Sermon Six: A Christian Spirit is a Humble Spirit

1 Cor. 13: 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

- Sermon 6 and “Reverse order of Decalogue” (Editor’s Introduction, 60)
  - sermon 4-10: love to neighbor
  - sermon 11-14: love to God

- Exegesis:
  - 1. That a spirit of Christian love is opposite to a proud behavior
    - (1) The greater degree is expressed by a man's vaunting himself, his carrying himself so as plainly shows that he glories in what he is or has.
    - (2) The less degree of a proud behavior is expressed in that, that he behaves himself unseemly
  - 2. We may observe the opposition of a spirit of love not only to a proud behavior, but to pride of the heart, expressed in this, that charity is not puffed up

- Doctrine: A Christian spirit is a humble spirit.
  - 1. What humility is (Quid sit)
    - Definition “Humility may be defined to be a sense of our own comparative meanness, with a disposition to a behavior answerable thereto.”
    - First. The first thing in humility is a sense of our own comparative meanness.
      - (1) It does primarily consist in a sense of his own meanness as compared with God or a sense of the infinite distance between God and us.
      - (2) There arises from this a sense of our own meanness compared with many of our fellow creatures.
    - [2.] Humility in fallen man implies a sense of a twofold meanness before God, natural and moral
      - (1) His natural meanness consisting in his being infinitely below God
      - (2) Kind of meanness of fallen man of which the humble man is sensible
    - Second. I come now to say something of the second thing implied in it, viz. a disposition to a behavior answerable to this meanness;
  - 1. In our behavior towards God.
    - (1) Humility disposes a person heartily and freely to acknowledge his own meanness before God
    - (2) Humility disposes a person to be distrustful of himself, and depending only on God
    - (3) He is disposed to renounce all glory of the good he has or does, and give it to God
- (4) It is the disposition of an humble person wholly to subject himself to God
  - 2. It also disposes to an answerable behavior towards men, which I shall show negatively by showing what a behavior it tends to prevent.
    - (1) It tends to prevent an aspiring and ambitious behavior among men
    - (2) It tends to prevent an ostentatious behavior
    - (3) Humility tends to prevent an assuming behavior
    - (4) Humility tends to prevent a scornful behavior
    - (5) Humility will tend to prevent a willful behavior among men
    - (6) Humility will tend to prevent a leveling behavior
    - (7) Humility tends to prevent a self-justifying behavior

- II. Would show how a Christian spirit is an humble spirit.
  - First. I would show how a spirit of divine love implies and tends to humility
    - (1) Because a sense of the loveliness of God is peculiarly that discovery
    - (2) It appears that divine love implies humility because when God is truly loved he is loved as an infinite superior.
  - Second. To show how the gospel tends to draw forth such exercises of love as do especially imply and tend to this. A Christian spirit and a gospel spirit are the same.
    - 1. Because the gospel leads us to love God as an infinitely condescending God.
    - 2. The gospel leads us to love Christ, as an humble person
    - 3. The gospel leads us to love Christ as a crucified Savior
    - 4. The gospel yet further tends to lead us to humble exercises of love as it leads us to love Christ as one that was crucified for our sins.

- Application
  - I. Use of instruction.
  - II. Use of self-examination
  - III. Use may be of exhortation
    - First. To natural men. Let them be hence exhorted to seek after the grace of God. Seek that you may have this humble spirit
    - Second. Let all be exhorted earnestly to seek much of an humble spirit, and to endeavor to be humble in all their behavior toward God and men. Seek for a deep and abiding sense of your comparative meanness before God and man