

Happiness is Subjection to the Will of God

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.” (Matt. 10:29-31)

If we were blind, and reduced to desire a person to lead us, and should yet pretend to dispute with him, and direct him at every step, we should probably soon weary him, and provoke him to leave us to find the way by ourselves if we could. But our gracious Lord is long-suffering and full of compassion: he bears with our forwardness, yet he will take methods both to shame and to humble us, and bring us to a confession that he is wiser than we. The great and unexpected benefit he intends for us, by all the discipline we meet with, is to tread down our wills, and bring them into subjection to his. So far as we attain to this, we are out of the reach of disappointment: for when the will of God can please us, we shall be pleased every day, and from morning to night; I mean, with respect to his dispensations.

O the happiness of such a life! I have an idea of it: I hope I am aiming at it; but surely I have not attained it. Self is active in my heart, if it does not absolutely reign there, I profess to believe that one thing is needful and sufficient, and yet my thoughts are prone to wander after a hundred more. If it be true, that the light of his countenance is better than life, why am I so solicitous about anything else? If he be all-sufficient, and gives me liberty to call him mine, why go I a begging to creatures for help? If he be about my path and bed; if the smallest as well as the greatest, events in which I am concerned are under his immediate direction; if the very hairs of my head are numbered; then my care (any further than a care to walk in the paths of his precepts, and to follow the openings of his providence) must be useless and needless, yea sinful and heathenish, burdensome to myself and dishonorable to my profession.

– John Newton