

by keep the heart, we understand the diligent and constant use and improvement of all holy means and duties, to preserve the soul from sin, and maintain its sweet and free communion with God. We are as able to stop the sun in its course, or make the rivers run backwards, as by our own skill and power to rule and order our hearts. We may as well be our own saviours, as our own keepers; and yet Solomon speaks properly enough, when he saith, "Keep thy heart," because the duty is ours, though the power be God's. A natural man without Christ hath no power, a gracious man hath sufficient, but that power he hath, depends upon the exciting and assisting strength of Christ. Grace within us, is beholden to grace without us, "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. So much of the matter of the duty.

2. The manner of performing it is "with all diligence;" "keep keep; set double guards," your hearts will be gone otherwise; and this vehemence of expression with which the duty is urged, plainly implies how difficult it is to keep our hearts, and how dangerous to let them go.

The reason or motive quickening to this duty is very forcible and weighty, "For out of it are the issues of life." That is, it is the source and fountain of all vital actions and operations. The heart is the treasury, the hand and tongue but the shops, what is in these came from thence; the hand and tongue always begin where the heart ends. The heart contrives, and the members execute. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things; for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh," Luke vi. 46.

If the heart err in its work, these must needs miscarry in theirs; heart errors are like the errors of the first concoction, which cannot be rectified afterwards.

Oh! then, how important a duty is that which is contained in the following proposition:—

That the keeping and right managing of the heart in every condition, is the great business of a Christian's life.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)