

A Curious Meditation

by James Smith

The sermon explores the complexities of the Christian experience, emphasizing desires for growth, fears of decline, and the transformative power of faith in Christ.

Scripture: Micah 6:8, John 8:32, Romans 8:1, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Corinthians 15:51, 1 Corinthians 15:57, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 3:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 John 2:6, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Christian Living", "Sanctification"

Description

James Smith reflects on the various aspects of his Christian journey, expressing desires for more communion with God, likeness to Jesus, and usefulness to the Church. He acknowledges his struggles, fears, burdens, and joys, while emphasizing the importance of faith, hope, and charity in his life. Smith recognizes the threefold sanctification he has received and the threefold freedom granted to him through Christ. He concludes with exhortations for both sincere Christians and unconverted sinners to seek God diligently and repent of their sins.

Transcript

As I was walking out for exercise in the fields one morning, having been pleading with God to give me some profitable subject for meditation --I suddenly fell into this train of thought, which I afterwards wrote down; and, as it may interest and profit some, it is here inserted.

There are three things which I especially desire :

more communion with God,

more likeness to the Lord Jesus, and

more usefulness to his Church.

There are three things which I deprecate :

the withering of my gifts,

the decay of my graces, and

to become useless in the Lord's vineyard.

There are three things which I dread :

that I should become a proud professor,

that I should become a lukewarm Christian, and

that I should fall into the hands of man.

There are three things which I sometimes wish for (but which God will never grant me on earth):

to be totally free from sin,

to be delivered from a daily cross,

and to be always happy.

There are three things which I feel sure of :

hatred by the world,

opposition by hypocrites, and

love by spiritual believers.

There are three foes which always oppose me :

the world,

the flesh, and

the devil.

There are three friends which will always stand by me:

a peaceful conscience,

the bride of Jesus, and

the Lamb of God.

There are three deaths which have been experienced by me:

a death in sin,

a death to sin,

a death to the law of God.

There are three lives which shall be lived by me:

a temporal life,

a spiritual life, and

an eternal life.

There are three things which burden me :

a body of sin and death,

the opposition I meet with, and

my own ingratitude.

There are three things which support me :

the Father's love,

the Son's redemption, and

the Spirit's work.

There are three things which are a sore trial to me:

an irritable temper,

a flippant tongue, and

self-love.

There are three things which bring strong consolation to me:

the open fountain of Christ blood,

the promises of God, and

the Savior's free invitation.

There are three things which are especially dear to me:

the Word of God,

the throne of grace, and

the ordinances of the Lord's house.

There are three things lacking in me:

perfect penitence,

entire resignation, and

fervent love.

There are three books which are very useful to me:

the book of nature ,

the book of Holy Scriptures , and

the book of my own experience .

There are three teachers which are employed to instruct me:

the Holy Spirit,

a special providence, and

the rod of God.

There are three things which are manifested in me:

the nature of sin,

the power of grace, and

the faithfulness of God.

There are three things which would be greatly useful to me:

more humility,

spiritual wisdom, and

enlightened zeal.

There are three things which characterize me:

weakness,

poverty, and

sinfulness.

Yet, there are three things which may be seen in me:

Christ's strength,

God's grace, and

the Spirit's holiness.

There are three things which are feared by me:

a stiff neck,

a hard heart, and

a presumptuous spirit.

There are three things which are matter of joy to me:

the conversion of sinners,
that my name is written in heaven, and
the glory to be given me at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

There are three things which must be renounced by me:

preconceived opinions,
worldly wisdom, and
natural religion.

There are three things which must be held fast by me:

the Word of truth,
my confidence in God, and
my profession of the gospel.

There are three things which are especially required of me:

to do justly,
to love mercy, and
to walk humbly with my God.

There are three things which are promised to me:

tribulation in the world,
sufficient strength in Jesus, and
eternal life at the end of my course.

There are three things which the Lord observes and approves in me:

the work of faith,
the labor of love, and
the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a threefold deliverance which is effected for me:

from the dominion of sin,
from the present evil world, and
from my deserved doom.

There are three things which I would trample under foot :

unfounded prejudice,
vain distinctions, and
self-righteousness.

There are three things which I would aim at daily :

to exalt Christ,
to glorify God, and
to bring sinners to repentance.

There are three things which are still sure to me:

a rough road,
changing experiences, and
safety at last.

There are three things which are behind me:

a wicked life,
a broken law, and
the pit of destruction.

There are three things which are before me:

death,
perfect conformity to Jesus, and
eternal glory.

There are three things which are on my right hand :

Satan to resist me,
the Lord Jesus to save me, and
my own heart set on things above.

There are three things which are on my left hand :

the lust of the flesh,
the lust of the eye, and

the pride of life.

There are three things which I greatly admire :

the Savior's person,

the promises of God, and

the instruments he employs in carrying on his work.

There are three things which much please me:

the doctrines of the gospel,

the witness of the Spirit, and

the light of God's countenance.

There are three things which I delight in :

that Jehovah is my God,

the comfort he imparts to me, and

the riches of glory which are set before me.

There are three things which I hate :

the cant of hypocrites,

the flattery of friends, and

the pride of professors.

There are three things which are good for me :

to draw near to God,

to be afflicted, and

to sing praises unto the Lord.

There are three things which often disgust me :

Satan's temptations,

the powerful working of unbelief, and

the conduct of religious professors.

There are three things which are prescribed to me :

to believe in God,

to love the saints, and

to observe the Lord's ordinances.

There are three things which are too often neglected by me :

self-examination,

diligent reading of the Bible, and

secret prayer.

There are three things which are too deep for me to fully know :

the depravity of my heart,

the devices of Satan, and

the manner of the Spirit's working.

There are three things which I wish to leave with the Lord :

to choose my lot in life,

to fight my battles, and

to supply all my needs.

There are three things which I do not consider worth having :

a form of godliness, without the power,

a name to live, while dead, and

the commendation of the enemies of Christ.

There are three things in which I glory :

the cross of Christ,

my saving knowledge of God, and

the everlasting gospel.

There are three things which have been taken from me :

proud free will,

vain boasting, and

enmity to God.

There are three things which abide with me :

faith,

hope, and

charity.

I am made up of three men :

corruption--the old man,

grace--the new man, and

the body--the outward man.

I fill a threefold office :

a prophet in the Church of Christ,

a priest before the altar, and

a king anointed to reign with Christ.

I wear a threefold garment :

the righteousness of the Lord Jesus,

the graces of the Holy Spirit, and

the garment of humility.

I have been condemned in three courts --and yet justified in them all:

the court of conscience,

the Church of God, and

the court of God's justice.

I have been justified three times:

at the resurrection of Christ my substitute,

when faith received his righteousness, and

when good works justified my faith before the world.

I am the subject of a threefold sanctification :

by the purpose of the Father,

by the blood of the Son, and

by the cleansing operations of the Holy Spirit.

I am a free man of three cities :

the present world,

the church below, and

the Jerusalem which is above.

I have been an eye-sore to three parties:

the devil,

the world, and

envious professors.

I shall have occupied three peculiar seats :

a dunghill by nature,

among the princes in the Church by grace, and

the throne of glory by special privilege.

I shall have three grand holidays :

one when the Holy Spirit sets my soul at liberty,

another when death sets me free from this mortal clay, and

and another when Jesus comes to be glorified in his saints.

I shall then have appeared in three different characters :

a vile rebel against God,

a supplicating sinner at mercy's footstool, and

a justified son of God before his throne.

I shall have had three fathers :

a human father,

the devil, and

Jehovah himself.

I shall have received three laws :

the law of nature,

the moral law of God, and

the law of the Spirit of life.

I shall have passed through three gates :

the gate of hope,

the gate into Christ's sheepfold, and

the gate of death.

I shall have walked in three ways :

the broad road of destruction,

the highway of holiness, and

Jesus Christ the only way to the Father.

I shall have conversed with three distinct classes of beings :

carnal men,

spiritual Christians, and

the Lord himself.

I shall have made three appearances :

once all black --like the devil,

then speckled --with nature and grace, and

then all pure --whiter than the driven snow!

I shall have undergone three momentous changes :

one at regeneration --when I passed from death unto life,

one at death --when my soul shall be admitted into Heaven, and

one at the resurrection --when my body shall be raised powerful, glorious, and immortal.

I view three things as pre-eminently excellent :

the fear of the Lord,

a sound judgment, and

Christ formed in the heart, as the hope of glory.

There are three things which I may covet :

the best gifts,

a contrite and humble spirit, and
to be filled with all the fullness of God.

There are three things which are removed from me:
the burden of sin,
the wrath of God, and
all condemnation.

There are three things which I do not know :
what is before me,
how God will provide for me, and
what I shall be.

There are three things which I do know :
that in my flesh dwells no good,
that though I was once blind, now I see, and
that I must needs die.

There are three things which are prepared for me:
a fountain to cleanse me,
a robe to adorn me, and
a mansion to receive me.

There are three things which await me:
a crown of righteousness,
a palm of victory, and
a throne of glory.

There are three things which shall be done for me :
God shall wipe away all tears from my eyes,
God shall remove all cause of pain and sorrow from my nature, and
the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall eternally satisfy me.

There are three things which shall never be known by me :

the frown of divine justice,
the curse of holy Jehovah, and
the power of God's anger.

There are three things which are hurtful to me:

carnal ease,
the flattery of professors, and
fullness of bread.

There are three things which benefit me:

temptation,
affliction, and
opposition.

There are three things which are pursued by me:

to know more of the Lord,
to live in peace with all men, and
thorough sanctification.

Satan tries to thwart me in three things:

by spoiling my comforts,
hindering my usefulness, and
seeking to devour my soul.

Satan has three things to expect :

to be disappointed of his prey,
to be judged by the saints, and
to be eternally punished for his wickedness.

There are three things which I would never trust :

my own heart,
an arm of flesh, and
my treacherous memory.

There are three subjects which I should never meddle with:

the fall of the angels,

the origin of moral evil, and

how God will justify himself.

There are three things which I cannot understand :

the nature of God,

the cause of my election, and

how divinity and humanity constitute one person.

There are three things which I should often think of :

what I have been,

what I now am, and

what I shall be.

A threefold freedom is granted me:

from the law of God,

from the reign of sin, and

to make use of, and enjoy the Lord Jesus.

I am an heir of three worlds :

the natural,

the spiritual, and

the eternal.

There are three things which will never grieve me :

that I have been poor in this world,

that I have preached the gospel fully, and

that I am related to Jesus Christ.

There are three things which comprise all I wish :

to know God, and glorify him,

to see Jesus, and be like him; and

to be united to the saints, and be eternally happy.

There are three things which shall never be heard by me :

Christ reproaching me,

God disowning me, and

the devils triumphing in my everlasting destruction.

There are three things which shall be eternally enjoyed by me :

the love of God,

the presence of Jesus, and

the company of the saints.

There are three things which will eternally delight me :

to be filled with holiness,

to be employed in praising Jehovah, and

to have gained a complete victory over all my foes.

There are three things which must come down :

the pride of men,

the devil's kingdom, and

the cause of error .

There are three things which will stand :

the house built on the Rock,

the purpose of God, and

the Messiah's kingdom.

There are three things which cannot be removed :

the church of God,

the covenant of grace, and

the kingdom we receive.

There are three things which will stand the fiery trial :

genuine faith,

the Word of God, and

a real Christian.

Lost sinners are like Satan in three things:

their nature ,

their employment , and

their end .

Three things make Hell :

the wrath of God,

the stings of a guilty conscience, and

black despair.

Three things prove a man a Christian :

worshiping God in the spirit,

rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and

having no confidence in the flesh.

Three things are never satisfied :

a doubting Christian,

a worldly miser, and

the man of pleasure.

Christ fills three offices :

a prophet --for the ignorant,

a priest --for the guilty, and

a king --for the depraved.

Christ has been in three states :

ancient glory,

deep humiliation, and

merited dignity.

What more shall I say!

If you, reader, are a sincere Christian --do three things daily:

search God's Word,

be much at God's throne, and

be diligent in God's work.

If you are an unconverted sinner --do three things immediately:

believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,

repent of every sin you have committed,

seek the witness and pledge of the Holy Spirit in your heart, so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-smith/a-curious-meditation/>

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