

CHAPTER 10

PRIVILEGES OF THOSE WHO ARE UNDER GRACE

In the next place, I shall show you the several privileges and advantages that the man or woman hath that is under this Covenant of Grace, over what they have that are under the Covenant of the Law and Works. As,

First. The Covenant of Grace is not grounded upon our obedience, but upon God’s love, even His pardoning love to us through Christ Jesus. The first covenant is stood to be broken or kept by us, and God’s love or anger to be lost or enjoyed thereafter as we, as creatures, behaved ourselves; but now, the very ground of the Covenant of Grace is God’s love, His mere love through Jesus Christ —

“The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the LORD loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers”
(⁶⁰⁰Deuteronomy 7:7, 8).

Again, “In His love and in His pity He redeemed them,” “and the angel of His presence saved them,” that is, Jesus Christ (²³⁰Isaiah 63:9). And again, “Who hath saved us — not according to our works” of righteousness which we have done,

“but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 1:9).

Second. This love is not conveyed to us through what we have done, as is before proved, but through what He hath done with Whom the covenant was made, which was given us in Christ — According as He hath chosen us in Christ. “Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” “God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you,” that is, through Christ’s doings, through Christ’s sufferings (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 1:9;

~~400~~ Ephesians 1:3, 4; ~~402~~ Ephesians 4:32). Now if this be but rightly understood, it doth discover abundance of comfort to them, that are within the bounds of the Covenant of Grace. For,

1. Here a believer seeth he shall stand, if Christ's doings and sufferings stand; which is sure foundation, for God dealeth with him through Christ. And so, secondly, he shall not fall, unless the suffering and merits of Christ be thrown over the bar, being found guilty, which will never be, before the eyes of Divine justice; for with Him the covenant was made, and He was the Surety of it; that is, as the covenant was made with Him, so He stood bound to fulfill the same (~~301~~ Zechariah 9:11; ~~302~~ Hebrews 7:22). For you must understand that the covenant was made between the Father and the Son long before it was accomplished, or manifestly sealed with Christ's blood; it was made before the world began (~~300~~ Titus 1:2; ~~400~~ Ephesians 1:4; ~~401~~ 1 Peter 1:18-20). But the conditions thereof were not fulfilled until less than two thousand years ago; and all that while did Jesus stand bound as a surety, as I said before, is used to do, till the time in which the payment should be made. And it was by virtue of His Suretyship, having bound Himself by covenant to do all things agreed on by the Father and Him, that all those of the election that were born before He came, that they might be saved, and did enter into rest. For the forgiveness of sins that were past, though it was through the blood of Christ, yet it was also through the forbearance of God (~~305~~ Romans 3:25). That is, Christ becoming Surety for those that died before His coming, that He should in deed and in truth, at the fullness of time, or at the time appointed, give a complete and full satisfaction for them according to the tenor or condition of the covenant. (~~304~~ Galatians 4:4). Again,

2. The second covenant, which believers are under, as the ground and foundation, if it is safe, so the promises thereof are better, surer, freer, and fuller, etc.

(1.) They are better, if you compare the excellency of the one with the excellency of the other. The first hath promised nothing but an early paradise — Do this, and thou shalt live; namely, here in an earthly paradise. But the other doth bring the promise of a heavenly paradise.

(2.) As the Covenant of Works doth promise an earthly paradise, yet it is a paradise or blessing, though once obtained, yet might be lost

again; for no longer than thou doest well, no longer art thou blessed by that. O, but the promises in the new covenant do bring unto us the benefit of an eternal inheritance — That “they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” O rare! it is an “eternal inheritance” (³⁰¹⁵ Hebrews 9:15).

(3.) The other, as it is not so good as this, so neither is it so sure as this; and therefore he calls the one such an one as might be, and was, shaken, but this is said to be such an one that cannot be shaken. “And this Word,” saith he, treating of the two covenants from ³⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 9:8-24 — “And this Word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are,” or may be, “shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken,” which is the second covenant, “may remain,” (³⁰²⁷ Hebrews 12:27); for, saith he (³⁰²⁸ Hebrews 12:28) “which cannot be moved.” Therefore, ye blessed saints, seeing you have received a kingdom “which cannot be moved,” therefore, “let us have grace, whereby we may serve” our “God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

Thus in general, but more particularly.

(4.) They are surer, in that they are founded upon God’s love also, and they come to us without calling for those things at our hands that may be a means of putting of a stop to our certain enjoying of them. The promises under, or for the law, they might easily be stopped by our disobedience; but the promises under the Gospel say, “If Heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched,” then, and not till then, “I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done” (²⁸¹⁷ Jeremiah 31:37). Again, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own” name’s “sake, and will not remember thy sins” (²⁸²⁵ Isaiah 43:25). I will make thee a partaker of My promise; and that I may so do, I will take away that which would hinder; “I will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea,” that My promise may be sure to all the seed; and therefore, saith the Apostle, when he would show us that the new-covenant promises were more sure than the old, he tells us plainly that the law and works are set aside and they are merely made ours through the righteousness of faith, which is the righteousness of Christ — “For the promise, that he [Abraham] should be the heir of the world,” saith he, “was not to

Abraham, or to his seed, through the law,” or works, “but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law,” or of works, “be heirs,” then “faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Therefore it is of faith — to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed” (Romans 4:13-14, 16).

(5.) Surer, because that as that is taken away that should hinder, so they are committed to a faithful Friend of ours in keeping. For all the promises of God are in Christ, not yea and nay, but yea and amen; certain and sure; sure, because they are in the hand of our Head, our Friend, our Brother, our Husband, our flesh and bones, even in the heart and hand of our precious Jesus.

(6.) Because all the conditions of them are already fulfilled for us by Jesus Christ, as aforesaid; every promise that is a new-covenant promise, if there be any condition in it, our Undertaker hath accomplished that for us, and also giveth us such grace as to receive the sweetness as doth spring from them through His obedience to every thing required in them.

(7.) Surer, because that as they are grounded upon the love of God, everything is taken out of the way, in the hand of a sure Friend. And has Christ has fulfilled every condition as to justification that is contained therein, so the Lord hath solemnly sworn with an oath for our better confidence in this particular — “For when God made promise to Abraham,” and so to all the saints, “because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife,” that there might be no more doubt or scruple concerning the certain fulfilling of the promise. “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel,” or certain, constant, unchangeable decree of God in making of the promise, for the comfort of his children, “confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things,” His promise backed with an oath, “in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong

consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (³⁸⁶³Hebrews 6:13-18).

(8.) That they are better it appears also in that they are freer and fuller. That they are freer, it is evident, in that one saith, No works, no life — Do this, and then thou shalt live; if not, thou shalt be damned. But the other saith, We are saved by believing in what Another hath done, without the works of the Law —

“Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”

(³⁸⁶⁴Romans 4:4, 5).

The one saith, Pay me that thou owest; the other say, I do frankly and freely forgive thee all. The one saith, Because thou hast sinned, thou shalt die; the other saith, Because Christ lives, thou shalt live also (³⁸⁶⁵John 15).

(9.) And as they are freer, so they are fuller; fuller of encouragement, fuller of comfort; the one, to wit, the law, looks like Pharaoh’s seven ill-favored kine, more ready to eat one up than to afford us any food; the other is like the full grape in the cluster, which for certain hath a glorious blessing in it. The one saith, If thou hast sinned, turn again; the other saith, If thou hast sinned, thou shalt be damned, for all I have a promise in me.

3. They that are of the second are better than they that are of the first; and it also appeareth in this — The promises of the Law, through them we have neither faith, nor hope, nor the Spirit conveyed; but through the promises of the Gospel there are all these —

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the Divine nature”

(³⁸⁶⁶2 Peter 1:4).

O therefore

“let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised”

(⁵⁰²Hebrews 10:23). “In hope of eternal life,” how so? because “God, that cannot lie, promised it before the world began” (⁵⁰⁰Titus 1:2).

4. They that are in this covenant are in a very happy state; for though there be several conditions in the Gospel to be done, yet Christ Jesus doth not look that they should be done by man, as man, but by His own Spirit in them, as it is written, “Thou hast wrought all our works in us.” Is there that condition, they must believe? Why, then, He will be both the “author and finisher of their faith” (⁵⁰²Hebrews 12:2, 3). Is there also hope to be in His children? He also doth and hath given them “good hope through His grace” (⁵⁰²2 Thessalonians 2:16). Again, are the people of God to behave themselves to the glory of God the Father? then He will work in them “both to will and to do of His own good pleasure” (⁵⁰³Philippians 2:13).

5. Again, as He works all our works in us and for us, so also by virtue of this covenant we have another nature given unto us, whereby, or by which we are made willing to be glorifying of God, both in our bodies and in our spirits, which are His — “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power” (⁵⁰²1 Corinthians 6:20; ⁵⁰³Psalms 110:3).

6. In the next place, all those that are under this second covenant are in a wonderful safe condition; for in case they should slip or fall after their conversion into some sin or sins (for who lives and sins not? ⁵⁰⁴Proverbs 24:16), yet through the merits and intercession of Christ Jesus, who is their Undertaker in this covenant, they shall have their sins pardoned, their wounds healed, and they raised up again; which privilege the children of the first covenant have not; for if they sin, they are never afterwards regarded by that covenant — They brake My covenant and I regarded them not, saith the Lord (⁵⁰⁰Hebrews 8:9). But when He comes to speak of the Covenant of Grace, speaking first of the public person under the name of David, He saith thus, “He shall cry unto Me, Thou art My Father, My God, and the rock of My salvation. Also I will make Him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with Him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and His throne as the days of heaven. If His children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not My commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless

My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from Him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven” (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 89:26-37). “My covenant shall stand fast with him” — mark that. As if God had said, I did not make this covenant with man, but with My Son, and with Him I will perform it; and seeing He hath given Me complete satisfaction, though His children do, through infirmity, transgress, yet My covenant is not therefore broken, seeing He with whom it was made standeth firm, according to the desire of my heart; so that My justice that is satisfied, and My Law, hath nothing to say, for there is no want of perfection in the sacrifice of Christ.

If you love your souls, and would have them live in the peace of God, to the which you are called in one body, even all believers, then I beseech you seriously to ponder, and Labor to settle in your souls this one thing, that the new covenant is not broken by our transgressions, and that because it was not made with us. The reason why the very saints of God have so many ups and downs in this their travel towards Heaven, it is because they are so weak in the faith of this one thing; for they think that if they fail of this or that particular performance, if their hearts be dead and cold, and their lusts mighty and strong, therefore now God is angry, and now He will shut them out of His favor, now the new covenant is broken, and now Christ Jesus will stand their Friend no longer; now also the devil hath power again, and now they must have their part in the resurrection of damnation; when, alas! the covenant is not for all this never the more broken, and so the grace of God no more straitened than it was before. Therefore, I say, when thou findest that thou art weak here, and failing there, backward to this good, and thy heart forward to that evil; then be sure thou keep a steadfast eye on the Mediator of this new covenant, and be persuaded that it is not only made with Him, and His part also fulfilled, but that He doth look upon His fulfilling of it, so as not to lay thy sins to thy charge, though He may as a Father chastise thee for the same — “If His children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless,”

mark “nevertheless My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from HIM, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips.” And what was that? Why, that “His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before Me” (^{488B}Psalm 89:30-34, 36).

7. Another privilege that the saints have by virtue of the new covenant is, that they have part of the possession or hold of Heaven and Glory already, and that two manner of ways —

(1.) The Divine nature is conveyed from Heaven into them; and, secondly, the human nature, i.e., the nature of man, is received up, and entertained in, and hath got possession of Heaven. We have the first-fruits of the Spirit, saith the man of God; we have the earnest of the Spirit, which is instead of the whole, for it is the earnest of the whole —

“Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory”

(^{491B}Ephesians 1:13, 14; ^{488B}Romans 8:8-11).

(2.) The nature of man, our nature is got into glory as the first-fruits of mankind, as a forerunner to take possession till we all come thither (^{483D}1 Corinthians 15:20). For the Man born at Bethlehem is ascended, which is part of the lump of mankind, into glory as a public Person, as the first-fruits, representing the whole of the children of God; so that in some sense it may be said that the saints have already taken possession of the kingdom of Heaven by their Jesus, their public Person, He being in their room entered to prepare a place for them (^{484D}John 14:1-5).

I beseech you consider, when Jesus Christ came down from Glory, it was that He might bring us to Glory; and that He might be sure not to fail, He clothed Himself with our nature, as if one should take a piece out of the whole lump instead of the whole, until the other comes, and investeth it in that glory which He was in before He came down from Heaven (^{482D}Hebrews 2:14, 15). And thus is that saying to be understood, speaking of Christ and His saints, which saith,

“And” He “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (^{491B}Ephesians 2:6).

8. Again, not only thus, but all the power of God, together with the rest of His glorious attributes, are on our side, in that they dwell in our nature, which is the Man Jesus, and doth engage for us poor, simple, empty, nothing creatures as to our eternal happiness (⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Peter 1:5). “For in Him,” that is, in the Man Christ, who is our nature, our Head, our root, our flesh, our bone, “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (⁵⁰¹⁹Colossians 2:9, 10). Mark how they are joined together, “In whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead. And ye are complete in Him.” God dwelleth completely in Him, and you also are completely implanted in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power; and all this by the consent of the Father —

“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell”
(⁵⁰¹⁹Colossians 1:19).

Now mark, the Godhead doth not dwell in Christ Jesus for Himself only, but that it may be in a way of righteousness conveyed to us, for our comfort and help in all our wants —

“All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth,”
saith He (⁴¹⁸⁸Matthew 28:18). And then followeth,

“And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”
(⁴¹⁸⁰Matthew 28:20).

“He hath received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious”
(⁴⁹⁸⁸Psalms 68:18).

“Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace”
(⁴⁰¹⁶John 1:16).

And this the saints cannot be deprived of, because the covenant made with Christ, in every tittle of it, was so completely fulfilled as to righteousness, both active and passive, that justice cannot object anything; holiness now can find fault with nothing; nay, all the power of God cannot shake anything that hath been done for us by the Mediator of the new covenant; so that now there is no Covenant of Works to a believer; none of the commands, accusations, condemnations, or the least tittle of the old covenant to be charged on any of those that are the children of the second covenant; no sin to be charged, because there is no law to be pleaded, but

all is made up by our middle man, Jesus Christ. O blessed covenant! O blessed privilege! Be wise, therefore, O ye poor drooping souls that are the sons of this second covenant, and “stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled AGAIN,” nor terrified in your consciences, “with the yoke of bondage;” neither the commands, accusations, or condemnations of the Law of the old covenant (^{<RB0>}Galatians 5:1, 2).

Two Hell-bred objections answered.

Objection. If it be so, then one need not care what they do; they may sin and sin again, seeing Christ hath made satisfaction.

Answer. If I were to point out one that was under the power of the devil, and going post-haste to Hell, for my life I would look no farther for such a man than to him that would make such a use as this of the grace of God. What, because Christ is a Savior, thou wilt be a sinner! because His grace abounds, therefore thou wilt abound in sin! O wicked wretch! rake Hell all over, and surely I think thy fellow will scarce be found! And let me tell thee this before I leave thee — as God’s covenant with Christ for His children, which are of faith, stands sure, immutable, unrevocable, and unchangeable, so also hath God taken such a course with thee, that unless thou canst make God forswear Himself, it is impossible that thou shouldst go to Heaven, dying in that condition — “They tempted Me, proved Me,” and turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, “so I sware,” mark that, “so I sware,” and that in My wrath, too, that they should never enter into My rest. Compare ^{<RB0>}Hebrews 3:9-11, with ^{<RB0>}1 Corinthians 10:5-10. No, saith God; if Christ will not serve their turns, but they must have their sins too, take them, Devil; if Heaven will not satisfy them, take them, Hell; devour them, Hell; scald them, fry them, burn them, Hell! God hath more places than one to put sinners into. If they do not like Heaven, He will fit them with Hell; if they do not like Christ, they shall be forced to have the devil. Therefore we must and will tell of the truth of the nature of the Covenant of Grace of God to His poor saints for their encouragement and for their comfort, who would be glad to leap at Christ upon any terms; yet therewith, we can tell how, through grace, to tell the hogs and sons of this world what a hog-sty there is prepared for them, even such an one

that God hath prepared to put the devil and his angels into, is fitly prepared for them (⁴²⁵⁴Matthew 25:41).

Objection. But if Christ hath given God a full and complete satisfaction, then though I do go on in sin, I need not fear, seeing God hath already been satisfied. It will be injustice in God to punish for those sins for which He is already satisfied for by Christ.

Answer. Rebel, rebel, there are some in Christ and some out of Him.

[1]. They that are in Him have their sins forgiven, and they themselves made new creatures, and have the Spirit of the Son, which is a holy, living, self-denying Spirit. And they that are thus in Jesus Christ are so far off from delighting in sin, that sin is the greatest thing that troubleth them; and O how willing would they be rid of the very thoughts of it (⁴⁹¹³Psalm 119:113). It is the grief of their souls, when they are in a right frame of spirit, that they can live no more to the honor and glory of God than they do; and in all their prayers to God, the breathings of their souls are as much sanctifying grace as pardoning grace, that they might live a holy life. They would as willingly live holy here as they would be happy in the world to come; they would as willingly be cleansed from the filth of sin as to have the guilt of it taken away; they would as willingly glorify God here as they would be glorified by Him hereafter (³⁰⁸⁶Philippians 3:6-22).

[2]. But there are some that are out of Christ, being under the Law; and as for all those, let them be civil or profane, they are such as God accounts wicked; and I say, as for those, if all the angels in Heaven can drag them before the judgment-seat of Christ, they shall be brought before it to answer for all their ungodly deeds; and being condemned for them, if all the fire in Hell will burn them, they shall be burned there, if they die in that condition (⁶⁰¹⁵Jude 1:15). And, therefore, if you love your souls, do not give way to such a wicked spirit. "Let no man deceive you with" such "vain words," as to think, because Christ hath made satisfaction to God for sin, therefore you may live in your sins. O no, God forbid that any should think so,

"for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (⁴⁰⁸⁶Ephesians 5:6).