

II. – That leads us to consider *God's method of saving the world*. The plan of redemption implies the covenant of grace between the three Persons of the adorable Trinity. God the Father determined in His sovereign love that sinners should be saved, and sent His beloved Son into the world to redeem the elect. The eternal Son delighted to do the Father's will, and accomplished the work given Him to do. The Holy Spirit, the third Person, was to apply to souls the benefits of the redemption procured by Christ as the divine surety. Neither angels nor men could have devised this method of saving the lost. Infinite wisdom alone could contrive a plan whereby the divine attributes might be glorified in consistence with the salvation of unworthy sinners. "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions."

We must now notice the nature of the preaching that God owns in the conversion of sinners. It is obvious that He does not honour what is not in accordance with His own Word. The doctrines preached must be based on the Holy Scriptures if they are to be of benefit to immortal souls. In the eyes of worldly men in the apostle's time the preaching of the cross was foolishness, and so it is still in the estimation of not a few.

The doctrine preached by the inspired apostles may be summed up under three heads.

First, *Ruin by the Fall*. We have touched on this already, and shall not enlarge much on it. The disobedience of our first parents brought ruin upon the whole race. Every sinner is by nature exposed to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. All must give an account to God at last, for our sins have exposed us to the divine wrath, and unless acquitted as believers, at the last day to eternal punishment. Sinners are undone in regard to their *state* and *nature*. When a sinner is saved his state is altered, and a new nature is given to him, so that he becomes a new man in Christ Jesus. He is no longer in a state of alienation, but in a state of grace. Sin has not now dominion over him as at first, but grace reigns in him through righteousness unto eternal life. This is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, and is in accordance with the experience of God's people in every age.

The next doctrine preached by the apostles was that of *Redemption through Christ*. In no other way was it possible for sinners to be redeemed than through the substitutionary sacrifice of the eternal Son of God in our nature. This is beautifully expressed in the Epistle to the Philippians: "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The Lord Jesus, as the covenant head of His people, endured the penalty due to them. He had to satisfy law and justice on their behalf. To the divine law He gave perfect obedience, and bore its curse in His own person. Without blood justice could not be satisfied, and on Calvary He gave His blood freely for the redemption of the guilty. Satisfaction had to be given to law and justice, and neither angels nor men could satisfy either of these. None other than God in our nature could pay the ransom price. Truly, this is the wonder of wonders, that the beloved Son of God should be willing to be "made sin for" those who were undeserving of the least mercy.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends," but Christ gave His life for His enemies. This is marvellous in the eyes of all true believers. Consider for a moment how redemption was wrought out. As soon as He was born, the Saviour was persecuted. King Herod sought His life. When He began His public ministry He was tempted of the devil, and very soon opposed by wicked men. He suffered in His reputation and character. Although he went about continually doing good, men said He was in league with the devil. In Gethsamane he sweated as it were great drops of blood. The traitor, Judas, betrayed his Master with a kiss, and the other poor disciples fled. Being led before Pilate, He was unjustly condemned, and compelled to bear His cross to the place of

execution. Every insult was heaped upon Him there, and to make it appear that He was the vilest of the malefactors crucified with Him, He was placed between them. When they crucified Him, blood came forth from His holy hands, feet, head and side. This caused great suffering of body, but His soul sufferings were far more intense. The hosts of hell were let loose upon Him: Ungodly sinners reviled Him, and God the Father forsook Him, so that in His great agony of spirit He cried but, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We cannot have any adequate conception of the bitterness of His sufferings. He, as an old divine said, dried up the hell of His elect on Calvary. The penalty due to them was borne willingly by Him. He made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Exalted to the right hand of the Father, He is now a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins. All who believe on Him are freely forgiven and justified from all their iniquities. Justification has for its foundation the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and in order to be justified you must accept of Christ as your personal Saviour.

Apostolic preaching was not confined to the above doctrines. It is noticeable that *Regeneration by the Holy Spirit* was proclaimed as being necessary to salvation. "Being washed (it is written) with the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Believers are described as being created anew in Christ. There is a new principle within them which inclines them to love holiness and hate sin. They are conscious of a new law in their members warring against the law of sin and death. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh," so that they cannot do the things that they would. As the outcome of being regenerated, there is a process of sanctification going on in believers which shall issue in their eternal perfection. Sanctification is a work, not an act, like justification, and it prepares the Lord's people for glory. Owing to indwelling sin they are often perplexed, and ready to think that they are deceiving themselves. How can they be sanctified, they say, when they feel sin so strong within? It is light that reveals objects in a dark place, and when the Spirit enlightens the mind, sinners then begin to realise what is within, and the more believers are sanctified, the more do they feel their own sinfulness. Unlike some in our day, Paul did not claim perfection, but he sought after it, and that is what every Christian in a healthy state of soul seeks.

At the resurrection the bodies and souls of God's people shall be reunited, and shall be perfectly holy in heaven. They shall be conformed to the image of Christ, and they shall be led by Him unto fountains of living waters throughout eternal ages. It is due to the work of the Spirit in them here that they shall be fit to enjoy the fellowship of God in eternity. May He sanctify each one of us, and may we be kept from grieving Him away from us!

These were the doctrines proclaimed by the first preachers of the Gospel wherever the Lord opened a door for them to make known "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The Reformers followed in their footsteps. Luther, Calvin, and Knox were of one mind in regard to these fundamental truths. When they began to preach the Gospel the Roman Catholic Church received its deathblow, and multitudes were saved. The Puritans and Covenanters were worthy successors of these men, and at no period in the history of Britain was there a fuller presentation of evangelical truth than during the time of these courageous and zealous witnesses for Christ. Their ideas and example have influenced for good succeeding generations. We owe a debt of gratitude to these men which we cannot repay but by following in their footsteps. They brought the great realities of eternity to bear upon the consciences and minds of their fellow-sinners with remarkable effect. Many experienced the power of the truth in convincing them of sin, and leading them as needy sinners to the feet of a gracious and compassionate Saviour. The Holy Spirit owned their labours abundantly, with the result that many came forth boldly to testify their love for, and faith in Christ during testing times.

It is such preaching that is needed in our day. There is a painful lack of evangelical truth in the pulpits of our country at present. Many of those who profess to be the servants of Christ are willing to preach anything but the true Evangel. The consequences are everywhere evident. Sins of every sort are becoming alarmingly prevalent; non-churchgoing is on the increase; there is open defiance of law and order, and true religion is treated with contempt. All these evils are in some measure due to the unscriptural theories that are propounded in many pulpits, and to the absence of law and Gospel preaching. In former times the Word of God had some authority on the consciences even of unconverted men, but now it is unchristian Socialism that has taken its place, and compels men to disregard the laws of God and man.

In the eighteenth century, when religion was at a very low ebb both in England and Scotland, God raised up a band of mighty preachers, such as Whitefield, Romaine and Newton in the former, and Boston and the Erskines in the latter country, to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. The doctrines taught by them were such as we have mentioned, and the Holy Spirit owned them in causing a widespread revival of religion to take place. Britain was roused out of its moral and spiritual torpor, while righteousness and truth were advanced in the land. This is what is needed to-day, and let it be our endeavour to abide by the example and doctrines taught by these faithful servants of Christ. We believe that when God revives His cause it will be by the sound preaching of the Gospel. Although no immediate fruits may be seen, it is the duty of the ministers of Christ to persevere in declaring the doctrines of grace, and in due time they may reap the fruit of their labours. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee the Lord Jesus performed His first miracle by turning the water used at the feast into wine. The water was there in the pot, and all that was required to turn it into wine was divine power. On that occasion His glory was revealed. So, where there is a faithful proclamation of the truth, all that is required to transform it into the wine of salvation is the exercise of the divine power, and when that takes place the glory of Christ is manifested.

III. – Let us now notice briefly some of the effects of the preaching of the Gospel. It saves those who believe. But let us consider, first, what it saves them from. Sin is the great evil from which men need deliverance. The loss of many is that they do not feel their need of being delivered from sin. Few have the experience of Paul, when he cried, “O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!” All who are taught from above know something of this, and they are saved from the reigning power of sin. Grace now reigns in them. Believers are delivered from the guilt as well as the power of sin. Peace with God becomes theirs when saved by the Gospel, and they enjoy fellowship and communion with Christ through the Word and Spirit. You who are still at ease in sin, and satisfied with your own righteousness, must perish, unless you accept the righteousness of Christ freely offered to you in the Gospel.

Deliverance from the penalty due to sin, and from the power of Satan, is another result brought about by the preaching of the truth, when savingly applied by the Holy Spirit to the heart and conscience. “The wages of sin is death” in its threefold aspect. Eternal death shall be the portion of impenitent sinners in the next world. Dear soul, think of your latter end, if you are unforgiven. Consider the final state of the ungodly. In hell there shall be no Gospel privileges, no temporal mercies; association with fallen angels and the vilest of mankind; an accusing conscience; dreadful remorse at the recollection of past sins and lost opportunities, and eternal despair shall be the portion of the lost. Satan shall be their master, and he shall use his power to torment to the utmost all under his sway. From all these tremendous evils the Gospel saves those who accept of it.

Observe also, that it delivers from the curse of a broken law, and the sword of divine justice. If you are not united to Christ, you must face these in your own person, and there is

nothing more certain than that they will exact the utmost penalty. Christ, as the divine surety of His people, has paid their debts to law and justice, and they are therefore set free.

Notice, also, that the Gospel takes down the pride of man, gives him his own place as an unworthy, hell-deserving sinner, and glorifies the triune Jehovah as the source of the salvation of all who believe.

In the last place, observe that it is explicitly stated that the preaching of the Gospel, when made effectual, saves only such as believe. Faith is necessary to salvation. "Without faith," it is written, "it is impossible to please God." Those who believe have set their seal to God's testimony concerning sin, its wages, their own character, and Christ as the only Saviour of sinners. They believe in the verbal inspiration of the written Word, from Genesis to Revelation. Although they may have doubts and fears concerning their own interest in Christ, they have no doubt whatever concerning His ability to save and the merit of His atoning death to save millions of transgressors. Neither do they doubt the absolute infallibility and inerrancy of the Word of God. Closely allied with faith there is trust. Faith unites to Christ, and the believer places his trust in the infinite merits of his adorable Saviour for the salvation of his soul.

It is the duty of sinners to wait on the sound preaching of the Gospel, but that in itself will not save the soul. You must believe the Gospel, or in other words, you must believe on the Lord Jesus, in order to be saved. Be not satisfied with merely hearing the word. Seek earnestly the faith by means of which sinners are justified.

The Gospel is the only remedy for the evils that afflict the nations and individual sinners. Wherever it has had free course it has wrought wonders. Reforms that have been of the greatest benefit to the world may be traced to the gracious influences of the Gospel. It has turned savages into humble followers of Christ, abolished slavery, procured civil and religious freedom for multitudes, and would heal speedily the gaping sores of a world at present distracted and blasted by the judgments of God, if its inhabitants would accept of it and render obedience to its precepts. No, it is not Christianity that has failed, but it is man's unbelief and rebelliousness that have kept the choice blessings of the Gospel from coming down upon the nations, as rain upon the mown grass.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Amen.

[December 1920]

Sowing and Reaping.

Notes of a Lecture, by the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall.

Delivered on Sabbath, 10th June, 1917.

“For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” Galatians 6:7,8.

The Apostle here lays down a principle which is true in nature and in grace. Whatever kind of seed is sown, the same kind is reaped. If you sow barley you shall reap barley, and if you sow wheat you shall reap wheat. This was true from the beginning of the Creation regarding all vegetation, as we have it recorded in Scripture: “And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind” (Genesis 1:12). This is true also in spiritual things. And in order that we might not expect to reap anything better than that which we have sown, the Apostle says: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” If we live in sin, we must receive the wages of sin, which is death; and, on the other hand, if we live to God, doing His will by His own grace, we shall reap the good that He promised to those that serve Him.

Every individual of the human race is a sower. The time for sowing is the spring season, which is our lifetime on earth, and whatever we sow in that season, we shall reap the same in kind in eternity, which is the harvest season in which we shall reap what we have sown. The Apostle and his fellow-labourers were sowers, and the seed which they sowed was the Word of God which they preached, and, as the first ripe fruits are reaped before the general harvest comes, they reaped as they sowed; they sowed the seed of truth which produced believers in reality! This is the case wherever the truth is taught from the pulpit in all ages. On the other hand, there were teachers who sowed the seed of error to their hearers, and the result was that those who received their false doctrine became Christians in name but not in reality, and this is always the case where error is preached. These teachers taught that their hearers must be circumcised in order to be saved. Circumcision makes some change in the flesh or body, but makes no change in the soul, which requires to be changed by regeneration and the new birth, without which no sinner can enter heaven, which Christ taught Nicodemus when He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” This was a sowing to the flesh, and corruption was reaped, as we have it in our text.

The words of our text apply to the practice of men. If you live after the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, you must reap according as you have sown. There are some who deceive themselves by thinking that they can reap better things than they have sown. These say, “Let us do evil that good may come,” but the principle, enunciated in our text, must stand true. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall reap.” You sow daily by your thoughts, words, and actions, and whatever these may be, you shall reap as you have sown. Examine yourselves as to what are your thoughts when you awake in the morning, throughout the day, and when you lie down to sleep at night. Are your thoughts set upon the Word of God and the things that pertain to your everlasting peace, or upon the world and the vanities thereof? Dr. Kennedy said that he would have good hopes of men or women whose first thoughts when they open their eyes in the morning, and their last thoughts before closing their eyes in sleep at night, were on the Word of God. This must be true of all God’s people, but it is not true of men in a state of nature, whatever they may profess. The Apostle Paul sowed to the flesh till the time of his conversion, when he was probably about thirty years of age, but, when he was changed by the grace of God, he at once ceased to sow to the flesh, and began to sow to the Spirit in his thoughts, words, and actions. He had now better work in preaching the Gospel of God’s grace to perishing sinners, and he is now reaping in eternity a rich harvest which sprang from his incessant labours on earth.

Spring time is a cold season, and those who sow seed in the earth suffer much from the inclemency of the weather, but when they reap an abundant crop in harvest, it more than

makes up for all that they suffered when sowing the seed. Men sow, not only by their conduct in general, but they sow in their mode of worship. Those who use the organ or any other musical instrument – but the lips – in the service of praise, in family worship, or in the public sanctuary, sow to the flesh, “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,” and they must reap corruption, according as they have sown. It is an unscriptural mode of worship; it has no Scriptural warrant in the Church of Christ in New Testament times, nor has it been the practice in Scotland till men forsook the faith, “once for all delivered to the saints.”

There were mighty men of God in the past who would not tolerate any error in doctrine or worship in the Church. They held to the Bible as given by the inspiration of God. They held, not only that the Word of God in the Bible was inspired, but also that the *record* of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments was also inspired. But a sad change has taken place since these men were taken home to their eternal rest. A flood of errors came into the Church through the instrumentality of graceless ministers. Instead of removing the flood of errors, the flood of errors removed them. They began to criticise the Bible, and declared that there were many errors in it. They borrowed the “higher” criticism from Germany, and let me tell you to be on your guard against the “higher” critics, for their intention is to destroy the Christian religion if they can. I read the article in a recent issue of the *Bulwark*, written by Dr. Robertson of Venice, who knew what he said. He mentioned in that article that many of the “higher” critics in Germany did not acknowledge even the being of the God of the Bible, but that the God they acknowledged and worshipped was the god of War, whom they called “Woden.” This god gives licence to his worshippers to practise all vices, and to wage war against all Christians. You know that it was often stated in the public prints that the Kaiser said that God was with him in this War, but you are to bear in mind that it is not in reality the God of the Bible he meant, but *Woden*, the god of War. The worshippers of this god repudiate the Lord Jesus Christ and His sayings in the Scriptures. They say that Jesus Christ said that, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” but they say, “Blessed are the mighty in spirit” – the War-Lords. The Kaiser never mentions the name of Jesus Christ. Till I read Dr. Robertson’s article I did not fully realise that the real intention of the higher critic in Germany was to destroy Christianity out of the world, but I see it now, and I warn my fellow-creatures to flee from every minister who is a higher critic. For ourselves, we resolve, by God’s grace, to keep to the doctrines of God’s Word; to preach these doctrines during our lifetime, and to hand them down to coming generations, pure and entire, as was the resolution of the Psalmist, who said:

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“We also will them not conceal
From their posterity;
Them to the generation,
To come declare will we.”

The devil’s aim is to destroy Christianity, and the higher critics, who are his children, are employed by him to accomplish his purpose, and the evil one is wroth at us because we make a stand in defence of the truth of the Christian religion, but Christ will support us by His grace, and instead of destroying Christianity, Christ, the author of Christianity, will destroy them, for He must reign till all His enemies are made His footstool.

The evil fruit yielded by the corrupt seed sown in Germany may be seen in various ways in our day, such as in deplorable departures from sound doctrine, and in the widespread practical atheism in our own country and other countries, for which God is now punishing the nations in the present terrible War. But the harvest in which men shall reap as they sowed is in eternity, where two classes of people shall reap as they sowed in this world. They that sowed to the flesh shall reap corruption, and they that sowed to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. That harvest shall never come to an end, and the reapers shall be reaping without ceasing, as they sowed, for ever and ever.

Let those who by grace commenced to do good “Not weary in well-doing, for in due season they shall reap, if they faint not;” but those who continue in their evil-doing till the end of their mortal life, cannot expect but everlasting punishment, for the words of our text must be fulfilled: “He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.” “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

[January 1921]

A Sermon.

By the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall,
Preached on Sabbath, 8th September, 1917.

“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people” (Psalm 113:7,8).

We find these words with some addition in the second chapter of First Samuel, as part of Hannah's song of praise to the Lord for His goodness to her in giving her a son, who was from his youth taught of the Lord, and became an eminent prophet in His service. In our text we have two things to notice: –

I. – The condition of the man spoken of; and

II. – That which the Lord does for him.

I. – The condition of the man spoken of.

1. The Lord's people, of whom Hannah was one, are characterised in Scripture as poor. If it is true of us, as we are by nature, that we are poor, the believer is "poor in spirit," but the man who is in his natural state is *spiritually* poor. When God created man he was rich, having God Himself as his portion in all He is and in all He has, and he was perfect in the image of his Creator, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, but by sin he lost all these riches, and he became poor indeed. Nothing belongs to him in this state but sin and misery. He is as poor now as any reasonable creature could be in the world. This is not only the testimony of Scripture concerning man in his fallen state, but it is also what the Spirit convinces of, when He begins the good work in the soul of the sinner.

2. He is in "the dust," namely, of spiritual death, "dead in trespasses and sins." He is dead spiritually as the body of man is put in the grave, there is not the least breath of life in it. "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3).

3. He is in the dust of repentance. This he must be, if he is saved. Under the Old Testament dispensation even a king, when brought to repentance, had to put off his royal apparel and cover himself with sackcloth and ashes. If individuals and nations were brought to this dust, there would be hope for them. Although individuals are brought to repentance, there is no sign yet of our nation coming to repentance, and therefore the Lord continues to smite us with the sword of war, scarcity of food, and other calamities. "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee" (Psalm 81:13,14,16). The Lord complained of other people who did not return to Him that smote them.

We have no doubt but He makes the same complaint against our nation. Without repentance and reformation He will not accept of their worship. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me: the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:11-17).

4. He is in the dust of humiliation. When Manasseh was brought to repentance, he humbled himself greatly, because he sinned greatly. People by nature are proud and haughty, and say, like Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" (Exodus 5:2), but it is otherwise with the Lord's people: they humble themselves in the presence of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and are in their own estimation very small. When

Abraham was pleading with God for sparing Sodom and Gomorrah, he, though eminent in grace, reckoned himself as dust and ashes. "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes" (Genesis 18:27). In the past, when the Lord was pouring out His judgments on nations, including our own nation, a day of humiliation was appointed by our Sovereign, but in our evil day those in authority, though appealed to repeatedly, refuse to appoint a day of humiliation on a week-day, with the result that the Lord shows His displeasure at them by the continuance of the present terrible War, and in other ways in His holy providence. We have sinned against God. Were it not for sin there would not be such a thing heard in the world as this man and that man died. All who lived in the world in the past, except Enoch and Elijah, died, and their bodies were brought to the dust of death, and all who now live in the world, and all who shall live in it to the end of time, with the exception of those living in the world at the Second Advent of Christ, shall die, and their bodies shall be brought to the dust of the grave. This is a divine appointment: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). This ought to make us seek preparation for death.

The man spoken of in our text is not only in the dust, but he is also on "the dunghill." I take this to mean our state of corruption. We are not only guilty, but also our whole nature is depraved by sin. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). There is no dunghill so filthy as our corrupt nature. Man in that view of him is not only lying on the dunghill, but the dunghill is within him. All who shall be raised from the dunghill shall be convinced of their depraved condition. It was a sense of this condition that made the Apostle Paul cry out: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24).

II. – That which the Lord does for the man that is in this uncomfortable condition. "He raiseth him from the dust." It is not the man himself that raiseth himself from the dust, nor can the Lord's people raise him from it, although they may be used, as they are, as instruments to do this work; it is God that does it. He does it in love, mercy, and compassion, according to His eternal purpose of salvation.

1. He raiseth him from the dust of spiritual death by quickening him by His Spirit. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). It is the same Almighty power that raised Christ from the dead that raises the sinner out of his spiritual grave. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:19,20). In this quickening of the dead to life some speak of the co-operation of the sinner with God, but what co-operation can a dead man give? When Christ raised up Lazarus from the dead, the dead man did not, and could not, co-operate with Christ in his own resurrection. There is not such a thing as co-operation in this work; the sinner is passive in regeneration, but when he is brought to life and born again, then he acts in doing the will of God.

2. Once the sinner is raised from his spiritual grave, he shall never fall into it again, although he is conscious of much of the power of death in him, which has the effect on him in joining others in the prayer, "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6), which is a sign of life. A dead man cannot speak.

3. He is raised up from a state of condemnation to a state of justification on the ground of Christ's righteousness being imputed to him, and received by faith alone. This is a glorious lifting-up of the guilty sinner. He shall never fall into a state of condemnation again, for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He is exalted in the righteousness of Christ. He is as highly exalted in that righteousness in this world as he shall be in glory.

4. He is raised up in his nature by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, the groundwork of which is the new nature begotten in regeneration. An unregenerate sinner cannot be sanctified. Sanctification is a progressive work that goes on till the death of the believer, when he is made perfect in holiness. The quickening of the sinner from death to life, his regeneration and sanctification, are effected by means of the word of the Gospel. The word of the law is used in awakening to a sense of his sinful and lost condition, but it is the word of the Gospel that is used in accomplishing a saving change – a change of nature and a change of state.

5. He is raised up from being a child of the devil to be a child of God, and has a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

6. He is raised up from the slavery of sin to serve God, the chief end for which man was originally created.

7. He is raised up to the rank of a prince. God sets him “with princes, even with the princes of his people.” This is true of the new-born babe as well as of the more advanced Christian. The son of a king is a prince the day he is born, although he is not at that stage of his life conscious of his high dignity. As he advances in years he will come to realise his high rank. When the sinner is savingly changed from a state of nature to a state of grace, he may not be able at once to realise his high rank; but, as he “grows in grace, and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), he comes to know that he is one of the princes of God’s people, and when he reflects on the low state in which he had been by nature and the state in which he is now, he is filled with thankful wonder, and “calls upon his soul and all that is within him to be stirred up to praise and magnify the Lord,” to whom the glory of the change is due. “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psalm 103:1,2).

8. His body shall be raised up at the general resurrection on the last day. Death separates his soul from his body, and while his soul rests in heaven, his body rests in the grave as in a bed made comfortable by his Saviour, whose body lay in that bed, and “who is the first begotten from the dead.” Although Christ’s body rested in the grave for a short time, three days and three nights, the bodies of some of the Lord’s people have rested in their graves for several thousands of years. The body of Abel has rested there longer than any of them, for he was the first that died by a violent death, having been killed by his brother Cain. It is remarkable that the first son of Adam was a murderer, and that the first man murdered was a godly man. The spiritual resurrection of the soul was a great and glorious change, and the literal resurrection of the body shall be a great and glorious change also, effected by the same Almighty power. It is He whose voice raised up the soul from its spiritual grave that shall raise up the body at the resurrection, for He is “the resurrection and the life.” The glorious change that shall be made on the body of the man spoken of in our text is described in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians – it is sown a corruptible body; it is raised incorruptible. That is, it is broken down and reduced to dust; that is the meaning of the word corruptible here. It is raised incorruptible; that is, it cannot be broken down by sickness or death after that any more for ever after the resurrection. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory, in such glory as that one would be apt to wonder whether it was the same body that was separated from the soul at death. “The vile body” shall be changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ (Philippians 3:21). It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. When put in the grave, it is so weak that it cannot move, but when raised from the grave, then, instead of being a drag upon the soul, as it had been before death, on account of many infirmities, it shall keep pace with the soul in serving God throughout eternity. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. We are not to understand by this change that the body shall be a spirit like the soul. It shall be as to substance the same body that was laid in the grave. Christ’s resurrection from the dead is the pattern of the resurrection of His

people. At His resurrection it was the same body that was crucified that was raised from the dead, and He took that body with Him to heaven. Those who hold the view that the bodies of believers shall at the resurrection be made spiritual bodies, like their souls, found their view on the Scripture, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," but they do not understand the meaning of that Scripture, for flesh and blood there signifies the infirmities incident to the body in the state of imperfection. In His state of humiliation Christ took upon Him the sinless infirmities of His people, such as weakness, fatigue, etc., and the days of His humiliation are called in Scripture, "The days of his flesh," but the days of His flesh came to an end at His resurrection. "He was crucified in weakness," but He left all His infirmities in the grave.

9. Lastly. – He shall raise him up from his state of pilgrimage, trials, and tribulations to a state of rest in heaven, where the sun shall never go down, and where he shall serve God perfectly, as he never managed to do when on earth. His holy and happy state there no tongue of man or angel can express, except as it is revealed in the Word of God. We shall leave him there to enjoy his unspeakable felicity in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

In conclusion. – We have been speaking of the great and wonderful change that God made in the state of the man who was by nature in the dust and on the dunghill, lifting him up from that state, and setting him among the princes of His people. You ought to look back on your past history and examine yourself as to whether you can point to a time when that change took place in your case. Perhaps some of the Lord's people who were converted in their childhood may find it difficult to point out the exact time in which they were savingly changed, but others, like the Apostle Paul, can tell the very day in which they were converted; and others of them who cannot tell the day are able to tell the year, and the season of the year, in which they were convinced of their sins and enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and all of them manifest by their walk and conversation that the change has really taken place. "By their fruits they are known." All whom the Father gave to Christ in the everlasting covenant of grace shall be brought out of a state of nature to a state of grace on earth, and a state of glory in heaven. As was said about the cattle of the children of Israel in Egypt, that not a hoof of them was left in Egypt, it may be said about them that not a hoof of them shall be left to perish in the state of nature. If you are one of these, and, although you should have such a mean view of yourself as to consider yourself but a hoof, you shall not be left to die in your sins. There was an ungodly woman at Lochcarron, called Kate Mhor, or big Kate, who, according to her own confession, was guilty almost of every sin mentioned in the decalogue. This great sinner was converted under the ministry of the Rev. Lauchlan MacKenzie. After she was brought to the liberty of the Gospel, she was afraid to come forward to the Lord's table, although the Session was willing to admit her. On a Communion occasion she received a token, but, remembering what a notorious sinner she was, she did not come forward, and when the last table was served, they heard a doleful scream in the congregation. This was big Kate. The minister, knowing her state of mind, concluding that she denied the Lord, and that her opportunity on that occasion for professing Him publicly was gone, intimated that there would be another table, and invited any who had received a token to come forward. Kate Mhor came forward to the table. She was the only communicant at that table, and the minister who served it spoke from the words, "There shall not an hoof be left behind," a suitable text for her who considered herself but a hoof among the Lord's people.

We shall conclude by repeating the words of Hannah in her song of praise to the Lord for His goodness to her: "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory" (1 Samuel 2:6-8).

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A Sermon.

By the REV. THOMAS ADAMS, One of the Puritan Divines.

“He hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God
for a sweet-smelling savour” – Ephesians 5:2.

This latter part of the verse is a fair and lively crucifix, cut by the hand of a most exquisite carver – not to amaze our bodily eyes with a piece of wood, brass, or stone, curiously engraven, to the increase of a carnal devotion, but to present to the eye of the conscience the grievous passion and gracious compassion of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, “who gave himself for us,” etc. This text presents to our eye seven considerable circumstances: –

(1) Who? “Christ.”

- (2) What? "Gave."
- (3) Whom? "Himself."
- (4) To whom? "To God."
- (5) For whom? "For us."
- (6) After what manner? "An offering and sacrifice."
- (7) Of what effect? "Of a sweet savour."

The points, you see, lie as ready for our discourse as the way did from Bethany to Jerusalem; only fail not my speech, nor your attention, till we come to the journey's end.

WHO? – The person that gives is Christ; the quality of His person doth highly commend His exceeding love to us. We will ascend to this consideration by four stairs or degrees, and descend by four other. Both in going up and coming down we shall perceive the admirable love of the Giver. Ascendantly –

1. We will consider Him a man. "Behold the man" (John 19:5), saith Pilate. We may tarry and wonder at His lowest degree – that a man should give himself for man. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die" (Romans 5:7). But this man gave Himself for unrighteous men, to die not an ordinary but a grievous death, exposing Himself to the wrath of God, to the tyranny of men and devils. It would pity our hearts to see a poor dumb beast so terrified; how much more a man, the image of God!

2. The second degree gives Him an innocent man. Pilate could say, "I have found no fault in this man" (Luke 23:14); no, nor yet Herod. No, nor the devil, who would have been right glad of such an advantage. So Pilate's wife sent her husband word: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man" (Matthew 27:19). So the person is not only a man, but a just man, that gave Himself to endure such horrors for us. If we pity the death of malefactors, how should our compassion be to one innocent!

3. In the third degree, He is not only a man, and a good man, but also a great man, royally descended from the ancient patriarchs and kings of Judah. Pilate had so written His title, and he would answer, not alter, it: "What I have written, I have written." And what was that? "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (John 19:19). Now, as is the person, so is the passion: the more noble the giver, the more excellent the gift. That so high a King would suffer such contempt and obloquy to be cast upon Him, when the least part of His disgrace had been too much for a man of mean condition; that a man – a good man, a great man – bore such calumny, such calamity, for our sakes; here was an unmatchable, an unspeakable, love.

4. This is enough, but this is not all. There is yet a higher degree in this ascent; we are not come to our full quantity. It is this: He was more than man; not only the greatest of men, but greater than all men. He was more than the Son of man – even the Son of God. As the centurion acknowledged, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39). Here be all the four stairs upwards: a man, a harmless man, a princely man, and yet more than man – even God Himself. Solomon was a great king, but here is a greater than Solomon. Solomon was the anointed of the Lord, but this is the Lord Himself anointed. And here all tongues grow dumb, and admiration sea-leth up every lip. This is a depth beyond sounding. You may perhaps drowsily hear this, and coldly be affected with it; but let me say, principalities and powers, angels and seraphims, stood amazed at it.

We see the ascent. Shall we bring down again this consideration by as many stairs?

1. Consider Him, Almighty God, taking upon Him man's nature. This is the first step downwards. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). And "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). And this was done by putting on our nature, not by putting off His own. Humanity is united to the Godhead, but the Godhead is not disassociated from itself. He is both God and man, yet but one Christ; one, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. Now in that this eternal God became man, He suffered

more than man can suffer, either living or dead. That man should be turned into a beast, into a worm, into dust, into nothing, is not so great a disparagement as that the glorious God should become man. "He that thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was made in the likeness of man." He that is "more excellent than the angels" became lower than the angels. Even the brightness of God's glory takes on Him the baseness of our nature; and He that laid the foundations of the earth, and made the world, is now in the world made by Himself. This is the first descending degree.

2. The second stair brings Him yet lower. He is made man; but what man? Let Him be universal monarch of the world, and have fealty and homage acknowledged to Him from all kings and emperors, as His viceroys. Let Him walk upon crowns and sceptres, and let princes attend on His court; and here was some majesty that might a little become the Son of God. No such matter. "He took upon him the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7). He instructs us to humility by His own example. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matthew 20:28). "O Israel, thou hast made me to serve with thy sins" (Isaiah 43:24). He gave Himself for a minister, not for a master. He that is God's Son is made man's servant. Proudly blind, and blindly poor man, that thou shouldest have such a servant as the Son of thy Maker. This is the second step downwards.

3. This is not low enough yet: "I am a worm, and no man," saith the psalmist in his person. Yea, the shame of men and contempt of the people. He is called (Psalm 24:7) "the King of glory." "Be ye open, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." But Isaiah says, "He is despised and rejected of men: we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not." O the pity of God, that those two should come so near together – the King of glory and the shame of men. The loftier the majesty, the lovelier the humility. Thus saith the apostle, "He made himself of no reputation" (Philippians 2:7). He that requires all honour as properly due to Him, makes Himself (not of little, but) of no reputation. Here was dejection, yea, here was rejection. Let Him be laid in His poor cradle, the Bethlehemites reject Him; the manger must serve – no room for Him in the inn. Yea, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). All Israel is too hot for Him; He is glad to fly into Egypt for protection. Comes He to Jerusalem, which He had honoured with His presence, instructed with His sermons, amazed with His miracles, wet and bedewed with His tears? They reject Him. "I would, and ye would not." Comes He to His kindred? They deride and traduce Him, as if they were ashamed of His alliance. Comes He to His disciples? "They go back, and will walk no more with him" (John 6:66). Will yet His apostles tarry with Him? So they say (verse 68), "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Yet at last one betrays Him, another forswears Him; all forsake Him; and Jesus is left alone in the midst of His enemies. Can malice yet add some further aggravation to His contempt? yes, they crucify Him with malefactors. The quality of His company is made to increase His dishonour. In the midst of thieves, as it were the prince of thieves, saith Luther, He that "thought it no robbery to be equal to the most holy God," is made equal to thieves and murderers; yea, as it were, a captain amongst them. This is the third step.

4. But we must go yet lower. Behold now the deepest stair and the greatest rejection. "The Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" (Lamentations 1:12). "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10). No burden seems heavy, when the comforts of God help to bear it. When God will give solace, vexation makes but idle offers and assaults. But now, to the rejection of all the former, the Lord turns His back upon Him as a stranger; the Lord wounds Him as an enemy. He cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" How could the sun and stars, heaven and earth, stand while their Maker thus complained! The former degree was deep; He was crucified with evil-doers; *reckoned amongst the wicked*. Yet thieves fared better in death than He. We find no irrision, no insultation, no taunts, no invectives against them. They had nothing upon them but pain;

He both contempt and torment. If scorn and derision can vex His good soul, He shall have it in peals of ordnance shot against Him. Even the basest enemies shall give it; Jews, soldiers, persecutors, yea, suffering malefactors, spare not to flout Him. His blood cannot appease them without His reproach. But yet the disciples are but weak men, the Jews but cruel persecutors, the devils but malicious enemies; all these do but their kind; but the lowest degree is, God forgets Him, and in His feeling He is forsaken of the Highest. Weigh all these circumstances, and you shall truly behold the person that gave Himself for us.

WHAT? – We come to the action, *He gave*. Giving is the argument of a free disposition. “I lay down my life; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again” (John 10:17,18). He that gives life to us, gave up His own life for us. He did not sell, set, or lend, but *give*. He was offered, because He would be offered. No hand could cut that stone from the quarry of heaven; no violence pull Him from the bosom of His Father, but His own mercy: *He gave*. “He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills” (Song 2:8). He comes with willingness and celerity, no human resistance could hinder Him; not the hillocks of our lesser infirmities, not the mountains of our grosser iniquities, could stay His merciful pace towards us.

He gave His life; who could bereave Him of it? To all the high priest’s armed forces He gave but a verbal encounter, “*I am he;*” and they retire and fall backward; His very breath dispersed them all. He could as easily have commanded fire from heaven to consume them, or vapours from the earth to choke them; He that controls devils could easily have quailed men. More than twelve legions of angels were at His back, and every angel able to conquer a legion of men. He gives them leave to take Him, yea power to kill Him; from Himself is that power which apprehends Himself. Even while He stands before Pilate scorned, yet He tells him, “Thou couldst have no power against me, unless it were given thee from above.” His own strength leads Him, not His adversaries; He could have been freed, but He would not; constraint had abated His merit; He will deserve though He die.

“The loss of His life was necessary, yet was it also voluntary” (Ambrose); therefore He gave up the ghost. In spite of all the world He might have kept His soul within His body; He would not. The world should have been burned to cinders, and all creatures on earth resolved to their original dust, before He could have been enforced. Man could not take away His spirit therefore He gave it. Otherwise, if His passion had been only material and not formal, it could not have been meritorious, or afforded satisfaction for us. For that is only done well that is done of our will.

But it is objected out of Hebrews 5:7, that “he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death.” Hence, some blasphemers say, that Christ was a coward in fearing the natural death of the body. If He had so feared it, He needed not to have tasted it. Christ indeed did naturally fear death, otherwise He had not been so affected as an ordinary man. Yet He willingly suffered death, otherwise He had not been so well affected as an ordinary martyr. But He prays thrice, “*Let this cup pass.*” Divines usually distinguish here the sententiaries, thus: That there was in Christ a double human or created will, the one a natural will, the other a reasonable will. Christ, according to His natural will, trembled at the pangs of death, and this without sin; for nature abhorreth all destructive things. But in regard of His rational will, He willingly submits Himself to drink that cup. “*Not as I will, O Father, but as thou wilt.*” A man, saith Aquinas, will not naturally endure the lancing of any member, yet by his reasonable will he consents to it, for the good of the whole body; reason masters sense, and cutting or cauterizing is endured. So Christ, by the strength of His natural will, feared death; but by His reason, perceiving that the cutting, wounding, crucifying of the Head, would bring health to the whole body of His church, and either He must bleed on the cross, or we must all burn in hell; behold now He willingly and cheerfully gives Himself an offering and sacrifice to God for us.

But was it a mere temporal death that our Saviour feared? No; He saw the fierce wrath of His Father, and therefore feared. Many resolute men have not shrunk at a little; divers martyrs have endured strange torments with magnanimity. But now when He that gave them strength quakes at death, shall we say He was a coward? Alas, that which would have overwhelmed man, would not have made Him shrink; that which He feared, no mortal man but Himself ever felt; yet He feared. The despair of many thousand men was not so much as for Him to fear. He saw that which none saw, the anger of an infinite God; He perfectly apprehended the cause of fear, our sin and torment; He saw the bottom of the cup, how bitter and dreggish every drop of that vial was; He truly understood the burden which we make light of. Men fear not hell because they know it not. If they could see through the opened gates the insufferable horrors of that pit, trembling and quaking would run like an ague through their bones. This insupportable load He saw; that the sponge of vengeance must be wrung out to Him, and He must suck it up to the last and least drop. Every talent of our iniquities must be laid upon Him, till, as “a cart, he be laden with sheaves” (Amos 2:13). And with all this pressure He must mount His chariot of death, the cross, and there bear it, till the appeased God gave way to an “It is finished.”

The philosopher could say that a wise man miserable is more miserable than a fool miserable, because he understands his misery. So that our Saviour’s pangs were aggravated, by the fulness of His knowledge. No marvel then if He might justly take David’s words out of his mouth, “Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.” This thought drew from Him those tears of blood. His eyes had formerly wept for our misdoings; His whole body now weeps; not a faint dew, but He sweat out solid drops of blood. The thorns, scourges, nails, fetched blood from Him, but not with such pain as this sweat. Outward violence drew on those; these the extremity of His troubled thought. Here, then, was His cause of fear. He saw our everlasting destruction, if He suffered not; He saw the horrors which He must suffer to ransom us. Hence those groans, tears, cries, and sweat; yet His love conquered all. By nature He could willingly have avoided this cup; for love’s sake to us He took it in a willing hand; so He had purposed, so He hath performed. And now to testify His love, saith my text, “He freely gave.”

WHOM? Himself. – This is the third circumstance; the gift, Himself.

Not an angel; for an angel cannot sufficiently mediate between an immortal nature offended and a mortal nature corrupted. The glorious angels are blessed, but finite and limited, and therefore unable for this expiation. They cannot be so sensibly “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Hebrews 4:15), as He that was, in our own nature, in all points tempted like as we are, sin only excepted.

Not saints, for they have no more oil than will serve their own lamps; they have enough for themselves, not of themselves, all of Christ, but none to spare. Fools cry, Give us of your oil; they answer, “Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves” (Matthew 25:9). They could not propitiate for sin, that were themselves guilty of sin, and by nature liable to condemnation. Wretched idolaters, that thrust this honour on them against their wills; how would they abhor such sacrilegious glory!

Not the riches of this world; “We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold” (1 Peter 1:18). Were the riches of the old world brought together to the riches of the new world; were all the mineral veins of the earth emptied of their purest metals, this pay would not be current with God. It will cost more to redeem souls. “They that trust in their wealth, and boast in the multitude of their riches, yet cannot by any means redeem their brother, nor give to God a ransom for him” (Psalm 49:6,7). The servant cannot redeem the Lord. God made a man master of these things; he is then more precious than his slaves.

“Not the blood of bulls or goats” (Hebrews 9). Alas! those legal sacrifices were but dumb shows of this tragedy, the mere figures of this oblation, mystically presenting to their faith that “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” This Lamb was prefigured in the sacrifices of the law, and now presented in the sacraments of the Gospel, slain indeed from the beginning of the world, who had power to profit us before He had a human being Himself. None of these would serve.

Whom gave He then? Himself, who was both God and man; that so participating of both natures, our mortality and God’s immortality, He might be a perfect mediator (Augustine Confes. lib. x. cap. 43). “He came between mortal men and immortal God, mortal with men, and just with God.” As man He suffered; as God He satisfied; as God and man He saved. He gave Himself, wholly and only.

1. All Himself, His whole person, soul and body, godhead and manhood. Though the Deity could not suffer, yet in regard of the personal union of these two natures in one Christ, His very passion is attributed in some sort to the Godhead. So Acts 20:28, it is called the “blood of God;” and 1 Corinthians 2:8, “The Lord of glory” is said to “be crucified.” The school’s distinction here makes all plain. He gave all Christ, though not all of Christ; as God alone, He would not, as man alone, He could not, make this satisfaction for us. The Deity is impassible; yet was it impossible, without this Deity, for the great work of our salvation to be wrought. If any ask, how the manhood could suffer without violence to the Godhead, being united in one person, let him understand it by a familiar comparison. The sunbeams shine on a tree, the axe cuts down this tree, yet can it not hurt the beams of the sun. So the Godhead still remains unharmed, though the axe of death did for a while fell down the manhood. His body suffered both sorrow and the sword; His soul sorrow, not the sword (literally); His deity neither sorrow nor the sword. The Godhead was in the person pained, yet not in the pain.

2. Himself only, and that without a Partner and without a Comforter.

1. Without a partner that might share either His glory or our thanks, of both which He is justly jealous (Ambrose). The suffering of Christ needs no help. Upon good cause, therefore, we abhor that doctrine of the papists, that our offences are expiated by the passions of the saints. No, not the blessed Virgin hath performed any part of our justification, paid any farthing of our debts. But thus sings the choir of Rome: “Holy Virgin, Dorothea, enrich us with thy virtue, create in us new hearts!” Wherein there is pretty rhyme, pretty reason, but great blasphemy; as if the Virgin Dorothea were able to create a new heart within us. No, “but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). His blood, and His only. O blessed Saviour, every drop of Thy blood is able to redeem a believing world. What, then, need we the help of men? How is Christ a perfect Saviour if any act of our redemption be left to the performance of saint or angel? No, our souls must die, if the blood of Jesus cannot save them. And whatsoever witty error may dispute for the merits of saints, the distressed conscience cries, “Christ, and none but Christ.” They may sit at tables and discourse, enter the schools and argue, get up into the pulpits and preach that the works of good men is the Church’s treasure, given by indulgence, and can give indulgence, and that they will do the soul good. But lie we upon our deathbeds, panting for breath, driven to the push, tossed with tumultuous waves of afflictions, anguished with sorrow of spirit, then we sing another song – Christ, and Christ alone – Jesus, and only Jesus; mercy, mercy, pardon, comfort, for our Saviour’s sake! “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

2. Without a Comforter. He was so far from having a sharer in His passion, that He had none in compassion, that (at least) might anyways ease His sorrows. It is but a poor comfort of calamity, pity; yet even that was wanting. “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?” (Lamentations 1:12). Is it so sore a sorrow to Christ, and is it nothing to you? a matter not worth your regard, your pity? Man naturally desires and expects, if he cannot be

delivered, ease; yet to be pitied. "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me" (Job 19:21). Christ might make that request of Job, but in vain; there was none to comfort Him, none to pity Him. It is yet a little mixture of refreshing if others be touched with a sense of our misery; that in their hearts they wish us well, and would give us ease if they could; but Christ hath in His sorest pangs not so much as a comforter. The martyrs have fought valiantly under the banner of Christ, because He was with them to comfort them. But when Himself suffers, no relief is permitted. The most grievous torments find some mitigation in the supply of friends and comforters. Christ after His monomachy or single combat with the devil in the desert, had angels to attend Him. In His agony in the garden, an angel was sent to comfort Him. But when He came to the main act of our redemption, not an angel must be seen. None of those glorious spirits may look through the windows of heaven, to give Him any ease. And if they would have relieved Him, they could not. Who can lift up where the Lord will cast down? What chirurgeon can heal the bones which the Lord hath broken? But His mother, and other friends, stand by, seeing, sighing, weeping. Alas! what do those tears but increase His sorrow? Might He not justly say with Paul, "What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart?" (Acts 21:13). Of whom then shall He expect comfort? Of His apostles? Alas! they betake them to their heels. Fear of their own danger drowns their compassion of His misery. He might say with Job, "Miserable comforters are ye all." Of whom, then? The Jews are His enemies, and vie in unmercifulness with devils. There is no other refuge but His Father. No, even His Father is angry; and He who once said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17), is now incensed. He hides His face from Him, and lays His hand heavy upon Him, and buffets Him with anguish. Thus alone He suffers. He gave Himself, and only Himself, for our redemption.

To WHOM? To God; and that is the fourth circumstance. To whom should He offer this sacrifice of expiation but to Him that was offended? And that is God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Psalm 51:4). "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight" (Luke 15:21). All sins are committed against Him: His justice is displeased, and must be satisfied. To God; for God is angry with what, and whom? with sin and us, and us for sin. In His just anger He must smite; but whom? In Christ was no sin. Now shall God do like Annas or Ananias? "If I have spoken evil," saith Christ "bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" (John 18:23). So Paul to Ananias, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" (Acts 23:3). So Abraham pleads to God, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). Especially right to His Son, and to that Son which glorified Him on earth, and whom He hath now glorified in heaven? We must fetch the answer from Daniel's prophecy, "The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (Daniel 9:26). Not for Himself? For whom, then? For solution hereof we must step to the fifth point, and there we shall find: –

FOR WHOM? For us. He took upon Him our person, He became surety for us; and lo! now the course of justice may proceed against Him! He that will become a surety, and take on him the debt, must be content to pay it. Hence that innocent lamb must be made a sacrifice; "and he that knew no sin in himself, must be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Seven times in three verses doth the prophet Isaiah inculcate this: *We, ours, us* (Isaiah 53:4,5,6). We were all sick, grievously sick; every sin was a mortal disease. "He healeth our infirmities," saith the prophet; He was our physician, a great physician. The whole world was sick to death, and therefore needed a powerful physician. So was He; and took a strange course for our cure, which was not by giving us physic, but by taking our physic for us. Other patients drink the prescribed potion; but our Physician drank the potion Himself, and so recovered us.

FOR US. – Ambrose said (De Fid. ad Grat. lib. ii. cap. 3), “He suffered for me, that had no cause to suffer for himself.” “O Lord Jesus, thou sufferest not thine own, but my wounds.” So monstrous were our sins, that the hand of the everlasting justice was ready to strike us with a fatal and final blow. Christ in His own person steps between the stroke and us, and bore that a while that would have sunk us for ever. (Aug. de doct. Christ. lib. i. cap. 14), “We abused the immortality we had, to our death; Christ used the mortality he had, to our life.” He loved us; and such as us, that were His utter enemies. Here then was love without limitation, beyond imitation. Unspeakable mercy, says Bernard, that the King of eternal glory should yield Himself to be crucified (Ser. de quadruplici debito), for so poor a wretch, yea, a worm; and that not a loving worm, not a living worm; for we both hated Him and His, and were dead in sins and trespasses.

Yea, for all us, indefinitely; none excepted that will apprehend it faithfully. The mixture of Moses’ perfume is thus sweetly allegorized. God commands him to put in so much frankincense as galbanum, and so much galbanum as frankincense (Exodus 30:34). Christ’s sacrifice was so sweetly tempered: as much blood was shed for the peasant in the field as for the prince in the court. The offer of salvation is general: “whosoever among you feareth God, and worketh righteousness, to him is the word of this salvation sent.” As there is no exemption of the greatest from misery, so no exemption of the least from mercy. He that will not believe and amend shall be condemned, be he never so rich; he that doth, be he never so poor, shall be saved.

This one point of the crucifix, “*for us*,” requires more punctual meditation. Whatsoever we leave unsaid, we must not huddle up this. For indeed this brings the text home to us, even into our consciences, and speaks effectually to us all: to me that speak, and to you that hear, with that prophet’s application, “*Thou art the man*.” We are they for whose cause our blessed Saviour was crucified. For us, He endured those grievous pangs; for us, that we might never taste them. Therefore say we with that father (Aug. de sancta virg. cap. 55): “Let Him be fixed wholly in our hearts, who was wholly for us fastened to the cross.”

We shall consider the uses we are to make of this by the ends for which Christ performed this. It serves to save, move, and mortify us.

1. To save us. This was His purpose and performance: all He did, all He suffered, was to redeem us. “By his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). By His sweat we refreshed; by His sorrows we rejoiced; by His death we are saved. For even that day, which was to Him the heaviest day that ever man bore, was to us “the accepted time, the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). The day was evil in respect of our sins and His sufferings; but eventually, in regard of what He paid and what He purchased, a good day, the best day, a day of joy and jubilation.

But if this salvation be wrought for us, it must be applied to us, yea, to every one of us. For that some receive more profit by His passion than others, is not His fault that did undergo it, but theirs that do not undertake it; to apply it to their own consciences. We must not only believe this text in gross; but let every one take a handful out of this sheaf, and put it into His own bosom. So turning this “*for us*” into “*for me*.” As Paul, “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Blessed faith, that into the plural, *us*, puts in the singular soul, *me*. “He gave Himself for me.” Every one is a rebel, guilty and convicted by the supreme law; death waits to arrest us, and damnation to receive us. What should we do but pray, beseech, cry, weep, till we can get our pardon sealed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and every one find a sure testimony in his own soul that Christ gave Himself for me.

2. This should move us. Was all this done for us, and shall we not be stirred? “Have ye no regard? Is it nothing to you that I suffer such sorrow as was never suffered?” (Lamentations 1:12). All His agony, His cries, and tears, and groans, and pangs, were for us;

shall He thus grieve for us, and shall we not grieve for ourselves? For ourselves, I say; not so much for Him. Let His passion move us to compassion, not of His sufferings (alas! our pity can do Him no good), but of our sins which caused them. “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children” (Luke 23:28). For ourselves; not for His pains that are past, but for our own that should have been, and (except our faith sets Him in our stead) shall be. Shall He weep to us, for us, and shall we not mourn? Shall He drink so deeply to us in this cup of sorrow, and shall we not pledge Him? Doth the wrath of God make the Son of God shriek out, and shall not the servants for whom He suffered tremble? (Hieron. in Math.). Every creature seems to suffer with Christ; sun, earth, rocks, sepulchres. Only man suffers nothing, for whom Christ suffered all. Doth His passion tear the veil, rend the stones, cleave the rocks, shake the earth, open the graves; and are our hearts more hard than those insensible creatures that they cannot be penetrated? Doth heaven and earth, sun and elements, suffer with Him, and is it nothing to us? We, wretched men that we are, that were the principals in this murder of Christ: whereas Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, soldiers, Jews, were all but accessories and instrumental causes. We may seek to shift it from ourselves, and drive this heinous fact upon the Jews; but the executioner doth not properly kill the man. Sin, our sins, were the murderers. Of us He suffered, and for us He suffered: unite these in your thoughts, and tell me if His passion hath not cause to move us.

And yet so obdurate are our hearts that we cannot endure one hour’s discourse of this great business. Christ was many hours in dying for us; we cannot sit one hour to hear of it. O that we should find fault with heat or cold in hearkening to these heavenly mysteries, when He endured for us such a heat, such a sweat, such agony, that through His flesh and skin He sweat drops of blood. Doth He weep tears of gore-blood for us, and cannot we weep tears of water for ourselves? Alas! how would we die for Him, as He died for us, when we are weary of hearing what He did for us?

3. This should mortify us. Christ delivered Himself to death for our sins, that He might deliver us from death and our sins. He came not only to destroy the devil, but to “destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8). Neither doth He take only from sin (Romans 8:1) the power to condemn us, but also (Romans 6:6,12) the power to rule and reign in us. So that Christ’s death, as it answers the justice of God for our misdeeds, so it must kill in us the will of misdoing. Christ in all parts suffered, that we in all parts might be mortified. His sufferings were so abundant that men cannot know their number, nor angels their nature, neither men nor angels their measure. His passion found an end, our thoughts cannot. He suffered at all times, in all places, in all senses, in all members, in body and soul also – all for us.

1. *At all times.* In His childhood by poverty and Herod; in the strength of His days by the powers of earth, by the powers of hell, yea, even by the powers of heaven. In the day He lacks meat, in the night a pillow. Even that holy time of the great passover is destined for His dying. When they should kill the paschal lamb in thankfulness, they slay the Lamb of God in wickedness. They admire the shadow, yet condemn the substance. All for us; that all times might yield us comfort. So the apostle sweetly, “He died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him” (1 Thessalonians 5:10).

2. *In all places.* In the cradle by that fox; in the streets by revilers; in the mountain by those that would have thrown Him down headlong; in the temple by them that “took up stones to cast at Him” (John 8:59). In the high priest’s hall by buffeters, in the garden by betrayers; by the way, laden with His cross. Lastly, in Calvary, a vile and stinking place, among the bones of malefactors crucified. Still all for us, that in all places the mercy of God might protect us.

3. *In all senses.* For His taste, lo! it is afflicted with gall and vinegar – a bitter draught for a dying man! His touch felt more; the nails driven into His hands and feet; places most sensible of pain; being the most sinewy parts of the body. His ears are full of the

blasphemous contumelies which the savage multitude belched out against Him. Not Him, but Barabbas, they cry to Pilate; preferring a murderer before a Saviour. Will you read the speeches objectual to His hearing? (See Matthew 27:29,39,42,49). In all, consider their blasphemy, His patience. For His eyes, whither can He turn them without spectacles of sorrow. The despite of His enemies on the one side, shewing their extremest malice; the weeping and lamenting of His mother on the other side, whose tears might wound His heart. If any sense were less afflicted, it was His smelling; and yet the putrified bones of Calvary could be no pleasing savour.

Thus suffered all His senses. That taste that should be delighted with the wine of the vineyard, that “goeth down sweetly” (Song 7:9), is fed with vinegar. He looks for good grapes, behold “sour grapes” (Isaiah 5:4); He expects wine; He receives vinegar. That smell that should be refreshed with the odoriferous scent of the “beds of spices” (Song 6:2), the piety of His saints, is filled with the stench of iniquities. Those hands that sway the sceptre of the heavens, are fain to carry the reed of reproach, and endure the nails of death. Those eyes that were as a flame of fire” (Revelation 1:14), in respect of which the very sun was darkness, must behold the afflicting objects of shame and tyranny. Those ears, which to delight the high choristers of heaven sing their sweetest notes, must be wearied with the taunts and scoffs of blasphemy.

And all this for us; not only to satisfy those sins which our senses have committed, but to mortify those senses, and preserve them from those sins. That our eyes may be no more full of adulteries, nor throw covetous looks on the goods of our brethren. That our ears may no more give so wide admission and welcome entrance to lewd reports, the incantations of Satan. That sin in all our senses might be done to death; the poison exhausted, the sense purified.

4. *In all members.* Look on that blessed body, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure virgin; it is all over scourged, martyred, tortured, mangled. What place can you find free? To begin at his head; that head which the angels reverence, is crowned with thorns. That face, which is “fairer than the sons of men” (Psalm 45:2), must be odiously spit on by the filthy Jews. His hands that made the heavens are extended and fastened to a cross. The feet which tread upon the necks of His and our enemies, feel the like smart. And the mouth must be buffeted which “spake as never man spake” (John 7:46).

Still all this for us. His head bled for the wicked imaginations of our heads. His face was besmeared with spittle, because we had spit impudent blasphemies against heaven. His lips were afflicted, that our lips might henceforth yield savoury speeches. His feet did bleed, that our feet might not be swift to shed blood. All His members suffered for the sins of all our members, and that our members might be no more servants to sin, but “servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Romans 6:19). “He would be polluted with their spittle, that he might wash us; he would be blindfolded, that he might take the vail of ignorance from our eyes. He suffered the head to be wounded, that he might renew health to all the body” (Jerome).

Six times we read that Christ shed His blood:

1. When he was circumcised; at eight days old His blood was spilt.
2. In His agony in the garden, where He sweat drops of blood.
3. In His scourging, when the merciless tormentors fetched blood from His holy sides.
4. When He was crowned with thorns; those sharp prickles raked and harrowed His blessed head, and drew forth blood.
5. In His crucifying, when His hands and feet were pierced, blood gushed out.
6. Lastly, after His death, “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34).

All His members bled, to shew that He bled for all His members. Not one drop of this blood was shed for Himself, all for us; for his enemies, persecutors, crucifiers, ourselves. But what shall become of us, if all this cannot mortify us? “How shall we live with Christ, if with Christ we be not dead?” (Romans 6:8). Dead indeed unto sin, but living unto righteousness. As Elisha revived the Shunamite’s child: “He lay upon it; put his mouth upon the child’s mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm” (2 Kings 4:34). So the Lord Jesus, to recover us that were dead in our sins and trespasses, spreads and applies His whole passion to us; lays His mouth of blessing upon our mouth of blasphemy; His eyes of holiness upon our eyes of lust; His hands of mercy upon our hands of cruelty; and stretcheth His gracious self upon our wretched selves, till we begin to wax warm, to get life, and the Holy Spirit returns into us.

5. In His *soul*. All this was but the outside of His passion: “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27). The pain of the body is but the body of pain; the very soul of sorrow is the sorrow of the soul. All the outward afflictions were but gentle prickings in regard of that His soul suffered. “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?” (Proverbs 18:14). He had a heart within that suffered unseen, unknown anguish. This pain drew those *strong cries*, those bitter *tears* (Hebrews 5:7). He had often sent forth the cries of compassion; of passion and complaint not till now. He had wept the tears of pity, the tears of love, but never before the tears of anguish. When the Son of God thus cries, thus weeps, here is more than the body distressed; the soul is agonized.

Still all this *for us*. His soul was in our souls’ stead; what would they have felt, if they had been in the stead of His? All for us; to satisfaction, to emendation. For thy drunkenness and pouring down strong drinks, He drunk vinegar. For thy intemperate gluttony, He fasted. For thy sloth, He did exercise Himself to continual pains. Thou sleepest secure, thy Saviour is then waking, watching, praying. Thy arms are inured to lustful embracings; He for this embraceth the rough cross. Thou deckest thyself with proud habiliments, He is humble and lowly for it. Thou ridest in pomp, He journeys on foot. Thou wallowest on thy down beds, thy Saviour hath not a pillow. Thou surfeitest, and He sweats it out, a bloody sweat. Thou fillest and swellest thyself with a pleurisy of wickedness. Behold incision is made in the Head for thee; thy Saviour bleeds to death. Now judge whether this point (for us) hath not derived a near application of this text to our own consciences. Since then Christ did all this for thee and me; pray then with Augustine: “Lord give me a heart to desire thee, desiring to seek thee, seeking to find thee, finding to love thee, loving, no more to offend thee.”

There are two main parts of this Crucifix yet to handle. I must only name them, being sorry that it is still my hap to trouble you with prolixity of speech.

6. The next is the *Manner: an offering and sacrifice*. His whole life was an *offering*, His death a *sacrifice*. He gave Himself often for us an eucharistical oblation, once an expiatory sacrifice. In the former He did for us all that we should do; in the latter He suffered for us all that we should suffer. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). Some of the Hebrews have affirmed, that in the fire which consumed the legal sacrifices, there always appeared the face of a lion (Paul. Tagius, cap. 4). Which mystery they thus resolve, that the Lion of Judah should one day give Himself for us, a perfect expiatory sacrifice. Thus, “once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26).

7. The last point is the *Effect: Of a sweet smelling savour*. Here is the fruit and efficacy of all. Never was the Lord pleased with sinful man till now. Were He never so angry, here is a pacification, a sweet savour. If the whole world were quintessenced into one perfume, it could not yield so fragrant a smell. We are all of ourselves dead and stinking

carcasses. The pure nostrils of the Most Holy cannot endure us: behold the perfume that sweetens us, the redeeming blood of the Lord Jesus. This so fills Him with a delightful scent, that He will not smell our noisome wickedness.

Let me leave you with this comfort in your bosoms. How unsavoury soever our own sins have made us, yet if our hand of faith lay hold on this Saviour's censer, God will scent none of our corruptions; but we shall smell sweetly in His nostrils. Bernard for all. "O dear Jesus, we should die, and thou payest it, we have offended, and thou art punished." A mercy without example, a favour without merit, a love without measure. Therefore I conclude my sermon, as we all shut up our prayers, with this one clause, Through our Lord Jesus Christ. O Father of mercy, accept our sacrifice of prayer and praise, for His sacrifice of pain and merit, even for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake! To whom, with the Father and blessed Spirit, be all glory, for ever. Amen.

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