

## CHAPTER 10

### APPLICATION OF THE SUBJECT.

WE will now speak something by way of conclusion, and so wind up the whole.

You must remember that we have been hitherto speaking of the throne of grace, and showing what it is; that we have also been speaking of Christ's sacrifice, and how he manages his high priest's office before the throne of grace. We have also here, as you see, been speaking of the mercy that is to be obtained and grace found at this throne of grace; and of what advantage it is to us in this our pilgrimage. Now, from all this it follows, that sin is a fearful thing; for all this ado is, that men might be saved from sin. What a devil then is sin! It is the worst of devils; it is worse than all devils: those that are devils, sin has made them so; nor could any thing else have made them devils but sin. Now, I pray, what is it to be a devil, but to be under, for ever, the power and dominion of sin, an implacable spirit against God? such a one from whose implacableness all the power in heaven and earth cannot release them, because God of his justice has bound them over to judgment. These spirits are by sin carried quite away from themselves as well as from God that made them; they cannot design their own good; they cannot leave that which yet they know will be everlastingly mischievous to themselves. Sin has bound them to itself so fast, that there can be no deliverance for them, but by the Son of God; who also has refused them, and left them to themselves, and to the judgment which they have deserved. Sin also has got a victory over man; has made him an enemy to God, and to his own salvation; has caught him, captivated him, carried away his mind, and will, and heart, from God; and made him choose to be vain, and to run the hazard of eternal damnation, with rejoicing and delight. But God left not man where he left those wicked spirits, namely, under the everlasting chains of darkness, reserved unto judgment; but devised means for their ransom, and reconciliation to himself; which is the thing that has been discoursed of in the foregoing part of this book. But, I say, what a thing is sin! what a devil, and master of devils is it, that it should, where it takes hold, so hang, that nothing can unclench its hold, but the mercy of God and the heart-blood of his dear Son! Oh, the fretting, eating, infecting, defiling, and poisonous nature of sin, that it should so eat into our flesh and spirit, body and soul, and so stain us with its vile and stinking nature; yea it has almost turned man into the nature of itself; insomuch that sometimes, when nature is mentioned, sin is meant; and when sin is mentioned, nature is meant.

Wherefore, sin is a fearful thing; a thing to be lamented, a thing to be abhorred, a thing to be fled from with more astonishment and trembling, than one would fly from any devil; because it is the worst of things, and that without which nothing can be bad; and because where it takes hold, it so fasteneth, that nothing, as I have said, can release whom it has made a captive, but the mercy of God, and the heart-blood of his dear Son. Oh, what a thing is sin!

As by what hath been said, sin appears to be exceeding sinful; so, from hence it also follows, that the soul is a precious thing: for you must know all this is for the redemption of the soul. "The redemption of the soul is precious." I say it is for the redemption of the soul: it was for this that Christ was made a priest, a sacrifice an altar, a throne of grace; yea, sin, a curse, and what not, that was necessary for our deliverance from sin, and death, and everlasting damnation.

He that would know what a soul is, let him read in letters of blood the price and purchase of the soul. It was not for a light, a little, an inconsiderate thing, that Christ Jesus underwent what he suffered, when he was in the world, and gave himself a ransom for souls. No, no: the soul is a great, a vastly great thing, notwithstanding it is so little set by of some. Some prefer any thing that they fancy, above the soul; a slut, a lie, a pot of liquor, an act of fraudulency, the swing of a prevailing passion; any thing shall be preferred when the occasion offereth itself. If Christ had set as little by souls, as some men do, he had never left his Father's bosom, and the glory that he had with him; he had never so humbled himself, so given himself to punishment, affliction, and sorrow, and made himself so an object of scorn, and contempt, and reproach as he did, and all that the souls of sinners might live a life in glory with him.

But methinks this is the mystery of all as to this, that the soul should take that pains, contrive such ways, and take such advantages against itself, for it is the soul that sins, that the soul might die. Oh! sin, what art thou! What hast thou done! and what still wilt thou further do, if mercy, and blood, and grace do not prevent thee! Oh, silly soul! what a fool has sin made of thee! what an ass art thou become to sin! that ever an immortal soul, at first made in the image of God, for God, and for his delight, should so degenerate from its first station, and so abase itself that it might serve sin, as to become the devil's ape, and to play like a Jack Pudding for him upon any stage or theater in the world!

But I recall myself; for, if sin make one who was some time a glorious angel in heaven, now so to abuse himself as to become, to appearance, as a filthy frog, a toad, a rat, a cat, a fly, a mouse, a dog, or bitch's whelp, to

serve its ends upon poor mortals, that it might gull them of everlasting life; no marvel if the soul is so beguiled as to sell itself from God and all good, for so poor a nothing, as a momentary pleasure is. But,

If sin and the soul are such great things, then behold the love and care of God — the love to souls, the care he hath taken to deliver them from sin. Sin, as I have said, is such a thing as from which no man can deliver himself. The soul is such a thing, so rich and valuable in the nature of it, that scarce one in twenty thousand counts of it as they should. But God, the lover of mankind, and the greatest enemy to sin, has provided means effectually to overthrow the one, and to save and secure the other. Behold, therefore, the love of God, the care of God for us; for when we neither loved nor cared for ourselves, God both loved us and cared for us. God commended his love toward us, in sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Let it be then concluded, that God is love, and that the love that God hath to us is such as we never had for ourselves. We have been often tried about our own love to ourselves; and it has been proved over and over, that sometimes even we that are Christians could, and would, if it had been possible, have pawned ourselves, our souls, and our interest in Christ, for a foul and beastly lust. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, would not suffer it so to be. Now, if we are so fickle and uncertain in our love to ourselves, as to value our salvation at so low and so base a rate, can it be imagined that ever we should, had it been left to our choice, have given the best of what we have for the salvation of our souls?

Yet God gave his Son to be the Savior of the world. I say again, if our love is so slender to our own souls, can any think that it should be more full to the souls of others? And yet God had such love to us, as to give his only begotten Son for our sins. Yet again, how should it be, that we, who are usually so affected with the conceit of our own happiness, since we care no more for our own souls, should do our best to secure the souls of others? And yet God, who is infinitely above all creatures, has so condescended, as to concern himself, and to give the best of his flock, even his only beloved Son, for very dust and ashes. Wherefore, herein is love, not that we loved God, or our neighbor, but that God loved us, and gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.

Is sin so vile a thing? is the soul so precious a thing? and is God's love and care of the salvation of the souls of sinners, infinitely greater than is their own care for their own souls? Then this should teach those concerned to blush, to blush, I say, and to cover their faces with shame. There is nothing,

that I know of, that more becomes a sinner, than blushing and shame doth; for he is the harbinger, the nurse, and the nourisher of that vile thing called *sin*; that so great an enemy of God, and that so great an enemy to the soul. It becomes him, also, if he consider what a creature God has made him, and how little he hath set by his own creation, and by the matter of which God hath made his soul. Let him also consider unto what base things he has stooped and prostrated himself, while things infinitely better have stood by and offered themselves unto him freely; yea, how he has cast that God that made him, and his Son that came to redeem him, quite behind his back, and before their faces embraced, loved, and devoted himself unto him that seeks nothing but the damnation of his soul.

Ah, Lord! when will foolish man be wise, and come to God with his hands upon his head, and with his face covered with shame, to ask of him forgiveness for that wickedness which he has committed? which is wickedness committed not only against holiness and justice, against which also men by nature have an antipathy, but against mercy and love, without which man cannot tell what to do.

Blush, sinner, blush! Ah, that thou hadst grace to blush! But this is God's complaint, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush." It is a sad thing that men should be thus void of consideration; and yet they are so. They are at a continual jest with God and his word, with the devil and sin, with hell and judgment. Ah, they will be in earnest one day; but that one day will be too late!

Is it so, that God, though sin is so fearful a thing, has prepared an effectual remedy against it, and purposed to save us from the evil and damning effects thereof? Then this should beget thankfulness in the hearts of the godly, for they are made partakers of this grace. I say, it should beget thankfulness in thy heart. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift," said the Apostle, when he seriously thought of that which was much inferior to what we have been discoursing of. That was about men's willingness to do good; this is about God's. That was about men's willingness to give money to poor saints; this about God's willingness to give Christ Jesus his Son to the world. It was the thought of this redemption and salvation that made David say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy name."

Oh! they that are partakers of redeeming grace, and that have a throne of grace, (a covenant of grace,) and a Christ that is the Son of God's love, to come to, and to live by, should be a thankful people. "By him, therefore, let

us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually giving thanks to his name.”

How many obligations has God laid upon his people, to give thanks to him at every remembrance of his holiness!

And to help you do this, study the priesthood, the high priesthood of Jesus Christ, both the first and second part thereof. ‘The first part was that, when he offered up himself without the gate, when he bare our sins in his own body on the tree. The second part is that which he executeth there whither he is now gone, even in heaven itself, where the throne of grace is. I say, study what Christ has done, and is doing. Oh! what is he doing now? He is sprinkling his blood, with his priestly robes on, before the throne of grace. That is too little thought on by the saints of God. “We have such an High Priest, who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord, pitched, and not man.” Busy thyself, fellow Christian, about this blessed office of Christ. It is full of good, it is full of sweet, it is full of heaven, it is full of relief and succor for the tempted and dejected; wherefore, I say again, study these things, give thyself wholly to them.

Since God has prepared himself a lamb, a sacrifice, a priest, a throne of grace, and has bid thee come to him; come to him as there sitting — come, come boldly, as he bids thee. What better warrant canst thou have to come, than to be bid to come of God? When the good man himself bids the beggar come to his house, then he may come boldly; the consideration of the invitation doth encourage. That we have a friend at court, should also make us come boldly. Jesus, as has been showed, as sacrifice and High Priest, is there, in whom we may “have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith of him.” Again, “By him also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Again, “We have boldness, brethren, to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.”

What can be more plain, more encouraging, more comfortable to them that would obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need?

It is a dishonor to God, disadvantage to thee, and an encouragement to Satan, when thou hangest back and seemest afraid to come boldly to the throne of grace. “Let us, therefore, draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works.”