

***"Therefore I love thy commandments above gold;
yea, above fine gold."***

Psalm 119:127

Therefore I love thy commandments. Yes--shall they not have double valuation in mine eyes, for the scorn and reproach which the world cast upon them? They count them dross--*I love them above gold--yea, above fine gold.* This hope, confidence, and idol of the worldling (Job, xxxi. 24), the love of which has been the ruin of thousands (1 Tim. vi. 9, 10)--is not the *commandment* of God more to be desired than it? (Ps. xix. 10.) "The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. It is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it." (Prov. iii. 14, 15.) Here has the Lord unlocked to us his golden treasure, and enriched our souls with "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

This image brings the miser before us. His heart and treasure are in his gold. With what delight he counts it! with what watchfulness he keeps it! hiding it in safe custody, lest he should be despoiled of that which is dearer to him than life. Such should Christians be: spiritual misers: counting their treasure, which is *above fine gold*; and "hiding it in their heart,"¹ in safe keeping, where the great despoiler shall not be able to reach it. Oh, Christians! how much more is your portion to you than the miser's treasure! Hide it; watch it; retain it. You need not be afraid of covetousness in spiritual things: rather "covet earnestly" (1 Cor. xii. 31) to increase your store; and by living upon it, and living in it, it will grow richer in extent, and more precious in value.

But have I through Divine grace been enabled to withdraw my love from the unworthy objects which once possessed it: and to fix it on that which alone offers satisfaction? Let me attempt to give a reason to myself of the high estimation in which I hold it, as infinitely transcending those things, which the world venture their all--even their temporal happiness--to obtain. *Therefore I love the commandments of God above gold: yea, above fine gold--*because, while the world and my own heart have only combined to flatter me, they have discovered to me my real state, as a self-deceived (Rom. vii. 9), guilty (James, ii. 10), defiled (Rom. vii. 14) sinner before God: because they have been as a "schoolmaster to bring me to Christ" (Gal. iii. 24)--the only remedy for sin, the only rest for my soul. *I love them;* because they have often supplied wholesome reproofs in my wanderings, and plain directions in my perplexity. *I love them;* because they restrict me from that which would prove my certain ruin; and because in the way of obedience to them the Lord has "accepted me with my sweet savour." (Ezek. xx. 41. Comp. Isa. lxiv. 5.) Should I not *love them*? Can *gold, yea, fine gold,* offer to me blessings such as these? Can it heal my broken heart? Can it give relief to my wounded spirit? Has it any peace or prospect of comfort for me on my death-bed? And what cannot--what has not--what will not--the precious word of God do at that awful season of trial? O my God, I would be

¹ Verse 11. Augustine tells us of himself, that while a Manichee, he slighted the Scripture for the plainness of its style, which appeared to him (from a false standard of criticism) not to be compared with the dignity of Ciceronian eloquence. ('Visa mihi est indigna scriptura quam Tullianae dignitati compararem.'--Confess. 1ib. iii. cap. 5.) But after his blessed acquaintance with Christ, though Tully was still read with pleasure, yet this thing alone--said he--abated his former interest, *that the name of Christ was not there.* Lib. iii. cap. 4.

deeply ashamed, that *I love thy commandments* so coldly--that they are so little influential upon my conduct--that they so often give place to objects of comparative nothingness in thy sight. O that my heart might be wholly and habitually exercised in them, that I may find the "work of righteousness to be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever!" (Isa. xxxii. 17.)