

- |    | H.  | P.  |  |
|----|-----|-----|--|
| 1. | 57  | 100 | My God in whom are all the Springs     |
| 2. | 257 | 148 | Ye trembling souls, dismiss your fears |
| 3. | 62  | 182 | Thou art my hiding-place, O Lord.      |

366 H 80807  
449 H  
17 Ps

"My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." 57 Ps. 72.

There is no trait of Character contemplated in Scripture upon which greater emphasis is laid, nor any to which greater importance is attached than that of resolute fixedness of purpose. Nor, by this term is it for a moment to be understood that obstinacy which is displayed by some men in clinging to opinions that are formed hastily and held through mere pride of consistency. For it ought to be understood that there is no disgrace whatever in a change of opinions, upon conviction. Obstinacy is one thing, and consistency is another and a very different thing. Obstinacy will cause a man to maintain his position in spite of all his convictions; Consistency requires a man to change his ground of opinion whenever he is convinced that it is wrong, & untenable. The fixedness



of purpose to which I refer, is the opposite of that fluctuating habit into which many have fallen, of adopting every whim and caprice of opinion with which they come in contact, and allowing themselves to be ~~blown~~ <sup>"tossed to & fro & carried"</sup> about by every wind of doctrine; by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness." This ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> described ~~by~~ <sup>in</sup> the words of the dying Patriarch in his blessing pronounced upon Reuben: "Unstable as water thou shalt not excel." So says James: "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind & tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." What is understood by the resolute fixedness of purpose is alike opposed to fickleness, - or change without reason; and to obstinacy, - or holding on to



opinions, right or wrong, in despite of reasons which are convincing, just because they are our opinions.

It is very obvious, then, that this trait of stability or fixedness of purpose implies that we have drawn correct opinions, upon grounds that deserve to be respected as sound and authoritative; that our opinions have been deliberately formed, upon a due consideration of their subject after having studied them in all their bearings, and that to maintain these opinions firmly and steadfastly and immovably is the first dictate of honesty and pure principle. I need hardly tell you that such was the ~~ster~~ <sup>character</sup> of every prominent man among those enumerated as the Children of God, and that whenever any one of them is recorded as, through fear or any other cause, vacillating, fluctuating



or yielding to pressure, there is sure to fall upon him the just penalty of his weakness, and, if a child of God, he has been corrected by his own errors, & his very fall has been overruled by the Spirit & the grace of God to render him firm & decided in, ever after, maintaining with inflexible firmness of purpose, his well formed opinions.

It may be granted that the attainment of this excellent steadfastness in the maintenance of true principle, is a growth of time, and the result of a somewhat varied experience in life; but to this it comes at last, in the career of a true Christian; that after, it may be, much tribulation, many <sup>tests</sup> ~~trials~~ of his <sup>principle</sup> ~~faith~~, and ~~tests~~ of his integrity, he may verify Peter's description "that the trial of his faith might be found much more precious than of



gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire";  
a description that doubtless was suggested by  
Peter's own experience of the fiery furnace of  
temptation through which he had passed. Or  
like David who had passed through danger, toil, and  
persecution, and who knew that, in spite of it all,  
God was for him; so now, at last, even in the  
very depth of his heavy depression, he rests in God,  
and cries out "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart  
is fixed." How far we may all adopt this  
language of David, depends upon our realiza-  
tion of certain grand objects as <sup>constituting</sup> the ground upon  
which our hearts are fixed, and it would seem  
not unreasonable to lay it down as a correct  
position that unless our hearts are fixed  
upon these, we have no right to claim to be



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children of God. I shall briefly suggest seven such objects, and upon this outline ask my hearers to make each for himself a prayerful & candid self-examination. A Christian's heart then, it is maintained, must be fixed I. Upon God as his portion, II Upon the person & work of Jesus X<sup>t</sup>. III Upon the Holy Spirit as his only Comfort, & Guide. IV Upon the word of God as the only infallible guide. V. Upon God's people as the only safe companions & friends. VI. Upon God's service as the only true happiness in this world. VII. Upon Heaven as our <sup>future</sup> ~~only~~ and eternal Home. I remark then the X<sup>t</sup>ian says, 1. "My heart is fixed O God," on thee only as my portion here & hereafter. The X<sup>t</sup>er of this great Being is so infinitely exalted and adorable; so much past the finding out of our finite minds, that at first sight



it would seem presumption in us to claim such intimate such endearing relations to Him. But then this is only felt by strangers to God. His own dear Ch<sup>n</sup> in great measure do realize that their hearts are fixed upon Him. They love & adore Him, with all His glory & majesty. The barriers that are standing between God & sinners - built up by themselves - are broken down, & they now by the eye of faith & love see Him robed in all the lovely attributes of His x<sup>ter</sup>. as their Heavenly Father; and so they delight in God. They feel "God is my exceeding joy." They appeal to Him with the simplicity & sincerity of His dear ch<sup>n</sup>. "Whom have I in Heaven but thee; & there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." I know that many may say there is so much in this world to distract the thoughts from God; our relations to our families; the duties we owe to others; the work & toil of living; the



claims of office; of company; of business, & all the countless  
 calls & interruptions of life, that it seems hard to say that  
 the heart is fixed on God. Now we, it is true, cannot be ever  
 engaged in formal worship of God; that is not expected;  
 nor required; but yet in the Christian's mind there is an ever  
 abiding conception of God; the thought of God lies there in  
 the midst of all other thoughts; the overshadowing influence  
 of His very idea, the very belief we have in His existence; and the  
 well fixed fact that we are His, accepted of Him; that He is our  
 reconciled God & Father; that He sees & knows the thought within  
 & hears the word; and witnesses the act we do; this <sup>thought</sup> ~~thing~~ I say  
 of God is with us by day & by night; in work or <sup>at</sup> rest; in solitude  
 or society, always & everywhere, we may & we do realize that  
 God is ours & we are His; and it is a living truth as much as  
 our own existence; and fixedness of our heart upon God con-  
 sists just in this that all we say think or do, is said, thought



& done as under God's supervision, & if we forget for a  
 moment that this is true; no sooner has the thought arisen,  
 or the word been <sup>uttered</sup> ~~spoken~~, or the deed <sup>performed</sup> ~~performed~~, than  
 it presents itself instantly, & we find ourselves approved or  
 condemned, as the case may be. <sup>The Unregenerate</sup> ~~Wicked men~~ cannot re-  
 alize this. We have not always done so. The more for-  
 midable features of God's xter <sup>repel Him from the mind</sup>  
 of <sup>the stranger</sup> ~~wicked man~~. But we know the meaning of the  
 Poet "The God that rules on high, And <sup>thunders when He please</sup> ~~manages the seas~~,  
 That rides upon the stormy sky, And manages the seas,  
 This awful God is ours, Our father & our love."  
 Our heart is so fixed upon Him, that we are evermore im-  
 pressed with Him, as our father, friend, Protector, Guide, Benefac-  
 tor, and final Judge; we think of Him in time of danger  
 "as a Wall of fire round about us"; and in times of peace  
 and worship as "the Glory in the midst of us."



The thought of God to the wicked man is so unwelcome  
that he persistently thrusts it out from him.

To God's Child it is like the rising of the sun  
on the world after a night of gloom; or, like  
a glorious beam breaking in <sup>upon</sup> the scene through  
a rift in the clouds on a day of gloom.

So the Christian may say, in this connection

"My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;"

So securely is the image or idea of the  
living, loving Father fixed in his mind

that it never can be removed; it has become  
a part of his own being; and through all the

web of life which invisible Providence are weaving  
this idea of God runs like a golden thread giving

to it all its beauty, glory, and bliss. So he feels

"This God is my God forever! He will be my guide even unto, de"



But while it is true the idea of God involves in it everything that we ought to fix in our minds & hearts, yet the child <sup>of God</sup> may say, -  
 II. "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed" upon Thee,  
 as manifested in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This too is unnatural to the human heart. Few ever fix their minds and employ their thoughts upon X<sup>t</sup>. & His great atoning work. Many feel no interest in it. Many entertain erroneous notions about the mission of X<sup>t</sup>. into the world; why He came; what He came to do; why He died; and what He accomplished by ~~coming~~ dying. Since they have such vague and unscriptural views on the subject, their hearts are never fixed upon Him. Even those who entertain most exalted conceptions of X<sup>t</sup>'s <sup>(our Unitarian friends)</sup> x<sup>t</sup>er as the loftiest, holiest, and most excellent of God's creatures, accord <sup>ing</sup> to Him this place in their esteem, and not realizing the absolute necessity <sup>of a Divine</sup> of X<sup>t</sup>. to their eternal salvation, ~~they~~ only think of Him when the name is mentioned, and the idea introduced in some incidental way. He has no fixed place in their hearts.



But when men have experienced the saving power & influence of Jesus Christ, as a Savior, they never lose a sense of His presence in their hearts. If they have a building of their soul's salvation, they know and ever have a present consciousness that X<sup>t</sup> is the foundation, and that with Him is mixed <sup>none of</sup> the wood, hay, or stubble of human works, or merit, so that this <sup>fixed</sup> sense of a solid sure & eternal, immoveable foundation of a Divine Savior produces in them peace, confidence, and assurance. When they <sup>have</sup> felt the poison of sin within, them working the ruin of the soul, and then by their experience of the efficacy of the blood of X<sup>t</sup> cleansing <sup>them</sup> from the malady, & realize that this is the only remedy to heal the diseases of the soul, then on Him the heart is fixed, and with a singleness of purpose, this thought is cherished, and borne about with them, as consciously as the sense of bodily health produced by the agency of some skilled Phy



sician, the name & idea of whom is immediately suggested and permanently preserved in memory by the recurrence of the thought that he has been diseased, has been healed, and is now in full possession of bodily health. As he remembers that the wrath of God like an angry cloud was once hanging over his soul, threatening to be poured out upon him in destruction, and that having looked around to many other places of refuge, all failed; but when everything else proved of no avail to protect & save, he heard the blessed assurance that "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe;" so he ran into it, & found that there was "none other name <sup>under heaven</sup> given among men whereby we must be saved;" & as he feels above, & around him the blessed protection of this great City of refuge, his heart is fixed in sweet security, and repose of spirit relying with unshaken faith upon his savior, and so he can understand Paul's words "we have strong consolation



who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us,  
 in the gospel. He has no more idea of security in such a  
 refuge from God's wrath, (as the moralist claims) in his  
 good deeds, & blameless life, than he would have in a roof of  
 straw to protect his family from <sup>(the pitiless pelting of a hail storm)</sup> ~~a raging fire~~, or a  
 lattice-work to ~~bid defiance to a devouring flame~~  
~~and storm~~, or a frail tent to withstand the whirlwind, &  
 the tornado. But there is, in his very soul, woven into every fibre  
 of his affections, the fixed, the never-to-be-shaken conscions-  
 ness that his trust is in the infinite, precious merits of  
 Christ's <sup>person & work;</sup> ~~salvation;~~ his hope of salvation rests solely  
 upon what X<sup>t</sup>. has done & suffered once for him; & what  
 X<sup>t</sup>. promises in His word to do for him; and in that all pre-  
 valent intercession which X<sup>t</sup>. is now ever making before the  
 Heavenly Throne; and the sentiment that X<sup>t</sup>. is "all & in all" to him enables  
 him to cry out with David, "~~My~~ My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed."



Upon God as the Author of <sup>15-</sup>our existence & the fountain of all blessedness; upon Xt. as the only Savior, we must be fixed and yet there is another subject upon which the Xtian's heart must be fixed, and that is

III. Upon the Holy Spirit as the only Comforter and Guide. It is a common impression which has prevailed among the great body of God's people that the work of recovering the race of man from the ruins of the Fall, is confined wholly to the person & atonement of Jesus Xt. It is true there is a vague notion among many that the Spirit of God is somehow connected with the work, but no adequate honor & respect is ordinarily rendered to the Spirit as a separate cooperating, yet independent Personal Agent in this work. The true doctrine in relation to this point is that God the Father, in His Infinite Wisdom, has appointed two great means in the accomplishment of human salvation: 1. The gift of His Son for men; 2. The gift of His Spirit to men. In this way the glory of the three



Persons of the Trinity is most clearly manifested; for while in the design & projection of the plan, the love, grace, & wisdom of the Father, ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> made clear; while in the execution of the plan, — the love, grace & condescension of the Son are shewn; even so the Love, grace & power of the Holy Spirit are made gloriously conspicuous in the application of the whole to men's Souls. The great promise of the O. T. was the coming of Xt., and believers then exercised faith in looking forward to a Savior: that being accomplished, Xt. having come; & having performed his great work on Earth, — the principal remaining promise of the N. T. is the coming of the Spirit. The peculiar subject of the N. T. is the doctrine of the personality, work, & grace of this Spirit. The N. T. reveals to us, & bestows upon us, every spiritual good from first to last, that we ever receive, or partake of. By Him we are quickened; regenerated; converted; sanctified; cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh & Spirit; and assisted in every



good word & work. We cannot believe in X<sup>t</sup>, we cannot obey  
 His commandments; we cannot worship God aright, but by  
 the Holy Spirit; these things constitute an epitome  
 of Christianity, and so if we could imagine that the aid  
 of the H. S. were withdrawn from us, then would all faith  
 cease, & Christianity would be banished from the earth.  
 When these truths are adopted by the Child of God, and he has  
 learned by his own experience the indispensableness  
 of the Spirit to his own <sup>continued</sup> spiritual life, then indeed he  
 becomes precious to him, and his love is concentrated  
 upon him & his glorious work. When he feels his help in  
 prayer; in exciting holy emotions, & aspirations; sustaining  
 him under his imperfections; teaching him how to pray &  
 what to pray for; making intercession within him with  
 groanings that cannot be uttered; comforting him in  
 the day of affliction, & thus sanctifying the deepest distress to him,



then may he cry out "My heart is fixed, &c." on this blessed Being  
 the Spirit of God as my only Comforter & Guide.  
 IV. The Child of God experiences this fixedness of purpose also  
 in relation the Bible, as the only Rule of faith & practice.  
 We are so material in our views, and are so prone to walk  
 by sight & not by faith, that Spiritual manifestations to  
 us require some palpable object more or less to  
 fix our thoughts, & minds in an unwavering, <sup>immovable</sup>  
 fixedness of heart. Hence God has given us this book.  
 In this we learn <sup>all that we do</sup> ~~a great deal~~ know about God, the  
 Father, Son, — & Holy Spirit, — Salvation, Holiness  
 Heaven, — Sin, Satan, & Hell. On this Vol. the X<sup>tian</sup> heart  
 is fixed as the infallible word of God, and such is his trust  
 & faith in its Divine Origin, that no argument, eloquence,  
 or Scarning can ever shake his convictions. Not that he  
 is familiar with the External Evidences of X<sup>tianity</sup> — not that he



can appreciate a regular train of learned argument at all. Nor is this necessary. The Bible is its own evidence, just as the Sun shines by its own light. Its perusal is accompanied by a power of conviction possessed by no other book.

More infidels convinced by reading it than in any other way.  
More of the members of X<sup>t</sup>'s invisible Body come to Him through this way than any other. Its sublimity of views; its power of penetration; its clearing up of all difficulty on subjects most important; its revelation of a future state; its <sup>pure</sup> system of morality; its revelation of Gospel system; the X<sup>t</sup>er of X<sup>t</sup>.; its offering to man the true source of consolation for every form of human affliction, and of comfort in death; are so clearly laid down, & so well adapted to the wants & peculiar nature and circumstances, of human beings, that the humblest Christian may on every turn of his mind to this Holy Volume, feel towards it as he does to no other Book; "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is



V. The heart of the Christian is fixed on God's people as his only  
Chief Companions & friends. "Love to the brethren." "I am a companion  
of all them that fear God." "Do good to all men, especially to them"  
"Ye did unto me." "A cup of cold water." "Then they that feared the  
Lord, &c." We "love them with pure hearts fervently." We dwell  
together in unity, "here, because we see our Savior's image &c.  
& because we hope to dwell with them forever. When it  
comes to a decision of our companions - our "heart is fixed" &c."

VI. Our heart is fixed on God's service as our chief delight  
No occupation inconsistent with that can engage us.

VII. It is fixed finally, on Heaven as our Home.

Strangers & Pilgrims here. This not our rest. Here no abiding  
city. Desire a better country. We expect Heaven. Desire Heaven.  
Pray for Heaven. Struggle & fight for Heaven. We are born for  
Heaven. Our conversation (citizenship) is in Heaven. We are bound for  
Heaven. O God my heart is fixed on Heaven. 1. It ought to be. Christian  
2. Come go with us, sinner.