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The Text Explained, the Doctrine Proposed, and a Distraction Described

"That ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction"
1 Corinthians 7:35

Section 1. The Explication of the Text

The words of the text present us with a design that believers as often aim at, and yet miss, as any in the world; and which is so excellent and rare an attainment that the Holy Ghost even makes two words on purpose to express it by that are nowhere else found in the New Testament; to "attend upon the Lord without distraction." There are two things to be considered:

1. The Matter What: "Attend Upon the Lord."
2. The Manner How: "Without Distraction."

1. The matter what, "attend upon the Lord."

The Greek word for "attend" in our copies has a remarkable elegance in it. First is that you may be fit and ready for God's service, that religion and religious duties may sit fitly on you, that you may be ready to serve the Lord in duty or suffering. It is a most sweet frame of soul to be always bent and strung for the service of God. That man is meet for the Master's use who is prepared unto every good work (2 Timothy 2:21). How many choice opportunities for instruction, for reproof, for charity, for prayer, do we hazard, yea, and lose, for want of a soul that is quick and ready to do our duty. Second is that you may be fixed and settled in His service. The word in-

timates such an inseparable cleaving, such a marriage of the mind to the work of God that we have in hand, as can by no means suffer a divorce. It should be as hard a matter to break off the heart from God in His service, being married to Him and settled in holy duties, as it is to abstract the miser's soul from the world to which it is glued.

2. The manner how, "without distraction."

The sense hereof is almost perverted by the emphasis of the former word. Yet this word is not without its great weight and it speaks a quiet, unshaken, and immoveable frame of soul that cannot be whirled about with vain trifles. The soul is never at a holy quiet as when it is directly ascending and communing with the Lord; and therefore Satan exceedingly envies this celestial happiness of the saints, and if he cannot distract them from duty be sure he will distract them in it—and this he does very much by the world and the business thereof. And therefore, says the apostle, guide your condition so, in this suffering season, that it may not misguide your hearts in your attendance on the Lord; that you may not attend on yourselves or on others, but on Him who is the center of an ordinance and your all in all.

Take the sum of all in this assertion, which is the main doctrine from the text.

DOCTRINE. It is a Christian's duty to attend on the Lord without distractions.

And that I may from this text and doctrine profitably handle the case, and endeavor the cure of distractions, I shall proceed to show these things.

1.The nature of a distraction.

2. The kinds of distractions.

3. That it is our duty to attend upon the Lord without distractions.

4. The reasons why we must attend on the Lord without distractions.