has been engendered in us, we begin to love God in return, who first loved us. But how should we love God? He requires of us no mere outward manifestations of regard, but demands the worship of heart and soul and mind. At every moment we should try to delight and honor Him. We should hold conversation with Him in prayer without ceasing. And we should gladly hear Him speak to us in His Word.

And we should *fear* God. We should fear Him "above all things." But does not the Bible say, 1 John 4, 18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear"? The answer is this: There are two ways of fearing God. The one is that servile fear which avoids God's presence in order to escape His punishment. The other is that childlike reverence in which awe is blended with affection. This fear renders service to God from tender reluctance of offending Him.

And we should *trust* in God. We should fully rely on Him at all times. We should firmly believe that He will bless the labor of our hands and that He will provide us with all that we need. Do not lean on the frail supports of this earth. With true faith and trust of your heart cling only to God. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

Prayer.

Grant me grace, O Lord God, to serve Thee, the highest Lord in heaven and on earth, in true knowledge and unfeigned fear, love Thee above all things, place all hope of my salvation in Thee, and walk in Thy commandments without blame. Let all that I do tend to Thy divine honor and to a blessed exercise of my faith, for the sake of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost to all eternity. Amen.

Fear, love, and trust we need to cultivate,
Our faint hearts are so ready to despair,
So prone to cry: The burden is too great
For us to bear.
He sends the bitter who has sent the sweet,
And it is best,
And often 'tis in sorrow and defeat
That we are blessed.

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