



1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD. 2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. 3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. 4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. 5 Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. 6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil. 7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. 8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right. 9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps. 10 A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment. 11 A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work. (Prov 16:1-11)

There is a culture of the heart – a predisposition to evil, and an inclination for God. These two sentiments are like two hungry wolves in our hearts fighting to the death – one good and the other evil. Which wolf wins? The one that you feed, of course. Our hearts are such fertile ground for sin because it is the fallen nature of man to sin. The weeds and tares of sin require no cultivation at all to grow in our hearts, but righteousness DOES require cultivation and safeguarding against the weeds and little foxes that creep without. Righteousness needs the cultivation of God's Word, frequent prayer, and fellowship with those other farmers who are cultivating the same crop of righteousness in their hearts. The great Lord of the Harvest whose eye is always on the righteous will send just the right measure of rain and sun to ensure that the gardens of our hearts are fruitful and plenteous. But His rain and sun will be of no benefit to the heart darkened by sin since no light or rain can enter its closed gates. The heart that has as its Lord the very Lord of the Harvest shall be ordered in all its ways according to the will of God. 1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD. The old adage holds true – “Man proposes, but God disposes.”

The next two verses present succinctly the way of error, and the solution thereof. 2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. Without the constant counseling of the Holy Ghost, man cannot know the right way. The way of man is never the way of the Lord. So man must be at war in his heart against those old carnal sins that seem to spring up without having been planted or cultivated. The way of man is directed by his heart. If the heart is dark, so will be the way. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* (Prov 14:12) Spiritual death is eternal darkness. If we travel the dark way, it should not surprise us to find ourselves in eternal darkness at the end of that way. Our

free wills always tell us that WE are right. As long as our wills remain free, our souls will remain free to sin. We must exchange those free wills for that perfect will of God which binds us in love to His Law and His Way. The Christian does not have 'free will' to sin any more than a mother has the free will to renounce her own baby. 3 *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.* The problem expressed in verse 2 is the free and wayward will of man. The solution addressed in verse 3 is to exchange that wayward will for the will of the Lord. Once the commitment is made, the way will become light.

4 *The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* God is pleased to find an echo of His righteous nature in the hearts of His people. He gives the Light of Heaven, yet many prefer to look on the darkness within. The stained glass windows of an ancient church appear dark and dreary as we view it from the street, but once inside, we behold the celestial beauty of the figures cut into the glass as the light of the sun streams through. Though the bones of the old artisan who wrought the intricate figures in the glass lie mouldering in the church-yard outside, the beauty awaits hidden in time until the two elements of a seeing eye within and a shining light without come together. God has a purpose, as with Judas, of even the wicked to bring about His plan. The wicked are free to practice their free wills, but God will turn all things to His purpose and glory in the end.

5 *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.* Have we not read often what disdain God holds for pride? Do you remember that pride led to the fall from heaven of our Archenemy – Satan? Pride drove that covering angel to the very pits of sin and degeneracy. Pride is a sin that knows no personal limits. Old and young, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, religious or atheist – these all possess pride that needs to be bridled. Pride is all about the eternal **ME**! It is the persistent sin that gives birth to all others. It is for this reason that God views pride, along with homosexuality, as a sin that rises to the level of **ABOMINATION**. There is no room for god and the prideful man in the same space, therefore the prideful man will not be found in Heaven. Even though the multitudes of sinner join in union against God, their very footprints shall be washed away by the tide of God's Holiness.

6 *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.* Do you sometimes feel that the hard trials that arise in your life are hurtful to you? It is common so to feel; however, these trials are most often sent to you for your very good. A mother who refuses ice cream to her child before he has eaten his spinach is not looked favorable at the moment by the child. But his health and vigor of body is enhanced by his mother's wisdom. The same is true with God. We are being prepared as soldiers to go forth to battle. We must experience the chill of the open night, the bitterness of the north wind, the mud and mire of the trench, and the physical conditioning of hard exercise if we will be able to stand against the enemy on the battle line. Every challenge God places before us becomes another shield of defense once overcome. We grow stronger and more enduring with trials. The Law of God instills our hearts with that initial fear that drives us to seek sanctuary in His bosom. Several years ago, I used to fly reconnaissance over the DMZ (demilitarized zone) between North and South Korea. If we inadvertently flew over that line, nothing would happen. The North Korean batteries would not open fire. But once we understood our demise and headed south, then the ground fire was withering. Satan loves for you to feel comfortable and crawl more securely into his web, but when you try to escape, he pounces on you with the ferocity of a spider. But it was the initial **FEAR** that turned us toward safety – the place where God is always found.

7 *When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at*

peace with him. When we live our lives pleasing to God, it is true that even our enemies will recognize the value of peace with us. Perhaps the overriding reason is that we have subdued that old enemy of our soul – Pride – in living a Christ-like life.

8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right. Please remember that to own all of the world is nothing compared to the riches of Heaven. What is the KOH-I-NOOR diamond compared to a lifeless soul? Or all of the diamonds in the world without a life to enjoy them?

9 A man's heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps. Whatsoever rules our heart determines the way that we live our lives – be it reprobate sin, or Godly righteousness through faith. If Christ abides in our hearts, He will BOTH devise our WAY, AND direct our steps. Who rules your heart at this very moment, Friend? Do you know to do right, but do not do it? Whose will decided that? To fail to do right is man's will. To will to do right is not man's will, but the Will of God acting in his members.

10 A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment. In the crown of the sovereign resides the essence of good law. If the sovereign is unjust, what of his edicts? The speech and demeanor of the king should epitomize the best of the kingdom, for he is her sovereign. If the very lips of the king utter unjust decisions, of what benefit or order is the law? If the head (king) is rotten, the body will follow suit; however, if the king is just, the body will benefit therefrom. Our King – the Lord Jesus Christ is Just, Righteous, and All-Powerful. Therefore, we – His body – must profit with like attributes.

11 A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work. Since the Lord is wholly just in all His ways, His laws are likewise just and righteous. The work of the Lord, performed by the hands of the men and women of his pasture, must likewise reflect those just weights and balances which the Lord has provided. If we say that we are Christians, but deal unjustly with men, what damage do we do to the Name of Christ? At the day closing of the curtain of time, the Lord shall yet bring all things into balance. Being saved by His grace, we may be found not wanting in the balance of righteousness. Are you sure of your own soul in that regard, my friends and readers?