

Claims for Supreme Affection

Will the reader mark those solemn words of the Lord Jesus – “He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me,” Mat. x. 37, compared with Luke xiv. 25, 26, “There went great multitudes with him; and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.* Behold here a teacher who, utterly unlike all that had come from God before him, claims for *himself* the supreme affection of his disciples, – claims, not for another, but for himself, the very throne of their hearts – “He that loveth father or mother more *than me*, is not worthy of me.”

Who is this that commands me to prefer him, in the love of my innermost soul, before my own wife, child, mother, father – yea, requires that, when the claims of their love and of his come into conflict, I shall be ready to cast theirs at once behind my back, – to treat father, mother, sister, brother, wife, child, as if I hated the, deaf to sobs and entreaties, to authority and arguments, to tears and commands – like one whose commendation was thus written of old, “Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen them; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children?” If Christ be none other than the God of whom it is commanded in the law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength,” then I can understand it at least, however imperfectly able to reach it. Then my whole soul assents to the claim as holy and just and good. Then is it easily understood why it should be written, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha;” and why, from the judgment seat, it should be made the hinge of our everlasting blessedness or woe – “ye did it,” or, “ye did it not, to me.”

And I can but fall down at his feet under a profound consciousness of shortcoming, and plead with him, O Lord Jesus, circumcise my heart to love thee; give what thou requirest, and require whatsoever thou wilt; entreat me not to leave thee; put thy law, thy love, into my inward parts, and write it in my heart! But if he be *not* the God of the law, the God who made me, and made me for Himself, then who is he? What creature is this that bids me prefer him in love before my own wife, before my own children? Can I do it, or ought I? And if I do, – if I shall have once given him the throne of my heart, *what other throne shall remain in it* to be afterwards given in obedience to the commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength?”

(The Divine Glory of Christ by Charles J. Brown, London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1868, ebook, 15-17, Text and Paragraph Structure Modified)