

## Religious Affections Summary Part II

### Review:

#### **I. Gracious Affections Are the Fruit of the Holy Spirit that Dwells Permanently in the Believer.** 1 Corinthians 2:14; Romans 8:14-17

*"...all spiritual and gracious affections are attended with and do arise from some apprehension, idea, or sensation of mind, which is in its whole nature different, yea, exceeding different, from all that is or can be in the mind of a natural man. The natural man discerns nothing of it...and conceives of it no more than a man without the sense of taste can conceive of the sweet taste of honey, or a man without the sense of hearing can conceive of the melody of a tune, or a man born blind can have a notion of the beauty of a rainbow."97*

#### **II. Gracious Affections Are Founded Primarily upon the Greatness of God and His Works, Apart from Self-interest.** 1 John 4:19

*"Now the divine excellency and glory of God and Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the works of God, and the ways of God, etc., is the primary reason why a true saint loves these things; and not any supposed interest that he has in them, or any conceived benefit that he has received from them, or shall receive from them."[5]*

#### **III. Gracious Affections Are Founded upon the "Loveliness" of the Holiness of God and His Works.** Psalm 96:9; Isaiah 6

*"Holy persons, in the exercise of holy affections, do love divine things primarily for their holiness: they love God, first, for the beauty of his holiness"*

#### **IV. Gracious Affections Arise from Divine Illumination, Not Natural Reason.** 1 Corinthians 2:6-13

*"Spiritually to understand the Scripture is to have the eyes of the mind opened, to behold the wonderful spiritual excellency of the glorious things contained in the true meaning of it [Scripture], and that always*

*were contained in it, ever since it was written; ... which things are, and always were, in the Bible, and would have been seen before if it had not been for blindness, without having any new sense added, by the words being sent by God to a particular person, and spoken anew to him, with a new meaning."*145

**V. Gracious Affections Are Accompanied by the Conviction that the Gospel Is True.** 2 Timothy 1:12

*"The great doctrines of the gospel cease to be any longer doubtful things or matters of opinion, which, though probable, are yet disputable; but with them, they are points settled and determined, as undoubted and indisputable; so that they are not afraid to venture their all upon their truth."*154

**VI. Gracious Affections Are Accompanied by True Humility.** Psalm 34:18; 51:17; 138:6; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 5:3

*"Evangelical humiliation is a sense that a Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable frame of heart."*

*"And as grace increases, the field opens more and more to a distant view, until the soul is swallowed up with the vastness of the object, and the person is astonished to think how much it becomes him to love this God and this glorious Redeemer that has so loved man, and how little he does love."*170

**VII. Gracious Affections Accompany a Change of Nature.** John 1:12, 13; 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17

*"all spiritual discoveries are transforming...they make an alteration in the very nature of the soul"*

**VIII. Gracious Affections Promote and Are Attended with a Christ-Like Demeanor.** Romans 8:29; Galatians 5:22,23; Romans 8:16, 17

*"In other words, they naturally beget and promote such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy, as appeared in Christ."*[6]

John Calvin "For whomever the Lord has adopted and deemed worthy of his fellowship ought to prepare themselves for a hard, toilsome, and unquiet life, crammed with very many and various kinds of evil. It is the Heavenly Father's will thus to exercise them so as to put his own children to a definite test. Beginning with Christ, his first-born, he follows this plan with all his children...his whole life was nothing but a sort of perpetual cross." (*Institutes*, III.viii.1)

#### **IX. Gracious Affections "Soften the Heart" Proverbs 28:14**

**X. Gracious Affections Have a Beautiful Symmetry and Balance.** Ephesians 4:22-24; Romans 13:14

*"They have the whole image of Christ upon them: they have put off the old man, and have put on the new man entire in all his parts and members. It hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fullness should dwell: there is in Him every grace; He is full of grace and truth: and they that are Christ's 'of his fullness receive, and grace for grace.'"* 188

**XI. The Higher Gracious Affections Are Raised, the Greater the Desire for Spiritual Growth, Whereas False Affections Rest Satisfied in Themselves.** Philippians 3:13-15; Psalm 24:6

*"The more a true saint loves God with a gracious love, the more he desires to love him, and the more uneasy is he at his want of love to him: the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and laments that he has so much remaining love to it...the kindling and raising of gracious affections is like kindling a flame; the higher it is raised, the more ardent it is."*

**XII. Gracious Affections Generate Christian Practice And Fruit.** John 14:15, 23; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 2:23; Ephesians 2:8-10; Matthew 7:15-20; James 2:18

*"I mean, they have that influence and power upon him who is the subject of 'em, that they cause that a practice, which is universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules, should be the practice and business of his life." (383, yale)*

*"There may be several good evidences that a tree is a fig-tree; but the highest and most proper evidence of it is that it actually bears figs."*232

*"...holy practice, under trials, is the highest evidence of the sincerity of professors to their own consciences."*222

*"Now from all that has been said, I think it to be abundantly manifest that Christian practice is the most proper evidence of the gracious sincerity of professors, to themselves and others; and the chief of all the marks of grace, the sign of signs, and evidence of evidences, that which seals and crowns all other signs."* 231

**Reflection Questions:**

- Read through the list of those signs that are "neither here nor there". Which signs have you seen in yourself or in others, that you have always assumed to be true signs of saving grace in the life?
- Do you agree or disagree with his assessment that all of these signs can be "forged" in the unbeliever? Why or why not?
- Read through the list of signs that are signs of true religious affections. Which of these do you see in your own life?
- Are there any that you do not see?
- Are there any that you would *like* to see?
- How do you think you can cultivate true affections in your life?