

The Spirit Committed to God

by Robert Murray M'Cheyne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of committing our spirit to God, especially in times of temptation, affliction, and death, and encourages believers to trust in God's sovereignty and love.

Scripture: Ruth 1:20-21, Psalm 22:12, Psalm 31:5, Isaiah 30:21, Isaiah 46:4, Luke 23:46, John 10:28, 1 Timothy 1:15, 2 Timothy 1:12, Hebrews 13:8

Topics: "Commitment to God", "Assurance in Affliction"

Description

Robert Murray M'Cheyne emphasizes the profound significance of committing our spirits to God, drawing parallels between Christ's final words on the cross and the believer's journey. He highlights that both the afflicted and the redeemed can find solace in entrusting their souls to the Lord, especially during times of temptation, affliction, and even death. M'Cheyne encourages believers to recognize the preciousness of their souls and the importance of placing them in the hands of the Redeemer, who is capable of delivering and preserving them. He reminds the congregation that in moments of despair, they can echo Christ's words, finding hope and assurance in God's truth. Ultimately, he calls for a heartfelt commitment to God, urging listeners to prepare their spirits for the eternal journey ahead.

Transcript

There is something peculiarly interesting in these words; they are the words of the Lord Jesus when he hung upon the cross he hung upon it for six long hours in bitter agony. The gall and the vinegar were bitter, but it was nothing to the wrath of God. It was at the last hour of his agony Christ said, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD GOD of truth." The very soul which he had made an offering for sin, he committed into the hand of God. There is something very precious in being allowed to use the same expression as Christ. There is something very pleasant in being allowed to use the words of a departed friend, and that a beloved friend. There is no friend like Christ. "This is my beloved, and this is my friend" (Song of Solomon 5:16). There is something sweet in being allowed to use the words of Christ, in the 40th Psalm: "Innumerable evils have compassed me about, and mine iniquities have taken such hold upon me, that I cannot look up" (verse 12). There is something pleasant for a sinner to be allowed to use the words of Christ in the 40th of Isaiah: "My way is hid from the Lord and my judgment is passed over from my God" (verse 27). In like manner it is sweet for a poor dying worm to be allowed to use the words before us.

From these words let us consider: (1) the person that speaks; (2) the person addressed; (3) the thing committed.

1. The Person That Speaks

it is an afflicted, tempest-tossed soul. Such was David, no doubt, when he wrote this Psalm. He says in verse 4, "Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me." Or, in verse 8, "And has not shut me up into the hand of the enemy ..." He was a poor, afflicted, tempest-tossed man. He felt that Satan and his own wicked heart were too many for him. "Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me." Such was Christ's, in that day especially, when he said, "This is your hour, and the power of the darkness" (Luke 22:53). "Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round"(Psalm 22:12). He was an afflicted, tempest-tossed soul. And, no doubt, there may be such within hearing; if so, these words are for them. They were used by the Head when he suffered for them, and he intended that they should be used by the members. Dear tempest-tossed soul, he can deliver thee. Put up this prayer, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."

2. The Person Addressed

This is the Redeemer. On the one hand there is a poor, tempest-tossed believer; on the other hand there is the all-sufficient Redeemer. On the ground lies a poor tempest-tossed man; above him stands the all-sufficient Redeemer. It is to this mighty Redeemer we must go. When Christ spoke these words, he no doubt spoke to the Father, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth." Some will ask, Did Christ need to be redeemed? Ah! yes, he had our sins laid upon him, and on that account needed to be redeemed. And therefore he said, when he was at the end of the work, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth." The very spirit that had been made an offering for sin. When Stephen took up the same words, he did not address them to God, but to the Redeemer; he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Ah! brethren, this is the only hand that can receive our spirit, none other but him who has redeemed us.

3. What It Is He Commits Into His Hand -- "My Spirit".

The soul of man is the most precious part of man. I do not intend to speak lightly of the body, but it is not to be compared to the soul. The outer man is the setting, but the soul is the diamond. It was the spirit that was made in the likeness of God. The body will go to the dust, but not so the spirit. When free from the body it will sin no more -- I mean the redeemed soul -- it will be clouded no more; sin and it will be for ever separated. It was this that David committed into the hand of God. It was this that Christ committed into the hand of his Father. It is this that every poor tempest-tossed soul will commit to God. "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" How long will the devil deceive you, brethren? How long will you neglect the unchanging, unsatisfied spirit?

In applying these words, I desire to show you a few of those times we should commit our spirit to God.

(1) In the time of conversion. It is the first time that ever a sinner commits his spirit into the hand of God. I think this is what Paul means when he says to Timothy, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day" (2 Timothy 1: 12). You will observe, in the Bible, that conversion is sometimes spoken of from God's part in it. Again, it is sometimes spoken of from the sinner's part in it. There is no contradiction in these two. Conversion begins first on God's part; but the Spirit works on the sinner; it produces faith in him, draws him to Jesus, and

enables him to forsake sin.

Dear brethren, I must speak to you seriously, and say that it is your solemn duty, as well as your sweet privilege, to commit your soul into the hand of God in conversion. In whose hand have you placed your spirit? Have you put it into the hand of the world? Was it crucified for you? Have you committed your soul into the hand of Satan, as Ahab did? He sold himself to work all manner of wickedness. What can he do for it? Can he give it peace? Can he give it joy? Can he fit it for heaven? But there are some who have committed their soul into the hand of God. There are those in this congregation who can look up to him against whom the sword of justice awoke, and say, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit" -- my poor, polluted, tempest-tossed spirit.

I would urge upon you all to commit your spirit to him. If your spirit be not committed to him, will it be saved? In a little, your spirit will return to God, who gave it, and if it be not committed into the hand of him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, how will you appear? Ah! but some will say, Will he receive my spirit? Ah! will he not? Did ever he say, That spirit is too vile for me -- that spirit has lived too long in sin? "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (I Timothy 1: 15). Chief of sinners, commit thy spirit to him.

(2) To those of you who may be tempted believers. I say, a time of temptation is a time to put up this prayer. There are some believers who, for a long time after believing, know not what temptation is. They are like Naphtali, "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD" (Deuteronomy 33:23). They have eternal sunshine; but perhaps they fall when temptation comes, and they feel with Job, "When thou hidest thy face I am troubled." Then he goes to his knees, but he finds no comfort. He goes to the Bible, but it is a sealed book. He goes to Christian friends, but miserable comforters are they all. Now what can he do? There is hardly such a word he can put up as this -- "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth" -- thou hast paid thine own precious blood to redeem me; wilt thou shut me up into the hand of mine enemy? "Pull me out of the net" (Psalm 31:4). "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."

There is a ray of hope springs from these words, "LORD God of truth". Thou hast said, "Thy sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of thy hand" (John 10:28). Thou hast said, "The very God of peace sanctify thee wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless until the coming of Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23). Wilt thou not do all that thou hast said?

(3) To those among you who may be in affliction. Many Christians know nothing of affliction. They are allowed to sail smoothly on; no storm comes near their little barque. They do not know what it is to write "Ichabod" -- the glory is departed -- on their dwellings; or like Naomi to say, "Call me not Naomi, call me Marah, for the LORD hath dealt bitterly with me" (Ruth 1:20-21). Dear brethren, it is not always that you will have these days. Days of darkness and disease will come, and what is to be done? There is only one place you can go to. "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."

(4) To those of you who are looking forward to duty. When a believer first comes to Christ, his time is all taken up about the gate, not about the way. I have been much struck with young believers. When they have been hearing a sermon, they say, "How did you like that sermon?" not, "What am I the better of it?" But, if you are a believer, you will feel that you have as much to do with the way as with the gate. Commit thy spirit to him. Oh brethren, he can carry you! "Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you" (Isaiah 46:4). There is none but he can carry you -- before duty to guide, in duty to direct, after

duty to accept. Commit thy spirit to his hand; he will guide you. "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isaiah 30:21).

Last of all, to dying believers. It was our Head that used this prayer, and it may well suit all the members. It is a solemn thing to die, because we will have to go alone. It is solemn because we are going where we never went before; all is strange and new. When we go to a throne of grace, we have been there before, and know the way; but to go there is dark, because we go we know not where. And then it is dark, because it is a final step. It is a solemn thing to die, because if we die wrong we cannot come back to die again. These are some of the things that make up the valley of the shadow of death.

In such a time, what are we to do? Commit thy spirit into his hand. You must commit your spirit to Christ in the same way as you did in the converting hour. There is no hand that can reach across Jordan but his. There is none that can say, "Peace, be still", but Jesus. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Dear brethren, are you preparing for death? Do you not know that soon another voice will be heard here, another voice will lead the psalm? It is a hard thing for a believer to commit his spirit into the hand of Christ. What then will you do, you that are giving your soul to the god of this world? What will you do when God says, "Go to the gods which you have chosen, commit your spirit to the world you have loved?" Amen.

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