

A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL

JOHN BUNYAN



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by John Bunyan

A Few Sighs From Hell or "**The Groans of the Damned Soul**" by that poor and contemptible servant of Jesus Christ, *John Bunyan*, 1658. Being an exposition of Luke 16:19-31, concerning the *Rich Man* and the *Beggar*, wherein is revealed the lamentable state of the Damned — their cries, and their desires in their distresses, with the determined judgment of God upon them. A good warning word to sinners, both old and young, to seek salvation by faith in Jesus Christ — lest they come into the same place of torment!

Also, a brief discourse touching the profitableness of the Scriptures for our instruction in the way of righteousness, according to the tendency of the parable.

"The wicked shall be tuned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God."
Psalm 9:17

"And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:15

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THE AUTHOR TO THE READER

Friend, because it is a dangerous thing to be walking towards the place of darkness and anguish; and again, because it is the journey that *most* of the poor souls in the world are taking, and that with delight and gladness, as if there was the only happiness to be found — I have therefore thought it my duty, being made sensible of the danger that will befall those who walk therein — for the preventing of you, O you poor man or woman! to tell you, by opening this parable, what sad success those souls have had,

and are also likely to have, who have been, or shall be found persevering therein.

We use to count him a friend, who will forewarn his neighbor of the danger, when he knows thereof, and also sees that the way his neighbor is walking in, leads right thereto, especially when we think that our neighbor may be either ignorant or careless of his way. Why *friend*, it may be, nay twenty to one, but you have walked, ever since you did come into the world, with your back towards Heaven, and your face towards Hell; and you, it may be, either through *ignorance* or *carelessness*, which is as bad, if not worse, have been running full hastily that way ever since! Why friend? I beseech you put a little *stop* to your mad race, and take a view of what treatment you will have, if you do in deed persist in this your dreadful course. Friend, your way leads 'down to death,' and your 'steps take hold on Hell' (Prov 5:5). It may be, that the path indeed is *pleasant to the flesh* — but the *end* thereof will be bitter to your soul. Hearken! Do you not hear the bitter cries of those who have recently died, saying: 'Let him dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame!' (Luke 16:24). Do you not hear them say: 'Send someone out from the dead — to prevent my father, my brother, and my father's house, from coming into this place of torment!' Shall not then these mournful groans pierce your *flinty heart*? Will you stop your ears, and shut your eyes? And will you not regard this solemn warning?

Take warning and stop your mad journey, before it be too late! Will you be like the *silly fly* — which is not quiet unless she is either entangled in the spider's web, or burned in the candle? Will you be like the *bird* that hastens to the snare of the fowler? Will you be like that *simple one* named in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, who will be drawn to the slaughter by the *cord of a silly lust*?

O sinner, sinner, there are better things than Hell to be had, and at a cheaper rate by the thousandth part! O! there is no comparison! There is Heaven, there is God, there is Christ, there is communion with an innumerable company of saints and angels. Hear the message then that God sends, that Christ sends, that saints bring, nay, that the dead send unto you: 'I beg you, therefore, that you would send him to my father's house! If one went unto them from the dead — they would repent!'

'How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning? And fools hate knowledge? Turn at my reproof!' 'Behold,' says God, 'I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.' I say, hear this voice, O silly one, and turn and live, O sinful soul, lest he make you hear that other saying — 'But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you!' (Prov 1:14-27).

O poor soul, If God and Christ invited you for your harm, it would be another matter; then if you did refuse, you might have some excuse to make, or fault to find, and ground to make delays. But this is for your profit, for your advantage, for the pardoning of your sins, the salvation of your soul, the delivering of you from Hell fire, from the wrath to come, from everlasting burnings — into favor with God, Christ, and communion with all happiness — that is so indeed.

But it may be you will say, All that has been spoken to in this discourse is but a *parable*, and parables are no *realities*. I answer with this answer, That though it is a parable — yet it is a truth, and not a lie; and you shall find it so too, to your cost — if you shall be found a sligher of God, Christ, and the salvation of your own soul.

But secondly, know for certain, that the things *signified* by parables are wonderful realities. O what a glorious reality was there signified by that parable, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea,' etc. Signifying, that sinners of all sorts, of all nations, should be brought into God's kingdom, by the *net of the gospel*. And O! how real a thing shall the other part thereof be, when it is fulfilled, which says, And 'when it was full they drew to shore, and gathered the good into vessels — but cast the bad away' (Matt 13:47,48). Signifying the mansions of glory that the saints would have, and also the rejection that God will give to the ungodly, and to sinners.

And also that parable, what a glorious reality is there in it, which says, 'Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and dies — it abides alone; but if it dies — it brings forth much fruit' (John 12:24). To signify that unless Jesus Christ did indeed spill his blood, and die the cursed death — he should abide alone; that is, have never a soul into glory with him. But if he died, he should bring forth much fruit — that is, save many sinners.

And also how real a truth there was in that parable concerning the Jews putting Christ to death, which the poor dispersed Jews can best experience to their cost; for they have been almost ever since, a banished people, and such as have had God's sore displeasure wonderfully manifested against them, according to the truth of the parable (Matt 21:33-41).

O therefore, for Jesus Christ's sake, do not slight the truth, because it is revealed in a parable! For by this argument you may also, nay, you will slight almost all the things that our Lord Jesus Christ taught; for he spoke them for the most part — in parables. Why should it be said of you as it is said of some, 'These things are spoken to those who are outside 'in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand?' (Luke 8:10). I say, take heed of being a quarreler against Christ's parables, lest Christ also object against the salvation of your soul at the judgment day!

Friend, I have no more to say to you now. If you do love me, pray for me, that my God would not forsake me, nor take his Holy Spirit from me; and that God would fit me to do and suffer what shall be from the world or devil inflicted upon me. I must tell you, the world rages, they stamp and shake their heads at me; the Lord help me to take all they shall do with patience; and when they smite the one cheek, to turn the other to them, that I may do as Christ has bidden me; for then the Spirit of God, and of glory, shall rest upon me. Farewell.

I am yours, if you be not ashamed to own me, because of my low and contemptible place in the world.

John Bunyan

Luke 16:19-31, concerning the *Rich Man* and the *Beggar*

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things — but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead!'" Luke 16:19-31

This Scripture was not spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to show you the state of two individual people only, as some, through ignorance of the drift of Christ in His parables, dream; but to show you the state of all the godly and ungodly to the end of the world. This is clear to him who is of

an understanding heart. For He spoke these words to the end that later generations should take notice thereof, and fear, lest they also fall into the same dreadful condition.

In my discourse upon these words I shall not be tedious; but as briefly as I may, I shall pass through the several verses and lay down some of the various truths contained therein. May the Lord grant that they be profitable, and of great advantage to those who read them or hear them read. I shall not spend much time upon verses 19–20 — but shall only give you three or four short hints, and so pass to the next verses, for they are the words I intend most especially to dwell upon.

Verses 19–20 run thus: 'There was a rich man who would dress in purple and fine linen, feasting lavishly every day. But a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, was left at his gate.'

If only these two verses had been spoken by Jesus Christ, nearly all the world would have cast a wrong interpretation on them. If Jesus had said only this much, the world would have made this conclusion: 'Then the *rich* man was certainly the *happy* man.'

For at first view it represents such a thing; but take all together, that is, read the whole parable, and you shall find that there is no man in a *worse* condition than he, as I shall clearly hold forth afterward.

Again, if a man would judge men according to *outward appearances*, he shall oftentimes miss his mark. Here is a man who, to outward appearances, appears as the only blessed man — better by far than the beggar, inasmuch as he is rich — and the beggar poor; he is well clothed — but the beggar is nearly naked; he feasted lavishly every day — but the beggar would be glad to have dog's food. 'He desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.' The rich man feasted lavishly every day — but the beggar is glad for a *bit* when he can get it.

Oh, who would not be in the rich man's state? A wealthy man, with all sorts of *new suits* and *dainty dishes* every day, has enough to make one who minds nothing but his *belly*, his *back*, and his *lusts* to say, 'Oh, that I were in that man's condition! Oh, that I had as much as that man has!

Then I would live a life indeed; then I would have heart's ease aplenty; then I would live pleasantly, and might say to my soul, 'Soul, be of good cheer; eat, drink, and be merry. You have everything aplenty, and are in a most blessed condition.'

This is the conclusion with those who judge according to outward appearances. But if the whole parable is well considered, you will see that that which is held in high estimation with men — is an abomination in the sight of God.

And John 16:20–22 shows that the *saddest* condition, according to outward appearances, is oftentimes the most *excellent* one; for the beggar had ten thousand times the best of it, though, to outward appearances, his state was the saddest.

From this we observe that those who judge according to outward appearances, for the most part, judge amiss (John 7:24). Those who look upon their outward enjoyments as tokens of God's special grace to them, are also deceived (Revelation 3:17). For here in the parable, a *man of wealth* and a *child of the devil* may be the same person; a man may have an abundance of outward enjoyments — and yet be carried by the devils into eternal burnings! (Luke 12:20).

This is the *trap* in which the devil has caught many thousands of poor souls, namely by getting them to judge according to outward appearances, or according to God's outward blessings. Ask a poor, carnal, covetous wretch — how we should know a man to be in a happy state, and he will answer, 'Those whom God blesses and gives an abundance of this world to.' Yet, for the most part, they are the *cursed* men. Alas! Poor men, they are so ignorant as to think that because a man is increased in outward things — therefore God loves that man with a special love, or else He would never do so much for him, never bless him so, and prosper the work of his hands.

Ah! Poor soul, it is the *rich* man who goes to Hell. 'The rich man died, and *in Hell* [mark it, 'in Hell'] he lifted up his eyes.' To see how the great ones of the world go *strutting* up and down the streets, makes me wonder. Surely they look upon themselves to be the only happy men; but it is

because they judge according to outward appearances. They look upon themselves to be the only blessed men, when the Lord knows the generality are left out of that blessed condition. 'Not many *wise* men after the flesh, not many *mighty*, not many *noble* are called' (1 Corinthians 1:26).

Ah! If they who now so brag that nobody dares scarcely look on them did but believe this, it would make them hang down their heads and cry, 'Oh, give me Lazarus' portion!' I might here enlarge very much — but I shall not. I shall only say to you who have much of this world, take care that you do not have *your portion* in this world. Take heed that it is not said to you hereafter, when you would very willingly have Heaven, 'Remember that in your lifetime you had your good things — in your lifetime you had your portion' (see Psalm 17:14).

And friend, who seeks after this world and desires riches — let me ask this question: Would you be content that God should put you off with a portion of *this* life? Would you be glad to be kept out of Heaven, and go to Hell — with a well-clothed back and a belly filled with the dainties of this world? Would you be glad to have all your good things in your lifetime, to have your *Heaven* last no longer than while you live in this world? Would you be willing to be deprived of eternal happiness and felicity?

If you say *no* — then have a care of the world and your sins; have a care of desiring to be a rich man — lest your table be made a snare to you (Psalm 69:22); lest the wealth of this world bars you out of glory. For, as the apostle says, 'Those who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition!' (1 Timothy 6:9).

These *two men* here spoken of, hold forth to us the state of the *godly* and *ungodly*. The *beggar* holds forth the state of the godly — and the *rich man* holds forth the state the ungodly.

'There was a *certain* rich man.' But why are the ungodly held forth under the notion of a *rich man*?

First, because Christ would not have them look too high, as I said before

— but that those who have riches should be concerned that their riches are not *all* their portion (James 1:10–12; 1 Timothy 6:17).

Second, because rich men are most liable to the devil's temptations: they are most ready to be puffed up with pride, worldliness, and the cares of this world — in which things they spend most of their time in lusts, drunkenness, immorality, idleness, together with the other works of the flesh — for which things the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience! (Colossians 3:6).

Third, because He would comfort the hearts of His own people, who are most commonly of the *poorer sort*. God has chosen the poor, despised, and base things of this world (1 Corinthians 1:26). Should God have set the *rich* man in the *blessed* state — then His children would have concluded that they, being poor, had no share in the life to come. Again, had not God given such a discovery of the miserable condition of those who are for the most part rich men — we would have concluded that the rich are absolutely the blessed men.

Nay, albeit the Lord Himself so evidently declares that the rich ones of the world are, for the most part, in the most miserable condition — yet they, through *unbelief* or *presumption*, harden themselves and seek for the riches of this world — as though the Lord Jesus Christ did not mean what He said, or else that He will say *more* than shall assuredly come to pass!

But let such know that the Lord has a time to *fulfill* — what He had time to *declare*, for the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).

The Lord does not mean that those who are ungodly are rich in the world, and no others shall be damned — for then all those who are poor — yet graceless and vain men, must be saved and delivered from eternal vengeance, which would be contrary to the Word of God, which says that together with the kings of the earth, the great men, the chief captains, and the mighty men — there are bondmen or servants, and slaves, who cry out at the appearance of the Almighty God, and His Son Jesus Christ, to judgment (Revelation 6:15).

So that, though Christ says, 'There was a *certain* rich man,' yet you must understand that He means *all the ungodly* — rich or poor. Nay, if you will not understand it so now — then you shall understand it to be so meant at the day of Christ's second coming, when all who are ungodly shall stand at the left hand of Christ with *pale faces* and *guilty consciences* — with the vials of the Almighty's wrath ready to be poured out upon them! Thus much regarding verse 19.

Verse 20: 'And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores.' This verse chiefly holds forth these things: The saints of God are a poor, contemptible people.

'There was a *certain beggar*.' If you understand the word 'beggar' to hold forth outward poverty, or scarcity in outward things — such are the saints of the Lord; for they are, for the most part, a poor, despised, contemptible people. But if you allegorize it and interpret it thus, they are such as beg earnestly for Heavenly food, this is also the spirit of the children of God. And it may be, and is a truth in this sense, though not as naturally gathered from this Scripture.

That 'he was laid at his gate, *full of sores*.' These words hold forth the *distempers* of believers. Saying that he was *full of sores* may signify the many troubles, temptations, persecutions, and afflictions in body and spirit which they meet withal while they are in the world — but also the treatment they find at the hands of those ungodly ones who live upon the earth. Whereas it is said that he was 'laid at his gate, full of sores.' Mark it: he was laid at his *gate*, not in his *house* — that was thought too good for him. But he was 'laid at his gate, full of sores.'

From here observe that the ungodly world does not desire to entertain and receive the poor saints of God into their houses. If they must be somewhere near them — yet they shall not come into their *houses* — but will be shut out of doors. If they need to be near us, let them be at the *gate*. Observe that the world is not at all touched with the afflictions of God's children, for they are all full of sores. They are a despised, afflicted, tempted, and persecuted people whom the world does not pity, no — but rather will labor to aggravate their trouble by shutting them out of doors. If they sink or swim — what does the world care? The world is resolved to

disown them; they will give them no entertainment. If lying down in the streets will do them any good, if hard usage will do them any good, if to be disowned, rejected, and shut out of doors by the world will do them any good — they shall have enough of that — but otherwise no refreshment, no comfort from the world. And he 'was laid at his gate, full of sores.'

Verse 21: 'And he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; the dogs came also and licked his sores.' By these words our Lord Jesus shows us the *frame of a Christian's heart*, and also the heart and behavior of worldly men towards the saints of the Lord. The Christian's heart is held forth by this, that *anything will content him* while he is on this side of glory: 'he desired to be fed with the crumbs,' — with dogs' food, with anything. A Christian will be content with anything if he can keep life and soul together. He is content; he is satisfied; he has learned — if he has learned to be a Christian — to be content with anything. As Paul says, 'I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content' (Philippians 4:11).

He learns in all conditions to study to love God, to walk with God, to give up himself to God; and if the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table will satisfy nature and give him bodily strength, so that thereby he may be the more able to walk in the way of God — then he is content.

And he '*desired* to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.' But mark it: he did not *have* them. You do not find that he had so much as a crumb or a scrap allowed unto him. No, those must be preserved for the dogs! From whence observe that the ungodly world love their *dogs* better than the *children of God*. You will say, 'That is strange.' It is so indeed — yet it is true, as will be clearly manifested.

For instance, how many pounds do some men spend in a year on their *dogs*, when in the meanwhile the poor saints of God may starve for hunger? They will build houses for their dogs, when the saints must wander and lodge in dens and caves of the earth (Hebrews 11:38). And if saints are in any of their houses for the hire thereof, they will eject them or pull the house down over their heads, rather than not rid themselves of such tenants. Some men cannot go half a mile from home, but they must

have dogs at their heels; but they can very willingly go half a score miles without the society of a Christian. Nay, if when they are busy with their dogs, they should chance to meet a Christian, they would willingly be rid of him if they could. They will go on the other side of the hedge or the way, rather than have any society with him; and if at any time a child of God should come into a house where there are but two or three ungodly wretches, they commonly wish either themselves or the saint out of doors.

And why is it so? Because they cannot find any pleasure in the society of a Christian; though if there should come in at the same time a dog, or a drunken, swearing wretch (which is worse than a dog), they will make him welcome. He shall sit down with them and partake of their dainties. And now tell me, you who love your sins and your pleasures — would you not rather keep company with a drunkard, a swearer, a strumpet, a thief, nay, a dog — than an honest-hearted Christian? If you say *no* — then what does your sour behavior to the people of God mean? Why do you look on them as if you would eat them up? Yet at the very same time, if you can but meet your dog or a drunken companion, you fawn upon them, take acquaintance with them, and go to the tavern or ale-house with them two or three times a week.

But if the saints of God meet together, pray together, and labor to edify one another, you will stay until doomsday before you will look into the house where they are. Ah, friends, when all comes to all — you will be found to love drunkards, harlots, dogs, anything, nay, to serve the devil himself — rather than to have loving and friendly society with the saints of God!

Moreover, 'the dogs came and licked his sores.' Here again you may see not only the *afflicted state* of the saints of God in this world — but also that even dogs themselves, according to their kind, are more favorable to the saints than the sinful world. Though the ungodly will have no mercy on the saints — yet it is ordered so that these creatures will. Though the rich man would not entertain him into his house — yet his dogs came and did the best good they could, even to lick his running sores.

It was thus with Daniel when the world was mad against him, and would

have him thrown to the lions to be devoured. The lions shut their mouths at him, or rather the Lord shut them up, so that the harm did not befall him, which was desired by his adversaries (Daniel 6).

As I said before, I am persuaded that, at the day of judgment, many men's conditions and behaviors will be so laid open that it will be evident that they have been very merciless toward the children of God, insomuch that when the providence of God fell out so as to cross their expectations, they have been very much offended thereat, as is very evidently seen in them who set themselves to study how to bring the saints into bondage, and to thrust them into corners, as in these late years (Psalm 31:13). And because God has, in His goodness, ordered things otherwise, they have gnashed their teeth thereat.

Hence, then, let the saints learn not to commit themselves to their enemies. 'Beware of men' (Matthew 10:17). They are very merciless men, and will not so much favor you, if they can help it, as you may suppose they may. Nay, unless the overruling hand of God in goodness orders things contrary to their natural inclination — they will not even show you as much favor as a dog!

Verse 22. 'And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried.'

The *former* verses do briefly hold forth the *behavior* of the ungodly in this life toward the saints. Now this verse holds forth the *departure*, both of the godly and ungodly, out of this life.

Where he said, 'And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried into Abraham's bosom,' and 'the rich man also died'; the *beggar* died, that represents the *godly*; and the *rich* man died, that represents the *ungodly*. From whence observe, neither godly nor ungodly must live always without a change, either by death or judgment; the good man died and the bad man died. That scripture also backs this truth marvelously well, that good and bad must die, where it is said, 'And it is appointed unto men once to die — but after this the judgment' (Heb 9:27).

Mark, he does not say it is so that men *by chance* may die; which might beget, in the hearts of the ungodly especially, some hope to escape the bitterness of it. But he says it is a thing most certain, it is *appointed*; mark, 'it is *appointed* unto men once to die — but after this the judgment.' God has decreed it, that since men have fallen from that happy estate that God at the first did set them in — they shall die (Rom 6:23).

Now when it is said the beggar died and the rich man died, part of the meaning is they ceased to be any more in this world; I say *partly* the meaning — but not altogether. Though it be altogether the meaning when some of the creatures die — yet it is but in part the meaning when it is said that men, women, or children die; for there is to them something else to be said, more than barely agoing out of the world. For if when unregenerate men and women die, that was the end of them, not only in this world but also in the world to come — they would be happy. But when ungodly men and women die, there is that to come after death that will be very terrible to them, namely, to be carried by the angels of darkness from their death-beds unto Hell — there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day, when both body and soul shall meet and be united together again, and made capable to undergo the uttermost vengeance of the Almighty to all eternity.

Now if this one truth, that men must die and depart this world, and either enter into eternal joy or else into the infernal prison, to be reserved to the day of judgment, were believed — we would not have so many wantons walk up and down the streets as there do, at least it would put a mighty check to their filthy behaviors, so that they would not, could not walk so basely and sinfully as they do.

Belshazzar, notwithstanding he was so far from the fear of God as he was — yet when he did but see that God was offended and threatened him for his wickedness, it made him hang down his head and knock his knees together (Dan 5:5,6). If you read the verses before you will find he was careless, and satisfying his lusts in drinking and playing the adulterer with his concubines. But so soon as he did perceive the finger of a handwriting, 'then,' says the scripture, 'the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed,

and his knees smote one against another.'

And when Paul told *Felix* of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come — it make him tremble. And let me tell you, soul, whoever you are, that if you did but truly believe that you must die and come into the judgment — it would make you turn over a new leaf. But this is the misery, the devil labors by all means as to keep out other things that are good, so to keep out of the heart, as much as in him lies, the thoughts of passing from this life into another world; for he knows, if he can but keep them from the serious thoughts of death, he shall the more easily keep them in their sins, and so from closing with Jesus Christ; as Job says, 'Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.' Which makes them say to God, 'Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of your ways' (Job 21:14).

Because there is no fear of death and judgment to come, therefore they put off God and his ways, and spend their days in their sins, and in a moment, that is, before they are aware — they go down to the grave (Job 21:17). And thus it fared also with the man spoken of in Luke 12:20. The man, instead of thinking of death, he thought how he might make his barns bigger. But, in the midst of his business in the world, he lost his soul before he was aware, supposing that death had been many years off. But God said unto him, 'You fool,' you trouble yourself about things of this life, you put off the thoughts of departing this world, when this night your soul shall be taken from you; or, this night, they, that is, the devil, will fetch away your soul from you!

And here it comes to pass, men's not being exercised with the thoughts of departing this life, that they are, so unexpectedly to themselves and their neighbors, taken away from the pleasures and profits, yes, and all the enjoyments they busy themselves withal while they live in this world. And hence it is again, that you have some in your towns and cities that are so suddenly taken away, some from haunting the ale-houses, others from haunting the whore-houses, others from playing and gaming, others from the cares and covetous desires after this world, unlooked for as by themselves or their companions.

It is because they do so little consider both the transitoriness of

themselves and their neighbors. For had they but their thoughts well exercised about the *shortness* of this life, and the *danger* that will befall such as do miss of the Lord Jesus Christ — it would make them more wary and sober, and spend more time in the service of God, and be more delighted and diligent in inquiring after the Lord Jesus, who is the deliverer 'from the wrath to come' (1 Thess 1:10). For, as I said before, it is evident, that those who live after the flesh in the lusts thereof, do not really and seriously think on death, and the judgment that follows after: neither do they indeed endeavor so to do; for did they, it would make them say with holy Job, 'All the days of my appointed time, will I wait until my change comes' (Job 14:14).

And as I said before, that not only the *wicked* — but also the *godly* have their time to depart this life. And the *beggar* died. The saints of the Lord must be deprived of this life also, they must yield up the spirit into the hands of the Lord their God; they must also be separated from their wives, children, husbands, friends, goods, and all that they have in the world. For God has decreed it; it is appointed, namely, by the Lord, for men once to die, and 'we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,' 2 Corinthian 5:10, 11.

But it may be objected, if the godly die as well as the wicked, and if the saints must appear before the judgment as well as the sinners, then what advantage have the godly more than the ungodly, and how can the saints be in a better condition than the wicked?

Answer. Read the 22nd verse over again, and you will find a marvelous difference between them, as much as is between Heaven and Hell, everlasting joy and everlasting torments; for you find, that when the *beggar* died, who represents the *godly*, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, or into everlasting joy. But the *ungodly* are not so — but are hurried by the devils into the bottomless pit, drawn away in their wickedness (Prov 14:32), 'And in Hell, he lifted up his eyes.' When the ungodly die — their misery begins, for then appear the devils, like so many lions, waiting every moment until the soul departs from the body. Sometimes they are very visible to the dying party, but sometimes more invisible; but always this is certain, they never miss of the soul if it dies out of the Lord Jesus Christ; but carry it away to the infernal prison, as I

said before, there to be tormented and reserved until that great day of judgment, at which day they must, body and soul, receive a final sentence from the righteous Judge, and from that time be shut out from the presence of God, into everlasting woe and distress!

But the godly, when the time of their departure is at hand, then also are the angels of the Lord at hand; yes, they are ready waiting upon the soul to conduct it safe into Abraham's bosom. I do not say but the devils are oftentimes very busy doubtless, and attending the saints in their sickness: ay, and no question but they would willingly deprive the soul of glory. But here is the comfort, as the devils come from Hell to devour the soul, if it be possible, at its departure — so the angels of the Lord come from Heaven, to watch over and conduct the soul, in spite of the devil, safe into Abraham's bosom.

David had the comfort of this, and speaks it forth for the comfort of his brethren (Psalm 34:7), saying, 'The angel of the Lord encamps round about those who fear him, and delivers them.' Mark, the angel of the Lord encamps round about his children, to deliver them. From what? From their enemies, of which the devil is not the least. This is an excellent comfort at any time, to have the holy angels of God to attend a poor man or woman; but especially it is comfortable in the time of distress, at the time of death, when the devils beset the soul with all the power that Hell can afford them.

But now it may be, that the glorious angels of God do not appear at the first, to the view of the soul; nay, rather Hell stands before it, and the devils ready, as if they would carry it there. But this is the comfort, the angels do always appear at the last, and will not fail the soul — but will carry it safe into Abraham's bosom.

Ah friends, consider: here is an ungodly man upon his death-bed, and he has none to speak for him, none to speak comfort unto him; but it is not so with the children of God, for they have the Spirit to comfort them. Here is the ungodly, and they have no Christ to pray for their safe conduct to glory; but the saints have an intercessor (John 17:9). Here is the world, when they die, they have none of the angels of God to attend upon them; but the saints have their company. In a word, the

unconverted person, when he dies, he sinks into the bottomless pit; but the saints, when they die, ascend with, and by the angels, into Abraham's bosom, or into *unspeakable glory* (Luke 23:43).

Again, it is said, that the rich man when he died, was buried or put into the earth; but when the beggar died, he was carried by the angels into *Abraham's bosom*. The one is a very excellent style, where he says he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom: it denotes the excellent condition of the saints of God, as I said before; and not only so — but also the preciousness of the death of the saints in the eyes of the Lord (Psalm 116:15). That after-generations may see how precious in the sight of the Lord the death of his saints is, when he says they are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

Thus many times the Lord adorns the death and departure of his saints, to hold forth unto after-generations, how excellent they are in his eyes. It is said of Enoch, that God took him; of Abraham, that he died in a good old age; of Moses, that the Lord buried him; of Elijah, that he was taken up into Heaven; that the saints sleep in Jesus; that they die in the Lord; that they *rest* from their labor, that their works follow them; that they are under the altar; that they are with Christ; that they are in light; that they are to come with the Lord Jesus to judge the world. All which sayings signify thus much — that to die a saint is very great honor and dignity.

But the ungodly are not so. The ungodly die and are *buried*; he is carried from his dwelling — to the grave, and there he is buried, hidden in the dust; and his *body* does not so fast moulder and come to nothing there — but his *name* rots as fast in the world, as says the holy scripture: 'The name of the wicked shall rot' (Prov 10:7). And indeed, the names of the godly are not in so much honor after their departure — but the wicked and their names do as much rot. What a dishonor to posterity was the death of Balaam, Agag, Ahithophel, Haman, Judas, Herod, with the rest of their companions?

Thus the wicked have their names written in the earth, and they perish and rot; and the name of the saints do cast forth a dainty savor to following generations; and that the Lord Jesus signifies where he says the godly are 'carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom'; and that the

wicked are nothing worth — where he says the ungodly die and are buried.

Verse 23. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.'

The former verse speaks only of the departure of the ungodly out of this life, together with the glorious conduct that the godly have into the kingdom of their Father. Now our Lord shows, in this verse, partly what does and shall befall to the reprobate after this life is ended, where he says, 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.' That is, the ungodly, after they depart this life — lift up their eyes in Hell.

From these words, may be observed these things:

First. That there is a Hell for souls to be tormented in, when this life is ended. Mark, after he was dead and buried, 'In Hell, where he was in torment.'

Second. That all who are ungodly, and live and die in their sins, so soon as ever they die — they go into Hell: 'The rich man also died and was buried. In Hell, where he was in torment.'

Third. That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins, that they scarcely know where they are, until they come into Hell. And that I gather from these words, 'In Hell he lifted up his eyes.' He was asleep before — but Hell makes him lift up his eyes.

[First.] As I said before, it is evident that there is a Hell for souls, yes, and bodies too, to be tormented in after they depart this life, as is clear, first, because the Lord Jesus Christ, who cannot lie, said that after the sinner was dead and buried, 'In Hell he lifted up his eyes.'

Now if it be objected that by *Hell* is here meant the *grave*, that I plainly deny:

1. Because there the body is not sensible of torment or ease; but in that Hell into which the spirits of the damned depart, they are sensible of torment, and would very willingly be freed from it, to enjoy ease, which

they are sensible of the lack of; as is clearly discovered in this parable, 'Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.'

2. It is not meant the grave — but some other place, because the bodies, so long as they lie there, are not capable of lifting up their eyes, to see the glorious condition of the children of God, as the souls of the damned do. 'In Hell he lifted up his eyes.'

3. It cannot be the grave, for then it must follow that the soul was buried there with the body, which cannot stand with such a dead state as is here mentioned; for he says, 'The rich man died'; that is, his soul was separated from his body. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.'

If it be again objected that there is no Hell but in this life; that I do also deny, as I said before: after he was dead and buried, 'In Hell he lifted up his eyes.' And let me tell you, O soul, whoever you are, that if you do not savingly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and lay hold on what he has done and is doing in his own person for sinners — you will find such a Hell after this life is ended, that you will not get out of again forever and ever! And you who are wanton, and do make but a mock at the servants of the Lord, when they tell you of the torments of Hell — you will find that when you depart out of this life, that Hell, even the Hell which is after this life, will meet you in your journey there; and will, with its Hellish crew, give you such a miserable salutation that you will not forget it to all eternity!

When that scripture comes to be fulfilled on your soul, in Isaiah 14:9, 10, 'Hell from beneath is moved for you to meet you at your coming: it stirs up the dead for you, even all the chief ones of the earth; it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they,' that is, that are in Hell, shall say, 'Are you also become weak as we? are you become like unto us?' O sometimes when I have had but thoughts of going to Hell, and consider the everlastingness of their ruin that fall in there, it has stirred me up rather to seek to the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver me from thence, than to slight it, and make a mock at it. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.'

[Second.] The second thing I told you was this, that all the ungodly that live and die in their sins, so soon as ever they depart this life — descend into Hell. This is also verified by the words in this parable, where Christ said, He 'died and was buried, and in Hell he lifted up his eyes.' As the tree falls, so it shall lie — whether it be to Heaven or Hell (Eccl 11:3). And as Christ said to the thief on the cross, 'Today you shall be with me in paradise.' Even so the devil in the like manner may say unto your soul, Tomorrow shall you be with me in Hell.

See then what a miserable case he who dies in an unregenerate state is in! He departs from a long sickness — to a longer Hell; from the gripings of death — to the everlasting torments of Hell. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.' Ah friends! If you were but yourselves, you would have a care of your souls; if you did but regard, you would see how mad they are, who slight the salvation of their souls. O what will it profit your soul to have pleasure in this life, and torments in Hell? (Mark 8:36). You had better part with all your sins, and pleasures, and companions, or whatever you delight in, than to have soul and body to be cast into Hell.

O then do not now neglect our Lord Jesus Christ, lest you drop down to Hell (Heb 2:3). Consider, would it not wound you to your heart to come upon your death-bed, and instead of having the comfort of a well spent life, and the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the comforts of his glorious Spirit — to have . . .

the sight of an ill-spent life,
your sins flying in your face,
your conscience uttering itself with thunder-claps against you,
the thoughts of God terrifying of you,
death with his merciless paw seizing upon you,
the devils standing ready to scramble for your soul,
Hell enlarging herself, and ready to swallow you up;
and an eternity of misery and torment attending upon you, from which there will be no release!

For mark, death does not come alone to an unconverted soul — but with such company, as were you but sensible of it would make you tremble. I pray, consider that scripture (Rev 6:8), 'And I looked and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was *Death*, and *Hell* followed with

him.' Mark, death does not come alone to the ungodly, no — but Hell goes with him. O miserable comforters! O miserable society! Here comes death and Hell unto you. Death goes into your body, and separates body and soul asunder; Hell stands without, as I may say, to embrace, or rather, to crush your soul between its everlasting grinders. Then your mirth, your joy, your sinful delights will be ended when this comes to pass. Lo it will come. Blessed are all those who through Christ Jesus his merits, by faith, do escape these soul-murdering companions. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.'

[Third.] The third thing you know that we observed from these words was this, That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins, that they scarcely know where they are, until they come into Hell. And that I told you I gather by these words, 'In Hell, he lifted up his eyes.' Mark, it was in Hell, that he lift up his eyes. Now some understand by these words that he came to himself, or began to consider with himself, or to think with himself in what an estate he was, and what he was deprived of; which is still a confirmation of the thing laid down by me. There it is that they come to themselves, that is, there they are sensible where they are indeed. Thus it fares with some men that they scarcely know where they are, until they lift up their eyes in Hell. It is with those people as with those who fall down in a swoon; you know if a man falls down in a swoon in one room, though you take him up and carry him into another — yet he is not sensible where he is until he comes unto himself, and lifts up his eyes.

Truly thus, it is to be feared, it is with many poor souls, they are so senseless, so hard, so seared in their conscience (1 Tim 4:2), that they are very ignorant of their state; and when death comes it strikes them as it were into a swoon, especially if they die suddenly, and so they are hurried away, and scarcely know where they are, until in Hell they lift up their eyes: this is he who 'dies in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet' (Job 21:23).

Of this sort are they spoken of in Psalm 73, where he says, 'There are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.' 'They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men.' And again, 'they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment,' mark, 'in a moment,' before they are aware, they 'go down to the grave!' (Job 21:13).

Indeed this is too much known by woeful and daily experience; sometimes when we go to visit those who are sick in the towns and places where we live, O how senseless, how seared in their consciences are they! They are neither sensible of Heaven nor of Hell, of sin nor of a Savior! If you speak to them of their condition, and the state of their souls, and you shall find them as ignorant as if they had no souls to regard! Others, though they lie ready to die — yet they are busying themselves about their outward affairs, as though they would certainly live here, even to live and enjoy the same forever.

Again, come to others, speak to them about the state of their souls, though they have no more experience of the new birth than a beast — yet will they speak as confidently of their eternal state, and the welfare of their souls, as if they had the most excellent experience of any man or woman in the world, saying, 'I shall have peace' (Deut 29:19). When, as I said even now, the Lord knows that they are as ignorant of the new birth, of the nature and operation of faith, of the witness of the Spirit — as if there were no new birth, no faith, no witness of the Spirit of Christ in any of the saints in the world. Nay, thus many of them are, even an hour or less before their departure. Ah, poor souls! though they may die here *like a lamb*, as the world says — yet, if you could but follow them a little, to stand and listen soon after their death, it is to be feared, you should hear them *roar like a lion* at their first entrance into Hell, far worse than even did Korah, etc., when they went down quick into the ground (Num 16:31-35).

Now, by this one thing does the devil take great advantage on the hearts of the ignorant, suggesting unto them that because the party deceased departed so quietly, without all doubt they are gone to rest and joy; when, alas! it is to be feared the reason why they went away so quietly, was rather because they were *senseless* and *hardened* in their consciences; yes, dead before in sins and trespasses. For, had they had but some awakenings on their death-beds, as some have had, they would have made all the town to ring of their doleful condition; but because they are seared and ignorant, and so depart quietly, therefore the world takes heart; 'therefore pride compasses them as a chain' (Psalm 75:6). But let them look to themselves, for if they have not an interest in the Lord Jesus

now, while they live in the world, they will, whether they die raging or peaceful, go unto the same place; 'and lift up their eyes in Hell.'

O, my friends, did you but know what a miserable condition they are in, who go out of this world without a saving interest in the Son of God, it would make you smite upon your thigh, and in the bitterness of your souls cry out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?' (Acts 16:29- 31). And not only so — but you would not be comforted until you found a rest for your soul in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 23. 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.'

Something, in brief, I have observed from the first part of this verse, namely, from these words, 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes.' And, indeed, I have observed but something, for they are very full of matter, and many things might be taken notice of in them. There is one thing more that I might touch upon, as touched in this saying, and that is this: Methinks the Lord Jesus Christ does hereby signify that men are naturally unwilling to see or take notice of their miserable state, I say by nature; but though now they are *willingly ignorant* — yet in Hell they shall lift up their eyes. That is, in Hell they shall see and understand their miserable condition; and, therefore, to these words: 'In Hell he lifted up his eyes,' he adds, 'being in torments.' As if he had said, though once they shut their eyes, though once they were willingly ignorant (2 Peter 3:5) — yet, when they depart into Hell, they shall be so miserably treated and tormented, that they shall be forced to lift up their eyes.

While men live in this world, and are in a natural state, they will have a good conceit of themselves and of their condition, they will conclude that they are Christians, that Abraham is their father, and their state to be as good as the best (Matt 3:7-9). They will conclude they have faith, the Spirit, a good hope, and an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ; but then, when they drop into Hell, and lift up their eyes there, and behold first their soul to be in extreme torments; their dwelling to be the bottomless pit; their company thousands of damned souls; also the innumerable company of devils; and the hot scalding vengeance of God, not only to drop — but to fall very violently upon them; then they will begin to be

awakened, who all their lifetime where in a dead sleep. I say, when this comes to pass, lo it will; then in Hell they shall lift up their eyes, in the midst of torments they shall lift up their eyes.

Again, you may observe in these words, 'And in Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments,' that the time of the ungodly men's smarting for their sins — will be in the torments of Hell. Now here I am put to a stand, when I consider the torments of Hell into which the damned do fall. O unspeakable torments! O endless torments! Now that your soul might be made to flee from those intolerable torments into which the damned do go, I shall show you briefly *what are the torments of Hell*. First, by the *names* of it. Second, by the *miserable state* you will be in, if you come there.

First. The **names** of Hell.

It is called a never-dying worm (Mark 9).

It is called an oven fire, hot (Mal 4:1).

It is called a furnace, a fiery-furnace (Matt 13).

It is called the bottomless pit, the unquenchable fire, fire and brimstone, Hell-fire, the lake of fire, devouring fire, everlasting fire, eternal fire, a stream of fire (Rev 21).

Second. By the miserable state you will be in, if you come there.

1. One part of your torments will be this — you shall have a full sight of all your ill spent life, from first to last; though here you can sin today and forget it by tomorrow — yet there you shall be made to remember how you sinned against God at such a time, and in such a place, for such a thing, and with such a one — which will be a Hell unto you. God will 'set them in order before your eyes' (Psalm 51:21).

2. You shall have the *guilt* of them all lie heavy on your soul, not only the guilt of one or two — but the guilt of them all together, and there they shall lie in your soul, as if your belly were full of pitch, and set on fire. Here men can sometimes think on their sins with delight — but there

with unspeakable torment; for that I understand to be the fire that Christ speaks of, which shall *never be quenched* (Mar 9:43-49).

While men live here, O how does the *guilt* of one sin sometimes crush the soul! It makes a man in such plight that he is weary of his life, so that he can neither rest at home nor abroad, neither by day nor in bed. Nay, I do know that they have been so tormented with the guilt of one sinful thought, that they have been even at their wits' end, and have hanged themselves. But now when you come into Hell, and have not only one or two, or an hundred sins, with the guilt of them all on your soul and body — but all the sins that ever you did commit since you came into the world, altogether clapped on your conscience at one time, as one should clap a red hot iron to your breasts, and there to continue to all eternity — this is miserable!

3. Again, then you shall have brought into your remembrance the *slighting of the gospel of Christ*; here you shall consider how willing Christ was to come into the world to save sinners, and for what a trifle you rejected him. This is plainly held forth in Isaiah 28, where, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation of salvation, verse 16, he says of them that reject the gospel, that, when the overflowing scourge passes through the earth, which I understand to be at the end of the world, then, says he, it shall take you morning by morning, by day and by night shall it pass over you; that is, continually, without any intermission. 'And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.' 'A vexation,' that is, a torment, or a great part of Hell only to understand the report, to understand the good tidings that came into the world by Christ's death for poor sinners.

And you will find this truly to be the mind of the Spirit, if you compare it with Isaiah 53:1, where he speaks of men's turning their backs upon the offers of God's grace in the gospel, he says, 'Who has believed our report?' or the gospel declared by us? Now this will be a mighty torment to the ungodly, when they shall understand the goodness of God was so great that he even sent his Son out of his bosom to die for sinners, and yet that they should be so foolish as to put him off from one time to another; that they should be so foolish as to lose Heaven and Christ, and eternal life in glory — for the society of a company of drunkards; that they should lose

their souls — for a little sport, for this world, for a harlot, for that which is lighter than vanity and nothing; I say this will be a very great torment unto you!

4. Another part of your torment will be this: You shall see your friends, your acquaintances, your neighbors; nay, it may be your father, your mother, your wife, your husband, your children, your brother, your sister, with others — in the kingdom of Heaven, and yourself thrust out! (Luke 13:28). 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham (your father), and Isaac, and Jacob, (together with your brethren), and all the prophets in the kingdom of Heaven, and you yourselves thrust out.' Nay, says he, 'they shall come from the east, and from the west' that is, those who you never saw in all your life before, and they shall sit down with your friends, and your neighbors, your wife and your children, in the kingdom of Heaven — and you, for your sins and disobedience, shall be *shut*, nay, *thrust* out. O astonishing torment!

5. Again, you shall have none but a company of damned souls, with an innumerable company of devils, to keep company with you. While you are in this world, the very thoughts of the devils appearing to you makes your flesh to tremble, and your hair ready to stand upright on your head. But O! what will you do, when not only the supposition of the devils appearing — but the real society of all the devils in Hell will be with you — howling and roaring, screeching and roaring in such a hideous manner, that you will be even at your wits' end, and be ready to run stark mad again for anguish and torment?

6. Again, that you might be tormented to purpose, the mighty God of Heaven will lay as great wrath and vengeance upon you as ever he can, by the might of his glorious power. As I said before, you shall have his wrath, not by *drops* — but by *whole showers* shall it come, thunder, thunder, upon your body and soul so fast, and so thick, that you shall be tormented out of measure. And so says the Scripture (2 Thess 1:9), speaking of the wicked, 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,' when the saints shall be admiring his goodness and glory.

Again, this you shall have, as I said before, without any *intermission*; you

shall not have any *ease*; you shall have it always every hour, day and night; for their worm never dies — but always gnaws, and their fire is never quenched; as it is written in Mark 9.

7. Again, in this condition you must be *forever*, and that is as miserable as all the rest. For if a man were to have all his sins laid to his charge, and communion with the devils, and as much wrath as the great God of Heaven can inflict unto him; I say, if it were but for a time, even ten thousand years, and so end — there would be ground of comfort, and hopes of deliverance! But here is your misery — this is your state forever, here you must be forever! When you look about you, and see what an innumerable company of howling devils you are among, you shall think this again — this is my portion forever! When you have been in Hell so many thousand years as there are *stars* in the sky, or *drops* in the sea, or *sands* on the sea-shore — yet you have to lie there forever. O this one word FOREVER, how will it torment your soul!

Friends, I have only given a very short touch of the *torments of Hell*. O! I am not able to utter what my mind conceives of the torments of Hell. Yet this let me say to you — accept of God's mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, lest you *feel* that with your conscience — which I cannot express with my tongue, and say, 'I am sorely tormented in this flame!'

'And sees Abraham *afar off*, and Lazarus in his bosom.'

When the damned are in this pitiful state, surrounded with fears, with terrors, with torment and vengeance, one thing they shall have, which is this — they shall see the happy and blessed state of God's children. He sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; which, as I said before, is the happy state of the saints when this life is ended. This now shall be so far from being any *ease* unto them — that it shall most wonderfully aggravate or heighten their torment, as I said before. There shall be weeping, or cause of lamentation — when they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven — and themselves thrust out.

1. Observe, Those that die in their sins are far from going to Heaven; he sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And, indeed, it is just with God to deal with them that die in their sins according to what they

have done; and to make them who are far from righteousness now — to stand far from Heaven to all eternity. Harken to this, you stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness, and that are resolved to go on in your sins, when you die you will be far from Heaven; you will see Lazarus — but it will be *afar off*.

Again, he 'sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.'

These are some of the things the damned behold, as soon as they come into torment. Mark, and he 'sees Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.' Lazarus, who was he? Why even he who was so *slighted*, so *disregarded*, so *undervalued* by this ungodly one while he was in the world, he sees Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

From whence observe, That those who live and die the enemies of the saints of God, let them be ever so great, or stout, let them bear ever so much sway while they are in the world, let them brag and boast ever so much while they are here — they shall see the saints, yes, the poor saints, even the Lazaruses or the ragged ones that belong to Jesus, to be in a better condition than themselves.

O! who do you think was in the best condition? who do you think saw themselves in the best condition? He who was in Hell — or he who was in Heaven? He who was in eternal darkness — or he who was in everlasting light? He who was in everlasting joy — or he who was in everlasting torments? The one with God, Christ, saints, angels — or the other in tormenting flames, under the curse of God's eternal hatred, with the devils and their angels, together with an innumerable company of howling, roaring, cursing, ever-burning reprobates? Certainly, this observation will be easily proved to be true here in this world, by him that looks upon it with an understanding heart, and will clear itself to be true in the world to come, by such as shall go either to Heaven or to Hell.

2. The second observation from these words, 'And sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom,' is this; those who are the persecutors of the saints of the Lord now in this world — shall see the Lord's persecuted ones to be those who are so highly esteemed by the Lord, as to sit or to be in Abraham's bosom, in everlasting glory, though they, the enemies to the

children of God, did so lightly esteem them, that they scorned to let them gather up the dog's food that falls under their table. This is also verified, and held forth plainly by this parable. And therefore be not grieved, O you who are the tempted, persecuted, afflicted, sighing, praying saints of the Lord, though your adversaries look upon you now with a disdainful, surly, rugged, proud, and haughty countenance — yet the time shall come when they shall behold you in Abraham's bosom!

I might enlarge upon these things — but shall leave them to the Spirit of the Lord, who can better by ten thousand degrees enlarge them on your heart and conscience, than I can upon a piece of paper. Therefore, leaving these to the blessing of the Lord, I shall come to the next verse, and shall be brief in speaking to that also, and so pass to the rest.

Verse 24. 'And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame!'

Verse 22 is a revealing of the departure of the godly and the ungodly out of this life; where he says the beggar died, and the rich man also died.

The 23d verse is a revealing of the proper places, both of the godly and the ungodly after death; one being in Abraham's bosom, or in glory, the other in Hell.

Now this 24th verse is a revealing of part of the too late repentance of the ungodly, when they are dropped down into Hell; 'And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me.'

From these words, '**And he cried,**' we may observe,

[FIRST.] What a *change* the ungodly will have — when they come into Hell. 'He cried.' It is likely that he was laughing, jesting, jeering, drinking, mocking, swearing, cursing, prating, in his prosperity, among his filthy companions. But now the case is changed! Now he is in another frame — now his proud, stout, currish behavior, has been humbled!

'And he cried.' The laughter of the ungodly will not last always — but will

be sure to end in a cry! 'The triumphing of the wicked is short!' (Job 20:5).

Consider, you must have a change either here — or in Hell. If you are not new creatures, regenerate people in this world — your note will soon be changed, your conditions will soon be changed; for if you come into Hell, you must cry. O did but the singing drunkards, when they are making merry on the ale bench, think on this — it would make them change their note, and cry, What shall I do? Where shall I go when I die?

But, as I said before — the devil, as he labors to get poor souls to follow their sins — so he labors also to keep the thoughts of eternal damnation out of their minds. But let them know that it shall not always be thus with them; for if, when they depart, they drop down into eternal destruction, they shall have such a sense of their sins, and the punishment due to the same, that it shall make them cry!

'And he cried!' O what an alteration there will be among the ungodly when they go out of this world? It may be, that shortly before their death — they were light, stout, surly, drinking themselves drunk, slighting God's people, mocking at godliness, delighting in sin, following the world, seeking after riches, feasting sumptuously, keeping company with the most vain; but now, they are dropped down into Hell — and they cry! A little while ago they were painting their faces, feeding their lusts, following their whores, playing their games and sports to pass away the time; but now they are in Hell — and they cry!

It may be, that last year they heard some good sermons, were invited to receive Heaven, were told their sins should be pardoned if they closed in with Jesus. But, refusing His offers, and slighting the grace that was once offered — they are now in Hell, and they cry.

Before, they had so much time, they thought that they could not tell how to spend it, unless it were in gaming, and whoring, in dancing, and playing, and spending whole hours, yes, days, nay, weeks, in the lusts of the flesh! But when they die, and begin to lift up their eyes in Hell, and consider their miserable and irrecoverable condition — they will cry!

O what a dreadful condition will you fall into, if you depart from this world unconverted! It would have been better for you to have been smothered the first hour you were born! It would have been better for you to have been made a dog, a toad, a serpent, nay, any other creature in the world — than to die unconverted! And this you will find to be true, when in Hell you lift up your eyes, and cry!

Here then, before we go any further, you may see that it is not without good ground that these words are here spoken by our Lord — that when any of the ungodly depart into Hell — they will cry.

CRY — why so?

1. They will cry to think that they should be cut off from the land of the living, never more to have any footing therein.
2. They will cry to think that the gospel of Christ should be so often offered them — and yet they are not profited by it.
3. They will cry to think that now, though they would so willingly repent and be saved — yet they are past all recovery.
4. They will cry to think that they should be so foolish as to follow their pleasures, when others were following of Christ.
5. They will cry to think that they must be separated from God, Christ, and the kingdom of Heaven — and that forever.
6. They will cry to think that their crying will now do them no good.
7. They will cry to think that, at the day of judgment, they must stand at the left hand of Christ, among an innumerable company of the damned ones.
8. They will cry to think that Lazarus, whom once they slighted, must be of those who must sit down with Christ to judge — to pass a sentence of condemnation on their souls forever and ever (1 Cor 6:2,3).
9. They will cry to think that they shall be tormented as long as eternity

lasts — without the least intermission or ease!

Tell me now, if it is not better to leave sin, and to close in with Christ Jesus — than to live a little while in this world in pleasures and feeding your lusts, in neglecting the welfare of your soul, and refusing to be justified by Jesus; and in a moment to drop down to Hell, and to cry forever?

O! consider, I say, and do not put off the offers of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ — lest the same be said of you, "And he *cried* and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame!"

'And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus,' etc.

[SECOND.] These words do not only hold forth the lamentable condition of the damned, and their lamentable howling and crying out under their anguish of spirit — but also they signify to us, as I said before, *their too late repentance*; and also that they would very willingly, if they might, be set at liberty from that everlasting misery that by their sins they have plunged themselves into! I say, these words hold forth a *desire* that the damned have — to be delivered from those torments that they now are in! 'O Father Abraham,' says he, 'have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame!'

These words, '*Father Abraham,*' may have some difficulty in them. It is possible that some may think them to be meant of the literal Abraham — and him that cries out here, to be the Jews.

Or it may be some may understand it to be God, or Jesus Christ his Son, which I rather suppose it may be, that is here cried out unto; because you find the same *cry* to him as it were uttered by the ungodly in other places of the Scripture; as in Luke 13:25, 26. Then shall they say, 'Lord, Lord, we have eaten and drank in your presence, and you have taught in our streets.' Nay more, 'In your name have cast out devils, and in your name

done many wonderful works' (Matt 7:22). This was just at their rejection. And again, in Matthew 25:11, they cry again to him, even to Jesus, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' And he there again gives them a repulse, as also in this parable.

But however or whoever *Abraham* is — yet these truths may be observed from the words:

1. That the damned, when in an irrecoverable estate, will seek for, or desire deliverance from the wrath that they are in, and shall be in for eternity.
2. That they will *pray*, if I may so call it, earnestly for deliverance from their miserable estate. These two things are clear from the words. For mark, he not only said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me'; but 'he CRIED,' and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me.'
3. From whence take a third observation; and that is, there is a time coming wherein, though men shall both cry and pray — yet they shall have no mercy at the hands of God; for so was this man served, as I shall further show by and by when I come to it.

Some people are so deluded by the devil, as to think that God is so merciful as to own or regard anything for prayer; they think anything will go for current and good satisfaction, while they are here in this world, through ignorance of the true nature of the mercy of God, and the knowledge in what way God is satisfied for sinners. Now I say, through ignorance they think, that if they do but mutter over some form of prayers, though they know not what they say, nor what they request — yet God is satisfied, yes, very well satisfied with their doings; when, alas! there is nothing less true. O friends, I beseech you to look about you, and seek in good earnest for the Spirit of Christ so to help you now, to strive and pray, and to enable you to lay hold of Christ, that your souls may be saved, lest the time come that though you cry and pray, and wish also that you had laid hold on the Lord Jesus — yet you must and shall be damned!

Then again, you may see that though God is willing to save sinners at some time — yet this time does not always *last*. No, he who can find in his

heart to turn his back upon Jesus Christ now — shall have God's back turned upon him hereafter, when he may cry and pray for mercy, and yet go without it! God will have a time to meet with them — who *now* do not seek after him. They shall have a time, yes time enough hereafter to repent their folly, and to befool themselves, for turning their backs upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

'But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you. Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me!' (Proverbs 1:24-28).

Again, this should admonish us to take time while it is offered, lest we repent forever of our unbelief and rebellion, when we are deprived of it. Ah friends! Time is precious, an hour's time to hear a sermon is precious. I have sometimes thought thus with myself: Suppose that the Lord should send two or three of his servants, the ministers of the gospel, to Hell among the damned, with this commission: Go to Hell, and preach my grace to those who are there. Let your sermon be an hour long, and hold forth the merits of my Son's birth, righteousness, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, with all my love in him, and offer it to them, telling them that now once more, and but once, do I offer the means of reconciliation to them. They who are now roaring in Hell, being past hope — would then leap at the least offer of mercy! O they that could spend whole days, weeks, nay, years, in rejecting the Son of God — would now be glad of one tender of that mercy. 'Father,' says he, 'have mercy on me.'

Again, from these words you may observe, that mercy would be welcome — when souls are under divine judgment. Now his soul is in the fire, now he is under the wrath of God, now he is in Hell, there to be tormented forever; now he is with the devils and damned spirits; now he feels the vengeance of God. '*Now, O now, have mercy on me!*' Here you may see, that mercy is prized by them that are in Hell, they would be glad if they could have it. 'Father, have mercy on me; for my poor soul's sake, send me a little mercy!'

'And send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.'

[THIRD.] These words do not only hold forth that the ungodly have a desire of mercy — but what those mercies are, what these poor creatures would be glad to have. As,

1. They would be glad to have the company of a *Lazarus* granted to them. Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and *send Lazarus!* Now *Lazarus* was he who was beloved by God — and also he who was hated by them. Therefore,

2. Observe, that those *saints*, that the *ungodly world* in their lifetime could not endure, now that they are departed, they would be glad to have society with them. 'O now, send Lazarus! Though the time was when I cared not for him — yet now let me have some society with him.'

Though the world disregards the society of God's children now — yet there is a time coming in which they would be glad to have the least company with them. Nay, do but observe: those saints who are *now* most rejected by them — even from them *shall* they be glad of comfort, if it might be. 'Send Lazarus! Send he who I slighted more than my dogs, he who I could not endure should come into my house — but must lie at my gate — send him! Now Lazarus shall be welcome to me, now do I desire some comfort from him!' But he shall go without it.

From whence again observe, that there is a time coming, O you surly dogged persecutors of the saints, that the godly shall slight you as much as ever you slighted them! You have given them many a hard word, told many a lie about them, given them many a blow. And now in your greatest need and extremity, they shall not pity you! The righteous shall rather 'rejoice when he sees the vengeance' of God upon you! (Psalm 58:10)

Again, 'Send Lazarus.' From whence observe, that any of the saints shall then be owned by you to be saints. Now you look upon them to be the despised of the world — but then you shall see them to be the *Lazaruses*

of God, even God's dear children. Though now the saints of the Lord will not be owned by you, because they are beggarly, low, poor, contemptible among you; yet the day is coming that you shall own them, desire their company, and wish for the least courtesy from them.

'Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame!'

Thus shall the souls that abide in their sins cry out in the bitterness of their spirits, with astonishing anguish and torment of conscience, without intermission!

'That he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.' That he, namely, the man who before I scorned should eat with my dogs, who before I slighted and had no regard of, who I shut out of door; send *him* — 'that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue!'

Now these words, 'that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue!' are as if he would have said, 'Now I would be glad of the least *mercy*, now I would be glad of the least *comfort*, though it be but one drop of cold water on the tip of his finger!'

One would have thought that this would have been a small request, a small courtesy: ONE DROP OF WATER what is that? Take a *pail* full of it — if that will do you any good. But mark, he is not permitted to have so much as *one drop*, not so much as a man may hold upon the tip of his finger! This signifies that those who fall short of Christ, shall be tormented as long as eternity lasts, and shall not have so much as the least *ease*, no, not even permission as to swallow his spittle — not a *drop* of cold water.

O that these things did take place in your hearts, how would it make you to seek after *rest* for your souls before it be too late, before the *sun of the gospel* be set upon you!

Consider, I say, the misery of the ungodly that they shall be in, and avoid their vices, by closing in with the offers of mercy; lest you partake of the same portion with them, and cry out in the bitterness of your souls: 'Oh,

for *one drop* of cold water to cool my tongue!

'For I am tormented in this flame!'

Indeed, the reason why the poor world does not so earnestly desire for mercy, is partly because they do not so seriously consider the *torment* that they must certainly fall into if they die outside of Christ. For let me tell you, did but poor souls indeed consider that wrath, which does by right fall to them because of their sins against God — they would make more haste to God through Christ for mercy than they do; then we would have them say, 'It is good closing with Christ *today*, before we fall into such distress.'

But why is it said, Let him 'dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my *tongue*?' Because that, as the several members in the body have their share in sin, and committing of that, so the several members of the body shall at that time be punished for the same. Therefore, when Christ is admonishing his disciples, that they should not turn aside from him, and that they should rather fear and dread the power of their God than any other power, he says, 'Fear him,' therefore, 'who can cast both body and soul into Hell!' (Luke 12:4). And again, 'Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell' (Matt 10:28).

Here is not one member only — but all the body, the whole body of which the hands, feet, eyes, ears, and tongue are members. And I am persuaded, that though this may be judged carnal by some now — yet it will appear to be a truth then, to the greater misery of those who shall be forced to undergo that wrath which God, in his just judgment, shall inflict upon them. O then they will cry, 'One grain of ease for my cursing, swearing, lying, jeering tongue! Some ease for my bragging, braving, flattering, threatening, dissembling tongue!'

Now men can let their tongues *run at random*, as we say; *now* they will be apt to say, 'Our tongues are our own, who shall control them?' (Psalm 12:4). But *then* they will be in another mind. Then, 'O that I might have a little ease for my deceitful tongue!'

Methinks sometimes to consider how some men do let their tongues run

at random, it makes me marvel. Surely they do not think they shall be made to *give an account* for their offending with their tongue. Did they but think they shall be made to give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead, surely they would be more wary of, and have more regard unto their tongue!

'The tongue,' says James, 'is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison'; 'it sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire by Hell' (James 2). The tongue — how much mischief will it stir up in a very little time! How many blows and wounds does it cause! How many times does it, as James says, curse man! How often is the tongue made the *conveyor of that Hellish poison that is in the heart*, both to the *dishonor of God*, the *hurt of its neighbors*, and the utter ruin of its own soul!

And do you think the Lord will sit still, and let your tongue run as it wills — and yet never bring you to an account for the same? No! The Lord will not always keep silence — but will reprove you, and set your sins in order before your eyes, O sinner! Yes, and your tongue, together with the rest of your members — shall be tormented for sinning.

I am very confident, that though this is made light of now — yet the time is coming when many poor souls will rue the day that ever they did speak with a tongue! 'O,' will one say, 'that I should so disregard my tongue! O that I, when I said such and such, had before bitten off my tongue! O that I had been born without a tongue! My tongue, my tongue, a little water to cool my tongue — for I am tormented in this flame! Even in that flame that my tongue, together with the rest of my members, by sinning, have brought me to!'

Poor souls *now* will let their tongues say anything for a little profit, for two-pence or three-pence gain. But, O what a grief will this be at that day when they, together with their tongue, must smart for that which they by their tongues, have done while they were in this world.

You who love your souls — look to your tongues, lest you bind yourselves down so fast to Hell with the sins of your tongues, that you will never be able to get loose again to all eternity! 'For by your words you shall be condemned,' if you have not a care of your tongue. For 'I say unto you,

that *every idle word* that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment!' (Matt 12:36).

Verse 25. 'But Abraham said, Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and you are tormented.'

These words are the *answer* to the *request of the damned*. The verse before, as I told you, is a revealing of the desires they have after they depart this world. Here is the answer, 'Son, *remember*,' etc.

The answer signifies this much, that, instead of having any relief or ease — they are hereby the more tormented, and that by fresh recollections, or by bringing afresh their former ill-spent life, while in the world, into their remembrance.

'Son, *remember* you had good things in your lifetime;' as much as if he had said, You are now sensible what it is to lose your soul; you are now sensible what it is to put off repentance; you are now sensible that you have befooled yourself, in that you spent that time in seeking after outward, momentary, earthly things, which you should have spent in seeking to make Jesus Christ sure to your soul. And now, through your anguish of spirit, in the pains of Hell you would surely have that which in former time you did make light of; but alas! you are here beguiled and altogether disappointed, your crying will now avail you nothing at all; this is not the *acceptable time* (2 Cor 6:2). This is not a time to answer the *desires of damned reprobates*; if you had cried out in good earnest while grace was offered, much might have been; but then you were careless, and turned the forbearance and goodness of God into a license for wantonness. Were you not told, that those who would not hear the Lord when he called — should not be heard when they call. But contrariwise he would *laugh* at their calamity, and *mock* when their fear comes (Prov 1:24-28).

Now, therefore, instead of expecting the least drop of mercy and favor, call into your mind how you spent those days which God permitted you to live; I say, remember that in your lifetime you behaved yourself rebelliously against the Lord, in that you were careless of his word and

ordinances, yes, and of the welfare of your own soul also! Therefore, now I say, instead of expecting or hoping for any *relief* — you must be forced to call to *remembrance your filthy ways*, and feed upon them, to your everlasting astonishment and confusion!

From these words, therefore, which say, 'Remember that you in your life-time received YOUR GOOD THINGS,' there are these things to be taken notice of,

FIRST. Those who, by putting off repentance and living in their sins, lose their souls, shall, instead of having the least measure of comfort when they come into Hell, have their ill-spent life always very fresh in their *remembrance!* While they live here — they can sin and forget it; but when they depart — they shall have it before them; they shall have a remembrance, or their memory notably enlightened, and a *clearer, and a continual sight of all their wicked practices* that they wrought and did while they were in the world. 'Son, *remember,*' says he; then you will be made to remember:

1. How you were born in sin, and brought up in the same.
2. Remember how you had many a time the gospel preached to you for taking away of your sin, by him whom the gospel holds forth.
3. Remember that out of love to your sins and lusts, you turned your back on the offers of the same gospel of good tidings and peace.
4. Remember that the reason why you lost your soul, was because you did not close in with free grace, and the offers of a loving and free-hearted Jesus Christ.
5. Remember how *near* you were to turning at such and such a time, only you gave way to your lusts when they wrought; to drunkards when they called; to pleasures when they offered themselves; to the cares and encumbrances of the world, which, like so many *thorns*, did choke those convictions which were set on your heart.
6. Remember how willing you were to satisfy yourself with a *hypocrite's*

hope, and with a *mere notion* of the things of God, without the real power and life of the same.

7. Remember how you, when you were admonished to turn — put off turning and repenting until another time.

8. Remember how you lied at such a time, cheated your neighbor at such a time, mocked, flouted, scoffed, taunted, hated, persecuted — the people of God at such a time, in such a place, among such company.

9. Remember that while others met together in the fear of the Lord to seek him — that you met with a company of vain companions to sin against him! While the saints were a-praying — you were a-cursing! While they were speaking good of the name of God — you were speaking evil of the saints of God. O then you shall have a *scalding hot remembrance* of all your sinful thoughts, words, and actions, from the very *first* to the last of them, which ever you committed in all your lifetime. Then you will find that scripture to be a truth, 'The Lord will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. In the morning you will say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening, "If only it were morning!" — because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see!' (Deut 28:65-67).

Nay, you will find worse things to your woe, than this scripture manifests! For, indeed, there is no tongue able to express the horror, terror, torment, and eternal misery that those poor souls shall undergo, without the least mitigation of ease; and a very great part of it shall come from that quick, full, and continual *remembrance of their sins* that they shall have. And, therefore, there is much weight in these words, 'Son, *remember* that you in your lifetime received your good things.'

From these words you see this is to be observed: That the ungodly shall *remember*, or have in remembrance, the *misspending their lives*. 'Remember that in your lifetime, you received your good things.' You may take these words, *good things*, either simply for the things of this world, which in themselves are called, and may be called good things. Or else

namely, all the pleasures, delights, profits, and vanities of this life — which the ignorant people of the world count their good things, and very much cheer themselves therewith. 'Soul, soul, eat, drink, and be merry; for you have much *goods* laid up for many years' (Luke 12:19,20).

Now I say, God, according to his glorious power and wisdom, will make poor creatures have always in their minds a fresh and clear *remembrance of their ill-spent life*; he will say unto them, '*Remember, remember*, that in your lifetime, it was thus and thus with you, and in your lifetime your behavior was so and so!'

If sinners might have their choice, they would not have their sins and transgressions so much in the remembrance, as it is evident by their behaviors here in this world; for they will not endure to entertain a serious thought of their filthy life, they 'put far away the evil day' (Amos 6:3; Eze 12:27); but will labor by all means to put the thoughts of it out of their mind. But there in Hell, they shall be made to remember to purpose, and to think continually of their ungodly deeds.

And therefore it is said, that when our Lord Jesus Christ comes to judgment, it will be to *convince* the ungodly world of their wicked and ungodly deeds; mark, 'to convince' them (Jude 14,15). They will not willingly take notice of them now. But then they shall hereafter, in spite of themselves. Those who die out of Christ shall be made to see, acknowledge, and confess, do what they can — when they lift up their eyes in Hell, and remember their transgressions. God will be a swift witness against them (Mal 3:5), and will say, 'Remember what you did in your lifetime, how you lived in your lifetime.'

Ha, friend! if you do not in these days of light 'remember the days of darkness' (Eccl 11:8), then in the days of death, Hell, and judgment, you shall be made to remember the days of the gospel, and how you disregarded them too, to your own destruction, and everlasting misery. This is intimated in that 25th chapter of Matthew.

'Remember that you in your lifetime received your good things.'

The great God, instead of giving the ungodly any ease, will even

aggravate their torments; first, by slighting their perplexities, and by telling of them what they must be *thinking* of. 'Remember,' says he, 'O you lost souls — remember that you had your joy in your lifetime, your peace in your lifetime, your comforts, delights, ease, wealth, health, your Heaven, your happiness, and your portion in your lifetime!'

O miserable state! You will then be in a miserable condition indeed, when you shall see that you have *had* your good things, your best things, your pleasant things; for that is clearly signified by these words, 'Remember that you in your lifetime *received* your good things,' or all the good things you are ever to have.

Second. From whence take notice of another truth, though it is a dreadful one, which is this: there are many poor creatures, who have all their good, sweet, and comfortable things in this life, or while they are alive in this world. 'Remember,' says he, 'that in your lifetime you received your good things' (Psalm 17:14).

The wicked's good things will shortly have an end; they will last no longer with them, than this life, or their lifetime. That scripture was not written in vain: it is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. They make a little blaze for a while, a little heat for a while; but come and consider them by and by, and instead of a comfortable heat, you will find nothing but a few dead ashes; and instead of a flaming fire, nothing but a smell of smoke!

There is a time coming, that the ungodly would be glad of a better portion, when they shall see the vanity of this world; that is, when they shall see what a poor thing it is for a man to have his portion in this world. It is true, while they are here on this side Hell, they think there is nothing to be compared with riches, honors, and pleasures in this world; which makes them cry out, 'Who will show us any good?' (Psalm 4:6). What is comparable to the pleasures, profits, and glory of this world? But *then* they will see there is another thing that is far better, and of more value than ten thousand worlds.

And seriously, friends, will it not grieve you, trouble, perplex, and torment you, when you shall see that you lost Heaven — for a little pleasure and profit in your lifetime? Certainly, it will grieve you and

perplex you exceedingly — to see what a blessed Heaven you left for a dunghill-world! O! that you did but believe this! that you did but consider this, and say within yourselves, What! shall I be contented with my portion in this world! What! shall I lose Heaven for this world! I say, consider it while you have day-light, and gospel-light, while the Son of God holds out terms of reconciliation to you — lest you be made to hear such a voice as this is, 'Son, *remember* that in your lifetime you received your good things'; your comforts, your joys, your ease, your peace, and all the *Heaven* you are ever to have. O poor Heaven! O short pleasures!

What a pitiful thing it is to be left in such a case? Soul, consider — is it not miserable to lose Heaven — for twenty, thirty, or forty years' sinning against God? When your *life* is done — your *Heaven* is also done! When death comes to separate your soul and body, in that day also you must have your Heaven and happiness separated from you, and you from them. Consider these things early, lest you have your *portion* in your lifetime. 'For if in this life only we have hope,' our portion, 'we are of all men most miserable' (1 Cor 15:19).

Again consider, that when the saints are to receive their good things, then you have already had yours. When others are to enter into joy, then you are to leave and depart from your joy. When others are to go to God — you must go to the devil! O miserable! You had better you had never been born, than to be an heir of such a portion; therefore, I say, have a care it be not your eternal condition.

'Remember that you received your good things, and LAZARUS, EVIL THINGS.'

These words do not only hold forth the misery of the wicked in this life — but also great *consolation to the saints*; where he says, 'And Lazarus, evil things.' That is, Lazarus had his *evil things in his lifetime*, or when he was in the world. From whence observe,

1. That the life of the saints, so long as they are in this world, is attended with many evils or afflictions; which may be discovered to be of divers natures; as says the Scripture, 'Many are the troubles of the righteous — but the Lord delivers him out of them all' (Psalm 34:19).

2. Take notice, that the afflictions or evils which accompany the saints, may continue with them their lifetime, so long as they live in this *valley of tears*; yes, and they may be of several sorts; some outward, some inward; and they may last as long as they shall continue here below, as has been the experience of all saints in all ages. All this might be proved at large — but I only *hint* in these things, although I might enlarge much upon them.

3. The evils and afflictions which accompany the saints will continue with them no longer than their lifetime. Here indeed lies the comfort of *believers*, the *Lazaruses*, the *saints* — they must have all their bitter cup wrung out to them in their lifetime. Here in this world — must be all their trouble; here must be all their grief! Behold, says Christ, 'the world shall rejoice — but you shall lament; but your mourning' *shall*, mark, it 'shall be turned into joy' (John 16:20). You shall lament, you shall be sorrowful, you shall weep in your lifetime — but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy no man, let him be what he will, no man shall take away from you!

Now if you think, when I say the saints have all their evil things and afflictions in their lifetime, that I mean that they have nothing else but trouble in this their lifetime — this is your mistake. For let me tell you, that though the saints have all their evil things in their lifetime — yet even in their lifetime they have also joy unspeakable, and full of glory, while they look not at the things that are seen — but at the things which are not seen. The joy that the saints have sometimes in their heart, by a believing consideration of the good things to come, when this life is ended, fills them fuller of joy — than all the crosses, troubles, temptations, and evils, which accompany them in this life, can fill them with grief (2 Cor 4).

But some saints may say, *My troubles are such as are ready to overcome me.*

Answer. Yet be of good comfort, they shall last no longer than your lifetime.

But my trouble is, I am perplexed with a heart full of corruption and sin, so that I am much hindered in walking with God.

Answer. It is likely so — but you shall have these troubles no longer than your lifetime.

But I have a cross husband, and that is a great grief to me.

Answer. Well — but you shall be troubled with him no longer than your lifetime, and therefore be not dismayed, be not discomforted, you shall have no trouble longer than this lifetime. Are you troubled with cross children, cross relations, cross neighbors? They shall trouble you no longer than this lifetime.

Are you troubled with a cunning devil, with unbelief; yes, let it be what it will — you shall take your farewell of them all, if you be a believer, after your lifetime is ended. O! How excellent! 'Then God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes; and there shall be no more death nor sorrow, neither crying, nor any more pain; for the former things are passed away' (Rev 21:4).

But now on the contrary, if you are not a true and sound believer; then, though you should live a thousand years in this world, and meet with sore afflictions every day — yet these afflictions, be they ever so great and grievous, they are nothing, compared to that torment that will come upon you, both in soul and in body, after this life is ended.

I say, be what you will, if you are found in unbelief, or under the first covenant — you are sure to smart for it at the time when you do depart this world. But the thing to be lamented is, for all this is so miserable a condition to be fallen into — yet poor souls are, for the most part, senseless of it, yes, so senseless, at some times, as though there was no such misery to come hereafter! Because the Lord does not immediately strike with his sword — but bears long with his creature, waiting that he might be gracious. Therefore, I say, the hearts of some of the sons of men are wholly set upon it to do mischief (Eccl 8:11). And that forbearance and goodness of God, that one would think should lead them to repentance; the devil hardening of them, by their continuing in sin, and by blinding their eyes, as to the end of God's forbearance towards them — they are led away with a very hardened and senseless heart, even until they drop into eternal destruction!

But poor hearts, they must have a time in which they must be made sensible of their former behaviors, when the just judgments of the Lord shall flame about their ears, insomuch, that they shall be made to cry out again with anguish, *I am sorely 'tormented in this flame!'*

'But now he is comforted — and you are tormented.' As if he should say, Now has God recompensed *both* Lazarus and you, according to what you sought after while you were in this world. As for your part, you neglected the precious mercy and goodness of God, you turned your back on the Son of God, who came into the world to save sinners; you made a mock of preaching the gospel; you were admonished over and over, to close in with the loving-kindness of the Lord, in his Son Jesus Christ. The Lord let you live twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years; all which time you, instead of spending it 'to make your calling and election sure' (2 Peter 1:10), spent it in making eternal damnation sure to your soul! (Job 21:29,30).

And also Lazarus, he in his lifetime made it his business to accept of my grace and salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you were in the ale-house — he frequented the word preached; when you were jeering at godliness — he was sighing to the sins of the times (Eccl 9:4-6). While you were swearing — he was praying; in a word, while you were making sure of eternal ruin — he, by faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, was making sure of eternal salvation. Therefore, 'Now he is comforted — and you are tormented!'

Here, then, you may see, that as the righteous shall not be always void of comfort and blessedness; so neither shall the ungodly go always without their punishment. As sure as God is in Heaven — it will be thus. They must have their several portions. And, therefore, you who are the saints of the Lord, follow on, be not dismayed, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58). Your portion is eternal glory. And you who are so reluctant now to close in with Jesus Christ, and to leave your sins to follow him — your 'day is coming' (Psalm 37:13), in which you shall know, that your *sweet morsels of sin*, that you do so easily swallow down (Job 20:12-14), and it scarcely troubles you — will have a time so to work within you to your eternal ruin, that you will be in a worse condition than if you had ten thousand devils tormenting of you! Nay, you had better have been plucked limb from limb a thousand times,

if it could be — than to be partakers of this torment that will, assuredly without mercy, lie upon you!

Verse 26. 'And besides all this, between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

These words are still part of that answer which the souls in Hell shall have for all their sobbings, sighings, grievous cries, tears, and desires, that they have — to be released out of those intolerable pains they feel, and are perplexed with. And O! methinks the words at the first view, if rightly considered, are enough to make any hard-hearted sinner in the world to fall down dead.

The verse I last spoke to was and is a very terrible one, and aggravates the torments of poor sinners astonishingly. Where he says, 'Remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus evil things,' etc. I say, these words are very terrible to those poor souls that die out of Christ. But these latter words do much more hold out their sorrow. They were spoken as to the present condition then upon the sinner. These words in verse 26 do not only back the former — but do yet further aggravate their misery, holding forth that which will be more intolerable. The former verse is enough to smite any sinner into a swoon — but this is to make him fall down dead! Where he says, 'And *beside* all this.' There is still something to aggravate your misery yet far more abundantly.

I shall briefly speak to the words as they have relation to the terror spoken of in the verses before. As if he had said, You think your present state is unsupportable, it makes you sob and sigh, it makes you to rue the time that ever you were born. Now you find the lack of mercy; now you would leap at the least grain of it; now you feel what it is to slight the offers of the grace of God; now it makes you to sob, sigh, and roar exceedingly for the anguish that you are in.

'But *beside* all this,' That is, I have *other* things to tell you of — which will break your heart indeed. You are now deprived of being in Heaven; you are deprived of hearing the gospel; the devil has been too hard for you, and has made you miss of Heaven; you are now in Hell among an

innumerable company of devils, and all your sins beset you round; you are all over wrapped in flames, and cannot have one drop of water to give you any ease; you cry in vain, for nothing will be granted. You see the saints in Heaven, which is no small trouble to your damned soul; you see that neither God nor Christ takes any care to ease you, or speak any comfort unto you. 'But *beside* all this,' there you are, and there you will lie forever — never think of any ease, never look for any comfort; repentance now will do you no good, the time is past, and can never be called again; the torment you have now — you must have forever. It is true, I spoke enough before to break your heart asunder; 'But *beside* all this,' you must lie there and swim in flames forever.

These words, 'Beside all this,' are terrible words indeed. I will give you the scope of them in a similitude. To show the dreadful case — you would take a man, and tie him to a stake, and with red-hot pinchers, pinch off his flesh by little pieces for two or three years together, and at last, when the poor man cries out for ease and help, the tormentors answer, Nay, 'but *beside* all this,' you must be handled worse! We will serve you thus, these twenty years together, and after that we will fill your mangled body full of scalding lead, or run you through with a red-hot spit! Would not this be lamentable?

Yet this is but a *flea-biting* compared to the sorrow of those who go to Hell; for if a man were treated so, there would, before it were long, be an end of him. But he who goes to Hell shall suffer ten thousand times worse torments than these — and yet shall never die under them. There they shall be ever whining, pining, weeping, mourning, ever tormented without ease — and yet never dissolved into nothing.

If the biggest devil in Hell might pull you all to pieces, and rend you small as dust, and dissolve you into nothing — you would count this a mercy. But here you may lie and fry, scorch, and broil, and burn forever. FOREVER! That is a long while, and yet it must be so long. 'Depart from me, you cursed,' says Christ, 'into *everlasting* fire,' into the fire that burns forever, 'prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt 25:41). O! you who were reluctant to go half a mile, yes, half a block to hear the word of God, if it were but a little dark; you who were reluctant to leave a few vain companions, to edify your soul; you shall have fire enough, you shall have

night enough, and evil company enough, your belly-full — if you miss of Jesus Christ; and 'beside all this,' you shall have them forever, and forever!

O you who spend whole nights in carding and dicing, in rioting and wantonness; you who count it a brave thing to swear as fast as the bravest, to spend with the greatest spendthrift in the country; you who love to sin in a corner when nobody sees you! O you who for bye-ends carry on the hypocrite's profession, because you would be counted somebody among the children of God — but are an enemy to the things of Christ in your heart. You who satisfy yourself, either with sins, or a bare profession of godliness — your soul will fall into extreme torment and anguish, as soon as ever you do depart this world, and there you shall be weeping and gnashing your teeth (Matt 8:12). 'And *beside* all this,' you will never have any ease or remedy, never expect any deliverance, you shall die in your sins, and be tormented as many years as there are stars in the sky, or sands on the seashore; 'and *beside* all this,' you must abide it forever!

'And *besides* all this, between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' 'There is a great gulf fixed.' You will say, what is that?

Answer.

1. See you rather to enter in at the strait gate — than curiously to inquire what this gulf is. But,

2. If you would needs know if you do fall short of Heaven, you will find it this, namely: *the everlasting decree of God*; that is, there is decree gone forth from God, that those who fall short of Heaven in this world, God is resolved they shall never enjoy it in the world to come. And you will find this gulf so deep — that you shall never be able to wade through it as long as eternity lasts. As Christ says, 'Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him' (Matt 5:25); 'lest he hale you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. I tell you, you shall by no means come out thence!' There is the gulf, the

decree, 'you shall not depart thence until you have paid the' utmost farthing, or 'very last mite' (Luke 12:58,59).

These words therefore, 'there is a great gulf fixed,' I do understand to be the everlasting decree of God. God has decreed that those who go to Heaven shall never go from thence again into a worse place; and also those who go to Hell, and would come out, they shall not come out thence again. And friend, this is such a gulf, so fixed by him who cannot lie, that you will find it so, whichever way you go, whether it be to Heaven or Hell.

Here therefore you see how *secure* God will make those who die in the faith; God will keep them in Heaven. But those who die in their sins — God will throw them to Hell and *keep* them there! So that those who would go from Hell to Heaven, cannot. Mark, he does not say, they *would* not for, O how gladly would these who have lost their souls for a lust, for two-pence, for a jug of ale, for a harlot, for this world — come out of that hot scalding fiery furnace of God's eternal vengeance, if they might! But here is their misery: those who would come from Hell to Heaven, cannot, they must not, they shall not! They cannot, God has decreed it, and is resolved the contrary.

Here therefore lies the misery, not so much that they are in Hell — but there they must lie forever and ever! Therefore, if your heart would at any time tempt you to sin against God, cry out, '*No, for then I must go to Hell — and lie there forever!*' If the drunkards, swearers, liars, and hypocrites did but take this doctrine soundly down, it would make them tremble when they even think of sinning. But poor souls, now they will 'make a mock of sin' (Prov 14:9), and play with it as a child plays with a rattle; but the time is coming, that these *rattles* which now they play with — will make such a noise in their ears and consciences, that they shall find, that if all the devils in Hell were yelling at their heels, the noise would not be comparable to it!

Friend, your sins, as so many bloodhounds, will first hunt you out (Num 32:23), and then take you and bind you, and hold you down forever (Prov 5:22). They will grip you and gnaw you as if you had a nest of poisonous serpents in your belly (Job 20:14). And this will not be for a time — but, as I have said, forever, forever, forever!

Verse 27. 'Then he said, I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house.'

The verses before, I told you, were spoken partly to hold forth the desire that the damned have to be freed of their endless misery. Now this verse still holds forth the cries of those poor souls very vehement, they would very gladly have something granted to them — but it will not be; as will more clearly appear afterward.

'Then he said, I beg you **THEREFORE, FATHER,**' etc. As if he should say, seeing I have brought myself into such a miserable condition, that God will not regard me, that my exceeding loud and bitter cries will not be heard for myself; seeing I must not be admitted to have so much as one drop of cold water, nor the least help from the poorest saints. And seeing, 'beside all this,' here my soul must lie to all eternity, broiling and frying; seeing I must undergo the hand of eternal vengeance, and the rebukes of devouring fire; seeing my state is such, that I would not wish a dog in my condition, 'send him to my father's house.'

It is worthy to be taken notice of, again, *who* it is he desired to be sent, namely, *Lazarus*. O friend, see here how the stout hearts and stomachs of poor creatures will be humbled, as I said before, they will be so brought down, that those things that they disdained and made light of in this world, they would be glad of in the life to come. He who by this man was so slighted, as that he thought it a dishonor that he should eat with the dogs of his flock. What, shall I regard *Lazarus*, scabbed, beggarly *Lazarus*! what, shall I so far dishonor my fair, sumptuous, and mirthful house, with such a loathsome beggar as he! No, I despise that he should ever be entertained under my roof. Thus he would say in his lifetime, while he was in his bravery; but now he is come into another world, now he is parted from his pleasures, now he sees his fine house, his dainty dishes, his rich neighbors and companions, and he, are parted asunder; now he finds . . .

instead of pleasures — torments;

instead of joys — heaviness;

instead of Heaven — Hell;

instead of the pleasures of sin — the horror and guilt of sin;

O now, send *Lazarus*!

Lazarus, it may be, might have done him some good, if he might have been entertained in time past, and might have persuaded him, at least not to have gone on so grievously wicked — but he slights him, he will not regard him, he is resolved to disown him, though he lose his own soul for so doing. Ay — but *now* send Lazarus, if not to me — yet to my father's house, and let him tell them, from me, that if they run on in sin, as I have done, they must and shall receive the same *wages* that I have received!

Take notice of this, you who are despisers of the least of the *Lazaruses* of our Lord Jesus Christ; it may be now you are reluctant to receive these little ones of his, because they are not gentlemen, because they are unlearned.

Though now the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ may be preached to them freely, and for nothing; nay, they are now begged to hear and receive it: though now they will not own, regard, or embrace these Christian offers of the glorious truth of Jesus, because they come out of some of the basest earthen vessels; yet the time is coming, when they will both sigh and cry, *Send him to my father's house* (1 Cor 1:26). I say, remember this, you who despise the day of small things; the time is coming, when you would be glad, if you might enjoy from God, from Christ, or his saints, one small drop of cold water, though now you are unwilling to receive the glorious distilling drops of the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Again, see here the lamentable state they are in, who go to Hell from their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, etc. While they are in this world, men delight to set sinful examples for their children; and also children love to follow the wicked steps of their ungodly parents; but when they depart this life, and drop down into Hell, and find themselves in irrecoverable misery — then they cry, send somebody to my father's house, to my brother's house. Tell them my state is miserable, tell them I am undone forever; and tell them also, that if they will be walking in these ungodly steps wherein I left them — that they will assuredly fall into this place of torments.

'I beg you — SEND HIM TO MY FATHER'S HOUSE.' Ah, friends and neighbors, it is likely you little think of this, that some of your friends and

relations are crying out in Hell, *Lord, send somebody to my father's house, to preach the gospel to them, lest they also come into these torments!*

Here, men while they live, can willingly walk together in the way of sin, and when they are parted by death, those who are living, seldom or never consider of the miserable condition that those who are dead are descended into! But you ungodly fathers — how are your ungodly children roaring now in Hell? And you ungodly children — how are your ungodly parents who lived and died ungodly, now in the pains of Hell also? And one drunkard is singing on the ale bench, and another roaring under the wrath of God, saying, *O that I was with him, how would I rebuke him, and persuade him by all means to leave off these evil courses. O! that they did but consider what I now suffer for pride, covetousness, drunkenness, lying, swearing, stealing, whoring, and the like. O! did they but feel the thousandth part thereof — it would make them look about them, and not buy sin at so dear a rate as I have done; even with the loss of my precious soul!*

'Send him to my father's house.' Not to my father — but to my 'father's house.' It may be, there are ungodly children, or ungodly servants, wallowing in their ungodliness — send him therefore to my father's house. It is likely that they are still the same that I left them; I left them wicked — and they are wicked still; I left them slights of the gospel, saints, and ways of God — and they are still. 'Send him to my father's house,' it is likely there is but a little time between them and the place where I am; send him *today*, before tomorrow, 'lest they also come into the same place of torment. I beg you that you would send him!'

I beg it on my bended knee, with crying and with tears, in the agony of my soul. It may be they will not consider — if you do not send him. I left them sottish enough, hardened as well as I; they have the same *devil* to tempt them, the same *lusts* and world to overcome them! 'I beg you therefore, that you would send him to my father's house'; make no delay, lest they lose their souls — lest they come here! If they do, they are likely never to return again. O! little do they think how easily they may lose their souls; they are apt to think their condition to be as good as the best, as I once through ignorance did; but send him, send him without delay, 'lest they

also come into this place of torment.'

But now, O that I was to live in the world again; and might have that privilege to have some acquaintance with blessed Lazarus, some familiarity with that holy man; what attendance would I give unto his wholesome words! How would I learn his doctrine, and close in with it! How would I square my life thereby! Now therefore, as it is better to hear the gospel under a hedge than to sit roaring in a tavern, it is better to welcome God's *begging Lazaruses* than the wicked companions of this world. It is better to receive a saint in the name of a saint, a disciple in the name of a disciple, than to do as I have done (Luke 10:16). O! it is better to receive a child of God, who can by experience deliver the things of God, his free love, his tender grace, his rich forbearance, and also the misery of man. O! I may curse the day that ever I gave way to the flatteries and fawning of a company of carnal clergymen, but this *my* repentance is too late; I should have looked about me sooner, if I would have been saved from this woeful place! Therefore send him, not only to the town I lived in, and unto some of my acquaintance — but to my father's house.

In my lifetime I did not care to hear that word that cut me most, and showed me my lost estate aright. I was vexed to hear my sins mentioned, and laid to my charge. I loved him best, who deceived me most; who said, *Peace, peace*, when there was no such thing (Jer 5:30,31). But now, O that I had been soundly told of it! O that it had pierced both my ears and heart, and had stuck so fast that nothing could have cured me, but the blood of Christ! It is better to be dealt plainly with, than that we should be deceived; they had better see their lost condition in the world — than they be damned, as I am. Therefore send Lazarus, send him to my father's house. Let him go and say, *I saw your son, your brother, in Hell, weeping and wailing, and gnashing his teeth!* Let him tell them plainly it is so, that they shall see their everlasting misery. 'Send him to my father's house.'

Verse 28. 'For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment!'

These words are, if I may so say, a reason given by those in Hell why they are so restless and do cry so loud; it is that their companions might be

delivered from those intolerable torments which they must and shall undergo, if they fall short of everlasting life by Jesus Christ. 'Send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren.' Though, while they lived among them in the world, they were not so sensible of their ruin — yet now they are passed out of the world, and do partake of that which before they were warned of; they can, I say, then cry out, *Now I find that to be true indeed, which was once and again told and declared to me that it would certainly come to pass.*

'FOR I HAVE FIVE BRETHREN.' Here you may see that there may be, and are, *whole households in a damnable state and condition*, as our Lord Jesus by this signifies. 'Send him to my father's house,' for they are all in one dreadful state, I left all my brethren in a pitiful case. People, while they live here, cannot endure to hear that they are all in a miserable condition; but when they are under the wrath of God — they *feel* it, they *know* it, and are very *sure* of it; for they themselves, when they were in the world, lived as they do — but they fell short of Heaven, and therefore, if they go on — so shall they. O, therefore, send him quickly to my father's house, for all the house is in an undone condition, and must be damned if they continue so!

The thing observable is this, namely: that those who are in Hell do not desire that their companions should come there; nay rather, says he, send him to my father's house, and let him testify to those who are therein, lest they also come to this dreadful Hell, etc.

Question. But some may say, What should be the *reason* that the damned should desire not to have their companions come into the same condition that they are fallen into — but rather that they might be kept from it, and escape that dreadful state?

Answer. I believe there is no such *love* in any of the damned in Hell, as really to desire the salvation of any. But in that there is any desire in those who are damned, that their friends and relations should not come into that place of torment — it appears to me to be rather for their own ease than for their neighbor's good. For it would aggravate their grief and horror — to see their ungodly neighbors in the like destruction with them. For where the ungodly live and die, and descend into the pit together, the

one is rather a *vexation and torment* to the other, and not any comfort at all. And it must needs be so, because there are no ungodly people who live ungodly together, but they do learn bad examples one of another, as thus: If there lives one in the town who is very shady in business practices — why the rest who are of the same mind with him, they will labor to imitate and follow his steps: this is commonly seen.

Again, if there is one given to *drunkenness*, others of the town, through his means, run the more into that sin with him, because of his enticing them, and also by setting such a bad example before them.

And so, if there be any addicted to *pride*, and must needs be in all the newest *fashions* — how do their example provoke others to love and follow the same vanity; spending that upon their lusts — which should relieve their own and others' wants.

Also, if there are any given to jesting, scoffing, lying, whoring, backbiting, secret wickedness, wantonness, or any other sin — then those who are most expert in these things, oftentimes entangle others, who perhaps would not have been so vile as now they are, had they not had such an example, and hence they are called *corrupters* (Isa 1:4).

Now these will, by their doings, exceedingly aggravate the condemnation of one another. He who set his neighbor a sinful example, and thereby caused him to walk in sin — he will be found one cause of his friend's destruction, insomuch that he will have to answer for his own sins — *AND* for a great part of his neighbor's too, which will add to his destruction! As that scripture in Ezekiel shows, where, speaking of the watchman that should give the people warning, if he did not, though the man did die in his sins — yet his blood shall be required at the watchman's hand! (Eze 33).

So here let me tell you, that if you should be such a one, as by your conversation and practices shall be a *trap* and a *stumbling-block* to cause your neighbor to fall into eternal ruin though he be damned for his own sins — yet God will charge you as being guilty of his blood, in that you were not content to keep from Heaven yourself — but did also, by your filthy conversation, keep away others, and cause them to fall with you! O,

therefore, will not this aggravate your torment! Yes, if you should die and go to Hell before your neighbor or companions, besides the guilt of your *own* sins — you would be so laden with the fear of the damnation of others to be laid to your charge, that you would cry out: O send one from the dead to this companion and that companion with whom I had society in my lifetime — for I see *my cursed behavior* will be one *cause* of his condemnation! I left him living in foul and heinous sins; but I was one of the first instruments to bring him to them. O! I shall be guilty both of my own — and his damnation too! O that he might be kept out hence — lest my torment be aggravated by his coming hither!

For where ungodly people dwell together, they being a snare and *stumbling-block* one to another by their wicked practices — they must needs be a *torment* one to another, and an *aggravation* of each other's damnation!

'O cursed be your face!' says one, 'that ever I set my eyes on you! It was you who enticed me and ensnared me. It was your filthy conversation that was a stumbling-block to me. It was your covetousness, it was your pride, your haunting the ale-house, your gaming and whoring. It was because of you — that I fell short of eternal life! If you had set me a good example, as you did set me a sinful one — it may be I might not have come to this dreadful Hell; but I learned of you, I followed your steps, I took counsel of you. O that I had never seen your face! O that you had never been born to do my soul this wrong, as you have done!'

Says the other, 'O, I may as much blame *you*, for remember how at such a time, and at such a place — you drew me out, and drew me away, and asked me if I would go with you, when I was going about other business, about my calling; but you called me away, you sent for me — you are as much in the fault as I! Though I were covetous, you were proud; and if you learned covetousness from me, I learned pride and drunkenness from you! Though I taught you to cheat — you taught me to whore, to lie, to scoff at goodness. Though I, base wretch, stumbled you in some things — yet you did as much stumble me in others. I can blame you — just as you blame me! And if I have to answer for some of your most filthy actions — you have to answer for some of mine. I wish you had not come here — *your very looks wound my soul*, by bringing my sins afresh into my mind

— the time when, the manner how, the place where, the persons with whom. It was with you, you! You are a grief to my soul! Since I could not shun your company there in the world — O that I had been without your company here in Hell!

I say, therefore, for those who have *sinned together* to go to Hell together — it will very much grieve and torment them both. Therefore I judge this is one reason why those who are in Hell desire that their friends or companions do not come there into the same place of torment that they are in. And therefore where Christ says that these damned souls cry out, 'Send to our companions, that they may be warned and commanded to look to themselves, O send to my five brethren!' It is only because they would not have their *own* torments heightened by their company; and a sense, yes, a continual sense of their sins, which they caused them to commit when they were in the world with them.

I believe that the very *looks* of those who have been beguiled of their fellows, I say their very looks will be a *torment* to them! For thereby will the *remembrance* of their own sins be kept, if possible, the fresher on their consciences, which they committed with them; and also they will wonderfully have the *guilt of the others sins* upon them, in that they were partly the cause of his committing them, *being instruments in the hands of the devil* to draw them in too.

And, therefore, lest this come to pass, 'I beg you send Lazarus to my father's house.' For if they might not come hither, perhaps my torment might have *some mitigation!* That is, if they might be saved, then their sins will be pardoned, and not so heavily charged on my soul. But if they fall into the same place where I am — then the sins that I have caused them to commit will lie so heavy, not only on *their* souls — but also on *mine*, that they sin me into eternal misery, deeper and deeper! O therefore send Lazarus to my father's house, to my five brethren, and let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment!

These words being thus understood — what a dreadful condition does it show them to be in then, who now much delight in being the very *ringleaders* of their companions into sins of all sorts!

While men live here, if they can be counted the *cunningest* in cheating, the *boldest* for lying, the greatest for whoring, the most subtle for coveting and getting the world; if they can but cunningly defraud, undermine, cross, and anger their neighbors, yes, and hinder them from the means of grace, the gospel of Christ — they glory in it, take a pride in it, and think themselves pretty well at ease, and their minds are somewhat quiet, being *beguiled with sin*.

But, friend, when you have lost this life, and begin to lift up your eyes in Hell, and see what your sins have brought you to; and not only so — but that you, by your filthy sins, caused others, *devil-like*, to fall into the same condemnation with you; and that one of the reasons of their damnation was this — that you led them to the commission of those wicked practices of this world, and the lusts thereof! Then, O that somebody would stop them from coming, lest they also come into this place of torment — and be damned as I am! How ill it torment me! Balaam could not be contented to be damned himself — but also he must, by his wickedness, cause others to stumble and fall. The Scribes and Pharisees could not be contented to keep out of Heaven themselves — but they must labor to keep out others too. Therefore theirs is the *greater* damnation!

The *deceived* cannot be content to be deceived himself; but he must labor to deceive others also. The *drunkard* cannot be content to go to Hell for his own sins — but he must labor to cause others to fall into the same *furnace* with him. But look to yourselves, for here will be *damnation upon damnation* — damned for your own sins, and damned for your being a partaker with others in their sins; and damned for being guilty of the damnation of others! O how will the *drunkards* cry for leading their neighbors into drunkenness! How will the *covetous* person howl for setting his neighbor, his friend, his brother, his children and relations — so wicked an example! by which he has not only wronged his own soul — but also the souls of others. The *liar*, by lying, taught others to lie; the *swearer* taught others to swear; the *whoremonger* taught others to whore.

Now all these, with others of the like sort, will be guilty, not only of their *own* damnation — but also of the damnation of *others*. I tell you, that some men have so much been the authors of the damnation of others,

that I almost think that the damnation of them, will trouble them as much as their *own* damnation. Some men, it is to be feared, at the day of judgment, will be found to be the authors of destroying whole nations! How many souls do you think *Balaam*, with his deceit, will have to answer for? How many *Mohammed*? How many the *Pharisees*, who hired the soldiers to say the disciples stole away Jesus? (Matt 18:11- 15); and by that means stumbled their brethren to this day; and was one means of hindering them from believing the things of God and Jesus Christ, and so the *cause* of the damnation of their brethren to this very day!

How many poor souls have the many filthy blind *priests* to answer for, do you think? How many souls have they been the means of destroying — by their ignorance and corrupt doctrine? Preaching, that which was no better for others souls — than rat-poison for the body — and all for filthy lucre's sake (O you priests — this word is for you!). They shall see, that they, many of them it is to be feared, will have *whole towns* to answer for; *whole cities* to answer for.

Ah, friend, I tell you — you who have taken in hand to preach to the people, it may be you have taken in hand you cannot tell what. Will it not grieve you to see your whole *parish* come bellowing after you to Hell, crying out, 'We may thank you for this! This is because of you — you did not teach us the truth! You led us away with fables — you were afraid to tell us of our sins, lest we should not put meat fast enough in your mouth. O you cursed wretch, that ever you should beguile us thus, deceive us thus, flatter us thus! We would have gone out to hear the Word abroad — but that you reprov'd us; and also that us that that which we see now is the way of God — was heresy, and a deceivable doctrine! And were not contented with that, blind guide as you were, to fall into the ditch of Hell yourself — but have also led us there with you!

I say, look to yourself, lest you cry out when it is too late: Send Lazarus to my people, my friends, my children, my congregation to whom I preached, and beguiled through my folly! Send him to the town in which I preached last, lest I be the cause of their damnation. Send him to my friends from whence I came, lest I be made to answer for their souls and my own too! (Eze 33:1-6).

O send him therefore, and let him tell them, and testify unto them — lest they also come into this place of torment!

Consider this, you who live thus in the world, while you are in the land of the living — lest you fall into this dreadful condition.

Suppose you should by your behavior, destroy but one soul — but one poor soul, by one of your behaviors or actions, by your sinful works; consider it now, I say, lest you be forced to cry, 'I beg you therefore, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them — lest they also come into this place of torment!'

If so, then I shall not *only* say to the *blind guides* — Look to yourselves, and do not shut out others; no — but this reaches unto all those who do not only keep souls from Heaven by *preaching* and the like — but speaks forth the doom of those who shall in any way be instrumental to hinder others from closing in with Jesus Christ.

O what *red lines* will those be against all those rich ungodly landlords, who so hinder their poor tenants that they dare not go out to hear the word, for fear their rent should be raised, or they be turned out of their houses! What do you say, landlord — will it not cut your soul, when you shall see that you could not be content to miss of Heaven yourself — but you must labor to hinder others also! Will it not give you an *eternal wound in your heart*, both at death and judgment — to be accused of the ruin of your neighbor's soul, your servant's soul, your wife's soul, together with the ruin of your own! Think on this, you drunken, proud, rich, and scornful landlords!

Think on this, you mad-brained blasphemous husbands, who are against the godly and chaste behavior of your wives! Also you who hold your servants so hard to it that you will not spare them time to hear the Word, unless it be where and when your lusts will let you. If you love your own souls, your tenants' souls, your wives' souls, your servants' souls, your children's souls; if you would not cry, if you would not howl, if you would not *bear the burden of the ruin of others forever* — then I beseech you to consider this doleful story, and labor to avoid the *soul-killing torment* that this poor wretch groans under, when he says, 'I beg you therefore,

that you would send him to my father's house!

'For I have five brethren, THAT HE MAY TESTIFY,' mark, 'that he may testify UNTO THEM, lest they also come into this place of torment.' These words have still something more in them than I have yet observed from them; there are one or two things more that I shall briefly touch upon, and therefore, mark, he says, 'That he may testify unto them,' etc.

Mark, I beg you, and take notice of the word TESTIFY. He does not say, And let him go unto them, or *speak* with, or *tell* them such and such things. No — but let him *testify*, or *affirm it constantly*, in case any should oppose it. 'Let him testify unto them.' It is the same word the Scripture uses to set forth the vehemency of Christ, his telling of his disciples of him that should betray him. 'And he *testified*, saying, One of you shall betray me.' And he testified, that is, he spoke it so as to dash or overcome any that should have said it shall not be. It is a word that signifies, that in case any should oppose the thing spoken of — yet that the party speaking should still *continue constant* in his saying. And he commanded them to preach, 'and to *testify*, that it is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of living and dead.' To testify, mark, that is — to be constant, irresistible, undaunted, in case it should be opposed and objected against. So here, let him *testify* to them, lest they come into this place of torment.

From whence observe, that it is not an easy matter to persuade those who are in their sins in this world — that they must and shall be damned if they turn not, and are converted to God. 'Let him testify to them,' let him speak confidently, though they frown upon him, or dislike his way of speaking.

And how is this truth verified by the behaviors of almost all men now in the world, toward those who now preach the gospel! If a man does but indeed labor to convince sinners of their sins and lost condition, though they must be damned if they live and die in that condition — O how angry are they at the preacher! 'Look how he *judges* us,' say they, 'see how he *condemns* us! He tells us that we must be damned if we live and die in this state. We are offended at him, we cannot abide to hear him, or any such as he! We will believe none of them all — but go on in the way we are

agoing!

'But the king interrupted him and said: Since when have I made you the king's counselor? Be quiet before I have you killed!' said the ungodly king to the prophet, when he told him of his sins (2 Chron 25:16).

I say, tell the drunkard that he must be damned if he does not leave his drunkenness; tell the swearer, the liar, the cheater, the thief, the covetous, the railer, or any ungodly people — that they must and shall lie in Hell for it, if they die in this condition; yet they will not believe you, but turn on you!

Again, tell others that there are many in Hell who have lived and died in just their conditions — and so will they go to Hell, if they are not converted to Jesus Christ, and are found in him. Or tell them that there are others that are more civil and sober men, who, although we know that their civility will not save them, if we do but tell them plainly of the emptiness and unprofitableness of that, as to the saving of their souls, and that God will not accept them, nor love them, notwithstanding these things — and that if they intend to be saved, they must be better provided than with such a *righteousness* as this — they will either flee away, and come to hear no more; or else if they do come, they will bring such prejudice with them in their hearts, that the Word preached shall not profit them, it being mixed not with *faith* — but with *prejudice* in those who hear it (Heb 4:1,2).

Nay, they will some of them be so full of anger that they will break out and call, even those who speak the truth — heretics! Yes, and even kill them if they could! (Luke 4:25-29). And why so? Because they tell them, that if they live in their sins — that will damn them; yet if they turn and live a righteous life, according to the holy, and just, and good law of God — that will not save them.

Yes, because we tell them plainly that unless they leave their *sins* and *self-righteousness* too, and close in with Jesus Christ alone — his blood and merits, and what he has done, and is now doing for sinners, that they cannot be saved — they are immediately offended at it, as the Jews were with Christ for speaking the same thing to them (John 6:53,60). And they fling away themselves, their souls and all — by quarreling against the doctrine of the Son of God.

Therefore, he who is a preacher of the Word, had need not only *tell* them — but *testify* to them, again and again, that their sins, if they continue in them, will damn them, and damn them again. And tell them again, their living honestly according to the law, their paying everyone their own, their living quietly with their neighbors, their giving to the poor, their notion of the gospel, and saying they believe in Christ — will do them no good at the day of judgment.

Ah, friends! How many of you are there at this very day, who have been told once and again of your lost undone condition, because you lack the right, real, and saving work of God upon your souls! I say, has not this been told you, yes, *testified* unto you from time to time, that your state is miserable — and yet you are never the better — but still stand where you did; some in an open ungodly life, and some drowned in a self-conceited righteousness? Therefore, for God's sake, if you love your souls, consider, and beg of God for Jesus Christ's sake — that he would work such a work of grace in your hearts, and give you such a faith in his Son Jesus Christ, that you may not only have rest here, as you think, not only *think* your state safe while you live here — but that you may be safe *indeed*, not only here — but also when you are gone, lest you cry in the anguish and perplexity of your souls, *Send Lazarus to my companions who have been beguiled by Satan as I have been — to testify to them, lest they come into*

this place of torment as I have done.

Again, one thing more is to be observed from these words, Let him 'testify to them, LEST THEY ALSO COME INTO THIS PLACE OF TORMENT.'

Mark, *lest they come*. As if he had said, Or else they *will surely* come into this place of torment — as sure as I am here! From whence observe, that though some souls fall into the bottomless pit of Hell before their fellows, because they depart this world before them — yet the other, abiding in the same course, are as *sure* to go to the same place as if they were there already! How so? Because all are condemned together — they have all fallen under the same law, and have all offended the same justice, and must for certain, if they die in that condition, drink as deep, if not deeper, of the same destruction. Mark, I beg you, what the Scriptures say, 'He who believes not, is condemned *already*' (John 3:18).

He is condemned, as well as they — having broken the same law with them; if so, then what hinders but they will partake of the same destruction with them? Only the one has not the law yet so executed upon them, because they are still here on earth; the other has had the law executed upon them, they are gone to *drink* that which they have been *brewing*; and you are brewing that in this life which you must certainly drink.

The same law, I say, is in force against you both, only he is now executed — and you are not *yet*. Just as if there were a company of prisoners at the bar, and all condemned to die; what, because they are not all executed in one day, therefore shall they not be executed at all? Yes, the same law that executed its severity upon the parties now deceased — will for certain be executed on those who are alive in its appointed time. Even so it is here, we are all condemned by nature; if we close not in with the grace of God by Jesus Christ — we *must* and *shall* be destroyed with the same destruction; and 'therefore send him,' says he, 'LEST,' mark, '*lest* they also come into this place of torment!'

Again, 'Send him to my father's house,' and let him 'testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' As if he had said, It may be that he may prevail with them; it may be that he may win upon them, and so

they may be kept from hence, from coming into this grievous place of torment!

Observe again, that there is a *possibility of obtaining mercy*, if now, I say, now in this day of grace — we turn from our sins to Jesus Christ; yes, it is more than possible. And therefore, for your encouragement, know for certain, that if you shall in this your day, accept of mercy upon God's own terms, and close with him effectually — that God has promised, yes, made many promises, that your soul shall be conducted safely to glory, and shall for certain escape all the evils that I have told you of; yes, and many more than I can imagine.

Do but search the Scriptures, and see how full of *consolation* they are to a poor soul who is minded to close in with Jesus Christ. 'Him that comes to me,' says Christ, 'I will never cast out.' Though he is an old sinner, 'I will never cast him out'; mark, NEVER, though he is a great sinner, I will never cast him out, if he comes to me. Though he has slighted me ever so many times, and not regarded the welfare of his own soul — yet let him now come to me, and notwithstanding this, 'I will never cast him out,' nor throw away his soul (John 6:37).

Again, says the apostle, 'Now,' mark *now*, 'is the accepted time, now is the day of their salvation.' Now here is abundant mercy — now God's heart is open to sinners; now you are welcome; now he will receive anybody, if they do but come to Christ. 'He who comes to me,' says Christ, 'I will never cast out.' And why? Because 'NOW is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation' (2 Cor 6:2). As if the apostle had said, If you will have mercy — have it *now*, receive it *now*, close in with it *now*.

God has a certain day to hold out his grace to sinners. *Now* is the time, now is the day. It is true, there is a day of *damnation* — but now is a day of *salvation*. There is a day coming, wherein sinners must cry to the mountains to fall on them, to the hills to cover them from the wrath of God; but *now*, now is the day in which he holds out his grace.

There is a day coming, in which you will not be admitted to have the privilege of one drop of water to cool your tongue, if *now*, I say, if now you slight his grace and goodness which he holds out to you!

Ah, friends, consider there is *now* hope of mercy — but *then* there will none; now Christ holds forth mercy unto you — but then he will not (Matt 7:23). Now there are his servants who beseech you to accept of his grace — but if you lose the opportunity that is put into your hand, you yourself may beseech hereafter — and no mercy be given you.

'And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.' And was none given! Therefore let it never be said of you, as it will be said of some, 'Of what use is money in the hand of a fool — since he has no desire to get wisdom?' That is, seeing he has no heart to make a good use of it (Prov 17:16). Consider therefore with yourself, and say: It is better going to Heaven than Hell. It is better to be saved than damned. It is better to be with saints than with damned souls — and to go to God is better than to go to the devil.

Therefore 'seek the Lord while he may be found, and call you upon him while he is near' (Isa 55:6). Lest in your trouble, he leave you to yourself, and say unto you plainly: Where I am — there 'you cannot come' (John 8:21).

O if those who are in Hell might but now again have one such *invitation* as this — how would they leap for joy! I have thought sometimes: should God send but one of his ministers to the damned in Hell, and give him commission to preach the free love of God in Christ extended to them, and held out to them, if while it is offered to them they will accept of his kindness; O how welcome would they make this news, and close in with it on any terms! Certainly they would say: we will accept of grace on any terms in the world, and thank you too, though it cost life and limbs to boot; we will spare no cost nor charge — if mercy may be had.

But poor souls, while they live here in this world, they will not part from sin — with Hell-bred devilish sin! No, they will rather lose their souls — than lose their filthy sins!

But, friend, you will *change your note* before long, and cry: O foolish wretch that I am — that I should damn my soul by sin! It is true, I have had the gospel preached to me, and have been invited in. I have been

preached to, and have been warned of this; but 'how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!' (Prov 5:12,13).

O therefore, poor soul — is there now hope? Then lay your hand upon your mouth, and kiss the dust, and close in with the Lord Jesus Christ, and make much of his glorious mercy; and invite also your companions to close in with the same Lord Jesus Christ, lest one of you do go to Hell beforehand, and expect with grief of heart your companions to come after — and with anguish of heart, sigh and say: O send him to my companions, and let him testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment!

Initial USE and APPLICATION (of the Preceding portion of the Parable)

Now then, from what has been said, there might many things be spoken by way of *use* and *application*; but I shall be very brief, and but touch some things, and so wind up.

First, I shall begin with the miserable condition of those who die outside of Christ, and speak something to that.

Secondly, I shall speak of the latter end of the parable, which more evidently concerns the Scripture.

First. I shall begin with the miserable condition of those who die out of Christ.

1. Therefore you see that the former part of the parable contains a miserable declaration of the state of one living and dying outside of Christ; how they lose . . .

Heaven for Hell,
God for the devil,
light for darkness,

joy for sorrow.

2. How that they have not so much as the least comfort from God — not so much as one drop of cold water — who in the time they live here below, neglect coming to him for mercy.
3. That such souls will repent of their folly, when repentance will do them no good, or when they shall be past recovery.
4. That all the comfort such souls have — they have it in this present world.
5. That all their groanings and sighs will not move God to mitigate in the least, his heavy hand of vengeance that is upon them, for the transgression they have committed against him.
6. That their miserable state is *irrecoverable* — they must never, mark, *never* come out of that dreadful condition.

From these things then, I beg you to consider the state of those who die outside of Christ Jesus; yes, I say, consider their miserable state; and think thus with yourself: Well, if I neglect coming to Christ, I must go to the devil, and he will not neglect to fetch me away into those intolerable torments!

Think thus with yourself: What, shall I lose an eternal Heaven — for short pleasure? Shall I buy the pleasures of this world at so dear a rate as to lose my soul to obtain them? Shall I content myself with a *heaven* that will last no longer than my lifetime? What advantage will these be to me, when the Lord shall separate soul and body asunder, and send one to the grave, the other to Hell; and at the judgment-day, the final *sentence of eternal ruin* must be passed upon me?

1. Consider, that the profits, pleasures, and vanities of this world will not last forever — but the time is coming, yes, just at the door, when they will give you the slip, and leave you in such a dreadful condition, and in the brambles of all that you have done. And therefore to prevent this,
2. Consider your dismal state, think thus with yourself:

It is true, I do love my sins, my lusts and pleasures; but what good will they do me at the day of death and of judgment? Will my sins do me good then? Will they be able to help me when I come to fetch my last breath? What good will my *profits* then do for me? And what good will my *vanities* then do, when death drags me away? What good will all my companions, fellow-jesters, jeerers, liars, drunkards, and all my harlots do for me? Will they help to ease the pains of Hell? Will these help to turn the hand of God from inflicting his fierce anger upon me? Nay, will not they rather cause God to show me no mercy, to give me no comfort; but rather to thrust me down in the hottest place of Hell, where I will swim in fire and brimstone!

3. Consider thus with yourself: Would I be glad to have all, every one of my sins to come in against me, to inflame the justice of God against me? Would I be glad to be bound up in them as the three Hebrew children were bound in their clothes — and to be as really thrown into the fiery furnace of the wrath of Almighty God as they were into

Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace?

4. Consider thus: Would I be glad to have all, and every one of the ten commandments, to discharge themselves against my soul? The first saying, *Damn him! for he has broken me!* The second saying, *Damn him! for he has broken me,* etc. Consider how terrible this will be! These indictments will kill both body and soul; and that not for an hour, a day, a month, or a year — but they will condemn you forever.

O consider — your doom is forever, forever! It is into everlasting damnation, eternal destruction, eternal wrath and displeasure from God, eternal gnawings of conscience, eternal continuance with devils.

O consider, it may be, that the thought of now seeing the devil, makes your hair to stand straight up on your head! O but this — to be damned, to be among all the devils, and that not only for a short time — but forever, to all eternity! This is so astonishingly miserable — that no tongue of man, no, nor of angels, is able to express it!

5. Consider much with yourself, Not only my sins against the *law* will be laid to my charge — but also the sins I have committed in slighting the *gospel*, the glorious gospel. These also must come with a voice against me.

As thus: Nay, he is worthy to be damned, for he rejected the gospel, he slighted the free grace of God offered in the gospel! How many times were you, damned wretch — invited, entreated, beseeched to come to Christ, to accept of mercy — that you might have Heaven, your sins pardoned, your soul saved, and body and soul glorified, and all this for nothing, but the acceptance, and through faith forsaking those *imps of Satan*, which by their embracements have drawn you downward toward the gulf of God's eternal displeasure? How often did you read the *promises*, yes, the *free* promises of eternal salvation! How often did you read the sweet *counsels* and *admonitions* of the gospel, to accept of the grace of God! But you would not come, you regard it not, you slight all.

Second. As I would have you to consider the miserable and woeful state of those who die out of Christ, and are past all recovery — so would I have you consider the many *mercies* and *privileges* you enjoy above some, perhaps, of your companions — who have departed to their Hell, their eternal abode. As,

1. Consider, you have still the *thread of your life* lengthened, which for your sins might seven years ago, or more, have been cut asunder — and you would have dropped down among the flames for these past seven years.

2. Consider the terms of reconciliation by faith in Christ are still offered unto you, and you invited, yes, *entreated* to accept them.

3. Consider the *terms* of reconciliation are but (bear with me though I say but) *only* to believe in Jesus Christ, with that faith that purifies the heart, and enables your soul to feed on him effectually, and be saved from this miserable state.

4. Consider that the time of your death is at hand, and the time is *uncertain*; and also that for ought you know that the *day of grace* may be

past to you before you die, not lasting so long as your *uncertain life* in this world. And if so, then know for certain, that you are as sure to be damned as if you were in Hell already; if you are not converted in the meanwhile.

5. Consider it may be that some of your friends are giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure, being resolved for Heaven — and you yourself endeavoring as fast to make sure of Hell, as if resolved to have it! And together with this, consider how it will grieve you that while you were making sure of Hell — that your friends were making sure of Heaven; but more of this by and by.

6. Consider what a miserable reflection this will have on your soul — to see . . .

your *friends* in Heaven — and yourself in Hell;
your *father* in Heaven — and yourself in Hell;
your *mother* in Heaven — and yourself in Hell;
your *brother*, your *sister*, in Heaven — and yourself in Hell;
your *children* in Heaven — and yourself in Hell.

As Christ said to the Jews of their relations according to the flesh, so may I say to you concerning your friends, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,' when you shall see your fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, husbands and wives, children and kinsfolk, with your friends and neighbors in the kingdom of Heaven — and you yourself thrust out! (Luke 13:27-29).

But again, because I would not only tell you of the damnable state of those who die out of Christ — but also persuade you to take hold of life, and go to Heaven, take notice of these following things:

(1.) Consider that whatever *you* can do, as to your acceptance with God, is not worth the *dirt of your shoes* — but is all 'as filthy rags' to God (Isa 64:6).

(2.) Consider that all the conditions of the new covenant, as to salvation, are and have been completely fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ — and that for sinners.

(3.) Consider that the Lord calls to you to receive all that Christ has done — and that on free cost (Rev 22:17).

(4.) Consider that you cannot honor God more, than to close in with his offers of grace, mercy, and pardon of sin (Rom 4).

Again, that which will add to all the rest, you shall have: the very mercy of God, the blood of Christ, the preachers of the word, together with every sermon, all the promises, invitations, exhortations, and all the counsels and threatenings of the blessed word of God. You shall have all your thoughts, words, and actions, together with all your food, your clothing, your sleep, your goods, and also all hours, days, weeks, months and years, together with whatever else God has given you. I say, your *abuse of all these* shall come up in judgment against your soul! For God will reckon with you for *everything*, whether it be good or evil (Eccl 12:14).

(5.) Nay further, it is so *unreasonable* a thing for a sinner to refuse the gospel, that the very *devils* themselves will come in to testify against you at the bar of God's justice, saying: O you foolish man! O vile wretch! You had not so much care of your soul, your precious soul, as the beast has of its young, or the dog of the very bone in its mouth! Was your soul worth so much — and did you so little regard it? Were the thunder-claps of the *law* so terrible — and did you so slight them? Besides, was the *gospel* so freely, so frequently, so fully offered to you — and yet have you rejected all these things? Have you valued *sin* at a higher rate than your *soul* — higher than God, Christ, angels, saints, and communion with them in eternal blessedness and glory? Were you not told of Hell-fire, those intolerable flames? Did you never hear of the intolerable roarings of the damned ones that are therein? Did you never hear or read that doleful saying in Luke 16, how the sinful man cries out among the flames, 'O for one drop of water to cool my tongue!'

Thus, I say, may the very devils, being ready to go with you into the burning furnace of fire and brimstone, though not for sins of so high a nature as yours, trembling say: O that Christ had died for *devils*, as he died for man! And, O that the gospel had been preached to *us* — as it has been to you! How would we have labored to have closed in with it! But woe be to us, for we have never had it offered to us; no, not in the least,

though we would have been glad for it. But *you* — you have it offered, preached, and proclaimed unto you (Prov 8:4). Besides, you have been entreated, and beseeched to accept of it — but you would not receive it. O vile fools! You might have escaped wrath, vengeance, Hell-fire, and that to all eternity — but you had no desire for this!

(6.) May not the *messengers of Jesus Christ* also come in with a shrill and terrible note against your soul, when you stand at the bar of God's justice, saying: Nay, you ungodly one, how often have you been forewarned of this dreadful day? Did we not sound an alarm in your ears — by the trumpet of God's Word day after day? How often did you hear us tell you of these things? Did we not tell you, that *sin would damn your soul*? Did we not tell you, that without true conversion there was no salvation? Did we not tell you, that those who loved their sins would be surely damned at this dark and gloomy day? Yes, did we not tell you that God, out of his love to sinners, sent Christ to die for them, that they might, by coming to him, be saved? Did not we tell you of these things? Did we not run, ride, labor, and strive abundantly, if it might have been, for the good of your soul — though now a *damned* soul?

Did we not venture our goods, our names, our lives? Yes, did we not ourselves with our earnest entreaties, beg to you to consider of your woeful estate, and by Christ to escape this dreadful day? O miserable doom! When you shall be forced full sore against your will to fall under the truth of this judgment, saying, 'O how have I hated instruction, and how has my heart despised reproof!' for, indeed, 'I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me' (Prov 5:12,13).

(7.) May not your father, your mother, your brother, your sister, your child, your friend, etc., appear with gladness against you at the terrible day, saying: O you silly wretch! how *justly* has God met with you! O how *righteously* does his sentence pass upon you! Remember that you would not be ruled nor persuaded in your lifetime. As you did not care for us and our admonitions then — so neither do we care for your ruin, terror, and damnation now! No — but we will stand on God's side in sentencing of you to that portion which the devils must be partakers of! 'The righteous shall *rejoice* when he sees the vengeance, he shall wash his feet

in the blood of the wicked' (Psalm 58:10).

O how miserable! It is enough to make mountains tremble, and the rocks rend in pieces — to hear this doleful sound.

Consider these solemn things, and if you would be reluctant to be in this condition, then have a concern of *living in sin* now. How grudgingly will you be to be thrust away from the gates of Heaven! And how grudgingly will you be to be deprived of the mercy of God! How unwillingly will you set foot forward towards the lake of fire! Never did a criminal so unwillingly step off the *ladder* when the *halter* was around his neck — as you will turn from God to the devil, from Heaven to Hell, when the sentence is passed upon your soul!

O how will you sigh and groan! How willingly would you *hide* yourself, and *run away* from justice! But alas! as it is with those who are on the *ladder* ready to be executed — so it will be with you. They would gladly run away — but there are many hang-men to stop them. And so the angels of God will encircle you around — I say around on every side; so that you may indeed look — but *run* you cannot. You may wish yourself under some rock, or mountain (Rev 6:15,16) — but how to get under, you know not!

O how unwilling will you be to see your *father* go to Heaven without you! To see your *mother* or child or friends, go to Heaven without you! How willingly would you hang on them, and not let them go! O mother! cannot you help me? My child! cannot you do me some good? O how afraid I am to burn and fry in Hell — while you are singing in Heaven! But alas! the father, mother, child or friends reject them, slight them, and turn their backs upon them, saying: You would have none of Heaven in your lifetime — therefore you shall have none of it now. You slighted our counsels then — and we slight your tears, cries, and dreadful condition now.

What do you say, sinner? Will not this persuade your heart, nor make you bethink yourself? Now, before you fall into that dreadful place, that fiery furnace! But O consider how dreadful the *place* itself, the *devils* themselves, the *fire* itself will be! And this at the end of all — Here you

must lie *forever!* Here you must fry forever, and forever! This will be more to you than any man with tongue can express, or with pen can write. There is none who can, of the ten thousandth part, express the dreadful state and condition of such a soul!

I shall conclude this, then, with **A FEW ENCOURAGEMENTS.**

First Encouragement. Consider, for I would gladly have you come in, sinner — that there is *way* made by Jesus Christ for those who are under the curse of God, to come to this comfortable and blessed state of Lazarus I was speaking of. See Ephesians 2.

Second Encouragement. Consider what pains Christ Jesus took for the ransoming sinners from all the curses, thunder-claps, and tempests of the law; from all the intolerable flames of Hell; from that soul-sinking appearance of your person, on the left hand, before the judgment-seat of Christ Jesus, from everlasting dwelling with innumerable companies of yelling and soul-amazing devils. I say, consider what pains the Lord Jesus Christ took in bringing in redemption for sinners from these things.

'In that though he was rich — yet he became poor, that you, through his poverty, might be made rich' (2 Cor 8:9). He laid aside his glory (John 17), and became a servant (Phil 2:7). He left the company of angels, and encountered with the devil (Luke 4; Matt 4). He left Heaven's ease for a time, to lie upon hard mountains (Luke 6:12; John 8:1). In a word, he became poorer than those who go with flail and rake; yes, than the very birds or foxes — and all to do good to unworthy sinners.

Besides, consider the unspeakable and intolerable slights and rejections, and the manifold abuses that came from men upon him. How he was falsely accused, being a sweet, harmless, and undefiled lamb. How he was undervalued, so that a murderer was counted less worthy of condemnation than he. Besides, how they mocked him, spit on him, beat him over the head with staves, had the hair plucked from his cheeks. 'I gave my back to the smiters,' says he, 'and my cheeks to those who plucked off the hair; I did not hide my face from shame and spitting' (Isa 50:6). His *head* crowned with thorns, his *hands* pierced with nails, and his *side* with a spear; together with how they scourged him, and so

miserably abused him, that they had even almost killed him in a great measure before they crucified him; insomuch that there was another needed to carry his cross. Again,

Third Encouragement. Not only this — but lay to heart a little what he received from God, his dear Father, though he were his dear and tender Son.

1. In that he did reckon him the greatest sinner and rebel in the world. For he laid the sins of thousands, and ten thousands, and thousands of thousands of sinners to his charge (Isa 53). And caused him to drink the terrible cup that was due to them all; and not only so — but delighted in so doing. 'For it *pleased* the Lord to bruise him.' God dealt indeed with his son, as Abraham would have dealt with Isaac; yes, and more terribly by ten thousand parts. For he did not only tear his body like a lion — but made his *soul* an offering for sin. And this was really done, for justice called for it — he standing in the place of sinners.

Witness that horrible and unspeakable agony that fell on him suddenly in the garden, as if all the vials of God's unspeakable scalding vengeance had been cast upon him all at once, and all the devils in Hell had broken loose from thence at once to destroy him, and that forever; insomuch that the very pangs of death seized upon him in the same hour. For, says he, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful' and 'sore amazed,' even 'unto death' (Mark 14:34).

2. Witness also that strange kind of *sweat* that trickled down his most blessed face, where it is said: 'And he sweat, as it were, great drops' or clots 'of blood,' trickling 'down to the ground.' O Lord Jesus! what a load did you carry! What a burden did you bear of the sins of the world, and the wrath of God! O you were so pressed, so laden, that the pure blood gushed through the flesh and skin, and so ran trickling down to the ground. 'And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood,' trickling or 'falling down to the ground' (Luke 22:44). Can you read this, O you wicked sinner — and yet go on in sin? Can you think of this, and defer repentance one hour longer? *O heart of flint!* yes, harder. O miserable wretch! What place in Hell will be hot enough for you to have your soul put into, if you shall persist or go on still to add iniquity to iniquity!

3. Besides, his *soul* went down to Hell, and his *body* to the bars of the grave (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:31). And had Hell, death, or the grave, been strong enough to hold him — then he would have suffered the vengeance of eternal fire to all eternity.

But, O blessed Jesus! how you revealed your love to man in your thus suffering!

And, O God the Father! how you also declared your purity and exactness of your justice, in that, though it was your only, holy, innocent, harmless, and undefiled Son Jesus — who took on him our nature, and represented our persons, answering for our sins, instead of ourselves! You so astonishingly poured out your wrath upon him, to the making of him cry out, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

And, O Lord Jesus! what a glorious *conquest* have you made over the enemies of our souls, even wrath, sin, death, Hell, and devils, in that you brought yourself from under the power of them all! And not only so — but have led them captive, which would have led us captive; and also have received for us that glorious and unspeakable inheritance that 'eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man' to conceive; and also have given your some discovery thereof through your Spirit.

And now, sinner, together with this consider,

4. That though Jesus Christ has done all these things for sinners — yet the devils make it their whole work, and continually study how they may keep you and others from enjoying of these blessed privileges that have been thus obtained for sinners by this sweet Jesus. He labors, I say:

(1.) To keep you *ignorant* of your state by nature.

(2.) To harden your heart against the ways of God.

(3.) To inflame they heart with love to sin and the ways of darkness.

(4.) To get you to continue herein.

For that is the way, he knows, to get you to be a partaker with him of flaming Hell-fire, even the same that he himself is fallen into, together with the rest of the wicked world, by reason of sin. Look to it therefore.

Fourth Encouragement. But now, in the next place, a word of encouragement to you who are the saints of the Lord.

1. Consider, what a happy state you are in, that have gotten faith in the Lord Jesus into your soul; I say, how safe, how sure, how happy are you!

For when others go to Hell — you must go to Heaven;

when others go to the devil — you must go to God;

when as others go to prison — you must be set at liberty, at ease, and at freedom;

when others must roar for sorrow of heart — then you shall also sing for the joy of heart.

2. Consider, you must have all your well-spent life to follow you — instead of all your sins; and the glorious blessings of the gospel — instead of the dreadful curses and condemnations of the law; the blessing of the father — instead of a fiery sentence from the judge.

3. Let *death* come when it will, it can do you no harm; for it will be but only a passage . . .

out of a prison — into a palace;

out of a sea of troubles — into a haven of rest;

out of a crowd of enemies — into an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends;

out of shame, reproach, and contempt — into exceeding great and eternal glory!

For *death* shall not hurt you with his sting, nor bite you with his soul-

murdering teeth; but shall be a *welcome guest* to you, even to your soul, in that it is sent to free you from your troubles which you are in while here in this poor world, dwelling in the tabernacle of clay.

4. Consider, however it goes with friends and relations — yet it will go well with you (Eccl 8:12). However it goes with the wicked — yet 'surely I know'; mark, 'yet surely I know,' says he, 'that it shall be well with God-fearing men, who are reverent before God!'

(1.) And therefore let this, in the first place, cause you cheerfully to exercise your patience under all the calamities, crosses, troubles, and afflictions which may come upon you; and, by patient continuance in well-doing, to commit both yourself and your affairs and actions into the hands of God, through Jesus Christ, as to a faithful Creator, who is true in his word, and loves to give unto you whatever he has promised to you.

(2.) And, therefore, to encourage you while you are here, with comfort to hold on for all your *crosses* in this your journey — be much in considering the place that you must go into so soon as death comes. It must be into Heaven, to God the judge of all, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven, and to Jesus, to the redeemer, who is the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things for you than Abel's did for Cain (Heb 11:22-24).

(3.) Consider, that when the time of the dead to be raised has come, then shall your body be raised out of the grave and be glorified, and be made like to Jesus Christ (Phil 3:21). O excellent condition!

(4.) Consider, that when Jesus Christ shall sit on the throne of his glory — you also shall sit with him, even when he shall sit on the throne of his glory! O will not this be glorious, that when thousands, and thousands of thousands shall be arraigned before the judgment-seat of Christ — then for them to sit with him upon the throne, together with him to pass the sentence upon the ungodly (1 Cor 6:2,3). Will it not be glorious to enjoy those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man to conceive?

Will it not be glorious to have this sentence, 'Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!' Will it not be glorious to enter then with the angels and saints into that glorious kingdom? Will it not be glorious for you to be in glory with them — while others are in unutterable torments? O then, how will it comfort you to see you have not lost that glory; to think that the devil has not got your soul, that your soul should be saved, and that not from a little — but from an exceeding danger; not with a little — but a great salvation. O, therefore, let the saints be joyful in glory, let them triumph over all their enemies. Let them begin to sing Heaven upon earth, triumph before they come to glory, salvation, even when they are in the midst of their enemies, for 'this honor have all his saints' (Psalm 149:9).

Verse 29. 'Abraham said unto him: They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.'

In the foregoing verses, you see there is a discovery of the lamentable state of the poor soul that dies outside of Christ and the special favor of God. And also how little the glorious God of Heaven regards and takes notice of their most miserable condition.

Now in this verse he magnifies the Word which was spoken to the people by the prophets and apostles, 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.' As if he should say, you ask me that I should send Lazarus back again into the world to preach to those who live there, that they might escape that doleful place that you are in. What is the need of that? Have they not Moses and the prophets? Have they not had my ministers and servants sent unto them and coming as from me? I sent Enoch and Noah, Moses and Samuel. I sent David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and the rest of the prophets, together with Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, James, Jude, with the rest; 'Let them hear *them*.' What they have spoken by divine inspiration I will own — whether it be for the damnation of those who reject, or the saving of them that receive their doctrine. And, therefore, what need have they that one should be sent unto them in *another* way? 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear *them*.' Let them receive their word, close in with the doctrine declared by them.

I shall tell you what is to be understood by these words, 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.' The things that I shall observe from hence are these:

[First.] That the scriptures spoken by the holy men of God are a *sufficient* rule to instruct to salvation, those who assuredly believe and close in with what they hold forth. 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.' That is, if they would escape that doleful place, and be saved indeed from the intolerable pains of Hell-fire, as they desire — they have that which is sufficient to counsel them. 'They have Moses and the prophets'; let them be instructed by them, 'Let them hear them.' For 'all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness'; why? 'That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works' (2 Tim 3:16,17). Do but mark these words, '*All* scripture is *profitable*.' ALL; take it where you will, and in what place you will, 'All is profitable'. For what? 'That the man of God,' or he who is bound for Heaven, and would instruct others in their *progress* there.

It is profitable . . .

to *instruct* him — in case he is ignorant;

to *reprove* him — in case he transgresses;

to *correct* him — if he has need of it;

to *confirm* him — if he is wavering.

It is profitable for doctrine, and all this in a very righteous way that the poor soul may not only be helped — but thoroughly furnished, not only to some — but to all good works. And when Paul would counsel Timothy to stick close to the things that are sound and sure, presently he puts him upon the Scripture, saying, 'From a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' The Scripture holds forth God's mind and will, of his love and mercy towards man — and also the creature's behavior towards him from first to last; so if you would know the love of God in Christ to sinners, then 'search the scriptures, for they testify of Him.'

Would you know what you are, and what is in your heart? Then search the Scriptures and see what is written in them (Rom 1:29-31, 3:9-18; Jer

17:9; Gen 6:5, 8:21; Eph 4:18, with many others). The Scriptures, I say, are able to give a man perfect instruction into any of the things of God *necessary to faith and godliness*, if he has but an honest heart seriously to weigh and ponder the several things contained in them. As to instance in things more particular for the further clearing up of this.

And first, if we come to the *CREATION* of the world. Would you know something concerning that? Then read Genesis 1 and 2, and compare them with Psalm 33:6; also Isaiah 66:2; Proverbs 8 towards the end.

Would you know whether he made them of something, or out of nothing? Read Hebrews 11:3.

Would you know whether he put forth any labor in making them, as we do in making things? Read Psalm 33:9.

If you would know whether man was made by God corrupt or upright? Read Ecclesiastes 7:29; Genesis 1:10, 18, 25, 31.

Would you know *where* God placed man after he had made him? Read Genesis 2:15.

Would you know whether that man lived there all his time or not? Then read Genesis 3:23, 24.

If you would know whether man is still in that state by nature, that God placed him in? Then read Ecclesiastes 7:29, and compare it with Romans 5:16; Ephesians 2:1-3. 'God made men upright — but they have sought out many inventions.'

If you would know whether the man was first beguiled, or the woman that God made a help-mate for him? Read Genesis 3:6, and compare with 1 Timothy 2:14.

Would you know whether God looked upon Adam's eating of the forbidden tree, to be sin or not? Read Romans 5:12-15, and compare it with Genesis 3:17.

Would you know whether it was the devil who beguiled them, or whether

it was a natural serpent, such as do haunt the desolate places? Read Genesis 3:13, with Revelation 20:1-3.

Would you know whether that sin is *imputed* to us? Read Romans 5:12-15, and compare it with Ephesians 2:2.

Would you know whether man was *cursed* for his sin? Read Galatians 3:10; Romans 5:15.

Would you know whether the curse did fall on man, or on the whole creation with him? Compare Genesis 3:17, with Romans 8:20-22.

Would you know whether man is defiled in every part of him by the sin he has committed? Then read Isaiah 1:6.

Would you know man's *inclination* so soon as he is born? Read Psalm 58:3. 'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born.'

Would you know whether man once fallen from God by transgression, can recover himself by all he can do? Then read Romans 3:20,23.

Would you know whether it is the desire of the heart of man by nature, to follow God in his own way or not? Compare Genesis 6:5, and Genesis 8:21, with Hosea 11:7.

Would you know how God's heart stood affected toward man before the world began? Compare Ephesians 1:4, with 2 Timothy 1:9.

Would you know whether sin was sufficient to draw God's love from his creatures? Compare Jeremiah 3:7, and Micah 7:18, with Romans 5:6-8.

Would you know whether God's love did still abide towards his creatures for anything they could do to make him amends? Then read Deuteronomy 11:5-8.

Would you know how God could still love his creatures, and do his justice no wrong? Read Romans 3:23-26. 'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the

redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished — he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.'

That is, God having his justice satisfied in the blood, and righteousness, and death of his own Son Jesus Christ for the sins of poor sinners — he can now save them that come to him, though ever so great sinners, and do his justice no wrong, because it has had a full and complete satisfaction given it by that blood! (1 John 1:7,8).

Would you know who he was, and what he was, who did out of his love, die for sinners? Then compare John 3:16, 17; Romans 5:8, with Isaiah 9:6.

Would you know whether this Savior had a body of flesh and bones before the world was, or took it from the Virgin Mary? Then read Galatians 4:4.

Would you know whether he did in that body bear all our sins, and where? Then read 1 Peter 2:24. 'Who bore our sins in his own body on the tree.'

Would you know whether he rose again after he was crucified, with the very same body? Then read Luke 24:38- 41.

Would you know whether he ate or drank with his disciples after he rose out of the grave? Then read Luke 24:42, and Acts 10:41.

If you would be persuaded of the truth of this, that that very body is now above the clouds and stars, read Acts 1:9- 11, and Luke 24 toward the end.

Would you know what that Christ who died for sinners, is doing in that place where he is gone? Then read Hebrews 7:24.

Would you know who shall have life by him, read 1 Timothy 1:14, 15, and Romans 5:6-8, which say, 'Christ died' for sinners, 'for the ungodly.'

Would you know whether those who live and die in their sins shall go to Heaven or not? Then read 1 Corinthians 6:10; Revelation 21:8, 27, which says, 'They shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.'

Would you know whether *man's obedience* will obtain that Christ should die for them, or save them? Then read Mark 2:17; Romans 5:6, 7.

Would you know whether righteousness, justification, and sanctification come through the virtue of Christ's blood? Compare Romans 5:9 with Hebrews 12:12.

Would you know whether natural man can abstain from the outward act of sin against the law, merely by a principle of nature? Then compare well Romans 2:14, with Philippians 3:6.

Would you know whether a man by nature may know something of the invisible things of God? Compare seriously Romans 1:20, 21 with 2:14, 15.

Would you know how far a man may go on in a profession of the gospel, and yet fall away? Then read Hebrews 6:4-6. 'They may taste the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' They may taste 'the Heavenly gift, and be partakers of the Holy Spirit,' and yet so fall as never to be recovered, or renewed again unto repentance. See also Luke 13.

Would you know how hard it is to go to Heaven? Read Matthew 7:13, 14; Luke 13:24.

Would you know whether a man by nature be a friend to God, or an enemy? Then read Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21.

Would you know what, or who they are, who shall go to Heaven? Then read John 3:3-7, and 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Would you know what a miserable thing it is for any to turn their backs upon the gospel of Jesus Christ? Then read Hebrews 10:28, 29, and Mark 16:16.

Would you know what is the wages of sin? Then read Romans 6:23, 'The wages of sin is death.'

Would you know where those go, who die unconverted? Then read Psalm 9:17, and Isaiah 14:9.

Reader, here might I spend many sheets of paper, yes, I might upon this subject write a very great book — but I shall now forbear, desiring you to be very conversant in the Scriptures, 'for they testify of Jesus Christ!' (John 5:39). The Bereans were counted *noble* upon this account: 'These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily,' etc. (Acts 17:11).

But here let me give you one caution, that is, have a care that you do not satisfy yourself with a *bare search* of them, without a real *application* of him whom they testify of to your soul, lest instead of faring the better for your doing this work — you fare a great deal the worse, and your condemnation be very much heightened, in that though you read so often the miserable state of those who die in sin, and the glorious estate of those who close in with Christ — yet you yourself should be such a fool as to lose Jesus Christ, notwithstanding your hearing, and reading so plentifully of him.

'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.' As if he should say: what need have they that one should be sent to them from the dead? Have they not Moses and the prophets? Has not Moses told them the danger of living in sin? (Deut 27:15-26, 28:15-68, 29:18-22). Has he not there told them, what a miserable state those people are in, who deceive themselves with the deceit of their hearts, saying they shall have peace though they follow their sins, in these words: 'And when he hears the words of this curse, he blesses himself in his heart, saying, "I will be safe, even though I persist in going my own way." The Lord will never be willing to forgive him; his wrath and zeal will burn against that man. All the curses written in this book will fall upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven!'

Again, Did not Moses write of the Savior who was to come afterwards into

the world? (Deut 18:18). Nay, have not all the prophets from Samuel, with all those who follow after, prophesied, and foretold these things? Therefore what need have they, that I should work such a miracle, as to send one from the dead unto them? 'They have Moses and the prophets — let them hear them.'

[Second.] From whence observe again, that God honors the writings of Moses and the prophets, as much, nay more — than if one should rise from the dead: 'Should not a people seek unto their God?' What, seek 'for the living among the dead? To the law, and to the testimony,' says God, 'if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them' (Isa 8:19,20). And let me tell you plainly, I believe that the devil knows this full well, which makes him labor to beget in the hearts of his disciples and followers light thoughts of the Scriptures; and persuades them, that even a motion from their own beguiled conscience, or from his own wicked spirit — is to be observed and obeyed before them.

When the very apostle of Jesus Christ, though he heard a voice from the excellent glory, saying, 'This is my beloved Son,' etc. — yet writing to the churches, he commends, the writing of the prophets before it, saying, 'We have also a *more sure word* of the prophets, to which you do well to take heed,' etc. (2 Peter 1:17-19). Now if you doubt whether that place be meant the Scriptures, the words of the prophets or not — read but the next verse, where he adds for a certain confirmation thereof, these words, 'Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man — but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.'

And therefore what a miserable thing is it for those who go about to *disown* the Scriptures! I tell you, however they may slight them now — yet when they come into Hell, they will see their folly! 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.'

Further, who are those who are so tossed to and fro, with the several winds of doctrine that have been broached in these days — but such for the most part, as have had a *light esteem of the Scriptures*. For the ground of error, as Christ says, "Are you not in error — because you do not know the Scriptures?" (Mark 12:24). And indeed, it is just with God to

give them over to follow their own dark blinded consciences, to be led into errors, that they might be damned into Hell — who did not believe that the things contained in the Scripture were the truth, that they might be saved and go to Heaven.

As for the unbelieving, I shall say to them, rather than God will save them from Hell with the breach of his holy Word, if they had a thousand souls apiece, God would destroy them all; for 'the Scripture cannot be broken' (John 10:35).

Verse 30. 'And he said, *Nay*, Father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.'

The verse before, you know, as I told you, it was part of an answer to such as lose their souls; so it is a vindication of the Scriptures of Moses and the prophets, 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.'

Now this verse is an answer to what was said in the former; and such a one as has in it a rejection of the former answer. '*Nay*, father Abraham.' *Nay*, says he — do not say so, do not put them off with this; send one from the dead, and then there will be some hope! It is true you speak of the Scripture, of Moses and the prophets, and say, 'let them hear them'; but these things are not so well as I could wish, I had rather you would send one from the dead.

In these words therefore, *Nay, father Abraham*, there is a repulse given: *Nay*, let it not be so! *Nay*, I do not like of that answer. Hear Moses and the prophets, *nay*.

The same expression is used by Christ, Luke 13:2, 3. 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, *Nay*! But unless you repent, you too will all perish!' So here, *Nay*, father Abraham, etc.

By this word *Nay*, therefore, is signified a *rejecting* the first answer.

Now observe, I beg you, the reason why he says *Nay*, is, because God enjoins all those who will be saved, to observe and receive the truth

contained in Scripture, and believe that. To have a high esteem of them, and to love and search them, as Christ says, 'Search the Scriptures,' for 'they testify of me' (John 5:39). But the damned say, *Nay!* As if he had said: "To be short, my brethren are unbelievers, and do not regard the Word of God. I know it by myself, for when I was in the world — it was so with me. Many a good sermon did I hear, many a time was I admonished, entreated, beseeched, threatened, forewarned of what I now suffer. But alas! I was ignorant, self-conceited, surly, obstinate, and rebellious. Many a time the preacher told me that Hell would be my portion, that the devil would wreck his malice on me; that God would pour on me his sore displeasure. But he might just as well have preached to the trees, to the post, to the stones I trod on! His words rang in my ears — but I kept them from my heart. I remember he alleged many a Scripture — but those I valued not. The *Scriptures*, thought I — what are they? A dead letter, a little ink and paper, of three or four shillings' price. Alas! What is the Scripture to me? Give me a foolish ballad, a newspaper, a novel — give me some book that tells of old fables. But for the holy Scriptures — I cared not. And as it was with me then — so it is with my brethren now, we were all of one spirit, loved all the same sins, slighted all the same counsels, promises, encouragements and threatenings of the Scriptures! And they are still, just as I left them — still in unbelief, still provoking God, and rejecting good counsel, so hardened in their ways, so bent to follow sin — that let the Scriptures be showed to them daily, let the messengers of Christ preach until their hearts ache, until they fall down dead with preaching — my brothers will rather trample it under foot, and swine-like rend them, than close in with those gentle and blessed offers of the gospel."

"Nay, father Abraham — but if one would rise from the dead, they would repent. Though they have Moses and the prophets, the Scriptures — they will not repent and close in with Jesus Christ, though the Scriptures witness against them. If therefore there is any good done to them — they must have it *another way*. I think that it would convince them, if one would rise from the dead."

And this truth indeed is so evident, that ungodly ones have a light esteem of the Scriptures, that it needs not many strong arguments to prove it,

being so evidently manifested by their every day's practice, both in words and actions, almost in all things they say and do. Yet for the satisfaction of the reader, I shall show you by a Scripture or two, though I might show many, that this was and is true, with the generality of the world.

See the words of Nehemiah in his 9th chapter concerning the children of Israel, who though the Lord offered them mercy upon mercy, as it is from verse 19-25, yet verse 26, says he, 'Nevertheless they were disobedient' for all your goodness towards them, 'and rebelled against you.' But how? 'They cast your *law* behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies.'

Observe,

1. They sinned against mercy. And then,
2. They slighted the law, or Word of God.
3. They slew the prophets who declared it unto them.
4. The Lord counts it a great provocation. See Hebrews 3:10-19.

Zechariah 7:11, 12, 'But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the *law* or to the *words* that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry!' etc.

Mark, I beg you, here is also,

- (1.) A refusing to hearken to the words of the prophets.
- (2.) That they might so do, they stopped up their ears.
- (3.) If anything was to be done, they turned their backs.
- (4.) To effect his, they made their hearts as hard as flint.

(5.) And all this — lest they should hear and close in with Jesus, and live, and be delivered from the wrath to come.

All which things do hold out an unwillingness to submit to, and embrace the words of God, and so Jesus Christ, who is testified of by them. Many other scriptures I might bring in for confirmation of the this fact, as that in Amos 7:12, 13; 1 Samuel 2:24, 25; 2 Chronicles 25:15, 16; Jeremiah 7:23-28, 16:12. Read also seriously, that saying in 2 Chronicles 36:15, where he says, 'And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up early, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling- place.' And did they make them welcome? No! but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words. And was that all? No! They 'misused his prophets.' How long? 'Until the wrath of the Lord arose against them. Until there was no remedy!' See also Jeremiah 29:19, 25:3-7; Luke 11:49.

Both *religious* and *profane* people neglect, reject, and turn their backs upon the plain testimony of the Scriptures. As,

First. Take the **THREATENINGS** laid down in holy writ — and how are they disregarded? These are but a few places in the Bible where there are *threatenings* against one sinner or other: against drunkards, swearers, liars, proud people, strumpets, whoremongers, covetous, railers, extortioners, thieves, lazy people, etc. In a word, all manner of sins are reprov'd, and without faith in the Lord Jesus, there is a sore punishment to be executed on the committers of them; and all this is clearly taught in the Scriptures.

But for all this — how thick, and by heaps, do these wretches walk up and down our streets? Do but go into the alehouses, and you shall see almost every room besprinkled with them, so foaming out their own shame, that it is enough to make the heart of a saint to tremble! They would not desire to have society with them any long while, for all the world. For as the ways of the *godly* are not liked of by the wicked, even so the ways of the *wicked* 'are an abomination to the just' (Prov 29:27; Psalm 120:5,6).

1. The Scripture says, 'Cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord' (Jer 17:5). And yet

how many poor souls are there in the world, who stand in so much awe and dread of *men*, and so highly esteem their favor — that they will rather venture their souls into the hands of the devil with their favor, than they will fly to Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls! Nay, though they are convinced in their souls, that the way of holiness is the way of God; yet how do they labor to stifle conviction, and turn their ears away from the truth — and all because they will not lose the favor of an ungodly neighbor!

Says one, "O! I dare not offend my master, my brother, my landlord! I shall lose his favor, his business — and so decay my own business."

"O, says another, I would willingly go in God's way — but for my father, he chides and tells me he will not be my friend when I come to poverty; that I shall never enjoy a pennyworth of his goods; he will disinherit me!"

"And I dare not", says another, "for my husband will be a-railing, and tells me he will turn me out of doors! He will beat me, and cut off my support!"

But I tell you, if any of these, or any other things are so prevalent with you now, as to keep you from seeking after Christ in his ways — they will also be so prevalent with God against you, as to make him cast off your soul, because you rather trusted man than God; and delighted in the embracing of man, rather than in the favor of the Lord!

2. Again, the Scripture says, 'He who being often reprov'd, hardens his neck — shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy!' (Prov 29:1). Yet many are so far from *turning*, though they have been convinced of their wretched state a hundred times, that when convictions or trouble for sin comes on their consciences — they go on still in the same manner *resisting* and *choking* the same — though remediless destruction is hard at their heels!

3. Again you have heard say, 'Unless a man is born again — he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' (John 3:3-7). And yet you go on in a *natural* state, an *unregenerate* condition; nay, you do resolve never to turn nor be changed, though Hell is appointed on purpose to swallow up

such (Isa 14:9). 'The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God' (Psalm 9:17).

4. Again, the Scripture says plainly, that all liars and deceivers shall have their part 'in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone' (Rev 21:8,27). And yet you are so far from dreading it, that it is your delight to jest and jeer, and lie for a penny, or twopence, or sixpence, again. And also if you can make the rest of your companions merry, by telling false things of the godly — you do not care a straw! Or if you hear a lie from, or of another — you will tell it to others, and swear to the truth of it. O miserable state!

5. You have heard and read, that 'He who believes not shall be damned' (Mark 16:16). And that 'all men have not faith' (2 Thess 3:2). And yet you do so much *disregard* these things, that it is like you scarcely ever so much as examined seriously whether you were in the faith or not; but content yourself with the *hypocrite's hope*, which at the last God will cut off, and count it *no better than the spider's web* (Job 8:13,14), or the house that is built on the sands (Luke 6:49). Nay, you perhaps do flatter yourself, and think that your faith is as good as the best of them all; when, alas, poor soul, you may have no saving faith at all; for you are not born again, and made a new creature (2 Cor 2:17).

6. You have heard, that he who neglects God's great *salvation* — shall never escape his great *damnation* (Heb 2:3, compared with Luke 14:24, and Rev 14:19,20). And yet when you are invited, entreated, and beseeched to come in, you will make any excuse to serve the turn (Luke 14:17,18; Rom 12:1; 2 Cor 5:19,20). Nay, you will be so wicked as to put off Christ time after time, notwithstanding he is so freely offered to you: a little ground, a few oxen, a farm, a wife, a two-penny matter, a play; nay, the fear of a mock, a scoff or a jeer — is of greater weight to draw you back, than the salvation of your soul to draw you forward! O miserable state!

7. And you have heard, that whoever will be a friend of the *world* — is the enemy of God (James 4:4). But you have no regard for these things — but contrariwise; rather than you be out of the friendship and favor of this world, you will sin against your own conscience, and get yourself into favor, by fawning and flattering of the world. Yes, rather than you will go

without it — you will dissemble, lie, backbite your neighbor, and an hundred other tricks you will have!

8. You have heard that the day of *judgment* is near, in which you and I, all of us, must appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and there be made to give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead — even of all that ever we *did*, yes, of all our sins in *thought*, word, and deed — and shall certainly be damned for them too — if we close not in with our Lord Jesus Christ, and what he has done and suffered for eternal life; and that not *notionally* or *traditionally* — but *really* and *savingly*, in the power, and by the operation of the Spirit, through faith (Eccl 11:9, 12:14; Acts 10:42, 17:30,31; 2 Cor 5:10; Heb 9:27; Rev 20:12).

'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books.'

There are several 'books':

the book of *conscience*,

the book of the *Lord's remembrance*,

the book of the *law*,

the book of the *gospel* (Rom 1:20, compare with Rom 2:12,15; Rev 6:17; John 12:48).

Then 'he shall *separate* them one from another, as a shepherd divides his *sheep* on the right hand — but the *goats* on his left' (Matt 25:30-41). 'And he shall say to them on his right hand — Come, you who are blessed!' But to the other, *go*, or 'Depart, you who are cursed!'

Yet, notwithstanding the Scriptures do so plainly and plentifully speak of these things, alas! who is there that is weaned from the *world*, and from their *sins* and *pleasures* — to fly from the wrath to come? (Matt 3:7).

Notwithstanding the Scripture says also that Heaven and earth shall *pass away*, rather than one jot, or one tittle of the word shall fail, 'until all be fulfilled,' they are so certain (Luke 21:33; Matt 5:18).

But leaving the threatenings, let us come to *the promises*, and speak somewhat of them, and you may see how light men make of them, and how little they set by them, notwithstanding the mouth of the Lord has spoken them.

Second, Take the **PROMISES** laid down in holy writ — and how are they disregarded?

1. 'Turn,' you fools, you scorers, you simple ones, 'at my reproof'; and 'behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you' (Prov 1:23). And yet people had rather be in their foolishness and scorning still, and had rather embrace some filthy lust — than the holy, undefiled, and blessed Spirit of Christ, through the promise; though by it, as many as receive it, 'are sealed unto the day of redemption' (Eph 4:30); and although he who lives and dies without it, is none of Christ's (Rom 8:9).

2. God has said, if you do but come to him in Christ, 'Though your sins be as red as scarlet — they shall be as white as snow'; and he will by no means cast you away. Compare Isaiah 1:18 with John 6:37. Yet poor souls will not come to Christ that they might have life (John 5:40) — but rather after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves *wrath* against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Rom 2:5).

3. Christ Jesus has said in the Word of truth, that if any man will *serve* and *follow* him, that where he is, 'there shall also his servant be' (John 12:26). But yet poor self-deluded souls choose rather to serve and follow sin, Satan, and the world — though their companions are the devils and damned souls forever (Matt 25:41).

4. He has also said, 'Seek first the kingdom of God — and all other things shall be added.' But let whoever will, seek after the kingdom of Heaven *first*. And if it is so, that they must needs seek after Heaven, or else be damned — they will wait until they have more leisure time, or until they can better attend to it; or until they have other fine things about them, or until they are older; when they have little else to do, or when they come to be sick, and to die. *Only then* they will desire the Lord to have mercy upon them! though it be ten thousand to one — but they perish forever!

For commonly the Lord has this way to deal with such sinners, who *put him off* when he is striving with them: either to laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear comes (Prov 1:26,28). Or else send them to the *gods* they have served, which are the devils (Judg 10:13,14) "But you have forsaken me and served other gods — so I will no longer save you. Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let *them* save you when you are in trouble!" Compare this with John 8:44.

5. He has said, 'There is no man who forsakes father, or mother, wife, or children, or lands, for his sake and the gospel's — but shall have a hundred-fold in this world, along with persecution — and in the world to come life everlasting' (Mark 10:29,30).

But men, for the most part, are so far off from believing the certainty of this, that they will scarcely lose the earning of a *penny* to hear the Word of God, the gospel of salvation. Nay, they will neither go themselves, nor allow others to go, if they can help it, without threatening to do them a mischief, if it lies in their way. Nay, further, many are so far from parting from any *worldly gain* for Christ's sake, and the gospel's — that they are still striving, by hook and by crook, as we say, by swearing, lying, deceiving, stealing, covetousness, extortion, oppression, forgery, bribery, flattery, or any other way to get more! Yet they get along with their worldly gain — death, wrath, damnation, Hell, the devil, and all the plagues that God can pour upon them!

And if any do not run with them to the same excess of riot — but rather for all their threats will be *so bold and careless*, as they call it, as to follow the ways of God; if they can do no more — yet they will sharpen their tongues like a sword to wound them, and do them the greatest mischief they can, both in speaking against them to neighbors, to wives, to husbands, to landlords, and raising false reports of them. But let *such* take heed lest they be in such a state, and woeful condition as he was in, who said, in vexation and anguish of soul, 'Oh that I had one drop of cold water to cool my tongue!'

Thus might I add many things out of the holy Writ, both *threatenings* and *promises*, besides those *Heavenly counsels*, *loving reproofs*, *free invitations* to all sorts of sinners, both old and young, rich and poor,

bond and free, wise and unwise. All which have been, now are, and is to be feared, as long as this world lasts — will be trampled under the feet of those *swine* — I call them not *men* — who will continue in the same! But take a review of some of them:

1. COUNSEL.

What Heavenly counsel is that where Christ says, 'I counsel you to buy from me *gold* refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and *white clothes* to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and *salve* to put on your eyes, so you can see!' (Rev 3:18). Also that, 'Ho, everyone that thirsts, come to the waters! Yes, come, buy wine and milk — without money and without price' (Isa 55:1). 'Hear, and your soul shall live' (5 3). 'Take hold of my strength, that you may make peace with me, and you shall make peace with me' (Isa 27:5).

2. INSTRUCTION.

'Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that hears me,' says Christ, 'watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me, finds life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord' (Prov 8:33-35). 'Take heed that no man deceive you by any means.' 'Labor not for the food which perishes — but for that which endures unto everlasting life' (John 6:27). 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate' (Luke 13:24). 'Believe on the Lord Jesus — and you shall be saved' (Acts 16:31). 'Believe not every spirit — but try the spirits.' 'Quench not the Spirit.' 'Lay hold on eternal life.' 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven' (Matt 5:16). 'Take heed, and beware of hypocrisy.' 'Watch and be sober.' 'Learn of me,' says Christ, 'come unto me.'

3. FOREWARNING.

'Because there is wrath, beware lest he take you away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver you' (Job 36:18). 'For the Lord has plainly said that he is determined to crush the whole land. So scoff no more, or your punishment will be even greater!' (Isa 28:22). 'Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you that is written, Behold, you despisers,

and wonder and perish. For I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you' (Acts 13:40,41). 'Let him that thinks he stands — take heed lest he fall' (1 Cor 10:12). 'Watch and pray — that you enter not into temptation' (Matt 26:41). 'Let us therefore fear lest a promise being' made, and left us of entering into his rest — that any of you should seem to come short of it' (Heb 4:1). 'I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not' (Jude 5). 'Hold that fast which you have, that no man takes your crown' (Rev 3:11).

4. COMFORT.

'Him that comes to me — I will never cast out' (John 6:37). 'Come unto me, all you who labor, and are heavy laden — and I will give you rest' (Matt 11:28). 'Be of good cheer — your sins are forgiven' (Matt 9:2). 'I will never leave, nor forsake you,' for 'I have loved you with an everlasting love' (Jer 31:3). 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' I lay down my life that they may have life. 'I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' 'At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you' (2 Cor 6:2). 'Though your sins be as scarlet — they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson — they shall be as wool.' 'For I have blotted out as a thick cloud your transgression, and as a cloud your sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed you' (Isa 44:22).

5. GRIEF to those who fall short. O miserable grief!

'How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me' (Prov 5:11-13). They shall 'curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven to darkness' (Isa 8:21,22). 'He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor, his righteousness endures forever; his horn will be lifted high in honor. The wicked man will see and be vexed, he will gnash his teeth and waste away; the longings of the wicked will come to nothing!' (Psalm 112:9,10). 'There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God — but you yourselves thrown out!' (Luke 13:28). All of the above Scripture threatenings are slighted by the world!

Thus much, in short, concerning this: That ungodly men undervalue the Scriptures, and give no credit to them, when the truth that is contained in them is held forth in simplicity unto them — but rather cry out, "*Nay — but if one should rise from the dead!*" Then they think that people would believe. When alas, though *signs* and *wonders* were wrought by the hands of those who preach the gospel, these poor creatures would never the sooner believe; though they suppose they would, as is evident by the behaviors of their forerunners, who albeit the Lord Jesus Christ *himself* did confirm his doctrine by miracles — as opening blind eyes, casting out of devils, and raising the dead — they were so far from receiving either him or his doctrine — that they put him to death for his pains! Though he had done so many miracles among them — yet they would not believe in him! (John 12:37).

But to pass this, I shall lay down some of the ***FOUNDATIONS*** of their ***rejecting and undervaluing the Scriptures***, and so pass on.

1. Because they do not believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God — but rather suppose them to be the inventions of men, written by some politicians, on purpose to make poor ignorant people to submit to some religion and government. Though they do not *say* this — yet their *practices* testify the same: "When such a person hears the words of this oath, he invokes a blessing on himself and therefore thinks, 'I will be safe, even though I persist in going my own way.' This will bring disaster on the watered land as well as the dry. The Lord will never be willing to forgive him; his wrath and zeal will burn against that man. All the curses written in this book will fall upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven!" Deuteronomy 29:19-20

And this must needs be, for did but men believe this, that it is the Word of God, then they must believe that he who speaks it is true — therefore shall every word and tittle be fulfilled. And if they come once to this, unless they are stark mad — they will be concerned lest they throw themselves under the lash of eternal vengeance.

For the reason why the Thessalonians *received* the Word, was, because they *believed* it was the Word of God, and not the word of man, which effectually worked in them by their thus believing. 'When you received the Word of God which you heard of us,' says he, 'you received it not as the word of *man* — but, as it is in truth, the Word of *God*, which effectually works also in you who believe' (1 Thess 2:13). So that did a man but receive it in hearing, or reading, or meditating, as it is the Word of God — he would be converted. 'But the Word preached did not profit them — not being mixed with faith in those who heard it' (Heb 4:2).

2. Because they do not indeed see themselves as heirs of that exceeding wrath and vengeance, which the Scriptures testify of. For did they but consider what God intends to do with those who live and die in a natural state — it would either sink them into despair, or make them fly for refuge to the hope that is set before them. But if there are ever such sins committed, and ever so great wrath denounced, and the time of execution is ever so near — yet if the party who is guilty is senseless, and altogether ignorant thereof — then he will be careless, and regard it as nothing at all.

And that man, by nature, is in this condition — is evident. For, take the same man that is senseless, and ignorant of that misery he is in by nature, I say, take him at another time when he is a little *awakened* — and then you shall hear him roar, and cry out as long as trouble is upon him, and a sense of the wrath of God hanging over his head, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved!'

Though the same man at another time, when his conscience is fallen asleep, and grown hard — will lie like the blacksmith's dog at the foot of the anvil, though the fire-sparks fly in his face.

But, as I said before, when anyone is a little awakened, O what work will one verse, one line, nay, one word of the holy Scriptures make in his heart! He cannot eat, sleep, work, keep company with his former companions — and all because he is afraid that the *damnation* spoken of in Scripture will fall to *his* share! Like Balaam, who said, 'I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord' (Num 22:18). So long as he had something of the word of the Lord with authority, severity, and power on his heart; but at another time he could teach 'Balak to cast a stumbling-block before

the children of Israel' (Rev 2:14).

3. Because the godless **priests** tickle the ears of their hearers with vain philosophy and deceit, and thereby harden their hearts against the simplicity of the gospel and Word of God; which things the apostle admonished those who have a mind to close in with Christ to avoid, saying, 'Beware lest *any* man,' be he what he will, 'takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ' (Col 2:8).

And you who muzzle up your people in ignorance with Aristotle, Plato, and the rest of the heathenish philosophers, and preach little, if anything, of Christ rightly; I say unto you — that you will find you have sinned against God, and beguiled your hearers, when God shall, in the judgment-day, lay the cause of the damnation of many thousands of souls to *your* charge, and will require their blood at your hands! (Eze 33:6).

4. Another reason why the carnal unbelieving world so slight the Word of God, is, because the judgment spoken of in the Scripture is not presently executed on the transgressors. "When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out — the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong!" (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Because God does not presently strike the poor wretch down as soon as he sins — but waits, and forbears, and is patient — therefore the world judging God to be unfaithful to His threatenings — commit their sins again and again, and every time grow harder and harder, until at last God sends death, with the devil and Hell — to fetch them!

"These things you have done and I kept silent! You thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face. Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue!" Psalm 50:21, 22

5. Another reason why the blind world slights the authority of Scripture, is, because they give ear to the devil, who, through his subtlety, casts false evasions and corrupt interpretations on them, rendering them not so

point blank as the mind of God, and a rule for direction to poor souls; persuading them that they must give ear and way to something else besides the Scriptures. Or else he labors to render it vile and contemptible, by persuading them that it is a *dead letter*.

But the Scripture is not so dead, but that the knowledge of it is able to make any man wise unto salvation, through faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim 3:15); and is profitable for instruction, reproof, and correction in righteousness — that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished to all good works (5 17).

And where it is said the *letter kills*, he means the *law*, as it is the ministration of damnation, or a covenant of works — and so indeed it kills, and must do so, because it is just; forasmuch as the party who is under the same, is not able to yield to it a *complete* and *continual* obedience.

But yet I will call Peter and Paul to witness that the Scriptures are of a very glorious concernment, inasmuch as in them is held forth to us the way of life; and also in that they do administer good ground of hope to us. 'For whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope' (Rom 15:4). And again, 'Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him' (Rom 16:25,26). And therefore whoever they are who slight the Scriptures — they slight that which is no less than the Word of God! And those who slight that — slight him who spoke it! And those who do so, let them look to themselves, for God will be revenged on such! Much more might be said to this matter — but I would not be tedious.

A word or two more, so I will be done with this. Consider the *danger* of slighting the words of the prophets or apostles, whether they be correction, reproof, admonition, forewarning, or the blessed invitations and promises contained in them.

1. Consider: Such souls do provoke God to anger, and to execute his vengeance on them. 'But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry. 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the Lord Almighty' (Zech 7:11-13).

2. Consider: God will not regard them in their calamity. 'But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — when *calamity* overtakes you like a storm, when *disaster* sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when *distress* and *trouble* overwhelm you. Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me. Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord.' (Prov 1:24-29).

3. Consider: God commonly gives up such men to delusions — to believe lies. 'Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved,' therefore 'God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie — that they all might be damned!' (2 Thess 2:10-12).

4. Consider: In a word, those who continue to reject and slight the Word of God — they are such, for the most part, as are ordained to be damned! Old Eli, his sons not hearkening to the voice of their father reproofing them for their sins — but disobeying his voice, it is said, It was 'because the Lord *would* slay them' (1 Sam 2:25). Again see in 2 Chronicles 25:15, 16. Amaziah having sinned against the Lord, he sends to him a prophet to reprove him; but Amaziah says, 'Forbear, why should you be smitten?' He did not hearken to the word of God, 'Then the prophet forbore, saying, I know that God has *determined to destroy* you, because you have not hearkened unto my counsel.' Read, therefore, and the Lord give you understanding. For a miserable end will those have — who go on sinning against God, rejecting his Word.

Other things might have been observed from this verse, which at this time I shall pass by; partly because the sum of them has been touched upon

already, and may be more clearly hinted at in the following verse; and therefore I shall speak a few words to the next verse, and so draw towards a conclusion.

Verse 31. 'And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.'

'And *he* said'; that is, and *God* made answer to the words spoken in the verse before, 'And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses,' etc. As if he had said, Moses was a man of great renown, a man of worthy note, a man who talked with God face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. The words that Moses spoke were such as I commanded him to speak. Let who will question them, I will own them, credit them, *bless* those who close with them — and *curse* those who reject them.

I myself sent the prophets, they did not run of their own volition, I gave them commission, I sent them out, and told them what they would say. In a word, they have told the world what my mind is to do, both to sinners and to saints.

'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.' Therefore he who shall reject and turn his back either upon the *threatenings, counsels, admonitions, invitations, promises*, or whatever else I have commanded them to speak as to salvation and life, and to directions therein — shall be sure to have a share in the many *curses* that they have spoken, and the destruction which is pronounced by them.

Again, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets,' etc. As if he had said, You would have me send one from the dead unto them — what is the need of that? They have my mind already, I have declared unto them what I intend to do, both for saving those who believe, and damning those who do not. That therefore which I have said — I will surely make good — whether they hear or forbear. And as for this desire of yours, you had as just as well asked me to make a new Bible, and so to *revoke* my first sayings by the mouth of my prophets! But I am God and not man, and my Word is immutable, and unchangeable — and shall stand as firm as my decrees can make it! Heaven and earth shall pass away — but one jot or tittle of my Word shall not pass away! (Matt 5:18).

If you had ten thousand brethren, and every one in danger of losing his soul, if they did not close in with what is already contained and recorded in the Scriptures of truth — every one of them must surely perish, and be forever damned in Hell — for the Scriptures cannot be broken!

I did not give the Scriptures so unadvisedly, as to recall it again by another consideration. No, for I speak in righteousness and in judgment (Isa 63:1-3), and in much wisdom and counsel. The Scripture being therefore gone out of my mouth in this manner, it shall not return in vain, until it has accomplished the thing whereto I have sent it (Isa 55:11).

But again, you suppose that *miracles* and *wonders* will work more on them, which makes you say, 'Send one from the dead.' But herein you are mistaken, for I have proved them with that many times — by my servants. How many miracles did my servant *Moses* work by commandment from me in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness! Yet those of that generation were never converted for all that; but, notwithstanding, rebelled and lusted, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt! (Acts 7).

How many miracles did *Samuel*, *David*, *Elijah*, *Elisha*, *Daniel*, and the *prophets*, together with *my Son* — who raised the dead, cast out devils, healed blind eye and gave and restored limbs! Yet for all this, as I said before — they hated him, they crucified him! I *raised him* again from the dead, and he appeared to his disciples, who were called, and chosen, and faithful, and he gave them commandment and commission to go and testify the truth of this to the world; and to confirm the same he enabled them to speak with divers languages, and to work *miracles* most plentifully — yet there was great persecution raised against them, insomuch that but a few of them died peacefully in their beds. And, therefore, though you think that a *miracle* will do so much with the world — yet I say no! For if they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead!

From these words, therefore, take notice of this truth, namely — that those who reject and believe not Moses and the prophets, are a very hard-hearted people, who will not be persuaded though one rises from the dead. Those who regard not the holy Scriptures to turn to God, finding them to testify of his goodness and mercy — there is but little hopes of

their salvation; for they *will* not — mark, they *will* not be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead.

This truth is confirmed by Jesus Christ himself. If you read John 5, where the Lord is speaking of himself that he is the very Christ, he brings in several witnesses to back what he said.

1. John Baptist.
2. The works that his Father gave him to do.
3. His Father speaking from Heaven.
4. The testimony of the Scriptures.

When all this was done, seeing yet they would not believe — he lays the fault upon one of these two things:

(1.) Their regarding an esteem among *men*.

(2.) Their not believing of the prophets' writings, even Moses and the rest. 'For had you believed Moses,' says he, 'you would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe my words?'

Now, I say, he who shall slight the Scriptures, and the testimony of the prophets in them concerning Jesus Christ — must needs be in great danger of losing his soul, if he abides in this condition; because he who slights the testimony, does also slight the thing testified of. For as Jesus Christ has here laid down the reason of men's not receiving him, so the apostle in another place lays down the reason again with a high and mighty aggravation (1 John 5:10), saying, 'He who believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he who believes not God has made him a *liar*, because he believes not the record,' mark, 'the record that God gave of his Son.'

The record, you will say — what is that? Why even the testimony that God gave of him by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:18-20). That is, God sending his holy Spirit into the hearts of his

servants, the prophets and apostles — he, by his Spirit in them, bore witness or record of the truth of salvation by his Son Jesus, both before and after his coming.

The apostle, speaking of Jesus Christ and obedience to God through him, says thus, Now 'he who despises, despises not man — but God.' But it is *Paul* who speaks; true — but it is by and through the Spirit, 'He therefore that despises, despises not man — but God, who has also given unto us his Holy Spirit.' This is therefore a mighty confirmation of this truth, that he who slights the record or testimony that God, by his Spirit in his prophets and apostles, has testified unto us — slights the testimony of the Spirit who moved them to speak these things; and if so, then I would gladly know how any man can be saved by Jesus Christ — who slights the testimony concerning Christ, yes, the testimony of his own Spirit concerning him?

'To the law,' therefore, 'and to the testimony,' try them by that; 'if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'

The apostle Peter, when he speaks of the *glorious voice* that he had from the excellent majesty, saying of Christ, 'This is my beloved Son — hear him,' says thus to those who he wrote unto, 'You have also a *more sure word* of prophecy,' or of the prophets, for so you may read it, 'unto which you do well that you take heed.' That is, though we tell you that we had this excellent testimony from his own mouth evidently — yet you have the prophets. We tell you this, and you need not doubt of the truth of it; but if you should — yet you may not, must not, ought not to question the Scriptures. Search therefore into them, until the day dawns, and the day-star arises in your hearts. That is, until by the same Spirit who gave forth the Scripture, you find the truth confirmed to your souls, which you have recorded in the Scriptures that this word of prophecy, or of the prophets, is the Scriptures. Read on; for, says he, 'knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation,' etc. (2 Peter 1:20).

OBJECTION: But, you will say, What is the need of all this ado, and why is all this time and pain spent in speaking to this, which is surely believed already? This is a thing received by all, that they believe the Scriptures to

be the Word of God, that sure word of prophecy; and therefore you need not spend your time in *proving* these things, and the truth of them, seeing we grant and confess the truth of it before you being to speak your judgment of them.

ANSWER. The truths of God cannot be borne witness unto too often:

1. *You may as well say* — You need not preach Jesus Christ so much, seeing he has been, and is received for the true Messiah already.

2. Though many may *suppose* that they believe the Scriptures — yet if they were but well examined, you will find them either by word of mouth, or else by their lifestyle — to deny, reject, and slight the holy Scriptures. It is true, there is a *notional* and *historical* assent in the head. I say, in the *head* of many, or most — to the truths contained in Scripture. But *try* them, I say, and you shall find but a little, if any, of the faith which is the operation of God in their hearts — to believe the Scriptures, and things contained in them. Many, yes, most people believe the Scriptures — as they believe a fable, a story, a tale, of which there is no certainty! But alas! there are but few do in deed and in truth believe the Scriptures to be the very Word of God.

OBJECTION: But you will say, This seems *strange* to me.

ANSWER. And it seems as *true* to me, and I will make it manifest, that there are but few, yes, very few — who effectually believe the Scriptures, and the truths contained in and spoken of by them.

But to make this appear, and that to purpose, if God will, I shall lay down the ***several operations that the Scriptures have on those who effectually believe the things contained in them.***

First. He who effectually believes the Scriptures, has in the first place been *killed* — I say killed by the authority of the holy Scriptures; struck stark dead in a spiritual sense, by the holy Scriptures, being sent home by that Spirit, which gave them forth, upon the soul. 'The letter kills'; the letter strikes men dead (2 Cor 3:6). And this Paul witnessed and found, 'I was *alive* without the law once.' That is, in my natural state, before the

law was applied to my heart with power; 'But when the commandment came, sin revived and I *died*' (Rom 7:9). 'And that law which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death; for sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me' (5 11).

Now that which is called 'the letter' in 2 Corinthians, is called the law in Romans 7, which by its power and operation, as it is wielded by the Spirit of God, does in the first place *kill* and *slay* all those who are enabled to believe the Scriptures. 'I kill,' says God — that is, with my law I pierce, I wound, I prick men into the very heart, by showing them their sins against my law (Deut 31:26; Acts 2:37). And he who is ignorant of this, is also ignorant of, and does not really and effectually believe the Scripture.

But you will say, 'How does the law kill and strike dead the poor creatures?'

Answer. The *letter* or *law* kills thus: It is set home upon the soul, and reveal to the soul its transgressions against the law, and shows the soul also, that it cannot completely satisfy the justice of God, for the breach of his law; therefore it is condemned (John 3:18). Mark, 'He who believes not, is condemned already.' Namely, condemned by the law — that is, the law condemns him; yes, it has condemned him already for his sins against it; as it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them' (Gal 3:10). Now all men as they come into the world are in this condition — that is, condemned by the law.

Yet not believing their condemnation by the *law* really, they do not also believe really and effectually the law that *condemns* them. For as men have but a poor notion of the one, that is, their condemnation, because of sins against the law — so they have but a poor notion of the condemning, killing, and destroying power of the law. For, as the one is — so always is the other. There is no man that really believes the law or gospel, further than they do feel the power and authority of them in their hearts. 'You are in error, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.' Now this letter or law, is not to be taken in the largest sense — but is strictly to be tied to the ten commandments, whose proper work is only by showing the soul its sin against this law — to kill — and there leaves him stark dead,

not giving him the least life, or support, or comfort — but leaves the soul in a helpless and hopeless condition, as from itself, or any other mere creature.

It is true the law sees all men as dead in sin, as they come into the world; but all men do not see themselves dead, until they see that law that struck them dead, striking in their souls, and having struck them that fatal blow. As a man who is fast asleep in a burning house, with the fire about his ears — and he not knowing of it because he is asleep — is unconcerned. Just so, because poor souls are asleep in sin, though the wrath of God, the curse of his law, and the flames of Hell have beset them round about — yet they do not believe it, because they are asleep in sin!

Now, as he who is awakened and sees this, sees that through this he is a dead man; even so those who do see their state by nature, being such a miserable condition, do also see themselves by that law to be dead men naturally.

But now, when did you feel the power of this first part of the Scripture, the law, so mighty as to strike you dead? If not, you do not so much as truly believe that part of the Scripture that contains the law in it, to be the truth of God. Yet if you should have felt something, I say, something of the *killing power of the law of God* in your heart, this is not an argument to prove that you believe all the things contained in Scripture, for there is gospel as well as law; and therefore I shall speak to that also, that is, whether you have felt the power of the *gospel*, as well as something of the power of the *law*.

Second. Then you have found the power of the gospel, and so believed it, you have found it thus with your soul.

1. You have been showed by the Word or truth of the gospel, in the light of the Spirit of Christ, that by nature you were without the true faith of the Son of God in your soul. For when He, the Spirit, has come, he shall show men that 'they believe not in me,' says Christ (John 16:9). Mark, though you have, as I said before, felt somewhat of the power of the law, letter, or ten commandments — yet, as you have not been brought to this, to see by the Spirit in the gospel, that you are without faith by nature, you

have not yet tasted, much less believed, any part of the gospel.

For the *gospel* and the *law* are two distinct covenants. And those who are under the law or first covenant, and yet in the meantime to be a stranger to the covenant of promise, that is, the gospel, and so have no hope in them (Eph 2:12). There is not any promise that can be savingly believed, until the soul be by the gospel converted to Jesus Christ. For though men think ever so much that they believe the things or the Word of the gospel of our salvation; yet unless they have the work of grace in their souls, they do not, cannot rightly believe the things contained in the Scriptures. Again,

2. As the law *kills* those who believe it, even so the promises contained in the gospel do, through faith, administer *comfort* to those who believe it aright. My words, says Christ, My words, 'they are Spirit, and they are life' (John 6:63). As if he had said, the words contained in the law as a covenant of works — they wound, they kill, they strike dead those who are under them. But as for me, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' That is, whoever receives them believingly — shall find them full of operation, to comfort, quicken, and revive their soul. For as I did not come into the world to destroy men's lives, so the words that I speak, as I am sent to preach the gospel, they have no such tendency unto those who believe them.

The promises that are in the gospel, O how do they comfort them! Such a promise, and such a promise — O how sweet is it! How comfortable to those who believe them! Alas! there are many poor souls who think they believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and yet they never enjoyed anything of the life and promises; they come in upon the heart to quicken, to revive you, to raise you from the sentence of death that is passed on you by the law. And through the faith that is wrought in your soul, by the operation of God's Holy Spirit, though once killed by the law or letter — you are made alive in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is presented to your soul in the promises.

Third. Do you in deed and in truth believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God? Then the things contained in them, especially the things of the gospel, are very *excellent* to your soul; as the birth of Christ, the death,

resurrection, intercession, and second coming. O how precious and excellent are they to your soul — insomuch that you regard nothing in comparison of them! O! it is Christ's birth, death, blood, resurrection, etc., according to the Scriptures, that you do rejoice in exceedingly, and abundantly desire after! 'Whom having not seen, you love; in whom you now you see him not — yet believing you rejoice, with joy unspeakable, and full of glory' (1 Cor 15:1-6, compared with Phil 3:6-8; 1 Peter 1:8).

Fourth. Do you believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God? Then you stand in awe of, and do much *reverence* them. Why, they are the Word of God, the true sayings of God; they are the counsel of God; they are his promises and his threatenings. Poor souls are apt to think, if I could hear God speak to me from Heaven with an audible voice, then surely I should be serious and believe it. But truly, if God should speak to you from Heaven, except you were converted, you would not regard, nor really believe him. But if you do believe the Scriptures, you see that they are the truth as really as if God should speak to you from Heaven through the clouds. Therefore never flatter yourself, foolishly thinking, that if it were so and so, then you could believe. I tell you, says Christ, If they believe 'not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one should rise from the dead!' But,

Fifth. Do you believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God? Then, through faith in Christ, you endeavor to have your *life* squared according to the Scriptures, both in word and practice. Nay, this I say, you may have, though you do not believe them all. My meaning is, that if you believe none but the ten commandments, your life may be, according to them, a *legal* holy life; and if you do believe the gospel too, then your life will be the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, either you will live in the blessed and holy enjoyment of what is testified in the Scripture concerning the glorious things of the Lord Jesus Christ, or else you will be exceedingly panting after them. For the Scriptures carry such a blessed beauty in them to that soul who has faith in the things contained in them, that they take the heart and captivate the soul of him who believes them — into the love and liking of them, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets, and have hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 'And herein do I

exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men' (Acts 24:14-16).

Sixth. He who believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God, if he does but suppose that any one place of Scripture excludes him, and shut him out of, and from a share in the promises contained in them — O it will trouble him, grieve him, perplex him! Yes, he will not be satisfied until he is resolved, and the contrary sealed to his soul; for he knows that the Scriptures are the word of God, all truth; and therefore he knows that if any one sentence excludes or bars him out for lack of this or the other qualification, he knows also that not the *Word* alone shuts him out — but *he* who speaks it, even God himself. And, therefore, he cannot, will not, dare not be contented until he find his soul and Scripture together, with the things contained therein, to embrace each other, and a sweet correspondence and agreement between them. To

him who believes the Scriptures aright — the promises, or threatenings, are of more power to comfort or cast down, than all the promises or threatenings of all the men in the world. And this was the cause why the martyrs of Jesus so slighted both the promises of their adversaries, when they would have overcome them, with offering the great things of this world unto them; and also their *threatenings*, when they told them they would *rack* them, *hang* them, *burn* them (Acts 20:24). None of these things could prevail upon them, or against them; because they most really believed the Scriptures, and the things contained in them, as is clearly found, and to be seen in Hebrews 11, and also in Mr. Fox's records of their martyred brethren.

Seventh. He who believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God, believes that men must be *born again*, and also be partakers of that faith which is of the operation of God, according as he has read and believed — or else he must and shall be damned. And he who believes this aright, will not be contented until, according as it is written, he partakes of and enjoys the new birth; and until he finds, through grace, that faith that is wrought by the operation of God in his soul.

For this is the cause why men satisfy themselves with so *slender* a conceited hope that their state is good, when it is nothing so, namely,

because they do not credit the Scripture; for did they, they would look into their own hearts, and examine seriously whether that faith, that hope, that grace which they think they have, be of that nature, and wrought by that spirit and power that the Scripture speaks of. I speak this of an *effectual* believing, without which all other is nothing unto salvation.

Five Uses by Way of Self-examination.

Now then, because I would not be too tedious, I shall at this time lay down no more marks of such a one as savingly believes the Scriptures, and the things contained in them — but shall speak a few words of *examination* concerning the things already mentioned. As,

First USE. You say you do in deed and in truth effectually believe the Scriptures: I ask, therefore — were you ever killed stark dead by the law of works contained in the Scriptures — killed by the law or letter, and made to see your sins against it, and left in a helpless condition by that law? For, as I said, the proper work of the law is to slay the soul, and to leave it dead in a helpless state. For it neither gives the soul any comfort itself when it comes, nor does it show the soul where comfort is to be had; and therefore it is called 'the ministration of condemnation,' as in 2 Corinthians 3:9, 'the ministration of death,' verse 7. For though men may have a *notion* of the blessed Word of God — yet before they be converted, it may truly be said of them, *You are in error, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God* (Mark 12:24).

Second USE. You say you do believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God. I say again, Examine, were you ever *quickened* from a dead state by the power of the Spirit of Christ; that is to say, by the power of God in his Son Jesus Christ, through the covenant of *promise*? I tell you from the Lord, if you have — then you have felt such a *quickening power* in the words of Christ (John 6) that you have been lifted out of that dead condition that you before were in. And that when you were under the guilt of sin, the curse of the law, and the power of the devil, and the justice of the great God — you have been enabled, by the power of God in Christ, revealed to you by the Spirit through and by the Scripture — to look sin, death, Hell, the devil, and the law, and all things that are at

enmity with you — with boldness and comfort in the face, through the blood, death, righteousness, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, made mention of in the Scriptures. And,

Third USE. On this account, O how excellent are the *Scriptures* to your soul! O how much virtue do you see in such a promise, in such an invitation! They are so large as to say, Christ will never cast me out! My crimson sins shall be white as snow! I tell you, friend, there are some promises that the Lord has helped me to lay hold of Jesus Christ through and by, that I would not have out of the Bible for as much gold and silver as can lie between York and London piled up to the stars! Because through them, Christ is pleased by his Spirit to convey comfort to my soul.

I say, when the *law* curses, when the *devil* tempts, when *Hell-fire* flames in my conscience — my sins with the guilt of them tearing me — then is Christ revealed so sweetly to my poor soul through the *promises*, that all is forced to flee away and stop accusing my soul.

So also, when the world frowns, when the enemies rage and threaten to kill me — then also the precious, the exceeding great and precious promises — weigh down all, and comfort the soul against all. This is the effect of believing the Scriptures savingly; for those who do so have by and through the Scriptures good comfort, and also ground of hope, believing those things to be their own, which the Scriptures hold forth (Rom 15:4).

Fourth USE. Examine, Do you stand in awe of sinning against God — because he has in the Scriptures commanded you to abstain from it? Do you give diligence to make your calling and election sure — because God commanded it in Scripture? Do you examine yourself whether you are in the faith or not — having a command in Scripture so to do? Or do you, notwithstanding what you read in the Scripture — follow the world, delight in sin, neglect coming to Jesus Christ, speak evil of the saints, slight and make a mock at the ordinances of God, delight in wicked company, and the like? Then know for sure, that it is because you do not in deed and in truth believe the Scriptures effectually.

For, as I said before, if a man does truly believe them, and that savingly — then he stands in awe, he looks to his steps, he turns his feet from evil; and endeavors to follow that which is good, which God has commanded in the Scriptures of truth. Yet not from a *legal* or *natural* principle; that is, to seek for salvation by doing good things — but knowing that salvation is already obtained for him by the blood of Christ Jesus on the cross.

Because he believes the Scriptures, therefore, I say, he labors to walk with his God in all well-pleasing and godliness, because the sweet power of the love of Christ, which he feels in his soul by the Spirit, according to the Scriptures, *constrain* him so to do (2 Cor 5:14).

Fifth USE. Examine again, Do you labor after those *qualifications* that the Scriptures describe a child of God by? That is, *faith*, yes the right faith, the most holy faith, the faith of the operation of God. And also, do you examine whether there is a real *growth of grace* in your soul — as love, zeal, self-denial, and a seeking by all means to attain, if possible, to the resurrection of the dead? That is, not to satisfy yourself until you are dissolved and rid of this body of death, and are transformed into that glory that the saints shall be in, after the resurrection-day.

And in the meantime do labor and take all opportunities to walk as near as may be to the gospel standard, though you know you cannot attain it perfectly. Yet, I say, you do *aim* at it, *seek* after it, *press towards* it, and to hold on in your race; you shun that which may any way hinder you, and also embrace whatever may any way further the same; knowing that that must be, or desiring that it should be, your eternal frame, and therefore out of love and liking to it — you *desire* and *long* after it, as being the thing that most pleases your soul.

O, how is it with your soul? Are you such a one as regards not these things — but rather busy your thoughts about the things here below, following those things that have no *scent of divine glory* upon them? If so, look to yourself — you are an unbeliever, and so under the wrath of God, and will for certain fall into the same place of torment that your fellows have fallen into before you, to the grief of your own soul, and your everlasting destruction!

Consider and regard these things, and lay them to your heart before it is too late to recover yourself — by repenting of the one, and desiring to embrace the other. O! I say, regard, regard — for *Hell is hot!* God's righteous hand is raised up against you, and the law is resolved to discharge against your soul! The *judgment-day* is at hand, the graves are ready to fly open, the trumpet is ready to be sounded, the sentence will before long be passed — and then only eternity remains!

FINAL USE AND APPLICATION

But again, seeing the Scriptures are so certain, so sure, so irrevocable and firm, and seeing the saving faith of the things contained therein, is to reform the soul, and bring it over into the things of God, really conforming to the things contained therein, both to the point of justification, and also an impartial walking, and giving up your soul and body to a conformity to all the commands, counsels, instructions, and exhortations contained therein — this then will teach us how to judge of those who give up themselves to walk in the imaginations of their own hearts, who slight and lay aside the Scriptures, counting them but empty and uncertain things, and will live every day in open contradiction to what is contained, commanded, and forbidden therein. As

FIRST. This will show us about all you drunkards, whoremasters, liars, thieves, swearers, backbiters, slanderers, scoffers at goodness, etc. I say, we may see by this, that those who live in such things, have not true Scriptural faith contained in their hearts — seeing they delight to practice those things that are forbidden by and in the Scriptures. And so, they continuing living and dying in this state — we may conclude without hesitation, that these portions of holy Scripture belong unto them, and shall for certain be fulfilled upon them: 'He who believes not shall be damned!' (Mark 16:16). 'The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God!' (1 Cor 6:9,10). 'But the abominable, the unbelieving, the whoremongers, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone!' (Rev 21:8). 'Depart, you cursed ones, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!' (Matt 25:41). Depart, depart from me, for I will not save you. Depart, for my blood shall not at all wash you. Depart, for you shall not set one foot into the kingdom of Heaven!

'Depart, you cursed,' you are cursed by God, cursed by his law, cursed by Christ who spoke these words, cursed by the saints, and cursed by the angels! You are cursed all over; you are nothing but cursed! Therefore depart from me!

Depart where? Into everlasting fire that will scald, scorch, burn, and flame to purpose. 'Fire that shall never be quenched' (Mark 9). Fire that will last to all eternity!

And must we be all alone? No, you shall have company — a great store of company with you. Namely, all the raging, roaring devils, together with an innumerable company of fellow-damned sinners — men, women, and children. And if the Scriptures are true, as they will one day wonderfully appear to be — then this must and shall be your portion, if you live and die in your unconverted state; and of all those who continue in sinning against the truth contained in the Scriptures. As,

First. Do you delight to sin against plain commands? *Then you will be damned!*

Second. Do you slight and scorn the counsels contained in the Scriptures, and continue in so doing? *Then you will be damned!*

Third. Do you continually neglect to come to Christ, and use arguments in your own heart to satisfy your soul with so doing? *Then you will be damned!* (Luke 14:17,18, compared with 5 24, and Heb 2:3). 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' How shall we escape — that is, there is no way to escape!

(1.) Because God has said we shall not escape (Heb 12:25). 'See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth (Moses), how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?'

(2.) Because he has not only said they *shall* not escape — but also has bound it with an *oath*, saying, 'So I swore in my wrath, They *shall not* enter into my rest!' (Heb 3:11). To whom did he swear that they should

not enter into his rest? Answer, 'to those who believed not.' So we see, that they could not enter in because of unbelief (verses 18,19).

SECOND. This will teach us what to think and conclude of such, who, though they do not so openly reveal their folly by open and gross sins against the law — yet they have no inward desire to the holy according to the revealed will of God. I say, such men are in as bad a state as the other to the full, being disobedient to God's will revealed in his Word, as well as they, though in a different manner; the one openly transgressing against the plain and well-known truths revealed in it; the other, though more hidden — yet secretly rejecting and slighting them.

A few words more — and so I shall CONCLUDE. And,

First. Take heed that you do not content yourself with a bare notion of the Scriptures in your heads — by which you may go far, even so far as to be able to dispute for the truth, to preach the gospel, and labor to vindicate it in opposition to gainsayers — and yet be found at the left hand of Christ at the judgment-day, forasmuch as you did content yourself with a *mere notion* or *traditional* knowledge of them.

Second. Have a care that you own the *whole* Scripture, and not own one part and neglect another, or slight it; as thus: To own the law, and slight the gospel. Or to think that you must be saved by your good doings and works; for that is all one as if you thrust Christ away from you. Or else so to own the gospel, as if by it you were exempted from all obedience to the ten commandments, and conformity to the law in life and conversation; for in so doing you will for certain make sure of eternal vengeance!

Third. Have a care that you do not confuse, or put wrong names on the things contained in the Scriptures, as to call the law — Christ; and Christ — the law; for some having done so, have so darkened to themselves the glorious truths of the gospel, that in a very little time they have been resolved to thwart and oppose them, and so have made room in their own souls for the devil to inhabit, and obtained a place in Hell for their own souls to be tormented forever and ever!

Against this danger therefore in reading and receiving the testimony of

Scripture, learn to *distinguish* between the law and the gospel, and to keep them clear asunder, as to the salvation of your soul.

1. And that you may so do, in the first place, beg of God that he would show you the nature of the gospel, and set it home effectually with life and power upon your soul by faith. Which is this, that God would show you, that as you being man, have sinned against God; so Christ, being God-man, has bought you again, and with his most precious blood set you free from the bondage you have fallen into by your sins. And that not upon condition that you will *do* thus and thus, this and the other good work; but rather, that you, being first *justified freely by mere grace through the blood of Jesus*, should also receive your strength from him who has bought you, to walk before him in all well-pleasing. Being enabled thereto by virtue of his Spirit, who has revealed to your soul that you are delivered already from wrath to come, by the obedience, not of yourself — but of another namely, Jesus Christ.

2. Then if the law you read of, tells you in your conscience you must do this and the other good work of the law, if ever you will be saved; answer plainly: that for your part you are resolved now not to *work* for salvation — but to *believe* in the virtue of that blood shed upon the cross, upon Mount Calvary, for the remission of sins.

And yet because Christ has justified you freely by his grace — you will serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life — yet not in a *legal* spirit, or in a covenant of works; but by obedience which is free, and cheerful, out of love to my Lord Jesus.

3. Have a care you receive not this doctrine in the *mere notion* only, lest you bring a *just damnation* upon your soul, by professing yourself to be freed by Christ's blood from the *guilt* of sin — while you remain still a servant to the *filth* of sin. For I must tell you, that unless you have the true and saving work of the faith and grace of the gospel in your hearts — you will either go on in a *legal holiness*, according to the tenor of the law; or else through a mere notion of the gospel, the devil bewitching and beguiling your understanding, will, and affections, you will turn the grace of God into wantonness, and bring upon your soul double, if not treble damnation — in that you could not be contented to be damned for your

sins against the *law* — but also to make ruin sure to your soul, you would dishonor the *gospel*, and turn the grace of God, into licentiousness.

But that you might be sure to escape these *dangerous rocks* on the right hand and on the left — see that your faith be such as is spoken of in Scripture. And that you be not satisfied without that, which is a faith wrought by the mighty operation of God, revealing Christ to and in you, as having wholly freed you from your sins by his most precious blood. Which faith, if you attain unto — will so *work* in your heart, that first you will see the nature of the *law*, and also the nature of the *gospel* — and delight in the glory of it! And also you will find an engaging of your heart and soul to Jesus Christ, even to the giving up of your whole man unto him, to be *ruled* and *governed* by him — to his glory, and your eternal comfort.

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