



Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) was a great evangelical bishop of England in the 19th century. He was a prolific writer, vigorous preacher, and faithful pastor. C.H. Spurgeon referred to Ryle as “an evangelical champion” and said that he was “one of the bravest and best of men.” Ryle’s sermons and books are fiercely Biblical, and still vitally important for us today.

In his tremendously encouraging and convicting book, *Old Paths*, J.C. Ryle outlined “Seven Marks of a Right Heart Before God” (in the chapter titled “The Heart”). Truly, there is no relationship more important than our relationship to God. But how do we know if we have a right relationship with God? That is, how can a person be assured that he/she truly knows God as Redeemer and Father? Simply saying you are a Christian is not enough. Going to church or reading your Bible does not necessarily prove that you are a Christian. So how can we ascertain our relationship with God? The answer lies within our hearts. While a person may think he/she is spiritual or religious, and even say and do many religious things, God knows if a person’s heart is truly for Him or against Him.

Ryle put it this way:

“Your outward life may be moral, decent, respectable, in the eyes of men. Your minister, and friends, and neighbours, may see nothing very wrong in your general conduct. But all this time you may be hanging on the brink of everlasting ruin. It is your heart which is the main thing. Is that heart right in the sight of God? Wishes and desires are not enough to make a Christian. You may have many good feelings about your soul. ... You may sometimes tremble at the thought of judgment to come, or be melted to tears by the tidings of Christ’s love. But all this time you may be slowly drifting downward into hell. It is your heart which is the main thing. Is that heart right in the sight of God?”

Let me challenge you to examine your heart under the microscope of God’s Word. Read through Ryle’s “Seven Marks of a Right Heart Before God”, studying the Scriptures referenced in each point, and prayerfully inspect the true condition of your spiritual heart.

- 1) **A right heart is a new heart** (Ezek.36:26). It is not the heart with which a person is born – but another heart put in them by the Holy Spirit. It is a heart which has new tastes, new joys, new sorrows, new desires, new hopes, new fears, new likes, new dislikes. It has new views about the soul, sin, God, Christ, salvation, the Bible, prayer, heaven, hell, the world, and holiness. It is like a farm with a new and good tenant. “Old things are passed away. Behold all things are become new” (2Cor.5:17).
- 2) **A right heart is a broken and contrite heart** (Ps.51:17). It is broken off from pride, self-conceit, and self-righteousness. Its former high thoughts of self are cracked, shattered, and shivered to atoms. It thinks itself guilty, unworthy, and corrupt. Its former stubbornness, heaviness, and insensibility have thawed, disappeared, and passed away. It no longer thinks lightly of offending God. It is tender, sensitive, and jealously fearful of running into sin (2Kgs.22:19). It is humble, lowly, and self-abased, and sees in itself no good thing.

(continued, Lord willing, next week)

Together in and for Christ,
Pastor David
(7/7/25)

Scripture Readings for the Week (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #27):

Leviticus 10-12; 2 Kings 1-5; Psalms 78-80; Proverbs 8-9; Ezekiel 19-24; Luke 17-18; Philippians 3-4

Recommended Reading:

“Old Paths” by J.C. Ryle