

The Whole Heart

By Andrew Murray

LET me give the principal passages in which the words "the whole heart," and "all the heart," are used. A careful study of them will show how wholehearted love and service is what God has always asked, because He can, in the very nature of things, ask for nothing less. The prayerful and believing acceptance of the words will waken the assurance that such wholehearted love and service is exactly the blessing the New Covenant was meant to make possible. That assurance will prepare us for turning to the Omnipotence of God to work in us what may have hitherto appeared beyond our reach.

Hear, first, God's word in Deuteronomy-

4: 29 : " *If thou seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and all thy soul.*"

6:4, 5 : " *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord ; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*"

10:12 : " *What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve Him with all thy heart and all thy soul.*"

11:13: " *Hearken diligently unto My commandments, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.*"

13:3 : " *The Lord your God proveth you, whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul.*"

26:16 : " *Thou shalt therefore keep these statutes and do them with all thy heart and all thy soul.*"

30:2: " *Thou shalt obey His voice with all thine heart and with all soul.*"

30:6: " *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul*" (see also 5: 9-10).

Take these oft-repeated words as the expression of God's will concerning His people, and concerning yourself; ask if you could wish to give God anything less. Take the last-cited verse as the Divine promise of the New Covenant -that He will circumcise, will so cleanse the heart to love Him with a wholehearted love, that obedience is within your reach; and say whether you will not vow afresh to keep this, His first and great commandment.

Listen to Joshua (22:5) : "Take diligent heed *to love* the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and *to keep* His commandments, and *to cleave* unto Him, and *to serve* Him, with all your heart and with all your soul."

Listen to Samuel (1 Sam. 12:20, 24): "Turn not aside from following the Lord, but *serve the Lord* with all your heart. Only fear the Lord, and *serve Him* in truth with all your heart."

Hear David repeating God's promise to Solomon (1 Kings 2:4): " If thy children take heed to their way, *to walk before Me* in truth with all their heart and all their soul."

Hear God's word concerning David (1 Kings 14:8): "My servant David, *who followed Me* with all his heart, to do that only which was right in Mine eyes."

Hear Solomon in his temple prayer (1 Kings 8:48): "If they *return to Thee* with all their heart and all their soul, bear Thou their prayer."

Listen to what is said of Jehu (2 Kings 10:31) : "The Lord said unto Jehu, Thou hast done well in executing that which is right in Mine eyes. *But* Jehu took no heed *to walk* in the, law of the Lord with all his heart."

Of Josiah we read (2 Kings 23:3, 25) : " The king and all the men of Judah made a covenant with the Lord, *to walk after the Lord*, with all their heart and with all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. There was no king like him, that *turned to the Lord* with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his might."

The words concerning Asa, in 2 Chron. 15:12-15, we had as our text.

Of Jehoshaphat, men said (2 Chron. 22:9): "He *sought* the Lord with all his heart."

And of Hezekiah it is written (2 Chron. 31:21) : " In every work that he began, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart and prospered."

Oh that all would ask God to give them, by the Holy Spirit, a simple vision of Himself! -claiming, giving, accepting, blessing, delighting in, the love and service of the whole heart -the sacrifice of the whole burnt-offering. Surely they would fall down and join the ranks of those who have given it; and refuse to think of anything as religious life, or worship, or service, except that in which their whole heart went out to God.

Turn to the Psalms. Hear David (9:1, 111:1, 138:1):

" I will praise Thee with my whole heart." And in Psalm 119, the Psalm of the way of blessedness: "Blessed who seek Him with the whole heart. With my whole heart have I sought Thee. I shall keep Thy law, yea I shall observe it with my whole heart. I entreated Thy favour with my whole heart. I will keep Thy precepts with my whole heart. I cried with my whole heart. " Praise and prayer; seeking God and keeping His precepts; all equally with the whole heart.

Shall we not begin asking more earnestly than ever, as often as we see men engaged in their earthly pursuits in search of money, or pleasure, or fame, or power, with their whole heart. Is this the spirit in which Christians consider that God must be served? Is this the spirit in which I serve Him? *Is not this the one thing needful in our religion?* Lord, reveal unto us Thy will!

Now, just a few words more from the Prophets about the new time, the great change that can come into our lives.

Jer. 24:7 : "I will give them an heart to know Me that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people and I will be their God; for they shall return to Me with their whole heart."

29:13: " Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord."

32:39-41.-Let my reader not be weary of reading carefully these Divine words: they contain the secret, the seed, the living power of a complete transition out of a life in the bondage of halfhearted service, to the glorious liberty of the children of God.---"I will give them one heart, that they may fear Me for ever. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, with My whole heart and My whole Soul!"

It is to be all God's doing. And He is to do it with His whole heart and His whole soul. It is the vision of this God with His whole heart loving us, longing and delighting to fulfil His promise, and make us wholly His own, that we need. *This vision makes it impossible not to love Him with our whole heart.* Lord, open our eyes that we may see!

Joel 2:12: "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, *turn ye* even to Me with all your heart."

Zeph. 3:14: "Shout, O Israel; BE GLAD AND REJOICE WITH ALL THE HEART; the Lord hath taken away thy judgments. HE HATH CAST OUT THINE ENEM; THE KING OF ISRAEL, THE LORD, IS IN THE MIDST OF THEE; THOU SHALT NOT SEE EVIL ANY MORE."

Now one word from our Lord Jesus (Matt. 22:37): "Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." This is the first and great commandment. This is the sum of that law He came to fulfil for us and in us, *came to enable us to fulfil.* "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk after the Spirit."

Praise God! this righteousness of the law---loving God with all -the heart, for love is the fulfilling of the law-this righteousness of the law is fulfilled *in us*, who walk after the Spirit. Jesus came to make it possible. He gives His Spirit---the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus---to make it actual. Let us not fear to give ourselves a whole burnt-offering, acceptable to God; loving Him with all our heart and mind and strength.

May I ask the reader just once again to peruse Chapter 6, on "The Everlasting Covenant," and Chapter 18, on " Entering into the Covenant with the Whole Heart." And say then, if you have never yet entered fully into this

covenant of the whole heart, whether you are not ready to do it now. God demands, God works, God is, oh, so infinitely worthy of, the whole heart! Fear not to say He shall have it. You may confidently count upon the blessed Lord Jesus, the Surety of the Covenant, whose it is to make it true in you by His Spirit, to enable you to exercise the faith that knows that God's power will work what He has promised. In His Name say: With my whole heart I do love Thee!

Chapter 18 of "Two Covenants" by Andrew Murray

(Do not be mistaken: Murray was a Holiness minister in South Africa, and participated in the Great Awakening. The "covenant of the whole heart" does not refer to mere personal dedication: it refers to entering His Rest. Revival Classics offer several books by Andrew Murray on the topic. Earnest Seeker)

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