

A Treatise on Earthly-Mindedness

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TO THE READER

It was the saying of a servant of Christ, "Every day a Christian spends on earth is a day lost in heaven." He meant it of the place, not the company, for what makes heaven, but union and communion with God in Jesus Christ? This being attainable in this life, what keeps a Christian from living in heaven while he lives upon earth? Truly our

fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, 1 John 1:3 . Our conversation is in heaven, said another apostle, Phil. 3:20 . And I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Galatians 2:20 .

These were men on the earth, subject to infirmities as we are, yet living in heaven. And there are yet in this declining, wanton, Christ-denying age, a generation upon earth thus living, whose lives and graces, though hidden under a mean outside, under many reproaches and infirmities, yet shine inwardly with the glory of Christ upon them who, though they are in the world, yet follow the Lord with a different spirit than the spirit of the world; and among these hidden ones of the Lord, this blessed man (the Preacher of these sermons, of whom the world was not worthy) was such a one who, while he was upon earth, lived in heaven. And as you may easily perceive, the end and scope of these sermons is to wind up your heart to a like frame and posture, viz., to take it off of perishing vanities, and to set it on that which is the real and durable substance.

We see upon what weak shoulders the fair neck of all worldly pomp and glory now stands, and how the Lord is winding up and putting an end to the glories of the kingdoms of men, who have not contributed their strength and power to the advancing, but rather to the pulling down and eclipsing of the glory of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Besides what the world tells us, never has an age had more examples laid before them of the world's vanity than in our days. Therefore, our hearts should sit loose to all things that cannot stretch themselves to eternity. The Apostle's reason is full of weight,

It remains that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoiced as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use the world as not abusing it.

And this exhortation he puts on by this argument, The time is short, or as the word is, "The remainder of our season is now folding up, as a veil or curtain into a narrow room."

Time is short and life shorter, and the end of all things is at hand. We have greater things to mind and to set our hearts upon. The divinity of this holy man's spirit did much appear in this, that having much of the comfort that earth could afford him, he still looked upon all creature contentments with the eyes of a stranger, and in order to the raising of his soul to a more holy, humble, serviceable, self-denying walking with God. For a man who enjoys little or nothing in this world to speak much of the world's vanity and emptiness, and of taking the heart off that, is not as much as when a man is surrounded with the confluence of creature comforts then, by a Divine spirit, to tread

upon the neck of these things, and to be caught up into third Heaven, bathing, solacing, and satisfying itself with sweet and higher enjoyments, with the more savory and cordial apprehensions it has of Jesus Christ. This is comparable to the one who is made a partaker of the Divine nature, and who lives above the world in the enjoyment of the world.

So now, reader, you have these sermons twice printed: once in the practice of this holy man and once again in these papers which we present to you in this preaching style (though we confess things might have been more contracted) because we find this more desired, more acceptable to his hearers and, if we mistake not, more working upon the affections and more profitable to the greatest number of Christians.

The Lord Jesus be with your spirit, and go along with these, and all his other precious labors, to the furtherance of the joy of your faith, building you up in the inner man, and directing you in the way to your eternal rest.

Thomas Goodwin, William Bridge, William Greenhill, William Adderly, John Yates, Sydrach Simpson, Philip Nye.

Chapter One: Doctrine: There is a great difference between a wicked man and a godly man. The one minds the earth; the other's conversation is in heaven

The Text Opened, Philippians 3:19 , "...who mind earthly things..."

This precious Scripture clearly holds forth the different dispositions of wicked and of godly men, especially of such wicked men as set themselves against the Gospel, for it relates to such as were professed enemies to the cross of Christ, that labored as best they could to hinder the success of the ministry of Paul. You will find, if you look back a few verses, that this is meant of that kind of men especially, for he tells us that many walked so, as they were enemies to the cross of Christ. They were those that opposed the preaching of Paul and his ministry. He describes those men by divers characters, but I'll treat none of them but this, who mind earthly things, who savour or relish earthly things, you may translate this as well. It is a general word comprehending the actions and operations of both the under-standing and the will. It is, in Scripture, applied to both, but most commonly to the actions of the will and affections. We will deal particularly with actions of the will.

Earthly things are those that are on the earth, whatever they are, the beauty, the glory, and pageantry of the earth; the profits that are earthly, the pleasures and honors of the world; who mind any things inordinately that are sublunary accommodations. But

we carry and behave ourselves as free citizens of the city of Heaven, for so the words in the original are, if we should thus read them, "Our city, where we are citizens and where we have rights, is heaven."

But our conversation, our city converse, is of things that are above the earth. When the Apostle would have men to follow his example and not the example of others, in the 17th verse, he uses this as an argument that such and such men are enemies to the cross of Christ, and they make their belly their god, and they mind earthly things. Do not follow them; do not harken what they say to you; they come up and down from house to house and whisper this and that to you, and would take you off from the ways of God. God has begun to enlighten you and to stir your consciences; do not let the precious affections of your souls run toward them, but be followers of us as we are of Christ, for our conversation is in heaven with our Lord and Master, this argument coming in the 20th verse. That being the only scope and meaning of the words, take this doctrinal truth: THIS IS THE GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WICKED MAN AND A GODLY MAN: ONE MINDS EARTHLY THINGS, AND THE OTHER HAS HIS CONVERSATION IN HEAVEN. I intend to handle both these in order.

One of these minds earthly things. It is a parallel Scripture to Romans 8:5, For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. "Do mind," there is the same word, only here it is the participle and there it is the verb, but the meaning is the same. They that are after the earth mind earthly things; they that are after the flesh favor fleshly things. The first part of this point is the description of wicked men, they that are enemies to the cross of Christ and to the ways of godliness. They are men that mind earthly things, and the more gross of them are described before this as having their bellies as their gods. Some of them are very sensual, drunken, unclean, and altogether given to satisfy the flesh in fleshly lusts. But there are others that do not appear to be so brutish, yet they are men of earthly minds who savour only earthly things, and these are the men that are secret enemies to the cross of Christ, yea, and will many times appear so to be; it will break out at length. Such a man whose spirit has been earthly for a long time will appear at length to be an enemy to Christ's cross. Now in the handling of this point, I will propound these five things:

First, what it is to mind earthly things in a sinful way, or thus: When a man may be said to be an earthly-minded man, that we may know when a man is an earthly-minded man, what it is to mind earthly things that the Apostle describes here a wicked man by. Without the opening of this, all that I shall say afterwards will be to little purpose.

Secondly, the great evil that there is in minding earthly things, and I shall help you discover a greater evil in it than you are aware of.

Thirdly, lay down some proofs whereby those men and women that think they are

clear of this sin may have it revealed to their consciences that they are the men and women that do mind earthly things.

Fourthly, I shall search into the reason why the hearts of men and women are so much after earthly things.

Fifthly, I shall labor to take your hearts off of earthly things. These are the five things that are to be done in the first part of the point, namely, the character of wicked men here laid down, who mind earthly things. '

First, who they are that mind earthly things. Certainly they are not all those that enjoy earthly things. All men who make use of earthly things must not be condemned for minding them. Paul himself, in this very epistle, Philippians 4:12 , wrote that though he knew how to want, yet he knew how to abound. He could tell how to make use of earthly things, and he gives charge that all those that are instructed should make such as had instructed them partakers of all their goods. Paul charges this! Yea, Christ Himself, in that Scripture where He labors most to take the thoughts of men off the earth, and not to take any thought for what they should eat or drink, still says, Your heavenly Father knows that ye have need of these things, Matthew 6:32 . Galatians 6:6 , Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth all good things, and if there be any pretence against it, yet he says, Be not deceived, God is not mocked for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Therefore, it is not here charged, as a mark of an evil man, to have earthly things, and to justly require what is due unto him, as Paul does here. And the Galatians could not charge him with breaking his own rule which he wrote to the Philippians. Therefore, we must inquire what is meant by minding earthly things. When does a man or woman mind earthly things in a sinful way? For that there are several particulars.

Chapter Two: Earthly-Mindedness Discovered in Nine Particulars

The first is this: when a man looks upon earthly things as the greatest things of all, when he has a high esteem of earthly things as THE things. As if it were thus, "Oh, if I had such and such things as others have, oh how happy I would be. How happy are such and such men that do enjoy such earthly things at their will, in their dwellings, their furniture, their comings in; oh, these are the excellent things, these are the delightful things. These are THE things in which felicity and happiness consist."

When men promise themselves felicity in any earthly things, they mind earthly things. I remember golden-mouthed Chrysostom had a speech about a covetous man who looked upon his money and saw more beauty in his money than in the very sun that shines in the firmament. Men look upon the things of the earth as the most

beautiful things in their eyes. Certainly a man is in a distemper when he puts such a high esteem upon any earthly things. This esteem is not according to what God and His saints put upon earthly things. God never puts any great eminency on any earthly thing. He never made any earthly things to be any great conduit or means of conveyance of any great good from Himself unto His creature. If you would know where your heart is, you may know it by this one sign as much as any: what do you count your excellency? According to what any man or woman counts their excellency to consist in, so is their heart. Their hearts are suitable.

In Genesis 27:28-39 , you find Isaac blessing Jacob and Esau. But I would have you observe the difference in the placement of them. Observe the blessing of Jacob in verse 28. There God gives the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine as Jacob's blessing. Now look at Esau's blessing, for the blessing was suitable to their disposition. Jacob's father answered and said unto him, Behold thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. Mark it, Isaac blesses them both with the dew of heaven and fatness of the earth. But in Jacob's blessing the dew of heaven is first and the fatness of the earth is second, while in Esau's blessing, the fatness of the earth is first and then the dew of heaven. Note this, that a godly man stands in need of earthly things. As Christ said, Your Father knows you stand in need of these things. But the great thing in the first place that a godly heart minds is the dew of heaven, and then secondly the blessing of the earth. Now a carnal heart thinks that it has some need of the things of heaven, it will acknowledge that. But it's the fatness of the earth they desire and then the dew of heaven. So that's the first thing: earthly-minded men look upon these things as the high and chief things, and hence it is that the choice thoughts of an earthly-minded man are carried out on worldly objects.

Secondly, when the creamy, choice thoughts of men and women are busied about earthly things, they mind earthly things in a sinful manner. You may know what kind of hearts you have by your thoughts about anything. The thoughts are the immediate ebullitions or risings up of the heart, that is, the bubbles that come from the heart immediately.

A man cannot know what is in his heart as much by words and actions as by the thoughts, because the thoughts immediately spring from the heart. For example, I can tell what the water is in such a fountain better from that which bubbles up immediately from the fountainhead than I can tell by the water that runs in the stream a mile or two off that never came from the fountainhead. That which immediately bubbles from the fountainhead reveals the nature of the fountain.

The thoughts are, as it were, the firstborn of the heart and, therefore, the heart may be known by the thoughts. The Holy Ghost said in Proverbs 23:7 , As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. That which is here spoken in particular may be applied in general.

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he; as his thoughts are, so is he. The heart is as the thoughts of the mind are. Men may keep words in and actions out by respects. If you could know what the heart is and look into the haunts of it in secret, that would reveal to you what you are. Many of your servants, when in your presence or before others, may, out of respect, carry themselves fairly. But if you would find them out, labor to know what they do when they are alone in their private haunts.

So, would you know your own hearts? Do not look so much at them and take a scantling of them by how you behave yourselves in words and actions before others, but what they are in your private chambers, what they are in the inward thoughts of the mind; there the heart comes to be discovered most. By these thoughts I do not mean every kind of injection or suggestion, for sometimes the Devil may cast evil thoughts into the most holy. But I mean such thoughts as are sweet to the soul, whereby the soul comes to suck out sweetness and contentment, for that's minding earthly things: when you find the strength of your thoughts to be upon the things of the earth; and they are more suitable to your hearts than any other. It is not when through weakness the mind may be wandering this way or that way, or through suggestions or temptations, but men or women are most themselves when alone and free. Can you say when you are alone, "O the very thoughts of God are sweet to me, I meditate in His law day and night." Can you suck out sweetness there as from a honeycomb? But an unclean wretch will suck sweetness out of his unclean thoughts when he is alone. The earthly-minded man will suck sweetness out of his earthly thoughts, and the ambitious man the sweetness of his pride when he is alone, and these are the most contentful thoughts to him. He can run two or three hours and take delight and pleasure in them, that's earthly-mindedness.

The third thing is this: an earthly-minded man is one whose heart cleaves to the earth. As I told you, the word was not only to mind, but to savour the things of the earth, his heart cleaves to the earth. The Psalmist, in a far different case, said that his soul cleaved to the dust, but that's true of many men in this case. Their very souls cleave to the dust, their spirits are mixed with the earth, and therefore they are dross. It may be they have some good common gifts, some good natural parts, and some workings of the Holy Ghost upon them, yet their spirits are drossy, because they are mixed with the earth. Talk to these men of the vanity of the things of the earth. They will give you a hearing, but when you have done all, their souls cleave to the earth. And talk to them of the excellency of heavenly things. They will hear you, but when you have done all, their souls still cleave to the earth, as a man whose soul cleaves in love to a woman (as it is said of Samson, his soul did cleave to Delilah). Say what you will against that woman, or of the excellency of any other woman, yet his soul cleaves to that woman. So it is in an earthly-minded man: let what will be said against the things of the earth, or what can be said for the setting forth of the excellency of the things of heaven, yet his soul cleaves to the earth, as the serpent's belly did to the dust of the ground. That's an earthly-minded man.

Fourthly, an earthly-minded man is one whose heart is filled with distracting cares about the earth, what he shall eat and drink, and what he shall put on, how he shall provide for himself and his family, and what shall become of him. Though he is well now, what may become of him afterwards? When the heart is filled with distracting cares about the things of the earth, as far as the heart has these prevailing over it, so far such a man may be judged to be earthly.

There are but two things that cause distracting cares about any business,

The first is an apprehension of some very great evil. In case I should be disappointed, I look upon my disappointment as a most intolerable evil to me. If I should be disappointed, I do not know what in the world to do. That's the first.

The second is an uncertainty in the means for the prevention of this disappointment. When I look upon disappointment as a great evil, I cannot trust those things that prevent and help me against disappointment to do so. I see them as being too weak to help me; notwithstanding such means, I may yet be disappointed. This causes distracting thoughts.

So, in the things of the earth, an earthly-minded man or woman has his thoughts filled with distracting cares about the world. First, looking upon the things of the world as such great things, they think that if they are disappointed, they will be undone. They look upon it as such a fearful, insufferable evil to be deprived of their estate and outward comforts in this world. Secondly, they don't look upon the means of provision for themselves and their families as having any certainty in it, which is a main thing to be considered. As for outward things in the world, they find by experience there is uncertainty in them. And then for any promise that there is in Scripture that God will provide for them and their families, alas, that they dare not trust. That's a thing that of all means they think to be the weakest. "Lord, have mercy upon us," they say. If they have nothing else to trust but a word of Scripture, they think of themselves as most miserable and wretched.

But now, it would be otherwise with the soul if it were not earthly-minded. It would not be at any great pause how things fall out here in the matters of the world. It's true, perhaps I may miscarry in such a business, and my estate may be taken from me by the Chaldeans or the Sabeans, as was Job's, but I shall not be undone, my happiness is not gone. I shall have that which will comfort me when all that is gone. Suppose the worst, yes, this will not undo me. Indeed, a man that sends his whole estate abroad in a venture is very solicitous because, if there is bad news about it, he is undone. But another man who has a great deal of riches, house, and lands, and a stock at home to maintain him and his family, if bad news comes he thinks, "I have a stock at home to live on." He is not as solicitous. So a worldly man has all his stock in the earth, there's

his only portion, and if he miscarries there, he is undone. But a godly man, though he has the things of the earth, yet he has something else, treasures in heaven to rest upon besides the earth, and therefore he is not as solicitous.

And then for the second, the uncertainty of means and help. If a godly man looks upon outward causes, he sees all is uncertain, but he has a promise to rest upon, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Cast your care upon Me for I care for you. This he looks on as a certain means and help. Whatever falls out, here's a promise that he can build upon, and therefore this takes off his solicitous cares. But an earthly-minded man's heart is filled with distracting cares, because he looks upon himself as undone if he miscarries here and has nothing more than the creature does for his provision in this world.

Fifthly, an earthly-minded man or woman is one whose great business of his heart, and endeavors of his life, are about the things of the earth. He makes it his great business, and the strong endeavors of his spirit are exercised in the things of the earth. He eagerly and greedily works with the strongest intention about these things; how the whole soul, the whole man is laid out about the world; it is the adequate object of his soul.

You will say, "Other men are busy in their callings as well as these that you account earthly-minded men." Yes, but they are busy in their callings in obedience to God. And, for outward things, they set aside their obedience to God. Then all the things that they busy themselves with in the world, were it not under that consideration that they were obeying God in it, they would not be adequate objects for their souls. By an adequate object, I mean that which is sufficient to take up the whole strength of the, soul to lay it out fully.

I'll give you this example to show you what I mean by an adequate object. You have a little child playing sports. This sport has as much in it as there is in his spirit, there is a kind of equality between his spirit and such a sport. A child receives enough benefit from a sport that it's worth laying out all his strength and might upon it. Now, it may be, sometimes a man or woman will play with their child. They will play as the child does, but this sport is not an adequate object. A man or woman will play with the child for awhile, but there is not enough good in this play to fill their souls, though it is fully adequate to the desires of the child. These things are not fully adequate to the desires of a man or woman. They have other matters in their heads than these, and businesses of a higher nature. And so it is in those that are not earthly-minded. Though they may be busied about the things of this world, yet they use the world as if they used it not. The things of the world are not adequate objects to their hearts. A spiritual heart reserves the chief strength of it for higher things. I follow these things in the world, but I reserve the chief strength for a more desirable good.

If a man has friends come to him, perhaps some of an ordinary rank come first. He makes ordinary provision for them, but if he has any choice things for entertaining, he reserves them for some choice friends that are coming. So a man that is not of the world, though he may be busy in earthly things, yet the choice of his heart he reserves for things of a higher nature. I remember Tertullian had a speech of the Christians, how they ate and drank when they supped. "They ate and drank so as they remembered they were to pray that night before they slept." So a gracious, spiritual heart follows his outward business in the world, but remembers he is to converse with God that night before he sleeps, so that he reserves the strength of his spirit for communion with God. But the other lays out all his strength as if he had nothing to do afterwards. In this, an earthly and a spiritual heart are quite contrary.

The Apostle would have godly men to use the world as if they used it not. Contrarily, an earthly-minded man uses spiritual things as if he used them not. How an earthly-minded man's heart is in spiritual things, so a spiritual mind is in earthly things. An earthly-minded man will do some things that are spiritual. He will come and hear the Word, perhaps he will pray in his family and read a chapter, but his heart is not there. He does it as if he did it not, come and hears as if he heard not, and prays as if he prayed not. He does not make it his business to pray or hear. A spiritually-minded man does worldly things as if he did them not, in comparison to being busy in spiritual things. Those he does with all his might. An earthly-minded man is like Corah, Dathan, and Abiram. We read that they were swallowed up by the earth. So, the truth is, the things of the earth, contentments, provision for themselves and families in earthly things, opens and swallows up the very hearts of earthly-minded men.

Sixthly, suppose a man does not seem to be so strongly inclined to layout his whole strength and heart about earthly things. Yet when any man or woman shall seek any earthly thing. for itself, and not in subordination to some higher good, this is an earthly-minded man, for as this prevails, in 2 Corinthians 4:18, our Apostle Paul speaks of the things that are seen that are but temporal. While we look not at the things that are seen, for the things that are seen are earthly and temporal. The word is as much as if to say, "While we look upon temporal and earthly things that are seen, we do not make them our end. We seek them in subordination. There is something else that we look at as higher in all these' things."

For instance, a man who is godly follows his business as other men do, but what is it that I) e would have? It is this: I show my obedience to God, and I would provide those things that may be helpful to me to serve God in my generation; that's my end. I can appeal to God in this, that even in following my business and all outward things, it is so that I might follow God in the use of means for the providing of such things as may enable me to serve him the more in my generation. This is my scope in what I do.

But now on the other side, an earthly-minded man makes his scope to follow his

business and look about the business of his calling that he might gain. He would get that he might get; he would have more that he might have more, and that he and his children might be somebody in the world. It may be that he might have enough to have his will and lusts, and therefore he follows his business very intently, merely that he may get to satisfy the flesh. Yes, indeed, all the good things that he does, he brings them in subordination to earthly things. You may take it thusly, a spiritual man does not seek earthly things for himself, but an earthly man does. Or more fully, an earthly man is earthly in all that he does do, both in earthly and spiritual things, and a spiritually-minded man is spiritual in all he does, both in spiritual and in earthly things. When an earthly man is in earthly things he is altogether earthly, he does not look at obedience to God in what he does. A spiritual man says, "I'll follow my calling because God has required it," but an earthly man thinks, "I'll follow it because I see gain coming from it." This is earthly. Though the things are lawful, (and it's your duty to follow your calling) but to follow it merely for gain, this is earthly. But because it is your duty and it is the place God has set you in, that is spirituality in earthly things. An earthly man is earthly in earthly things, and he is more earthly in spiritual things. When he performs spiritual duties, he has an earthly end in it, either to get esteem from men, or to cover some evil. Perhaps merely for form or fashion he does it in an earthly way, and it may be at most that he does it merely for his own quiet, to satisfy his own conscience.

Now a spiritual man is spiritual in earthly things. One of a spiritual mind is more heavenly and spiritual when he is about his calling, though it be the lowest, like cutting hedges, digging ditches, pulling ropes or lines, or using his axe or hammer. He is more spiritual at these than is an earthly man when he is praying or hearing, or receiving Sacraments. Certainly it is so, and it will be found to be so at the great day of judgment, when all the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.

That which we may add as a seventh is, that he is earthly in spiritual things. I grant that the best of the saints may have some earthliness in spiritual things, but I speak of the predominance. It's that which rules in the heart, so that in the performance of spiritual things, his very ends are but earthly, and the frame of his heart is but earthly in spiritual performances.

The eighth thing wherein we may find an earthly-minded man is this, that he passes through many and great difficulties in matters of the earth, and they are very little to him. Though he toils a great deal in matters of the earth he is never weary because he is in his proper element. Therefore, let there be what difficulties there will be, which to another man would be very great, he makes them as nothing and, though there is much toil and labor, yet he is not weary. Why? Because he is in his own element. The fish is not weary with swimming, but a man is quickly weary. It is because the fish is in his element and the man is not. Observe this, when a man's spirit is in this kind of temper, let him be busied about earthly things, wherein earthly advantage comes in,

no difficulties will hinder him, no wind or weather. He will rise in cold mornings and go abroad, do anything in the world. Oh! What difficulties will men endure in storms at sea, and hazards there and troubles at land, and sit up late, and rise early, and toil themselves, and complain of no weariness or difficulties. But, let them come to spiritual things, to soul business that concerns God and their spiritual estates. Every little difficulty puts them aside and discourages them. Every mole hill is a mountain in their way. I would do so and so, but it's so hard, and 'tis tedious. to rise in a morning, especially in cold winters. It is very hard and difficult to read and pray. And so he complains of the difficulty of these things.

To watch over the heart is a very difficult thing. To an earthly man, any spiritual thing is difficult and the difficulties discourage him. In spiritual things, oh how weary are they! In Malachi 1: 13 , they cry out, What a weariness is it! But they can follow the business of the world from morning to night and never get tired. They can work like a horse and never be out of breath! I wish you would try once to spend one Sabbath exactly and see what a weariness that would be to you. Resolve just one Sabbath to rise early in the morning, and to have your thoughts spiritual and heavenly as much as you can. Then get up and pray alone in your closet. Then read, and hear, and meditate, and mark what you hear. And when you go home, think of it and confer about it. And when you come again to attend on the Word, and so spend the whole day in hearing, reading, meditating, and conferencing about good things, calling your family to account, and praying again. See how tiresome this will be to your hearts if they are carnal.

However, a spiritual heart will call the Sabbath a delight. And the Sabbath unto such a one is no other than a type and forerunner of that eternal day of rest it shall enjoy in the kingdom of heaven. One that is spiritual counts the Sabbath to be a day of rest, but an earthly man is quickly tired in spiritual things. He will give up his work and not go through it. We read in Nehemiah 4:6 that Nehemiah spoke of the great difficulties that they met with in their work, and yet the work went on, for they had a mind to it. So look how a man's mind is, he will be able to go through with his work. If a man is an earthly- minded man, he will go through with his work. If he takes up worldly business, he will go through with it, for he has a mind to it. He is an earthly-minded man. But let him take on a spiritual work and he will lay it aside before it is half done! He will seldom bring to perfection any spiritual work. Why? Because he has no mind to it, whereas, if the heart were spiritual and there were any spiritual work undertaken, such a one would go through with it until all was finished. Another note (the ninth particular) which describes an earthly-minded man is this: an earthly-minded man is one that conceives the most heavenly truths that are revealed in the Word in an earthly way, according to his mind, his genius, and the disposition of his own heart. I truly think this is meant in a special manner in this place, for the Apostle is speaking of those that opposed him in his ministry and that were enemies to the cross of Christ. Now, these mind earthly things, their minds are of an earthly temper,

and therefore it is no wonder they do not savor those heavenly and spiritual truths that we bring to them, for their minds, being earthly, do only apprehend those things after an earthly manner.

Now what was the great truth that the Apostle brought to the Philippians? It was the way of reconciling the world to God, of making our peace with God, and of our justification through Jesus Christ. Now there is no point of religion more spiritual, heavenly, and divine, than the doctrine of reconciliation, and of justification by Jesus Christ. So that one who is of an earthly disposition, though he may be convinced of a necessity of pardon of sin and peace with God, yet apprehends the making of his peace with God and obtaining pardon of sin in an earthly manner. He has carnal thoughts and apprehensions about his place with God and obtaining pardon of sin. He thinks it is the same way that one man obtains peace with another when there has been a falling out, and of getting pardon from another man that he has offended. He conceives it in an earthly way, he looks upon his making peace with God by something that he must perform. But the free justification by the grace of God in Christ? It's too divine, spiritual, and heavenly for an earthly-minded man to apprehend. An earthly-minded man's apprehensions of God are only in a carnal, earthly way.

As the prophet speaks in Isaiah 1:3 , The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib. In the same way an earthly- minded man knows God, like an ox knows his owner, and the ass his master. The ox knows his owner since he brings him fodder daily, so an earthly-minded man has no other apprehensions of God but that God gives him good things in this world. God makes his corn to grow or prospers his voyage. An earthly-minded man may rise so high as to have apprehensions of God as bringing good things unto him here on earth, but one that is spiritual and heavenly apprehends God as God. He does not look upon God merely as good in respect of the benefit he receives from God here, but he looks upon God as He is in Himself. He sees the face of God. There's a great deal of difference between a man that knows another man and a beast that knows a man.

The ox knows his owner. The ox knows the man that brings hay or provisions to him, but a man knows a man in another way. He knows what the nature of a man is, what it is to be a rational creature. So one who is spiritual knows what God is in Himself; he sees the face of God, and understands what God is in another way than others do. The difference between the know ledge of God that a spiritual soul has, one who is pure in heart, and the knowledge of God that an earthly heart has, is just as different. As the ox knows the man that drives him to fat pastures, so an earthly man knows God gives him good things. But a spiritual man knows God as one man knows another, not in the full excellency, but there is such a difference in some degree between the apprehensions of God in a spiritual heart and the apprehensions of God in an earthly heart.

We might mention many other spiritual and divine truths that an earthly mind apprehends only in an earthly way. For example, consider heaven itself. How does an earthly mind apprehend that? He apprehends that he shall be delivered from pain and shall have some kind of glory, but he knows not what it is. He conceives it according to the way of the earth, some pompous, glorious thing, that he shall live in pleasures and not in pain, and so apprehends all the glory of heaven but in sensuality. A spiritual heart looks at heaven in another way. He looks upon the enjoyment of communion with God and Jesus Christ in heaven, and living the life of God in heaven. That's a thing an earthly heart has no skill in at all, neither does such a heart so much as savour it.

Thus I have in these several particulars revealed what an earthly-minded man is. Oh, that you would lay your hands upon your hearts and consider how far these things reach you! But besides these, I have divers other arguments to convince the consciences of men and women that there is still much earthliness in them, but we shall treat them in order later.

The second head to consider is this: the great evil of earthly-mindedness is that they mind earthly things. "Is that such a great matter?" you say. "We cannot imagine the transcendency of the evil there is in this. We think there's a great deal of evil in swearing, whoring, drinking, and such scandalous sins. But to have an earthly mind? We do not think this to be such an exceeding evil." Yet you will find that the Scripture speaks most dreadful things against this, and if God is pleased to set them upon your hearts, I hope that much glory may come to God by it, and much good to you in particular.

Chapter Three: Six Evils of Earthly-Mindedness

THE FIRST EVIL. The Scripture calls it adultery. It is spiritual adultery in James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" They were adulterers and adulteresses in respect of their love to the world. You that would abhor the thought of a temptation to adultery, yet you may commit spiritual adultery. A man or a woman may be an adulterer or adulteress before the Lord, though they never commit the act of uncleanness with another. Yet if their hearts are towards another, they are guilty of uncleanness, for Christ said that whoever looks on a woman to lust after her in his heart has committed adultery already. That is, he has sinned against that command which forbids adultery. If a man lets his heart go after another woman more than his wife, and a wife after another man more than her husband, this is adultery before the Lord. So if our hearts go after anything more than the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we profess to be married and who is our Husband, this is adultery in Scriptural terms.

THE SECOND EVIL. A worldly or an earthly mind in Scriptural terms is called "Idolatry" in Ephesians 5:5 . Speaking of divers sins that should not so much as be named among them, as is becoming saints, he lists covetousness among the rest. And he adds this, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Now what is earthly-mindedness but covetousness, which is idolatry? A man or woman is an idolater who is of an earthly mind. Idolatry, which is a worshiping of sticks and stones, you all account to be a great sin; but do you and all others take heed of another idolatry that may be as bad, which is to have your hearts make the god of this world -the cursed mammon of unrighteousness -to be your God, to make the things of the earth to be your Christ by falling down and worshiping the golden calf of the world? It's certain that the thing a man's heart is most taken with and set upon is his God. And therefore. in this verse, it is said they made earthly things (their bellies) their god. The voluptuous and drunkards make their bellies their God, and the unclean person makes his strumpet to be his goddess and worships that.

Whatever your heart is most set upon, that is your God. Therefore, you must know, that this is the meaning of the Commandment, Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me. That is, you shall give Me, and nothing else, the strength of your soul. I am a God to My creature when I have its strength exercised about Me, to lift up Me as the highest good. But if there is anything else that your soul is set on as the highest good, that's your god, and it's worse than bowing the knee. You bow your soul to that thing.

Now the more base anything is that we make a God of, the more vile is the idolatry. When the Egyptians worshiped divers sorts of gods, they were accounted the most vile idolaters, whereas other heathens worshiped more excellent things: the sun, moon, and stars. The Egyptians worshiped dogs, cats, onions, and vile things, and therefore their idolatry was vile. So, the more vile any thing is that men or women set their hearts upon, the more vile is their idolatry. For a man to set his heart upon unclean lusts and to make them to be a god, satisfying those lusts, is abominable. To make any earthly thing a god to us is most vile for, of all the things of the works of creation that God has made, the earth is the lowest. It is the basest and lowest thing and has the least beauty in itself, and it is the most dull and meanest element of all. To make earthly things to be a god to you is most vile.

OBJECTION: You will say for this idolatry, "What is there in it?" **ANSWER:** There are two particulars to open the evil of idolatry or earthly-mindedness.

First, the evil of idolatry is in this: you depart from God. In letting your hearts go out to these things, you go off from God, and renounce the protection of God, the goodness and mercy of God. You leave it all by this. In Hosea 4: 12 , they are said to go a-whoring from under their God. It is a notable phrase. By going to idols, they went out from the protection of God whereas, while they were worshiping the true God, they were under the protection of God. But when they went to idols, they went from

under their God, from under His protection. So when you set your heart upon God and lift up the infinite First Being of all things as the Chief Good to your soul, you are under the influence of this grace and mercy, but when you depart from Him and make other things to be your chief good, you go from under His protection and from His goodness and mercy.

Secondly, God is slighted and condemned when you choose to make the earth your god rather than the infinite First Being of all things. A man might despise his wife, an abominable sin, and choose to go to a Queen, the most beautiful woman in the world, forsaking his wife. But to leave a Queen or Empress, who is the most beautiful woman upon earth, and to have the heart cleave to a base dunghill raker, would this not be a great show of contempt to the beautiful Queen ? Yet it is so when you forsake the blessed, eternal God as your Chief Good, and choose the things of the earth. For the truth is that the earth is the sink of all the creatures of God's making, and for you to leave the most blessed and eternal One, and to make the earth your god is, of necessity, a very vile and abominable thing. Therefore the prophet Jeremiah, in speaking of this idolatry, calls the heavens and the earth to be amazed at it. Jeremiah 2:12 , Be astonished, O ye heavens at this, and be horrible afraid. be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. Why? What's the matter? For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. So it is here. You forsake the fountain of living waters, the blessed God, and your heart cleaves to the dust. You seek your contentment and happiness in cisterns that can hold no water! Let the heavens be astonished at this horrible wickedness.

THE THIRD EVIL. Thirdly, earthly-mindedness is enmity against God. You would hate to be found an enemy against God. Certainly it's true that an earthly-minded man or woman is an enemy to God. The Scripture makes it to be enmity in the very text, James 4:4 , know ye not that the love of the world is enmity to God? Observe this, for there's much in it: if God would be pleased to lay this on our hearts, you will find by experience that earthly-mindedness makes men to be enemies to that which is spiritually good. Therefore, well might the Holy Ghost say, 'tis enmity to God, for whatever is enmity to anything that is spiritually good is enmity to God. As much as my heart or any of your hearts are against anything that is spiritual, so much mine or any of your hearts are enemies to God. Here, in this text, the earthly-minded men are made enemies to the cross of Christ, that is, enemies to the spiritual preaching of Christ and holding forth of Christ. Indeed, if they would have mixed Christ and circumcision together, then they would have been content with it, but now this spiritual way of preaching Christ and being justified by faith alone, and Christian religion in its purity, was that which was not suitable to their carnal hearts, and therefore they were enemies to it.

Oh! Earthly-mindedness makes us enemies to spiritual things. Where you have

greater enemies unto the things of God, unto spiritual things, unto the ministry of the Word and to the work of God's grace upon the hearts of men and women, there are no greater enemies unto these things than earthly-minded men, men that savour the things of the earth. They can go up and down, and they do not care as long as they can go about their business, grow rich in the world and fare deliciously every day with Dives, making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. There is an antipathy in their spirits against Jesus Christ and all goodness.

THE FOURTH EVIL. Fourthly, there is scarcely any disposition more opposite, more contrary to the work of grace, to the work of godliness in a man's own heart than earthly-mindedness. 'Tis so exceedingly cross to the nature of grace, that you may as well put men or women on the stand, and put them upon examination whether there be any grace or not in their hearts, if earthly-mindedness prevails. If God should suffer your corruptions to prevail over you, so that you should break forth into some notorious sins, then it may be you would begin to think, "Can this stand with grace? And how can that stand with such workings as I have had before? Have I not cause to fear that I am but a hypocrite, a rotten professor?" This earthly-mindedness has as much opposition to the nature of grace and the power of godliness in the heart as almost any sin that you can name. It is quite contrary to the very beginning of the work of grace, not contrary to the degrees only, but to the very beginning! The main work of God, at first, in working grace in the soul, is to disengage the soul from the creature. It is to take it off from the earth and from all creatures here below. It is naturally true that as we are of the earth, so we are earthly and have our spirits engaged to the things of the earth. But then comes the work of grace upon the soul and takes it off, and discharges the heart from the earth. Therefore you find that Christ lays this in as the first lesson, He that will be My disciple, must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. As if He should say, "Never think of being a Christian unless you will deny yourselves." Self? What's that? It is all natural contentment, natural self, and sinful self.

To be emptied wholly of yourselves, and creature comforts, and contentments, and take up His cross, to be willing to suffer anything in regard to earthly comforts, to be willing to lay down all at His feet, to give up your interest in all, and to take up His cross, this is the very first beginning of Christ's bringing disciples to Himself. The soul then says, "Let me have my sin pardoned, and farewell earth; it's heaven, holiness, renewal in the image of God, communion and union with God, and living to the eternal praise of His name in Christ that my heart is upon." This is in the beginning of God's working the heart to Himself.

The work of grace, when it is first wrought, has the name of "vocation" or calling. What is it for a man to be called? Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. To be called is this: whereas before you were altogether digging and delving in the earth and seeking for your happiness In the world, it pleased God to make you

hear a voice behind you, calling you and telling you, "O poor soul, your happiness is not here. There are other things in which the Chief Good consists. You were made for higher and better things than these. God has nobler thoughts about mankind than merely to let him have a few contentments here in the earth.

Oh soul! Come away and look after higher things. Here's the first work of grace, and the soul answers unto this call of God and says, "Lord, I come," and so the soul goes up to God to dispose of earthly things, and this is the beginning of the work of grace. Now how contrary is earthly-mindedness to the work of God in bringing grace into the heart?

Think of it in these three things.

1. The very work of conversion is set out in Scripture by God's calling the soul out of the world, whom He hath predestinated, him He hath called. When God effectually begins to work upon the heart of a sinner, He causes a voice to be heard in the soul. Oh soul! You have been busying yourself about many things, but there is one thing necessary. Oh, come out of that way of yours which you are in. You can never be happy otherwise. You will be undone in it." The Lord calls the soul out of the world, and that is the very work of conversion, the soul's answering to God's call. Now, can the soul answer God's call and still have a heart cleaving to these things? Surely such a one is not yet effectually called out of the world.

2. From this follows the soul's answer to this call. The Lord disengages the heart from all creature comforts, and teaches the first lesson: to deny himself and take up Christ's cross. Now, what is more opposite to self-denial and the taking up of the cross of Christ than earthly-mindedness? The text here says, They are enemies to the cross of Christ.

3. A third thing in conversion is the resigning up of the soul to God as the Chief Good. The soul, upon the call of God, learns the lesson of self-denial and taking up the cross, and so being disengaged from the creature, now resigns itself to God as an infinite soul-satisfying good forever. Now, you cannot but in the naming of this see how opposite earthly-mindedness is to it.

Next we turn to the work of grace upon the heart, after the heart is convened and turned to God. First, grace brings a new light into the soul. A spiritual and divine light is set up in the soul upon the conversion of a sinner to God. But the earth, you know, is the dark part of the world, and earthly-mindedness causes darkness to be upon the spirit, as the interposition of the earth between us and the sun hinders the sight of the sun from us. So the interposition that there is of earthliness in the soul of man between God and itself hinders the sight of God from the soul. There is a divine light set up in the soul, and God works grace that discovers things of a higher and more

excellent and glorious nature, than those things were, which before the soul did so much cleave to.

In the second place, the Scripture sets forth the work of grace by the phrase, "the new creature." In the soul, all things are made new, old things are passed. He that is in Christ is a new creature. Now, earthly-mindedness is opposite to the new creation of the soul. It's the old man that is of the earth. The first man is of the earth, earthly; and so it is apparent that you are still only in the stock of the first man, of the earth, who are an earthly-minded man. But the second man is the Lord from heaven. But now, you who are an earthly-minded man or woman are yet but a child of Adam, the first man, and so are of the earth, earthly. This is opposed to grace, for grace works a new creation in the soul.

Thirdly, grace is of an elevating nature. It raises the heart above itself and above the creature, yea, above the world; in some respect above angels themselves, above principalities and powers, above all created things. Grace is of a raising nature, but an earthly-minded man sinks down to low and base things.

Fourthly, grace is of an enlarging nature. It enlarges the heart, so that it cannot be satisfied with any earthly thing. Though God should give the whole world to a heart that has grace, this would not satisfy that heart. Why? Because it is so enlarged by the work of grace. The work of grace is the divine nature, the image of God in the soul, and therefore makes the soul like God. It's said of God in Isaiah 40: 15 , that all the nations of the earth are to Him but as a drop in the bucket, and as the final dust in the balance. Now, grace earthly man will strain hard but he will get over it, but were a man's heart taken off from the earth, though he had never gone so far in business, if there should come a stop in a matter of conscience, just a doubt that such a thing was a sin would be enough to stop him. A mere doubt lest he should sin would be enough to make him say, "Let the business fall if it will, there may be a snare in this, and I see some cause to doubt." Now, if the heart were spiritual, it would be taken off, but an earthly mind will go through many dreadful things and does not trouble itself, and so ensnares itself exceedingly, that may get an estate, or preserve it once he has it.

THE SIXTH EVIL. The sixth thing wherein the danger of earthly-mindedness consists is this: that 'tis one of the greatest hindrances in the world to profiting from the ministry of the Word. O many of you cannot but be convinced in your consciences that you have not profited by the Word, and sometimes you will complain of the lack of profiting under the means! O that you had hearts to look into the cause of it, as to why it is that you profit so little! It will appear that it comes from your earthly-mindedness. You bring a heart full of the world, full of dross, with you. It is no wonder that you do not see those spiritual, heavenly things that are in the Word when there is so much dross in your eyes.

Summer travelers, traveling in the midst of dust and in company, do not have the freedom of their eyes to see things like they do at other times. O many men come to the Word with their thick clay, and a great deal of filth that clams up their very eyes, and deadens their hearts in the hearing of the Word! You know what Christ said to Martha, when Mary was sitting at Christ's feet and hearing His Word. Martha was encumbered with many things. So it is many times with those that come to hear the Word. Though they are in the presence of Christ and have the sound of the Word in their ears, yet their hearts are encumbered about many things. There's a great noise in their hearts. They are busied in the world even while they are hearing the Word. As you find in Ezekiel 33:3 I, there's a notable description which, I fear, may be true of many of you, And they come unto thee (said the Lord to the prophet) as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

They sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, and they show much love with their mouth. They will commend the sermon. It may be that they will say, "He is an excellent preacher, it was a very good sermon that we heard today." They will show love with their mouths, but yet their hearts go after their covetousness for all that. They heard a man speak fine things, and bring excellent expressions to set forth the matter at hand, but their hearts are after the things of the earth, and after their covetousness.

They had carnal, earthly, drossy hearts, and hence it was that no good came to them by the ministry of the Word. That famous place, which shows" it clearly, is in Matt.13:22 . You know the' several sorts of ground that had the seed of the Word sown into them, but there was but one of them that was good and faithful The other was thorny ground. He that received seed among the thorns is he that hears the Word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches chokes the Word and it becomes unfruitful. I beseech you to observe it: these that our Saviour speaks of herein this parable, who get no benefit from the Word, are not men that live lewdly (drunkards, swearers, or whoremasters), but those who have earthly hearts. It says, "the deceitfulness of riches." The things of the earth do not hinder in an open way, for thousands of men who have earthly hearts do not know that they have earthly hearts. No, it is the deceitfulness of riches, and it chokes the Word. It may be, just when they are hearing the Word, it affects them. Oh, they think it's sweet, and they will remember it, but the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world choke the Word. When these things come, they have worldly businesses, and their houses, and gardens, and comings in, and full tables, and all the delights that they have in the world. All these things come and possess the heart, so that the Word is choked. It cannot get down into the soul to sink in there and so to prevail in the soul to bring forth fruit. The Word is choked.

Many of you come here three times on the Lord's Day and have precious seed sown all those times, and yet how it is choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of the things of this world! You bring with you, and keep with you, and carry along with you, earthly minds, and hence it is that the Word prevails not with your hearts. Oh! What do you lose through this earthliness? You lose the fruit of the Word that should save your souls. A spiritual heart, having received some one truth into it, later blesses God for it, and would not for ten thousand worlds have it otherwise than that he should have that truth preached unto his heart at such a time. Oh, he has cause to bless God for such a morning, for such a day, that he has such a godly pearl of great price presented to him! Taking root, it's more than if God had given him thousands of worlds to possess.

But now, many of you, having your thoughts and hearts about some petty thing of this world, all those blessed truths that you hear from time to time, things that the very angels desire to pry into, are all choked and come to be unfruitful. Why did the young man who came to Christ to know what he should do to inherit eternal life receive no good? The text says, he had great possessions. A man may, no doubt, be a rich man and yet a godly man, a holy man. But it was the heart, mixed with the earth which hindered the young man from embracing Jesus Christ. Young men are, for the most part, guilty of fleshliness rather than seeking after the riches of the world. Yet sometimes it has been the bane of some young men. They were very forward when they were servants; oh, how precious was the Word to them! But when they got into the world and found the sweetness of it coming in, then the Word was choked in them, and they have lost the savour they had in the Word. They have lost the relish of the Word. It is not as sweet now to them as formerly it had been. That's the great evil of earthly-mindedness; it hinders the great benefit of the Word, and there is much evil in this. If you had hearts to receive what is delivered, your hearts would tremble at the thought of this. Oh, Lord! What shall I do so as not to be hindered in profiting from this Word? 'Tis the great blessing of God to the world. It's that which must save my soul; there's more worth in it than ten thousand worlds. Whatsoever might hinder my profiting from Thy Word, I must take heed of it. Take heed of earthly-mindedness. Many of your consciences cannot but tell you this. Sometimes any business will keep an earthly-minded man from coming to the Word, and when he does come, there is earth in his heart, and ears that keep him from attending upon the Word. When your thoughts are about earthly things in the hearing of a sermon, it may be that some truth passes by your soul that might have saved you eternally, and you have lost that opportunity which, perhaps, you shall never have again.

Chapter Four: Eight Additional Evils of Earthly-Mindedness

In the seventh place, earthly-mindedness causes many foolish lusts in the heart, and

that's a great evil. I will expand them in six particulars. You have the same Scripture as was used previously for the temptations and snare, 1 Timothy 6:9 , But they that will be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, lusts that are very foolish and simple. First, it causes men to follow after things that are very vile and mean. It causes men to bestow the strength of their immortal souls on things that have no worth at all in them. That's a foolish lust, to bestow the strength of an immortal soul on vanities. If you should see men of excellent gifts spending their time on trifles and toys, like catching flies or chasing feathers, you would say that they had begun to be dull-minded. So the soul of man, capable of such excellency as it is -of communion with God, with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost -to have its strength spent on such poor, trifling things that cannot profit in the evil day. Oh, this is a foolish lust!

2. Foolish lusts, or earthly-mindedness, cause you to be a servant to your servants. You would think a man is a fool who is a servant to his servants. God has made the things of the earth to be servants to you, and yet you come and place your neck under your servant's yoke and become a servant to your servant! Yea, is it not a great folly for a man to expect all his honors and respect to come from a servant rather than from any excellency in himself?

Suppose a man is traveling and is shown some respect, but for his servant's sake rather than for his own. Once he realized this, he would account it a great dishonor to himself. But an earthly heart puts itself into such a condition, since it is its greatest honor to have honors from its estate and riches. Earthly men do not respect other men for any worth that is in them, or for any excellency of their own, but for their riches alone, which is to say that a man is not respected for himself, but for his servant!

Take some men that have had estates, but are now deprived of them and have become as poor as almsmen or beggars. Who regards them now? But, let a man have grace and holiness, if he loses all and is made as poor as Job, yet he is one that the angels of heaven look upon with honor, and would glory in attending. This is the difference between the carnal, earthly heart, and the spiritual heart. It's a foolish lust to make yourself to be a servant to your servants.

3. Earthly-mindedness brings a man into foolish lusts, for a man might have much more of the earth if he did not mind it as much as he does. For a man to mind the earth and to endanger himself in doing so, when he might have it better not to do so, is surely a foolish thing. For a man to bestow a great deal of labor on a thing, when he might have it with less labor, is surely foolish. If you are one who belongs to God, you may expect God to bless you if you keep your hearts more spiritual. You might expect that God would grant you more of the good things of this world if you were less earthly-minded than you are. And it's your earthly-mindedness that makes God cut

you short of these things. I am persuaded that there are many who have had bad success in their earthly affairs, and it's a fruit of God's displeasure upon them because their hearts are so much on worldly business. Were you to go on in your employment in obedience to God and commit it to God for success, you might be crowned with more success than you have been. Now what a foolish thing is this?

4. Yea, further, it's a great folly for any of you to buy a thing and pay a greater price for it than it is worth. Suppose you sent a servant to buy something, and when he returned you asked him what it cost, and he told you that he paid ten times more than it is worth. You would think you had sent a fool to the market. So an earthly-minded man manifests himself to God, His angels, and all the saints, to be a fool. How? You bestow upon this world that which is a thousand times more worthy than the things of this world. You bestow upon this world that which might bring you to heaven.

I may say to an earthly-minded man, "Those thoughts, cares, affections, and endeavors that you spend on the things of the world, had they been spent on the things of God, they might have saved your soul to all eternity! You might have gotten Christ, and heaven, and eternity. The Lord would have gone along with you, and you may come to say at the great day when all things shall be opened before men and angels, 'Had I spent those thoughts and cares and endeavors on understanding the ways and things of God and eternal life, my soul might have been saved forever!' " Not that our works will do it, but that God would have gone along together with you in those ways.

Now for you to spend those thoughts and cares on that which you may never have (for many men and women spend their souls on things of the world and never have them), this is a sad thing. Oh! Will this not be a folly? Will you not curse yourself hereafter for your folly? "Oh, that I should spend myself and be spent on that which I have not gotten, and I must be damned for that. Whereas, had I spent time on things that concerned my soul and eternal life, I would have been more likely to have gotten those things."

God does not fail men in spiritual things as He does in earthly things. A man may be as diligent as is possible in earthly business and yet miscarry. But show me a man or woman that was ever diligent in seeking the things of God and eternal life who miscarried! I truly believe that, at the day of judgment, there will not be found one man that shall be able to say, "Lord, I improved the talents that You gave me to the uttermost to save my soul but, Lord, because I was not able to do any more without Your grace. You denied Your grace to me and, therefore, now I must be damned." I believe there will not be any soul that will be able to say this. But in the matters of the world, men do say this, that they have done all they could, labored and toiled, and yet for all this they miscarry. Oh, what a foolish thing is this, then, to toil and labor on that which is so uncertain, for is it not a foolish thing for a man to bestow all his

estate on buying stones and that which will not afford him any benefit at all? This folly is in the heart of man.

Two of you might go to the Indies, where there are precious stones. And one might purchase a cargo of precious stones and other rich commodities, while the other, with an equal amount of money, lays out all his money on baubles and trifles. Both went out with the same amount, both came home loaded, but one came home with precious stones that made him and his posterity great, while the other brought home nothing but stones which made his neighbors scorn and jeer him. O how would he tear his flesh for his folly in this matter!

This will be the difference between men and women at the day of judgment for, the truth is, what is this world but a seafare? We are sailing in this world, with either a load of pearls, or with that which has no worth at all. When you live in the times of the gospel, there is a market for pearls, for those things that will enrich you to all eternity. One man bestows all the strength of his thoughts and heart on those things for which he shall be blessing God in the highest heavens to all eternity, and the other bestows his thoughts and heart on the things of the earth, loading himself down with thick clay. There is a man or woman that shall be blessed for all of eternity, that shall join with angels and saints in the highest heavens to magnify the free grace of God in Christ. And there is another that, had he bestowed his thoughts and heart on the same things, he might have been blessed forever also, but he, minding the things of the earth, is a cursed fool and is the scorn and contempt of men and angels to all eternity.

Earthly-mindedness brings men into foolish lusts. Oh! Men of earthly minds think themselves the only blessed men and applaud themselves at home. Let men think what they will, but the Holy Ghost said that those lusts caused by earthly-mindedness are foolish lusts.

5. It is folly for a man to do that which he must undo to gain. This is especially true of those earthly-minded men who have this earthliness so prevailing upon them as to get some earthly thing by some false ways. Such men must undo all they have done. You have gotten so much of the earth in some cunning, cheating way, and you bless yourselves that you found out such a mystery of iniquity. This is a foolish lust. Foolish? Why? Because it must be done again. Either you must eternally be damned, or else you must restore as Zaccheus did, if you are able, even though it might make you impoverished. All the sorrow and repentance that can be will not be sufficient. You cannot be pardoned even with all your sorrow and repentance if you do not restore, if you are able, what you have gotten by means.

I do not know that there was ever any minister of the gospel on the face of the earth who did not hold to this, that it was of absolute necessity to salvation to restore. And this one reason cannot but satisfy any man's conscience, that A MAN CANNOT TRULY

REPENT OF A SIN AND YET WILLFULLY CONTINUE IN IT! Unless you restore, you are willfully continuing in that sin. Why? You do not only wrong the man the first hour, but as long as you keep anything that is his, you wrong him still. If you are able to restore and do not, simply because you are loath to part with so much money or so many goods, you willfully continue in the sin. Now, no man or woman can truly repent of a sin and yet willfully persist in that sin. What a foolish lust is this, for a man or woman to get the things of this world in such a way that he must undo it all, though it is to his shame.

O consider what a folly it is! You deceitful servants that spend away on your lusts that which you cheat your master of. Afterwards, when you come to set yourself up, you must restore what you have stolen, and it may be that a great part of your estate must be repaid by way of restitution. It must be done, there's no way around it. Therefore, what a foolish lust it is to be so set upon the things of this earth as to get them in an earthly way.

6. By earthly-mindedness, they lose the comfort of earthly things before they have them. For example, suppose a man or woman has troubling thoughts about the things of the earth. It may be that, by their inordinate thoughts, cares, and affections about some earthly things, they contract much guilt. Yet after this, perhaps, God gives them that earthly thing. Now when they have it, if they have any light in their consciences, their convicted consciences will then reflect thusly, "I have this indeed, but do I have it with the blessing of God? I have it in my custody, but I got it dearly, it cost me such thoughts and cares and affections. Now I have it, but I cannot say it comes out of God's love. I rather fear that God has given it to me in His wrath, because I got it in such a way."

Now all the comfort is gone and lost whereas, had it come in the way of God and had you given up yourself to God and let Providence bring such a comfort to you, you might have enjoyed much of God in it and blessed God for it. "The Lord has blessed me in my trading. Oh, I have it from the love of God." But now, because your heart was earthly before it came, when it does come you have no comfort in it. The comfort of all is lost before it comes, you have spent so much upon it. As when a man gets something, and after he gets it he thinks thusly, "What has this cost me? It has cost me a great deal more than it's worth; now the comfort of it has vanished."

THE EIGHTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness is the root of apostasy. I'll give you but one Scripture and compare it with another. II Timothy 4:10 is a notable text that shows how earthly-mindedness breeds apostasy. 'Tis the example of Demas. The Apostle said that Demas hath forsaken me. What was the matter? Having loved this present world. It was that which made Demas to be an apostate. Why? What was Demas before this? Compare this Scripture with the Epistle to the Colossians, and you shall see what he was before this. He was an ardent disciple of Paul's, and the Apostle held him in high

esteem. Read Colossians 4: 14 , where Paul was directed by the Holy Ghost, Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. Paul ranks Demas here among the famous professors of religion. The Apostle, writing to the Colossians, said, Demas greets you among the rest. When we write to our friends and say, "Such and such a one commends him to you," we usually do not name them unless they are good friends.

The interpreters think it was the same Demas, and the word gives some ground for this. In Timothy, you find that he names Luke there, too. It seems that Demas and Luke were two great associates. Paul mentions them together. When Demas had forsaken him, Luke still rode with him, and when Paul sends them the greetings of Luke, the beloved physician, he sends the greetings of Demas, too. But one was truly godly and, whatever sufferings Paul met with, one cleaved to him and would not forsake him. But when Paul began to suffer, Demas thought, "There's no thriving for me if I follow this persecuted Apostle." Demas would have no more of Paul; he thanked him for his company and departed from him. He hath forsaken me. What's the reason? He has embraced this present world. Another note: though he was an ardent professor, Paul's heart was not very affectionate towards him, for he said Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. He did not say "the beloved Demas." It's true, Demas was an ardent professor, and he seemed to wear a cloak of religion, yet Paul was directed by the Holy Ghost only to speak of him as a professor.

The Holy Ghost directs Paul to speak of the two as companions together, giving one an epithet, "beloved," while only giving the other's name. Two men, both very ardent, and companions together, yet those that are godly, old disciples can savour one more than the other. They are both professors, and both have excellent parts and gifts, yet there's more spirituality and greater experiences in one than in the other, for it appears that there was more in Luke than in Demas. Your earthly-minded men afterwards prove to be apostates. Usually, before their grand apostasy, they manifest some deadness and waywardness of spirit to that which is good. Yes, their spirits reveal them to be earthly spirits. They smell of the earth.

Before a man dies, his breath will smell very earthy. You will say, "Oh, such a one cannot live, his breath is so earthy!" So it is with those that are great professors of religion. Those that have an intimate acquaintance with them before they apostatize smell their breath to be earthy in their duties, in their conferences. Oh, take heed of earthly-mindedness, lest it be the root of apostasy. This may be written on an apostate's grave, "THIS WAS AN EARTHLYMINDED MAN OR WOMAN IN SPITE OF THEIR PROFESSION." And hence it is that they fell from the truth in times of danger. When they were brought to the trial, they were base backsliders from God and His truth.

THE NINTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness wonderfully deadens the heart in prayer. It sinks the spirits of men and straightens them out in spiritual duties. Indeed, it defiles

every duty of religion. In Psalm 119:37 , David prays there to God that He would turn away his eyes from beholding vanity, and that He would quicken him in His Law. Certainly, the vanity of which he speaks there means the things of the world, and by his eyes he means the eyes of the mind, chiefly working on the thoughts of his heart after earthly things.

If you look at the 36th verse, he says, Incline my heart to Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Oh, Lord, let not my heart be inclined to covetousness, turn away my eyes from beholding vanity, so that my heart may not be inclined to covetousness. Lord, let not my thoughts be busied with such vain things, but quicken me in Thy Law. It is as if he were to say, "Lord, while my mind is turned to vanity or my heart to covetousness after the things of the earth, I always find my spirit dull and heavy in any holy duties. I have no quickness at all in my inward man when I come into Thy presence, and, by experience, I find this to be the reason that my heart is so drossy, because my thoughts and mind are set on earthly things that are vain." Therefore, "Lord, let not mine heart be inclined to covetousness, nor mine eyes after vanity, but turn away mine eyes from these things and quicken me in Thy Law."

If you would have your hearts quickened in God's Law, in the duties that God sets you on, take heed of your eyes that they look not after vanity, and your hearts that they follow not after covetousness, for an earthly spirit will be a dead spirit. As the dust of the earth is the most sluggish, dead element of all, so earthliness in the heart makes the heart sluggish, dead, and lifeless to any holy and spiritual duty. I appeal to your consciences in this. When you have let your hearts out after the things of this earth, and have been exercised in the world and in business, then when you have come to have communion with God, oh, how dead have you found your hearts! A drossy heart must be a dead heart in heavenly exercises. You complain many times of your vain thoughts in the performance of holy duties. You cry out of dead spirits then, but here lies the cause. You have given yourselves up so much to the things of the world at other times, that when you come to converse with God, your hearts are so dead and dull. This is the ground of it, this is the great root of all, it lies here in your earthly-mindedness. Oh, how many prayers have been spoiled by an earthly heart! Whereas those who have spiritual hearts have enjoyed blessed communion with God at the throne of His grace, and have been sweetly refreshed, while you have gone with a dead heart and continued there, and come away with a dead heart without any quickness and life. This is that which comes by your earthly-mindedness, which is such a restraint to duties.

THE TENTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness is so great an evil, wherever it prevails, that it would be just of God that your name should be written in the earth. Those that are earthly-minded and have this prevailing upon their hearts, and who are not sensible of it, have cause to fear God lest He should write their names in the dust, yea, lest God already has written their names in the earth. In Jeremiah 17:13 , we read such an

expression, Oh, Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake Thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from Thee shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters. It's apparent that he speaks of earthly spirits here, for in the 11th verse he says, As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

Then he goes on to describe the excellency of God and His sanctuary, A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary, etc. It is if he should say that there are a company of foolish vain men that seek after nothing but getting richer in the things of the earth, but a glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of Thy sanctuary. O Lord, we see an excellency in You, and in Your ordinances, and in Your sanctuary. O Lord, the hope of Israel, in whom there is such excellency, is there any that forsake You, who have so much excellency in Yourself, who are the hope of Israel? O Lord, it would be just that their names should be written in the earth, that they should never come to partake of those good things that are in You, the excellent things that are in Your ordinances, and in Your Gospel. But, Lord, let their names be written in the earth, let God write concerning such a man or woman, "EARTH SHALL BE THEIR PORTION." Their mouths shall be filled with earth one day, and that's all the good they shall have from the Almighty. O those who have known God and the things of eternal life cannot but apprehend this to be a sad and grievous evil, to have their name Written in the earth!

THE ELEVENTH EVIL. An earthly-minded man has the curse of the serpent upon him. What is that? Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat. You have the curse of the serpent, you grovel upon the earth, as it were, upon your belly. Your soul cleaves to the ground in a sinful way, and you feed upon dust. While the saints are feeding upon Jesus Christ, upon the very flesh and blood of Christ, refreshing themselves with the hidden manna, angels' bread, corn from heaven, you satiate yourself with the earth. That's your food, and that's the very curse of the serpent. It's a sign of a serpentine brood, and of the old serpent, to be groveling upon the earth and to feed upon it.

THE TWELFTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness is a dishonor to God and a scandal to religion. What, do you profess an interest in Christ, and are there no higher things to be had in God than the base things your heart is set upon? What, do you hold forth the everlasting gospel in your hand to others, and openly profess to be nearer to God than others, and is there no difference between the workings of your heart and the workings of others after the things of this world? Oh, how does this darken the excellency of grace! If there is any grace at all, it very much clouds it. Like the mixing of earth and drossy stuff with pure metal takes away the excellency of the pure metal, so the mixing of the earth with the profession of religion blemishes the beauty and splendor of the profession of religion.

You will never be the man or woman who is likely to convince any by your conversation; you are never likely to be a means to draw any to the love of the ways of godliness, because there is so much darkness and earthliness in your conversation. "Oh," they will say, "indeed he or she makes a great blaze in the world and talks much of religion and ordinances and such things, but they are as worldly as any and groveling in the earth as much as any." People that are bystanders will think that profession is but a mere verbal thing, or a pretence, when they see as much earthliness in your conversation as in the conversation of those that are without the profession of religion. You bring a bad report upon the things of God, as did the spies about the land of Canaan.

Every professor of religion should endeavor to put a luster on religion, and to make the ways of God to be beautiful, amiable, and glorious in the eyes of all who behold them. But to give a lie about a gospel profession by your earthly conversation is a very great scandal to the name of Christ that is upon you, and to His gospel that you seem to stand up for! Oh, there's a great evil in this, and a very bad report comes upon the ways of religion by this. Many that have had little religion in them have some kind of generosity of spirit, so that they scorn such base sordidness as some professors are given to. Oh, for shame! Let not those that have only common gifts of nature and education outstrip you that seem to be the followers of Christ. Away with that base, muddy, earthy, saving, pinching disposition. It becomes none but Judas that carried the bag and betrayed his Lord and Master for eighteen shillings and four pence.

Let me argue with you who have to deal with friends or neighbors who you are afraid do not have the power of godliness in them that you desire. You see they have much ingenuity, generosity, and a concern for the public good. Take heed of scandalizing such men, for certainly if such men could be brought to the love of religion, to the power and strictness thereof, had they the work of the Holy Ghost upon their hearts to humble them for sin, and to show the excellency of Jesus Christ, they would be glorious instruments in the church of God and the Commonwealth. Therefore, it's a very great evil to scandalize such men as these. No, you should labor to walk so that they might see a beauty and excellency in the ways of religion by your conversation. Oh, it would be a thousand times better for you to be cut short of the things of this world, than that you should scandalize the ways of God, and the profession of the name and gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE THIRTEENTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness exceedingly hinders preparation for death, and it is likely to make death very grievous and terrible when it comes. "Take heed to yourselves," Christ said to His disciples, "lest any time your hearts be overcharged or filled with indulgence and drunkenness and cares of this life." Note how He puts them all together. It's very strange, you might say, that Christ should say this to His disciples, to forewarn them of this. We do not think that they were drunkards, following after taverns or ale houses, or reeling in the streets. But by this

drunkenness, He means any excessive use of meat or drink, and professors of religion may be subject to that, to give themselves up too much to sensual delights and excess in the use of the creature.

But besides that, though there are many that would abhor gluttony and drunkenness, yet the cares of this life take up their hearts. Therefore Christ said, Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with the cares of this life. Why? What evil would come from filling the heart with the cares of this life? Mark, says the text, And so that day will come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always.

I may apply this to death, though the Scripture is speaking of Christ's coming. In the time of death, Christ comes particularly. There is a particular day of judgment at the day of death. It may likewise be applied to the time of any affliction. Then the evil of earthly-mindedness appears in this, that it hinders the preparation of the soul for affliction. Oh, earthly-mindedness will make your affliction grievous and heavy to you. An affliction is a very grievous thing to an earthly spirit. If God comes to take away any comforts of this world because your heart cleaves so closely to them, there must be a rending of them from you, and that will put you to pain.

A man that wears loose garments can easily put them off when he goes to bed at night, but if a man has a sore upon his body, and his inward garments cleave to the sore, when he pulls them off, it puts him to a great deal of pain. Oh, then he cries out in his pain! Truly, this earthly-mindedness comes from distemper of spirit, and the things of the earth cleave to the hearts of men and women that are earthly like the inward garment would cleave to a sore on a man's body.

Now, when afflictions or death come to take away the things of the earth from them, or them from the things of the earth, it's painful to them, it's grievous to them. For one who has an earthly spirit, it's a hundred to one against him having any light of conscience left in him. But his conscience will trouble him in time of sickness, and then tell him how he has spent his time and strength of spirit on the things of the earth, when they should have been spent on more excellent things.

When he comes to die, then, his spirit will be troubled thusly, "I am now to leave all these things that I have spent my care and thoughts on and let my heart go after, and what good is it to me now? What good is it that I shall leave so much more than my neighbor does, what great content is this to me when I am upon my sick and death bed? What comfort can I have in all the good things I have enjoyed? Yea, through the earthliness of my spirit, I have enjoyed little of them, yet I have troublesome thoughts. But now death is likely to be to me as a strainer, that strains out the good and leaves the dross and the dirt behind it. So all the good of the things of the world is

gone, but the guiltiness that I have contracted upon my spirit with my immoderate care and affections is now upon my spirit."

I remember a man that lived in a place not far from where I formerly lived who had a covetous, earthly spirit. When he was about to die, he called for his money and fell to swearing, "Must I leave you now?" He was speaking to his bags of money and hugging them! What! "Must I leave you now,?" Here was an earthly man who had spent his spirits and strength upon these things, and indeed, let out his heart to them as his portion. Then he saw that he must be stripped of all. He must bid an eternal farewell to all, no more houses, no lands, nor money. Oh, death is grievous to such a man!

Now, what should the life of a Christian be but a continual preparation for death? Many of the heathens said of philosophy that it was but a preparation for death. It is a special excellency of Christianity that it is a preparative for death, and therefore you should let out your hearts to the things of this world, and be continually thinking of death, so that when God calls you to part from these things, you may do it with as much ease as a man who is going to bed casts off his loose clothes. The grave is a bed to the saints where they fall asleep when they die, and so they may lay down all things and go to their sleep with ease and peace.

A man or woman can have their consciences tell them, "I have been diligent in my calling, but God knows through faithfulness to Him rather than love to the world. And I have kept my heart close to God and faithful to Him. I can bid the world farewell now. As the world has done with me, so I have done with it. So long as my time was to work for God, God continued those things that this frail nature of mine needed. Now my work is done; farewell to the comforts of this world. I expect other comforts where I am going." Such a one that is spiritual may die with comfort, but those that have their hearts filled with the cares of this life will have the day of Christ come upon them unawares.

THE FOURTEENTH EVIL. Earthly-mindedness is that which will bring destruction at last, as it will drown your soul in perdition. There are two texts for it. The first is here in this text. The Apostle says here, speaking of men who mind earthly things, their end is destruction. He joins both together: earthly-mindedness will bring destruction at last.

And the other place, for our purposes, is 1 Timothy 6:9, where the Apostle speaks of bringing them into snares and foolish lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. Some who are washing themselves in the Thames River go a little way at first, and then venture a little further and further, and at length, they are over their heads and ears. There they are drowned and cannot recover themselves. So it will be with your hearts if you look not to them.

You think you may venture so far to the things of this world. Why? Are they not good and in themselves lawful? "I did not get my estate by wrongdoing or cheating." And so by degrees your hearts are stolen away from God and are taken with these earthly things. You get deeper and deeper into the world until, at length, you are plunged in over your head and ears before you are aware, and then you cannot recover yourselves. That man who gives his heart to the things of this world and thinks that he will go no further, I bet a hundred to one that once these things have taken up his heart, he gets more and more advantage, until this man is drowned in destruction and perdition.

A man or woman may be undone as much by earthliness and be damned and perish eternally as by adultery, drunkenness, murder, or any notorious sin. Many who are great professors of religion, it's very likely that the earthliness of their minds will be the sin by which they will perish to all eternity. Do not deceive yourselves into thinking that because you keep from those gross and notorious sins that others live in, therefore you hope to be saved. Your earthliness may damn you as well as anything else. Upon dung-hills, you cast not only carrion and such nasty stuff, but the dust that you sweep from your houses. I may compare hell, which is the place where God casts those damned out of His presence, to the common dunghill upon which filthy creatures are cast. Now upon that dunghill, there are not only carrions and filthy blasphemers, whoremasters and thieves, but there will also be dust upon that dunghill, and scrapings from your houses cast upon the dunghill of hell from the presence of God. Therefore, do not satisfy yourselves that you do not lie in such filthy, abominable lusts as others do.

If you have foul, earthly hearts, you may be cast upon the dunghill as well as those that have lived most notoriously wicked. Therefore take heed of earthly-mindedness.

There is a great deal of evil and danger in earthly-mindedness, may the Lord keep us from it. I shall enlarge my meditations upon this subject by opening some proofs, to further convince men and women that there is a great deal of earthly-mindedness in them. And for preparation, I will lay this down. First, that a man or woman may be earthly-minded, and yet little think of it themselves, not knowing that they are so. Yea, and it may be even perish eternally through their earthly-mindedness, and not know it of themselves.

Chapter 5: Five Things May Be Wrought In A Man, and Yet Earthly-Minded

1. A man may be convinced that there is vanity in all the things of this world and yet be an earthly-minded man. Many think they are not earthly-minded. Why? Because

they are convinced that all these things are vanity. Come and speak to them about the things of this world and they will acknowledge that there is a vanity in all these things, that they are vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

2. A man may have some kind of contentment in his estate and yet have an earthly mind, as in Genesis 9:33 . Esau was one of the earth. He said he had enough, yet he was certainly one of an earthly spirit and his portion was in the earth. How many of you have come as far as did Esau, to say of your estates that you have enough? Oh, 'tis a shame for those that are professors of religion, and would seem to be of the seed of Jacob, to not be able to say they have enough, when an Esau can say he has enough.

3. Men and women may speak very great words about the vanity of all the things of this world. When you come to converse, you may discourse much about them and yet have a very earthly spirit.

4. A man may be free from getting anything of this world by false means, by deceit, by injustice, etc., and yet be earthly for all that.

5. Through some predominant lust for something else, a man may seem to despise some earthly thing. For example, many men who have a lust for ambition will seem to despise money. Those who have a lust to show themselves generous, and those that have a lust of sensuality, will seem to despise the things of the world. Many a man, through one lust, will seem as if he hates the other, but the truth is he does not hate it as sin but because it is opposite to some other lust that he has. He does not hate it; he has no dislike of it as a sin against God. Your prodigals, your young spendthrifts, speak against covetousness as if they hated that sin, whereas the truth is, no wicked man hates any sin any further than one sin crosses another. He may hate it, but not as a sin.

In Isaiah 13: 17 , the text says, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver, and as for gold they shall not delight in it. The Medes were heathen, wicked people that had no grace in them at all, and yet the text says that they shall not regard silver nor delight in gold. Some men think it is through the work of grace, because they find that they are above the base covetousness they see in other men. They do not regard silver and gold, or getting all for themselves, and they despise those men that are of such a base, covetous way. Upon that they think that their condition is good because they think they are above that lust. But you see it is not different than a Mede. A heathen may disregard silver and gold, but how? It is because his spirit is upon another lust, that's the ground of it.

Can you say this, you who seem to scorn covetousness and hate such base sordidness as you see in some men, "The Lord has made me to know what communion with Himself in Jesus Christ means, and since that time I bless God that my heart has been

above all these earthly things. And that's the reason that I look upon all these earthly things as vanity, because the Lord has revealed to me those excellent and glorious things that are infinitely above these earthly things."

That's something, indeed. If you can be above earthliness on this ground, that's a good argument! Therefore, examine upon what ground it is that your spirit is against such things, whether it be upon the sight and experience of better things. If so, then it's right. But certainly men and women may go far in seeming to be above earthly things in respect to the sin of covetousness, and still have earthly minds. Now I will proceed to give you arguments, besides those things to which I have hinted.

How does a man value himself and others? Is it not because those others, or yourselves, have much of the things of the earth? Can you value a poor man who is godly above the richest man who is wicked? And so, can you value yourselves for the least work of grace upon your hearts to make you more excellent than the greatest gathering of your estates? But these things we have already hinted.

And then, where lies the chief joy and sorrow of men's hearts? What is it which most troubles your hearts? Is it the loss of the light of the face of God or the loss of an estate? The loss of a voyage, or the commission of a sin? What's your chief joy? Your profiting from the Word or gaining from a bargain? You have come to the Word and, sometimes, God has there revealed some truth to you and you have profited. Can you go away rejoicing because God has made you to know His Law? "The Lord has darted some truth into my soul this morning. Oh! I will go away rejoicing, and my heart is filled with more joy than I've ever had from some bargain." These are two proofs at which we had not hinted before.

NINE PROOFS OF EARTHLY-MINDEDNESS

1. Seriously consider this: when a man rests upon earthly props, upon worldly helps for the good that he expects, if he can have those things, his heart seems to be upon the wing; he is very pleasant. But there is nothing else that can revive his heart, nothing else that can keep his spirit. Now that which a man or woman most trusts in, they have made to be their god. It properly belongs to God to put our trust in Him. We make God, then, to be our God when we roll ourselves upon Him. You will say, "I cannot trust in earthly things to bring me to God." No, but to trust in them for the comforts of this life while you are here in this world is an argument of an earthly spirit for, the truth is, the comfort of a man's life consists not in any earthly thing that he might enjoy.

OBJECTION: You will say, "Do not these things make our lives more comfortable?"

ANSWER: Yes, so far as God is pleased to let Himself out through them, but if your

heart rests on these for comfort, and does not look higher than these for comfort, even for outward support, certainly you have an earthly heart. And so, when you are about any business, you have some earthly means to further you.

OBJECTION: You will say, "God would have us to take all outward means to help us."

ANSWER: Aye, but not to trust in anything. IF RICHES INCREASE, SET NOT YOUR HEARTS UPON THEM. If friends increase, set not your hearts upon them, but trust in the living God. Let it be the living God that you rest on for all outward things in this world.

2. A second proof is when men make most provision for the things of this world, both for themselves and for their children. Are these not your thoughts? I do not know what I may want hereafter, and I see many who have lived finely when they have been young yet, afterwards, they have lived miserably, and therefore I must make provision for aftertimes. But now, do you reason thus for the things of heaven? Do not I see many that have made a great blaze of religion, and yet afterwards they have come to nothing? They have gone out in a snuff as men that God has forsaken, and they have died in horror of conscience. Therefore, let me lay up provision now against an evil time, that I may not miscarry in the matters of my soul as others have done. This is a sign that your minds are not earthly.

God has sent you children and, oh, how you toil and labor! Your thoughts run in the night, and as soon as you wake in the morning, about what you shall get for their portions, and an estate for them. Now I appeal to your consciences before God, the Searcher of all hearts. Have your cares been to provide in a suitable way for their souls, for their spiritual and eternal estates? There is no question but that it's lawful for parents to provide in a providential way for their children, and they that do not are worse than infidels. But what is your chief provision for? Are your thoughts more solicitous to provide portions for them, than that they should have instructions in the fear of God, an interest in Christ, grace wrought in their hearts? You are loathe to die before you can bring your estate to its fullness so you may leave it to your children. Are you not loathe to die before such a time as you can see some work of grace wrought in the heart of your children? These would be your thoughts if you were spiritual!

"Oh, could I discern just some seeds of grace sown before I was dissolved, I could rejoice abundantly," 'tis repeated of Austen's mother. The great thing she desired to live for was to see her son converted. God granted her desire, and then she found herself willing to die. There's nothing which will make the spiritual heart of a father or mother more willing to depart from this world, than to find grace wrought in their children. "Oh, that I may see before I die, my child left under the promise in covenant with God." But those whose cares and thoughts are mostly for these earthly things, in

providing for themselves and their children, give proof that their hearts are earthly.

3. A third proof (which is very notable, and I beseech you all to lay this to heart and consider it seriously) of the evil of this earthly-mindedness is that it is a very secret and close sin. Therefore I am going to be longer in this point.

The proof is this: that man who can be content with a slight assurance in the matters of heaven, except for the matters of earth, never thinks himself sure enough. But he is very careful to make all things so infallible that there can be no way he can be deceived, that he may surely build upon what he has in the things of the earth. This is proof of an earthly mind. Come to men that are earthly and talk with them about matters that concern their souls. "What evidence have you that you are gone beyond any formal professor, that you are better than the stony ground that we read of in Scripture? What evidence have you that the saving work of grace is wrought in you? That you have shot the gulf? That you are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Jesus Christ? And that your sins are pardoned and your souls justified? That you are at peace with God? What evidences do you have of peace made between God and your soul?"

This answer would be given, "I hope I am converted. I trust in God's mercy. I am sure I have grace. I shall be saved, for God is merciful." But what evidences can they show? They scarcely know any. You will have many like that, because they do not know what assurance means, therefore they will think nobody can be assured. We may hope well, but we cannot come to be assured of it.

A heart that is truly gracious and godly would loathe that to be true. They would not lose their part in the blessings of assurance for a thousand worlds, even if God were to make them kings or queens of the earth. But you have an earthly, drossy heart, and do not look much after assurance for matters of your soul and eternal estate. You will venture those matters and put them upon chance. But when it comes to the matters of the earth you'll make sure there, and go from this lawyer to that lawyer for counsel. If there is anything you can do to be more sure, you will do it. If you could but hear of anything your neighbors had done to be more certain than you, you would not even rest until you had done as much. Is it so in matters of your eternal estate?

Do you not hear of many saints of God who walk comfortably in the midst of all afflictions upon the assurance of God's love? You will have some who will be able to say, "Aye, and it's this Scripture I build upon and, through God's mercy, such has been the work of God upon my soul in revealing Himself to me, and such a promise I have sucked an abundance of honey from." But now, come to people upon their sick beds, and, generally, all they say is that they hope in God's mercy. But for the ground of hope, for showing how God has been pleased to bring their hearts and the Word together, and what real effects there have been upon their spirits by the Word, they

can show nothing. You have, therefore, not gotten that assurance for your soul and eternal estate as others have, and yet you can go on quietly.

Oh, it concerns you who are so busy in making all sure for your outward estate, to spend more thoughts and care in the matters of your soul and eternal estate than ever you have done. Here's an earthly-minded man that can be contented with slight assurance for the matters of his soul, and be satisfied with no kind of assurance in the matters of the world but would make those things more and more sure continually.

4. Further, an earthly-minded man may be convinced of his earthliness in this, that he is content with a little degree of sanctification, but regarding the matters of the world, he would have more and more. He looks at those that are the most eminent in his rank, and he would get as high as they are in the things of this life. But in matters of religion, he looks at the lowest Christians and is content to be as low as they are.

Take an earthly-minded man that is of such and such a trade. If there is anyone of his profession or calling that had as little to begin with as he, and was thriving better, he would desire to get that high himself, and he is troubled that he is not as rich. That's how it is in the world.

But now, take them in matters of God. There are such men who began when you began, and had as little means for the good of their souls as you have had, who have thrived and gone beyond you abundantly in the matters of God. Does this trouble you? Are your thoughts solicitous about this?

Do you say, "Oh, that I could attain to the degree of grace that man has, for he has a spiritual mind, and is full of the joy of the Holy Ghost! He is full of faith, he is able to depend upon God in the lack of all outward comforts, and certainly enjoys much communion with God, but I am far beneath him." Do these thoughts trouble you? It is ordinary for earthly spirits to look upon the lowest Christian and be satisfied that they are like them, but for the matters of the world they look upon the highest, and are not satisfied unless they attain to that level. That's a fourth evidence.

5. A fifth proof is this, earthly-minded men are very wise in matters of the world, but in matters that are spiritual are very weak and simple. You have many men who, in matters of religion, are very ignorant. If they do speak in points of saving knowledge, they speak like children, so that one would wonder where their understandings were. Now turn such men to the matters of the world. Oh, how wise they are in their generation. How subtle and crafty are they! They can see an objection there and know how to answer it. They can discern anything that will let them see a profit many miles off. But in those things that hinder their souls, they cannot see things there. They are wise in their generation and have memories for the matters of the world. They can understand things and remember things, and they can meditate there, but put them to

meditate upon a point of religion, they come to a standstill. Let me appeal to you. Do not your consciences tell you? In worldly matters, when you are walking from here to London, you can run your thoughts on business all the way. You can plot this and contrive that. You can foresee this objection and that one, and you can answer each one in your own thoughts. But let me put this to you. When you walk through the fields, settle upon one meditation about Christ and see whether you are able to draw out that meditation the entire time you walk, whereas you can spin out an earthly meditation no matter how far your journey is. When you awake in the night, your thoughts are upon the things of the world, and you can draw them out and work with understanding, but how about the things of God? Oh, how barren and simple are you there! There is scarcely anyone who can outdo you in the things of the world, but in the matters of religion you are outdone; every slight temptation overcomes you there.

6. Besides this, you may know earthly-mindedness by the discourse and words of men. I John 4:5 says, They are of the world, therefore they speak of the world, and the world heareth them. Their breath is earthly. Oh, it's an ill sign that when you come to a friend's bedside and fear that they will die because their breath smells so earthy. It's symptom of the death of their bodies. So your hearts smell earthy, and it would be somewhat tolerable if it were only on the days when your calling requires you to talk about business. But even during that time that God has set apart for Himself, you are often discoursing in your own thoughts about the business of the world. You do it when you are praying, you do it when you are hearing the Word. The communication and discourses of men should relish what they have heard out of the Word, not go and talk about some earthly occurrences.

Oh, it's this that has lost many precious truths. It may have been when you have been hearing the Word, God has darted some beam of gospel light into your souls, and you have lost it before you got home, and have come to lose the impression of the truth you have heard. Oh, what a seemly thing it is that those who come to hear the Word, depart with no discourse about what they have heard! Oh, how often are you in company and never leave anything to refresh one another's spirits, or to further one another in the way to eternal life! Though God gives you allowance to speak about your business, yet still, if you are spiritual and heavenly, He would have you to have something of eternal life before you depart.

7. A further proof is this, when spiritual things must give way to earthliness upon every little business. Prayer must pay for it. If I have any business to do, I will take it out of prayer time, or converse in the Word the less, or hear the Word less. When earthly things are as high as spiritual things, heaven must stand by until earth is served. This is an evil sign of an earthly spirit. Whereas, were the spirit heavenly, the very first thing that you would do when you awake in the morning would be to season your heart with something that is spiritual.

In Psalm 139:17-18 , we read, How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, when I awake I am still with Thee. That is an argument of a spiritual mind, to be with God upon awaking, When I am awake I am still with Thee. But now, I appeal to you, who are you with when you awake? Can you say, "Lord, when I awake I am still with Thee. I find an inclination in my spirit to be upon the matters of heaven, and when I am up, I would rather my worldly business give way than my spiritual duties."

8. When a man or woman cares not how it is with the church, with the kingdom of Jesus Christ, as long as it is well with them in matters of the world, this is proof of an earthly mind. When things are stirring abroad in the world, he does not inquire how things are in respect to the privileges of the saints, the ark of the church, as long as his cabin is safe. Truly, there is nothing needed but the examining of your own hearts, how they have been these last years of Jacob's troubles. In the time of war, Eli sat trembling because of the Ark of God. He did not sit trembling because the Philistines might prevail and take his home. No, it was because of the Ark of God. That was proof of the spirituality of Eli's mind.

Likewise, it may be an argument of great comfort to you in these dangerous times if your consciences tell you this, that God, who knows all things, knows that the great thing your heart was solicitous in these evil days was "What shall become of Thy great name?" Lord, what shall become of religion? What shall become of the gospel? Lord, these were the things that took up my heart, not so much what should become of my estate and outward accommodations and relations in this world.

Oh, examine your hearts in this, whether the care of your spirits is more for the furtherance of the kingdom of Jesus Christ or for the furtherance of your estates. But for that man or woman who is most solicitous about the business of his or her outward estate, and does not much care how religion goes, or how the way of the kingdom of Christ is maintained, God at this time speaks to that soul.

You are an earthly-minded man or woman and, therefore, take heed lest what has been spoken concerning the great evil there is in earthly-mindedness befalls you, and especially these words, whose end is destruction, who art drowned in perdition. Lest hereafter, this be the thing that you shall lie crying out and cursing yourself for. "Oh, I had a base and earthly heart, and sought the things of the earth. I made my portion there, and in the meantime, the blessed God has been forsaken. I have lost my portion in the Holy Land, for I had my portion in Egypt among the Egyptians, according as I chose for myself."

9. The more spiritual any truth is that is revealed, the less it takes with his heart. Some truths of religion move him, perhaps, but these are as bywords to him, he does not mind them at all. The more spiritual an ordinance is, the less his spirit is moved

by it. If he comes to the Word and there is some earthly, natural excellence mingled there -like natural parts, wisdom, wit, eloquence, and learning -that will move him. It may be that some fine story is more pleasing to him than the goodly pearls of truth that are revealed in the Word, like the enjoyment of communion with God, the longing after Jesus Christ's coming, the living by faith upon a bare promise, the excellency that there is in suffering for Jesus Christ. These truths are spiritual, the mortifying of the inward lusts, self-denial. These things are favored but little by an earthly- minded man.

Tell him of the privileges of the saints, the mysteries of the gospel. Anything that is spiritual is but a notion to him. As it is with men that are upon the earth, they look up to heaven and see the things of heaven only slightly. Why is it that the stars seem so small to us here? It is because we are on the earth. The earth seems a vast body to us, but the stars seem little to us, even though they are far bigger than the earth. Were we in heaven, the heavenly bodies would seem vast to us, and the earthly bodies would scarcely be discerned by us. Were men's hearts heavenly, all the things of the earth would seem little to them, but because they are earthly, the things of heaven and spiritual mysteries are very small in their eyes.

Chapter Six: Seven Reasons of Men's Earthly-Mindedness

I shall now proceed to the reasons why it is that men's hearts are so set upon the earth, minding earthly things. Briefly, I will give you these reasons for it.

First, the things of the earth appear real to them, but spiritual and heavenly things are just a notion. That which has reality in it takes most with the heart. Men are deceived in this, though, for the Scripture speaks of spiritual things as the only real things, and earthly things as those which have no being at all. In Proverbs 23:5 , it says, Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? (speaking of the riches of the world) it has no reality in it at all. But in Proverbs 8:20-21 , "Lead me in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance to inherit that which is, that which has a being." The honors of the earth are but a fantasy and vain show. You have read of Bernice and Agrippa. They came with much pomp, with great fancy, as the original says. But to an earthly man, these earthly things are real things, and therefore he minds them. Wisdom is a lie to a fool.

Secondly, they look upon these things as necessary, though the Scripture tells us but of one thing that is necessary. Yet they think that these earthly things are present now, they only have need of heavenly things hereafter. They may have need of reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, and such things. They may have need of them, that is, when they depart out of this life. O the infinite folly of

most hearts to think that there is so present a necessity of spiritual and heavenly things, whereas indeed, our life consists in them for the present! This is eternal life. We may come here in this world to enjoy eternal life, but the majority of people look upon all spiritual things only as our good for the future, when we leave here and are seen no more.

Thirdly, these things are most suitable to men's hearts. It's no wonder that they mind earthly things, they are of the earth, and from the earth; they have nothing but the first Adam in them. The first man was from the earth earthly. The truth is, the happiness of man's estate even in innocency, in the morning of the day of his creation, in comparison of the things that are now revealed by the gospel, was but earthly.

Take man when he was in paradise; that paradise was but earthly. But then take man in his fallen and corrupt estate. He cannot help but be earthly, and everything closes with what is suitable to that. Comfort does not come so much from the goodness of a thing, but from the suitability of the object with the faculty. Now the things of the earth are suitable to men that are of the earth, and therefore they mind them. The heart will abundantly run out upon that which is suitable to it.

Fourthly, these things of the earth have a very fair show in the flesh. They have a kind of goodly appearance in the eye of sense, and in the eye of that reason that is now corrupted by sin. We have a most elegant expression of these earthly things, and those earthly-minded men who have their hearts set upon these things. It is in Galatians 6:12 . As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, says the Scripture. The words are to signify when a man looks smug and neat. You shall have some men that dress themselves curiously and, having handsome bodies, they look so trim, fine, handsome, and very splendid to the eyes of all who behold them. So, he says, these men that are false teachers desire to make a fair show in the flesh. That is, they look upon the things of the flesh as those things that are appealing to the eye, and they look to have all things so complete about them so that they may look smug, and carry themselves with such beauty before the world.

Oh, this is their happiness, this they take satisfaction in! They seem to have fine estates, and to have appealing clothing, and all curious things about them. This looks so good in the eyes of the world, and therefore it is that their hearts are upon them. They are here enemies to the cross of Christ. They think suffering for Christ, poverty, or disgrace looks bad. But now, those that desire to make a fair show in the flesh, that would have their countenances well washed, fair, and beautiful wherever they go, and be somebody in this world, forsake the truths of God and seek to provide for themselves in the things of the flesh.

Fifthly, men naturally never knew better things than the things of the earth. It is no marvel, therefore, that they mind the things of the earth so much. Children that are

born in a dungeon and never knew any better place can play up and down in the dungeon. So it is with men that never knew what the things of heaven and eternal life meant. They can mind earthly things better than those, but when the Lord opens the eyes of their understanding to see into the reality, excellency, and glory of spiritual things, then they wonder at their former blindness in minding such poor, low, mean, foolish rattles, as the things of the;! earth are.

Sixthly, there are earthly principles continually dropped into men by conversing with other earthly men. Psalm 49:11 says, "Their inward thoughts are that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling place to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Their hearts are set on earthly things." Then, in the 13th verse, "Their way is folly," yet their posterity approves their sayings. They are applauded by men. They see that everybody applauds them in these ways, and when they converse with one another, they converse about the things of the earth. They see everybody following the things of the earth, and they are greedy after these toys. That also inclines their minds to the things of the earth.

Lastly, the sensible experience they have had of the sweetness there is in the things of the earth takes their minds off spiritual things, and makes them to mind the things of the earth. But though these are the reasons why men mind the things of the earth, someday it will be shown to be folly.

Though an earthly-minded man blesses himself in this way, and thinks he has good reason for what he does, and thinks all men fools who do not grovel in the ground like a mole with him, and look upon the matters of religion as mere words and talk, let them do what they will, I will find contentment here. Their way will be proven folly. As the Holy Ghost said in the 49th Psalm, "Their way is folly."

In the end, the wise men of the earth, those that have sought the things of the earth and bless themselves in their way, will prove to be the greatest fools; the Holy Ghost accounts them so. In Jeremiah 17:11, it says, As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool. He applauds himself for what he presently has, but at the end he shall be a fool.

Chapter Seven: Eleven Considerations to Take the Mind Off of Earthly-Mindedness

The main thing we have tried to do thus far is to take the minds of men and women off of the things of the earth. This will prepare us for the next point which is of infinite concern, our conversations in heaven. But because a man's conversation cannot be in

heaven until his mind is taken off of the earth, until the disease of earthly-mindedness is cured, we must now propound those things that may help take off men's minds from the earth.

First consider this: if you could possess all the things of the earth that your mind and heart are upon, there is still not enough good in them as to undo the evil of the least sin, not the least sin of thought. Your heart is muddling upon the earth, and you think that you would be blessed if you had thus and thus as others have. Let me tell you if you had but one sinful thought, there is more evil in that than there is good in all that you shall get all the days of your life. And, if this is so, it concerns you rather to have your mind on how to avoid sin, how to get the evil of sin removed, and how to get your sin mortified. That ought to concern you more than minding and plodding about the things of the earth. That's one consideration.

A second consideration that may take off the hearts of men from the things of the earth is this: the chief things that are in the earth have been the portion of reprobates heretofore and are to this day, and shall be the portion of multitudes whom God hates and has set apart to glorify His infinite justice eternally. Shall your mind and heart be set upon such things as are the portion of reprobates? Will a reprobate's portion satisfy you? Will it serve you? Are you satisfied with dog meat? If it will not content you, why is it that your mind is so much upon the things of the earth?

It may be that you are poor and low in the world. Your mind is upon some little matter. You never expect to have any great things in the world and yet you mind these little matters as if that were your portion and your happiness, some small pittance to furnish your house, to provide for yourself and your family. Oh, friend! If it were possible for you to get the empire of the whole world under your foot, still you would get no more than has been the portion of such as God has hated, and if kingdoms and empires have been the portions of reprobates, why do you abundantly mind things that are lower and let the strength of your heart flow out upon such things as these are?

A third consideration is this, surely God has made man for higher things than the things of this earth. Oh! If you had your thoughts working this way, "For what end do I think God has made the children of men? Why has He sent them into the world?" Of all the creatures God has here upon the earth, none are capable of knowing Him, the infinite First Being of all things, except the children of men. And God has given them a nature that is capable of conversing with Him. Surely, then, there are other things that God made man for, than to have meat, drink, and clothes, and to live here awhile just to enjoy creatures.

Do we not read often that Jesus Christ was God and man, took man's nature upon Himself, and died for man? Surely there must be some other manner of things that

are the fruit of the purchase of the blood of Christ than the things of the earth! Oh, my brethren, if you only had this settled upon you: that God has great, glorious, high, and wonderful thoughts about mankind. This would be a mighty means to take your hearts off of the things of this earth, when you have your hearts groveling here. Oh, but are these the things God made man for? Had not God higher thoughts in making the children of men? Do not I find in the Word that when man was made there was a kind of Divine consultation with the Trinity? Come, let us make man according to our Image. God had higher thoughts of man than of other things. And if man were made for nothing else but to dig in the earth, certainly, the thoughts of God about man have been very low and mean (as I may so speak with holy reverence), for these are but low and mean things here that men enjoy on the earth.

Fourthly, as God has higher thoughts concerning man, so the dignity of man's nature, the rational soul of man, is of too high a birth to have the strength of it spent on things of the earth. God breathed into man His soul. It is a kind of a Divine spark. The soul of man is of the same nature as angels, a spirit as angels have. The thoughts of the mind, the faculties and powers of the soul are more precious than to be poured out as water upon the ground.

If a man had a golden mill, he would not use it just to grind dirt, straw, and sticks in. The mind of man, the thinking faculty, is too high to be exercised in the things of this earth. The mind of man is of a most excellent, capacious nature. It is fit to converse, not only with angels, but with the eternal God Himself, with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to bestow the strength of such a faculty upon such dirty, drossy, low, base, mean things as earthly-minded men and women do, this is a great evil. Know this, the dignity of your nature, the excellency of your mind, and the soul of man is that of a transcendent being. Put all the world into the balance with it, it is nothing. Therefore you know what Christ said, What shall it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and lose his soul?

The soul of the lowest galley-slave is more precious than heaven and earth, sun, moon, stars, and all the host of them and, let me add, than all the silver and golden mines underground, and all the unsearchable riches of the great and wide sea. Yea, put all together, and the soul of the most contemptible beggar that cries for a crust of bread at your door is unexpressedly worth more than all these. Now if man's soul is of such a high-born nature, if God has put such a spirit, which is a spark of heaven, into the bosom of man for him to employ in no other use and service but to merely be an earthworm to creep upon the ground, this is a great evil.

The fifth consideration is the uncertainty of all these things, uncertain riches. Any casualty come and take away from you all the things of the earth that your mind is on. God sends a little too much heat into the body and puts you into a fever, and where is your delight then? Your body will either be too hot or too cold, and what's become of

all your comfort in this life? You go abroad and are wounded by an enemy, and what refreshment do you receive from all these things? Let me tell you, you are in the midst of a thousand thousand casualties here, every moment ready to take away all the comforts of the earth. Usually, at the time when most minds of men and women are fixed upon the earth, that's the time God has to strike them in those things. That's when they are closest to being deprived of the comforts of the earth, when their minds are most fixed upon them.

As you know, when the rich man in the gospel was blessing himself and crying to his soul, Soul, soul, take thine ease. Thou hast goods laid up for many years, that very night, the text says, this message came to him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken away from thee, and then, whose shall all these things be? And at the time that Nebuchadnezzar was blessing himself in the palace he had built for his honor, a message came to him from heaven so that he was ousted from all his court vanities to graze among the beasts of the field.

You may find in your own experience that God has many times most crossed you in the things of the earth when your minds and hearts have been most glued to them. And it may be that He has done it in mercy. It's a greater mercy to be crossed in these things at such a time than to prosper in the midst of them, for it may be a good argument that God intends good to a soul to cross him at the time he is most earthly. Oh, many that have been godly indeed, but have been earthly-minded and have found God coming at such a time and crossing them in some earthly contentment, have seen cause to bless God for thus dealing with them. Where was I going? I was going altogether to the earth and minding such things. My heart was set upon them and God came to me in a seasonable time to show me the vanity of my heart, and of those things that my mind was busied upon. Oh, it was a happy cross that I had at such a season! There was much of Christ that hung upon it.

Sixthly, consider what has become of those that have been earthly heretofore, that enjoyed the greatest accommodations of the earth. What has become of those men in former ages of the world that lived here, and vaped so much in their generation, who had all the earth according to their desires? What's become of Agrippa and Bernice with all their pageantry and greatness? Now they have acted their parts and are gone off the common stage of the world, and all their vanity is buried with them in one grave. What difference is there between the poor and rich when they die? They all go the same way. They lived for a little time and flourished in the things of the earth and now are gone, but have left a great deal of guiltiness behind them. Look to their example, and what's become of them? Consider that your case must be as theirs within a short while. The wheel is turning around which will bring you as low as them, so that you, before long, must be numbered among the dead. Oh, it's a mighty means to take our hearts from the things of this earth!

Seventh, consider how short the time is that you have in this world. That's the argument of the Apostle, because the time is short. Therefore, let us use the world as if we used it not. Therefore, let our hearts be taken off these things. We have only a little time and a great deal of work. We have in this short winter's day of life to provide for eternity. Considering the great weight of the work that depends on us here in this world, it may be a mighty reason for us to bid adieu to all the things of this world. If we had enough time for our work, and were sure of our time, then we might spend it on trifles.

If a man comes into the city to do some business of great weight and consequence, and has only a little time to spend on it, he does not mind anything he sees in the city, he does not mind anybody that comes by him, but goes up and down the streets minding his own business. Oh, it should be so with us, brethren. Consider the great work we have to do, and the little time we have to effect that work in. Upon our little, short, uncertain inch of time, depends matters of more consequence than ten thousand, thousand worlds are worth, and if we miscarry in this little time of our lives, we are lost and undone forever. Better we had never been born, or had been made toads or serpents, or the vilest beasts, than unreasonable creatures.

Oh, have you so much time for spending the very spirits of your souls upon the things of this earth, can you spare so many hours? Certainly, if God made known to you what eternity means, if the Lord caused the fear of eternity to fall upon you, you would not misspend as much time as you do. Many times, though, you complain of a lack of time for spiritual things. Oh, how much time do you spend in letting out your thoughts and affections upon the things of the earth? More than you need!

In the eighth place, consider that a little will carry us through this world. We are here but as on a pilgrimage or a voyage. A little will serve to carry us through this world. Men will not take more on a journey than may help them. If a man who is going on a journey should get a whole bundle of sticks and lay them on his shoulder, and you ask him the reason why he is carrying that bundle, he might say that he is going on a great journey, and he does not know how many sticks he will need to help him. Now, it's true, to carry a staff in a man's hand will help him, thus Jacob was helped by his staff over Jordan, but to carry a bundle upon his shoulder will hinder him.

A little will serve your purpose. If you have only meat and drink, food and clothing, be content, said the Apostle. The servants of God in times past, passed through this world with very little, and many of them, the less they had, the more peace and comfort they had in God, and the more fit they were to die. I remember Ecolampadius was very poor when he was to die. He professed that he would not have been richer than he was, for he saw what a hindrance it was, and so he could pass out of the world with more ease and quiet. Certainly a little will serve your purpose here.

We say that nature is content with a little, and if there were grace, it would be content with less. Therefore, we do not let our minds be on the things of the earth. We do not have as much need for the things of the earth as we think we do.

Ninthly, consider that there is no comfort, no good to be had in things of the earth any further than God will be pleased to let Himself through them. They are but channels to convey the blessing and goodness of God to us. Man lives not by bread, nor meat only. You are deceived to think that if you had such and such things you should certainly have a comfortable life. I say you are deceived in this, for it is God in these that comforts the heart.

There is a notable Scripture for this in Psalm 62, where the Holy Ghost says in the 10th verse, Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery, if riches increase, set not your hearts upon them. Do not mind them, but why not? In the 11th verse, God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this. That power belongeth unto God, if riches increase, set not thy heart upon them. Let not your hearts and minds be upon riches or anything in this earth. Why not? God has spoken again, twice have I heard, that is, again and again. God has spoken effectually to me that all power to do any good belongs to Him. It is not in riches; there is no power there to make you happy, but all belongs to Him.

This, I confess, is a spiritual meditation in which earthly-minded men will have little skill, yet where earthly-mindedness prevails in anyone of the saints, this may do him good. Whereas the truth is, this power is not in the creature, or creature comforts. Neither can do me any good. If I had a thousand times more than I have, I might be miserable in the earth and have as little comfort as those that have least. Therefore, let me set my affections upon things above, and not on things on the earth.

Tenthly, lay this to heart. If you are godly, God promises to provide the things of the earth for you, and to that end He might ease you of the burden of your care. Cast your care upon God for He careth for you, and take no thought for these things, for your Heavenly Father knows you have need of them. Your Heavenly Father takes care, see how He clothes the lilies, and are not you much better than they? Children do not much mind the things of the earth, to provide for themselves, because they know they have their father to provide for them. A child that has his father and friends to make provision for him is very much eased by this. But those that are left fatherless and friendless seem to have some excuse, "I have to take care of myself for I have nobody to provide for me." Aye, but the saints cannot say so, they have a Father to provide for them, and all the earth is the Lord's, as well as heaven, the earth being your Father's. The earth being the Lord's, as well as heaven, the earth being your Father's, why should your care be so much on things of the earth? Let your care be to do your duty to your Father, to walk as a child, but do not let it be for things of the earth. You as much as disavow the care of your Father for you. Can you believe that God shall give

His Son to you, and not give you all things else? Does not godliness have the promises of this life as well as of that to come? Oh, you unworthy child that professed an interest in such promises, and hoped that God had done such things for you as He has done, and yet have your heart in things of the earth. As if the Lord had settled you here only, and left you to shift for yourself from door to door. No, certainly, the care of God is over His people in the things of the earth as truly as it is over them in regard of spiritual and eternal things.

Some men think, or at least believe, that they trust God for their souls, but cannot trust for their bodies as well. But surely faith teaches you to trust God for your body as well as your soul, for God has care of both, and both were redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. I have told you that he that fears the Lord shall never want anything that is good for him. Now these considerations may mightily prevail to take off the hearts of men from the things of the earth.

The last consideration I shall name is this, that all who are professors of religion are dead to the world, or should be so. Nay, if you are truly religious, you are so. By profession, you profess yourselves to be dead to the world. The Scripture makes this argument in Colossians 3:2-3, Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Why? For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. You are dead, the Apostle writes to the Colossians, and yet he tells them they were dead. The Scripture speaks much of the death of the saints. It's said of women who lived in pleasures in I Timothy that they were dead while they lived. So it may be said of Christians that they are dead while they live, dead to the world. I am crucified to the world, says the Apostle, and we are dead with Christ. I find that some interpret the Scripture in I Corinthians 15:29, Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? as that all those that came in, which were heathens and converted to Christianity and were baptized, were baptized for dead men, that is, by their baptism. Now there was a profession. They professed themselves, from that time forever as dead men to the world, "baptized for the dead." You have it in some of your books "over the dead," but the word is fur, and so it is translated in this last translation, for dead men. Your baptism is administered to you as a sign of your profession, to live henceforth as if they were dead.

This is the profession of Christians, to be as dead men to the world. Oh, do not dishonor your profession of religion, for, indeed, it is a greater evil for professors of religion to be earthly-minded than for any others, and yet how many are guilty of this? It's an observation of Luther that when God revealed Himself to Abraham and told him that He would multiply his seed He made use of two similitudes. One was this, that He would make his seed as the stars of heaven, and at another time God said that He would make his seed as the sand upon the seashore. Now, said Luther, by these two expressions are signified two sorts of Abraham's seed. There are some that are as the stars of the heaven, that are heavenly-minded. There are others that are as the

sand of the sea, that is, there are some who profess themselves to be of Abraham's seed, but are of earthly spirits.

Oh now, my brethren, we should labor to have such minds and hearts so as to appear to be the seed of Abraham, as the stars of heaven, to be of the number of those that are as the stars of heaven, that is, through heavenly-mindedness. But we shall come to that when we speak of the conversation of Christians, and how it ought to be in heaven.

But now, may not someone ask, "May we not mind earthly things and heavenly things, too?" There is a great mistake here. You cannot serve two masters, God and mammon. It's very plain that the text of Scripture in Colossians 3:2 marks the opposition, Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. They are opposed to one another. Set your affections or minds, for I think it is the same word as that in my text, who mind earthly things. A man cannot look up to heaven and down to earth both at the same time. There is an opposition between these two, between the earthly-mindedness that has been opened to you, and minding of heavenly things.

But you will say, "We have a need for these things while we are on the earth. How can we do otherwise but mind them? When we come to heaven, then we shall have dispositions suitable to heaven, and not until then." To that I answer, though Christians live upon the earth, they are not of the earth. There's a great deal of difference between one that is of the earth, and another that lives on the earth. Christ said, concerning Himself, that He was not of the earth. It's true, He did live awhile on the earth, but He was not of it. In John 3:31, He that cometh from above is above all, he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth. While Christ spoke these words He was on the earth but He was not of the earth. And so it is with Christians, they are upon the earth but they are not of the earth. They are a people redeemed from the earth! It's true, these are things we need; therefore, we must not mind them, for in Matthew 6, where Christ speaks against taking thought for what we shall eat, or drink, or put on, He said, Your heavenly Father knows you have need of these things. You have some need, aye, but you have need of other things, and greater need of other things than of these things. What need is there for you to live upon the earth, but in order to provide for eternity, and of living to the honor of Christ and the praise of His gospel? I say, you have no need of anything on the earth but in subordination to higher things. There is no need that you should live, except for some other end. Therefore, do not let that be an argument to plead for earthliness, as indeed an earthly spirit is very witty in pleading for itself. I shall close this point with some exhortation to you, and directions about this point of earthly-mindedness.

EXHORTATIONS

Considering what has been delivered, I beseech you, lay it seriously upon your heart,

especially you that are young beginners in the way of religion, lest it proves to be with you as it has with many that are digging veins of gold and silver underground. While they are digging in those mines for riches, the earth, many times, falls upon them and buries them, so that they never come up out of the mine again. And so it is with many that are beginning in the way of religion, that are digging in the mines of salvation, for unsearchable riches, for that is abundantly better than gold and silver.

Now while you are thus seeking for grace and godliness, take heed that you are not covered with the earth while you are digging in the world. Keep wide open some place to heaven, or otherwise if you dig too deep, noxious gas vapors will come up from the earth, if it doesn't fall on you first. There will be noxious gas vapors to choke you if there is not a wide hole to let in the air that comes from heaven to you. Those that are digging in mines are very careful to leave a place open for fresh air to come in. And so, though you may follow your calling and do the work that God sets you here for as others do, be as diligent in your calling as any. But still keep a passage open to heaven, that there may be fresh gales of grace come into your soul. If, at any time, you are in the world just one day, and have not some spiritual air from heaven, take heed, there's a vapor coming up that will choke you. Oh, that Christians would consider this while they are here below.

I remember reading Austin's comments on Psalm 72:19 , "They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and his enemies shall lick the dust." In a witty way he applied it to earthly-minded men by saying, "If you lick the dust, by this you will come to be counted as one of the enemies of God." It's true, the scope of the place is different, but take heed that, in this metaphorical sense, you do not lick the dust and so come to be counted as an enemy of God. You who would be counted as friends and seek a reconciliation with God, do not lick the dust to be always here as moles upon the earth. Moles, though blind, are said to have their eyes open if they are on top of the ground, and then they shake and tremble. So, though the earth may close the eyes of men here for awhile, certainly there will be a day when their eyes shall be opened, to see how they have guiled and deceived themselves. It's worse, too, in the time of the gospel to be an earthly-minded man than at other times. It was not such an evil thing to be an earthly-minded man in the time of the Law, when all the promises of God were carried in a kind of earthly way.

This is not to say that all promises that were made under the Law were merely earthly, but that they were carried out in an earthly way. Therefore you shall find that when God promised His people great mercies in the time of the Law, it is done by earthly expressions, like gold, silver, and such kinds of things. Their promises for heaven went under the expression of living in the land of Canaan, as being a type of heaven. They were taken with earthly things, though, when God revealed Himself to them in an earthly manner.

Now in the time of the gospel, lift up your hearts for your calling is from above. Now there are heavenly things revealed. He that is from above is come among us, and the heavens are broken open, and the glory of it shines upon the churches in a far brighter manner than it did before. Therefore, gospel light aggravates the sin of earthly-mindedness, and now, above all times, should the hearts of men and women be disengaged from the things of the earth.

Chapter Eight: Five Directions How to Get our Hearts Free from Earthly-Mindedness

The First Direction

First, to that end, be watchful over your thoughts. Do not take liberty to let your hearts run too far in the things of the earth. What time you have for meditation, let it be as much as can be reserved for spiritual things. Most men and women think they may take liberty in their thoughts. Why, the thing in itself is not unlawful! Aye, but your thoughts will steal upon you and affect your heart very much; therefore, watch narrowly over your thoughts, keep them within Scripture bounds.

The Second Direction

Be humbled much for sin, for that will take off the heart from earthly-mindedness. Earthly-minded men, who have earthly and drossy hearts, have not known what the weight and burden of sin means. Just let God lay the weight and burden of sin upon the soul, for that will take off the soul from earthly things quickly! Oh, those men that have gone on in the world in a secure condition, and never knew what trouble of conscience meant for sin, have grown seared in those earthly contentments. But those men that have had the weight of sin lie upon them know what it is to have to deal with an infinite God. In bearing the burden of the wrath of an incensed Deity, such men know that they have other things to look after than the things of the earth. If God would just humble your hearts, the humiliation of your spirits would quicken you, take off the dullness and deadness of your spirits, and stir you up to look after things other than the things of this life.

The Third Direction

Further, set the example of the saints before you who have been the most precious servants of God in former times. Note how they counted themselves as pilgrims and strangers here on the earth. At your leisure, read Hebrews 11:13, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and

pilgrims on the earth.

Mark, therefore, how it follows in the 37th verse, They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. Who were these people? They were those of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, and yet were such precious saints of God that the world was not worthy of them. Now when we set before us how joyfully these servants of the Most High went through all their wilderness condition, this should make us ashamed of our earthly-mindedness, and would be a mighty help to us.

The Fourth Direction

Then, if we consider the great account that we are to give for all earthly things, you will note that you only look upon the comfort of them. But consider the account you must give for them. This would be a means to take off the heart from earthly-mindedness. And consider, what if you were now to die and go the way of all flesh. What good would it be to me to remember what contentments and pleasures I had in the earth?

The Fifth Direction

But above all, set Jesus Christ before you and be meditating on the death of Jesus Christ. That's the great thing that will take the heart from the things of the earth. Be looking upon Christ crucified, how He who was the Lord of heaven and earth put Himself into such a low condition merely to redeem us! Conversing much with the death of Jesus Christ deadens the heart much to the world. In Philippians 3 we have a notable text for that, in the example of Paul. He counted all things as dung and dross for Jesus Christ. In the 8th verse, I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but DUNG that I may win Christ. Then, in the 10th verse, That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death.

Paul desired to be so conformable to the very death of Christ, that he counted all things in the world but as dung and dross in comparison of that. Paul had the death of Christ before his eyes, and meditated much on the death of Christ, and that meditation had a great impression upon his spirit. That made him count all these things as dross, as dog's meat by comparison, that he might have fellowship with the death of Christ.

Perhaps some of you think of the glory of Christ in heaven, and that may, for the

present, make you less worldly. But let me entreat you to meditate on the death of Christ, and know that there is an excellency in conformity even to the death of Christ, such an excellency that may take your hearts from the things of the world. It's said of the King of France that he, asking once about an eclipse, said, "I have so much business in the earth that I take little notice of the things of heaven."

O my brethren! To close all this, I beseech you, let not this be said concerning any of you, that you have such and such worldly enjoyments that you cannot inquire about Jesus Christ. Do not plead that you have such great business, that you had so much to do in this earth, that you take little notice of the things of heaven. Surely, the saints of God have their business in heaven as we shall, God willing, see hereafter. Their city business, their trading, their aims, their bent is higher than the things of this earth. There are things that a man may let out his thoughts and affections to as much as he wants. This shows the vanity of the things of this world, that a man needs to be very wary how much he minds them. He cannot enjoy the comforts of this earth without some fear. But now, when he comes to converse with heaven, there he may let out himself to the uttermost. That shows the excellency of these things. You that are poor and lowly in the things of this earth, do not be discomforted because there is a charge from God that men should not mind these things. Surely there is no great matter in them since God charges that we should not mind them. O the excellency lies in things above which are heavenly and spiritual, where the saints have their conversation! But of this, there is more in the following TREATISE OF GOSPEL CONVERSATION.

MONERGISM BOOKS

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