

Man's Dislike of a Present God.

by Horatius Bonar

Horatius Bonar's sermon explores humanity's rejection of God in favor of worldly desires, emphasizing the spiritual void this creates.

Scripture: Job 21:14, Psalm 10:4, Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 15:8-9, John 14:6, Romans 1:21-23, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, James 4:4, 1 John 2:15-17

Topics: "Worldliness", "Rejection of God"

Description

Horatius Bonar addresses the tendency of worldly men to reject the presence of God, as illustrated in Job 21:14, where they express a desire for God to depart from them. He explains that this rejection is not born from atheism or a sense of injustice, but rather from a love for worldly pleasures that God threatens to disrupt. Bonar emphasizes that this attitude is prevalent not only in the world but also within the church, where individuals seek to distance themselves from God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and God's law. Ultimately, he highlights God's persistent love and desire to remain close to humanity, despite their rejection. Bonar calls for a recognition of the emptiness that follows God's departure and the importance of embracing His presence.

Transcript

"They say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of your ways." - Job 21:14

Yet they say to God, "Leave us alone! We have no desire to know your ways." - Job 21:14

The men who speak thus are not atheists. They do not say there is no God. They may be scoffers, blasphemers, ungodly, but they are not atheists. They whom Job describes are worldly men. The world, with its riches, its possessions, its pleasures, its friendships, is their all. They have nothing beyond it, and they do not wish anything beyond it. They are satisfied. They love the world, and are resolved to make the best of it that they can. When anything comes in between it and them, or threatens to prevent their enjoying it, such as pain, or sickness, or death, they thrust it away. They do not ask whether the intervention by God may not, after all, be true and important; it mars their enjoyment of the world, and so must not be for a moment entertained.

In our text we have WORLDLINESS VERSUS GOD. For it is worldliness that is here speaking out. It is not man contending against man because of injury or encroachment, it is not man protesting against pain, or mortality, or life's brevity, it is man protesting against God. God seems to him as a dark shadow

overclouding all his joy. How is this?

I. Not because God has injured him. He does not pretend that any wrong has been done or threatened to be done. He does not speak as an injured man, nor plead against God because of injustice.

II. Not because God hates him. He has no reason to conclude such a thing, either from what God has said or done. He cannot point to any mark of hatred.

III. Not because God has interfered with his prosperity. He is evidently a prosperous man, mighty in power; neither is the rod of God upon him (verses 7 and 9). It is not because of these things that he says to God, Depart from us. Indeed, he does not hide his reason altogether, "we desire not the knowledge of your ways." He has no liking for God or his ways, he looks on him as an obstruction, an unpleasant visitor, a dark cloud, a spoiler of his pleasure.

But these worldly men in Job's time were but a specimen of the men of many ages- our own as well as others. In these different ages we find a variation in the feeling and in its expression. Sometimes there is more of infidelity in it, or even direct atheism, sometimes less. But in all there is a desire to get rid of God, God personally, though perhaps not God abstractly; to thrust him into a corner of his universe, where he will least disturb the children of men. In the present day we find this state of feeling widely spread and working, not only in the world but in the church. Men who call themselves Christians lend themselves to the outcry, "Depart from us." At the bottom of all this feeling is the love of the world. It is this that prompts men to seek to get rid of God.

I. They try to get rid of GOD HIMSELF. They tolerate Him afar off, but not near. They tolerate a religion of uncertainty, but not one of certainty, or fellowship, or conscious nearness. They would let Him alone, if He would let them alone; but if not, they raise the cry, "Depart." An abstraction, a creed, a system of theology, they bear with, because it does not interfere with their worldliness; but God Himself can only be tolerated as a shadowy, impalpable, far distant being. To anything else they say, "depart."

II. They try to get rid of CHRIST. Some superhuman being, such as Paganism delighted in, they tolerate; but not the Christ of Scripture, the Word made flesh. A Christ that will assist them in their great endeavor to keep God at a distance they will admire and sing of; but the Christ that brings God near, that makes His love a reality, and His favor and forgiveness a certainty, they cannot away with.

III. They try to get rid of the HOLY SPIRIT. They dislike the supernatural, and do not wish to hear of a world outside their own, from which influences and operations are continually coming to modify things here, or transform men, or protest against sin. The Holy Spirit, as the special expression and representative of the supernatural and divine, in connection with man's nature and soul, they either refuse to believe in, or treat him as a mere afflatus, a breath, an influence.

IV. They try to get rid of God's BOOK. The Bible is God's visible representative and commissioner here. It is the silent protest in every house in favor of God. And hence it is set aside by many, or only read for its poetry, its morality, its antiquity. To believe as little of it as possible is the object of multitudes; to cast doubt upon its authenticity; to reject its inspiration- to treat it as not a book for this advanced age- these are the ways in which men are seeking to get rid of God's book.

V. They try to get rid of God's LAW. They say it was not for us but for the Jews; they tell us that the morality of Socrates was higher than that of Moses; they (in a more refined fashion) speak of it as buried in

the grave of Christ; so that we have got past its exactions and sanctions. No restraint on us; the law is dead!

Thus the age tries to get rid of God. It does so, because it dreads Him; it has no relish for Him; His presence is a gloomy shadow; His nearness would interfere with all worldly schemes and pleasures. Therefore men say, "Depart." The old Pagans never said to Jupiter, Depart; for they looked on him as in sympathy with their sins, and lusts, and pleasure. But to the living and true God men say, "Depart", because they feel that they cannot have both Him and their sins. They cannot clothe Him with the robes of their own worldliness.

Yet He has not departed. In love He lingers, seeking to bless. He knows the blank His departure makes, and that nothing can fill it. Therefore He lingers; yearning over the sons of men; entreating them to take Him for their portion and all.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/horatius-bonar/mans-dislike-of-a-present-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net