

Articles and Sermons :: That there is the greatest vanity — in all created excellency ~ W.Secker

That there is the greatest vanity — in all created excellency ~ W.Secker - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/11/4 16:05

"Vanity of vanities! Everything is vanity!" If this truth were more believed — this world would be less adored. A lady being once told, that the world, in all its glory, was but vanity; returned for answer, "True, I have heard that Solomon said so — but he tried it, before he said it, and so will I." Thus, many believe not a serpent to be poisonous, until they are envenomed with it! They forget, that it is not only vanity — but also vexation of spirit; and all who are resolved to try the former, must also feel the latter.

He who knocks at the creature's door for supplies — will find an empty house kept there! "All the rivers run into the sea — yet the sea is not full." Though all the rising streams of worldly profits may run into the hearts of men — yet they cannot fill up the hearts of men. Reader, did you ever hear a rich man complain of the lack of riches? Though he has enough to support him — yet he never has enough to content him!

"All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing." Were it possible for the eye to see all that is to be seen — yet it would not be satisfied with seeing. If there is not enough in the world to satisfy the senses of men — how should there be enough in it to satisfy the souls of men? The earth is not a satisfying substance — but a fleeting shadow!

"For the fashion of this world passes away." The most excellent and flourishing appearances in the whole creation — are continually hastening to dissolution! We are commanded to use the world — as though we used it not; because while we use the world — it is not! The tide of worldly grandeur which brings the gallant ship into the haven, may suddenly leave her in the mud. The higher the sun of prosperity approaches on its meridian — the nearer it is to its setting.

O, all you who caress the world, have you not seen some who have begun their lives in a palace — to end them in a prison? The golden chains about their necks — have been turned into iron fetters about their feet! The substance of this life, is but for the season of this life. All creature felicity will become a victim to mortality. You who feed upon golden dust — will have all your gold turned to dust! The short summer of your prosperity — will usher in the long winter of damnation. Those who now rejoice in the world, will before long — have no world wherein to rejoice. "Arise and depart; for this is not your rest, because it is polluted! It shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." Heart's-ease is a flower which does not grow in the world's garden.

Where does that fish swim which will not nibble at that hook, on which there hangs a golden bait? How many perish eternally — to gain that which perishes in the using.

Poor worldling, why do you seek for wealth with such incessant anxiety, seeing the greatest misers are laid as naked in their "long home" — as the poorest beggars? The tighter you grasp the world in your hands — the sooner it slides between your fingers. "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world — and lose his own soul?" He who made this world — knew its worth. If the world is gained — it may be lost again; but if the soul be lost at death — it can never be recovered. There is one way to keep a man out of Hell — but there is no way to get a man out of Hell. It is as easy for a stone to lodge in the air — as for a man to find rest in the earth.

How many are there who have resolved to ascend the pinnacle of honor — but what have left a good conscience at the bottom of the ladder! Believers, themselves, would be glutted with the world's sweets — if a gracious God were not to call them away from the banquet. Creature comforts, are like the soft morning dews, which, while they water the branches of the tree, leave the roots dry. Why should professors be found eagerly pursuing those trifles — which even heathens have been found flying from? The world is rather a sharp brier to wound us — than a sweet flower to delight us.

As poison works more furiously in wine — than in water; so corruptions manifest themselves more in a state of plenty — than they do in a state of poverty.

One compares this life to a beautiful fruit, which, however fair it may seem — is full of nothing but worms and rottenness! The earth is for a saint's passage — but Heaven is prepared for him as his portion. The earth is for a believer's use

— but Heaven alone, is a believer's choice. Everything below Heaven — is too base for the soul's nobility, and too brittle for the soul's stability.

A professor boasting of the world — is but like a balloon filled with the wind. Those who set out at first, like Judas, for the world — may be put off at last, like Demas, with the world. "Son, remember that you, in your life time, received your good things." These blossoms will fall off from all such spreading trees — when death comes to shake the boughs!

The world is too frequently gotten with anxious cares, kept with alarming fears, and lost with heart-rending groans! We see the outside of the great estate — but not the inside of it. We behold the field of corn — but not the tares that are mixed with it. We do not always see the worldling's clouds and dark nights — but his clear day and sunshine. The riches, honors and pleasures of the world are like beautiful — but poisonous trees. The devil shows us the fair leaves, and offers us the pleasant fruits — but conceals from us their deadly nature!

The world pretends to be a nurse — but those who draw her breasts will find in one the water of vanity; and in the other the wind of vexation. The world does us infinitely more hurt by our loving it — than it can possibly do us good by our having it. "Labor not for the food which perishes — but for that which endures to everlasting life." Ah, what a fool is he who would hazard a glorious crown above, for a single crumb below! When we have the least of creature enjoyments, it is then our duty to bless God for them. When we have most of creature enjoyments, it is then our distinguished privilege not to bless ourselves in them.

The higher the larks are in their flight — the sweeter are their songs. The higher a Christian is raised above the things of the earth — the more he is ravished with the joys of Heaven. The least portion of grace — is preferable to a mountain of gold. One ray of God's mercy — is better than a sun of earthly pleasure! One whisper of love from Christ's voice — is worth more than all the symphony of nature. Give me that Friend who lives forever, and that wealth which lasts forever! I desire those blessings which come freely, satisfy fully, and continue eternally!

"Surely every man walks in a vain show! Surely he is disquieted in vain. He heaps up riches — not knowing who shall gather them." Every carnal man walks in a vain show — and yet how vain is he of his show of vanity! He is disquieted in vain — and it is only vanity which disquiets him. He labors all his life for the profit of riches, and yet in death, his riches will not profit him. He who views cattle grazing in a fat pasture, concludes that the livestock is but being prepared for the day of slaughter!

The greatest happiness of the creature — is not to have the creature for his happiness. It is far better not to have the world at all — than to have our all in the world. Who would be like the raven — to feed upon the carrion of this execrated world, while there is much more wholesome food for doves — in the ark? The world at best, is but a looking-glass; there is a face presented by it — but there is no face seated in it.

"Labor not to be rich." A strange paradox! If it were not for labor — who would be rich? And if it were not for riches — who would labor? But see what follows! "Will you set your eyes upon that which is not?" While riches are — they are not. They are not what they look like — they have not in them what we look for. But what are they not? They are not durables — but changeables. "Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone — for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle!" The gourd may flourish in the day — but it will wither at night. The cup which now overflows with wine — may soon be filled up to the brim with water. When the sun of earthly happiness is in its meridian — it may be eclipsed.

A man rejoices in health — and a severe illness shakes him. He delights in honor — and a cloud shadows him. He delights in riches — and a thief robs him. He delights in peace — and a rumor disturbs him. He delights in life — and death disappoints him!

The heavens at first had their dropsy — and then the old world was drowned. The heavens at last shall have their fever — and then the present world shall be burned.

The earth is big in our hopes — but little in our hands. It is like Sodom's apples, beautiful to the eye at a distance — but when they are touched, they crumble into ashes. "Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath." Wealth is worthless in the day of man's wrath — to preserve him from plundering. Wealth is worthless in the day of God's wrath — to keep him from punishment. Pleasures are but a shield of melting wax, against a sword of power; they can no more keep an evil conscience from tormenting, than a velvet sleeve can keep a broken arm from aching.

See how the men of the world toil upon their hands and knees for the vanities of the world! "There are many who say — Who will show us any good?" As if they could find a heaven — in the trifles of earth. That was a hard expression of a hardened worldling: "Let God but give me enough of the earth — and I will never complain of the loss of Heaven." Thus we see the curse of the serpent — entailed upon the seed of the serpent. What God pronounces as a malediction — they take as a benediction!

The devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give You," he said, "if You will bow down and worship me." If a covetous man had been there, O how would he have cached the promise out of the devil's lips — lest he should have gone back from his word! Some are so enchanted with their golden bags, that they will run hastily to Hell — if they might but be well paid with golden wedges for their pains. All such covetous Balaams — must fall by their own devices!

Covetousness is incompatible with the love of holiness. The truly excellent of the earth — can see no excellency in the earth. This world is no better than a loathsome dunghill, upon which the wealthy stand crowing — and about which the poor are scraping! If he alone is blessed — who lives above the world; then those cannot be blessed — who live in conformity to the world.

William Secker

Re: That there is the greatest vanity — in all created excellency ~ W.Secker - posted by HeartSong, on: 2009/11/5 2:24

Quote:
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