

# An Alarm to the Unconverted 2 of 5

by Joseph Alleine

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*Without conversion, your being is in vain, your prayers are but howlings, your life is to bad purpose, your religion is vain, and your hopes are in vain.*

**Duration:** 1:29:23

**Scripture:** Genesis 19:15-17, Job 21:14, Psalm 82:5, Isaiah 48:17, Ezekiel 16:30, Hosea 11:3, Malachi 1:13, Matthew 5:8, Luke 11:1, John 3:3, Romans 5:6, Ephesians 2:5

**Topics:** "Audio Books"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of self-examination and the danger of being deceived about one's spiritual state. He challenges the listeners to honestly assess their hearts and actions, questioning whether they are truly converted and living in obedience to God. The preacher highlights the tragic state of those who may think they are rich in grace but are actually spiritually poor, blind, and naked. He urges the conscience to give a true report of one's condition and calls for a definite answer regarding one's relationship with God. The sermon concludes with a plea to take action and escape the consequences of remaining in a sinful state.

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## Transcript

A Sure Guide to Heaven by Joseph Alain Chapter 3 The Necessity of Conversion It may be you are ready to say, What does this stir mean? And are apt to wonder why I follow you with such earnestness, Still ringing the same lesson in your ears, That you should repent and be converted. But I must say to you as Ruth to Naomi, Entreat me not to leave thee, Or to return from following after thee, Were it a mantra of indifference, Might you be saved as you are, I would gladly let you alone. But would you not have me concerned for you, When I see you ready to perish? As the Lord liveth before whom I am, I have not the least hope of seeing your face in heaven, Except you be converted.

I utterly despair of your salvation, Except you will be prevailed with, Thoroughly to turn and give up yourself to God, In holiness and newness of life. As God said, Except a man be born again, He cannot see the kingdom of God. And yet do you wonder why your ministers Labor so earnestly for you? Do not think it strange that I am earnest with you To follow after holiness, And long to see the image of God upon you.

Never did any, nor shall any, Enter into heaven by any other way but this, The Conversion described, Is not a high attainment of some advanced Christians, But every soul that is saved undergoes this change. It was the saying of the noble Roman, When he was hasting with corn to the city in the famine, And the

mariners were loath to set sail in foul weather, It is necessary for us to sail, It is not necessary for us to live. What is that you count necessary? Is your bread necessary? Is your breath necessary? Then your conversion is much more necessary.

Indeed, this is the one thing necessary. Your possessions are not necessary. You may sell all for the pearl of great price, And yet be a gainer by the purchase.

Your life is not necessary. You may part with it for Christ to infinite advantage. Your reputation is not necessary.

You may be reproached for the name of Christ, And yet be happy. Yes, you may be much more happy in reproach than in repute. But your conversion is necessary.

Your salvation depends upon it. And is it not needful and so important a matter to take care? On this one point depends your making or marring to all eternity. But I shall more particularly show The necessity of conversion in five things.

Number one, without conversion your being is in vain. Is it not a pity you should be good for nothing, An unprofitable burden of the earth, A mere wart in the body of the universe? Thus you are while unconverted, For you cannot answer the end of your being. Is it not for the divine pleasure that you are and were created? Did not God make you for himself? Are you a man and have you reason? Then think how you came into being and why you exist.

Behold God's workmanship in your body, And ask yourself for what purpose did God rear this fabric. Consider the noble faculties of your heaven-born soul. To what end did God bestow these excellencies? Was it to no other end than that you should please yourself and gratify your senses? Did God send men into the world only like the swallows To gather a few sticks and mud and build their nests? And rear up their young and then away? The very heathen could see further than this.

Are you so fearfully and wonderfully made, And do you not yet reason with yourself? Surely it was for some noble and exalted end. O man, set your reason a little in the chair. Is it not a pity such a goodly fabric should be raised in vain? Verily you are in vain, except you are for God.

It were better you had no being than not be for Him. Would you serve your end? You must repent and be converted. Without this you are to no purpose, indeed to bad purpose.

You are to no purpose. Unconverted man is like a choice instrument that has every string broken or out of tune. The spirit of the living God must repair and tune it by the grace of regeneration And sweetly move it by the power of actuating grace.

Or else your prayers will be but howlings, And all your service will make no music in the ears of the most holy. All your powers and faculties are so corrupt in your natural state That except you be purged from dead works, you cannot serve the living God. An unsanctified man cannot work the work of God.

First, he has no skill in it. He is altogether as unskillful in the work as in the word of righteousness. There are great mysteries in the practice as well as in the principles of godliness.

Now the unregenerate do not know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. You may as well expect him to read that never learned the alphabet, Or look for goodly music on the lute from one that never set his

hand to an instrument, As that a natural man should do the Lord any pleasing service. He must first be taught of God, John 6.45, Taught to pray, Luke 11.1, Taught to profit, Isaiah 48.17, Taught to go, Hosea 11.3, Or else he will be utterly at a loss.

Secondly, he has no strength for it. How weak is his heart, Ezekiel 16.30. He is soon tired. This Sabbath, what a weariness is it, Malachi 1.13. He is without strength, Romans 5.6, Yea, dead in sin, Ephesians 2.5. Number three, he has no mind to it.

He desires not the knowledge of God's ways, Job 21.14. He does not know them, and he does not care to know them. Psalm 82.5, he knows not, neither will he understand. Fourthly, he has neither due instruments nor materials for it.

A man may as well hew the marble without stones, Or paint without colors, or brushes, or build without materials, As perform any acceptable service without the graces of the Spirit, Which are both the materials and instruments in the work. Almsgiving is not a service of God, but of vain glory, If it does not spring from love to God. What is the prayer of the lips without grace in the heart, But the carcass without life? What are all our confessions, Unless they are exercises of godly sorrow, And unfeigned repentance? What are our petitions, Unless animated with holy desires and faith In the attributes and promises of God? What are our praises and thanksgiving, Unless they spring from the love of God, And the holy gratitude and sense of God's mercies in the heart? So that a man may as well expect the tree should speak, Or look for emotion from the dead, As look for any service holy and acceptable to God from the unconverted.

When the tree is evil, how can the fruit be good? Also, without conversion you live to bad purpose. The unconverted soul is a very cage of unclean birds, Revelations 18.2 A sepulcher full of corruption and rottenness, Matthew 23.27 A loathsome carcass full of crawling worms, And sending forth the most noxious stench in the nostrils of God. O dreadful case, do you not see a change to be needful? Would it not of grief one to see the golden consecrated vessels of God's temple Turned into quaffing bowls of drunkenness, And polluted with the idol's service? Was it such an abomination to the Jews, When Antiochus set up the picture of a swine at the entrance of the temple? How much more abominable then would it have been To have had the very temple itself turned into a stable or a sty, And have had the holy of holies served like the house of Baal? This is just the case of the unregenerate.

All your members are turned into instruments of unrighteousness, Servants of Satan, And your inmost heart into a receptacle of uncleanness. You may see what kind of guests are within by what come out. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, Murders, adulteries, fornications, Thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

This black truth shows what a hell there is within. O abuse insufferable to see a heaven-born soul Abased to such vileness. To see the glory of God's creation, The chief of the works of God, The Lord of this lower world eating husks with the prodigal.

Was it such a lamentation to see those that did feed delicately Sit desolate in the streets, And the precious sons of Zion, Comparable to fine gold, Esteemed as earthen pitchers, And those that were clothed in scarlet, Lamentations for two and five. And is it not much more fearful to see the only being That has immortality in this lower world, And carries the stamp of God, Become as a vessel in which there is no pleasure, And be put to the most sordid use? O indignity intolerable, Better you were dashed in a thousand pieces Than continue to be a base to do so vile a service. 2. Not only man, but the whole visible creation Is in vain without conversion.

God has made all the visible creatures in heaven and earth For the service of man, And man only is a spokesman for all the rest. Man is in the world like the tongue to the body Which speaks for all the members. The other creatures cannot praise their Maker Except by dumb signs and hints to man That he should speak for them.

Man is, as it were, the high priest of God's creation To offer the sacrifice of praise for all his fellow creatures. The Lord God expects a tribute of praise from all his works. Now all the rest who bring in their tribute to man And pay it by his hand.

So then if a man is false and faithless and selfish, God has robbed of all and has no active glory from his works. O dreadful thought! That God should build such a world as this, And lay out such infinite power and wisdom and goodness Thereupon and all in vain. And that man should be guilty at last of robbing And spoiling him of the glory of all.

O think of this! While you are unconverted, All the offices of the creatures are in vain to you. Your food nourishes you in vain. The sun holds forth its light to you in vain.

Your clothes warm you in vain. Your beast carries you in vain. In a word, the unwary labor and continued travail Of the whole creation is to you are in vain.

The service of all the creatures that drudge for you And yield forth their strength to you, With which you should serve their maker, Is all but lost labor. Hence the whole creation groaneth. Romans 8.22 Under the abuse of unsanctified men Who preferred all things to the service of their lusts, Quite contrary to the very end of their being.

Number three. Without conversion, your religion is vain. All your religious performances will be but lost, For they can neither please God nor save your soul, Which are the very ends of religion.

Romans 8.8 Be your services ever so specious, Yet God has no pleasure in them. Isaiah 1.14 Malachi 1.10 Is not that man's case dreadful, Whose sacrifices are his murders, And whose prayers are as a breath of abomination? Isaiah 66.3 Proverbs 28.9 Many under conviction think that they will set upon mending, And that a few prayers and alms will set all right again. But alas, sirs, while your hearts remain unsanctified, Your duties will not pass.

How punctilious was Jehu, And yet all was rejected, Because his heart was not upright. 2 Kings 10 How blameless was Paul, And yet being unconverted all was but lost. Philippians 3.6.7 Men think they do much in attending to God's service, And are ready to set him down so much their debtor.

Whereas, sir, persons being unsanctified, Their duties cannot be accepted. Also, do not think, when your sins pursue you, That a little praying and reforming your ways will pacify God. You must begin with your heart.

If that is not renewed, You can no more please God than one Who, having unspeakably offended you, Should bring you the most loathsome thing To pacify you. Or, having fallen into the mire, Should think with his filthy embraces To reconcile you. It is a great misery to labor in the fire.

The poets could not invent a worse hell for Sisyphus Than to be ever toiling To get the stone up the hill, And then that it should presently roll down again And renew his labor. God threatens, it is the greatest temporal judgments, That they should build and not inhabit, Plant and not gather, And that their labor

should be eaten up by strangers. Deuteronomy 28 verses 30 and 38 to 41 Is it so great a misery to lose our common labors, To sow in vain and to build in vain? How much more to lose our pains in religion, To pray and hear and fast in vain? This is an undoing and eternal loss.

Be not deceived. If you go on in your sinful state, Though you should spread forth your hands, God will hide his eyes. Though you may make many prayers, He will not hear.

Isaiah 1 verse 15 If a man without skill set about our work And spoil it in the doing, Though he take much pains, We give him but small thanks. God will be worshiped after the due order. If a servant do our work, But quite contrary to our order, He shall have stripes rather than praise.

God's work must be done according to God's mind, Or he will not be pleased. And this cannot be except it be done with a holy heart. Without true conversion your hopes are in vain.

The hope of the hypocrite shall perish. Job 8 verse 12 to 13 The Lord hath rejected thy confidences. Jeremiah 2 verse 37 The hope of comfort here is vain.

It is not only necessary for the safety, But comfort of your condition, That you be converted. Without this you shall not know peace. Without the fear of God You cannot have the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

God speaks peace only to his people and to his saints. If you have a false peace continuing in your sins, It is not of God speaking, And therefore you may guess the author. Sin is a real sickness.

Isaiah 1 verse 5 Yea, the worst of sickness. It is a leprosy in the head. Leviticus 13 verse 44 The plague in the heart.

1 Kings 8 verse 38 It is brokenness in the bones. Psalm 51 verse 8 It pierces, it wounds, it wracks, it torments. 1 Timothy 6 verse 10 A man may as well expect ease When his diseases are in their full strength, And through his bones out of joint His true comfort while in his sins.

O wretched man, they can have no ease in this case But what comes from the deadliness of the disease. You shall have the poor sick man saying in his wildness, He is well when you see death in his face. He will be up and about his business When the very next step is likely to be to his grave.

The unsanctified often see nothing amiss. They fend themselves all and cry not for the physician. But this only shows the danger of their case.

Sin naturally breeds diseases and disturbances in the soul. What a continual tempest is there in a discontented mind. What a creating evil is in ordinate care.

What is passion but a very fever in the mind. What is lust but a fire in the bones. What is pride but a deadly dropsy.

Or covetousness but an insatiable and unsufferable thirst. Or malice and envy but venom in the very heart. Spiritual sloth is but a scurvy in the mind And carnal security a mortal lethargy.

How can that soul have true comfort which is under so many diseases. But converting grace cures and so eases the mind And prepares the soul for a settled standing of mortal peace. Great peace of they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them.

Psalm 119 verse 165 They are the ways of wisdom that afford pleasure and peace. Proverbs 3 17 David had infinitely more pleasure in the word than in all the delights of his court. The conscience cannot be truly pacified until soundly purified.

Hebrews 10 22 Cursed is that peace which is maintained in a way of sin. Deuteronomy 29 19 and 20 Two sorts of peace are more to be dreaded than all the troubles in the world. Peace with sin and peace in sin.

Number 2 The hope of salvation hereafter is in vain. This hope is most injurious to God. Most pernicious to yourself.

There is death despair and blasphemy in this hope. There is death in it. Your confidence shall be rooted out of your tabernacles.

God will up with it root and branch. It will bring you to the king of terrors. Job 18 14 Though you may lean upon this house it will not stand but will prove like a ruinous building which when a man trusts to it falls down about him.

Job 8 15 There is despair in it. Where is the hope of the hypocrite when God taketh away his soul? Job 27 8 Then there is an end forever of his hope. Indeed the hope of the righteous has an end but it is not a destructive but a perfective end.

His hope ends in fruition. Others in frustration. The godly may say a death it is finished but the wicked it is perished.

And may earnestly bemoan himself as Job did though mistakenly in his case. Where now is my hope? He hath destroyed me. I am gone and my hope is removed like a tree.

Job 19 10 The righteous hath hope in his death. Proverbs 14 32 When nature is dying his hopes are living. When his body is languishing his hopes are flourishing.

His hope is a living hope. But others a dying yea a damning soul undoing hope. When a wicked man dieth his expectation shall perish and the hope of unjust men perisheth.

Proverbs 11 7 It shall be cut off and proved like a spider's web. Job 8 14 Which he spins out of his own bowels. But then comes death and destroys all.

And so there is an eternal end of his confidence in which he trusted. The eyes of the wicked shall fail and their whole shall be as a giving up of a ghost. Job 11 20 Wicked men are fixed in their carnal hope and will not be beaten out of it.

They hold it fast. They will not let it go. But death will knock off their fingers.

Though we cannot undeceive them death and judgment will. When death strikes his dart through your liver it will ruin your soul and your hopes together. The unsanctified have hope only in this life and therefore are of all men most miserable.

When death come it lets them out into the amazing gulf of endless despair. There is blasphemy in it. To hope we shall be saved.

Though continuing unconverted is to hope that we shall prove God a liar. He has told you that merciful and compassionate as he is he will never save you notwithstanding if you go on in a course of ignorance or unrighteousness. In a word he has told you that whatever you are or do nothing shall avail you to salvation unless you become new creatures.

Now to say God is merciful in the hope that he will save us without conversion is in effect to say we hope that God will not do as he says. We must not set God's attributes at variance. God has resolved to glorify his mercy but not to prejudice his truth as a presumptuous sinner will find to his everlasting sorrow.

Objection. But we hope in Jesus Christ. We put our whole trust in God and therefore do not doubt that we shall be saved.

Answer. This is not hope in Christ but hope against Christ. To hope to see the kingdom of God without being born again to hope to find eternal life in the broad way is to hope Christ will prove a false prophet.

David's plea is I hope in thy word. Psalm 119 verse 81 But this hope is against God's word. Show me a word of Christ for your hope that he will save you in your ignorance or profane neglect of the service and I will never try to shake your confidence.

God rejects this hope with abhorrence. Those condemned by the prophet went on in their sins yet says the prophet while they lean upon the Lord. Micah 3.11 God will not endure to be made a prop to men in their sins.

The Lord rejected those presumptuous sinners that went on stealing their trespasses and yet withstave themselves on Israel's God as a man would shake off the briars that cleave to his garment. If your hope is worth anything it will purify you from your sins. 1 John 3.3 Because it is that hope which cherishes men in their sins.

Objection Would you have us despair? Answer You must despair of ever coming to heaven as you are that is, while unconverted. You must despair of ever seeing the face of God without holiness but you must by no means despair of finding mercy upon your thorough repentance and conversion. Neither may you despair of attaining to repentance and conversion in the use of God's means.

5 Without conversion all that Christ has done and suffered will be as to you in vain. That is, it will in no way avail you to salvation. Many urge this as a sufficient ground for their hope that Christ died for sinners.

But I must tell you Christ never died to save impenitent and unconverted sinners. So continuing A great theologian was accustomed in his private dealings with souls to ask two questions. What has Christ done for you? What has Christ wrought in you? Without the application of the Spirit in regeneration we have no saving interest in the benefits of redemption.

I tell you from the Lord that Christ himself cannot save you if you go on in this state. First, to save men in their sins would be against his trust. The Mediator is a servant of the Father, shows his commission from him, acts in his name, and pleads his command for his justification.

John 10, 18, 36 God has committed all things to him, entrusted his own glory and the salvation of his elect with him. Accordingly, Christ gives his Father an account of both parts of his trust before he leaves the world. Now Christ would quite thwart his Father's glory, tarnish his greatest trust, if he should save men in their sins, for this would overturn all his counsels and offer violence to all his attributes.

It would overturn all God's counsels, of which this is the order, that men should be brought to salvation through sanctification. 2 Thessalonians 2, 13 He has chosen them that they should be holy. Ephesians 1, 4 They are elected to pardon and life through sanctification.

1 Peter 1, 2 If you can repeal the law of God's immutable counsel or corrupt him whom the Father has sealed to go directly against his commission, then, and not otherwise, you may get to heaven in this condition. To hope that Christ will save you while unconverted is to hope that Christ will prove false to his trust. He never did nor ever will save one soul but whom the Father has given him in election and drawn to him in a factual calling.

John 6, 37, 44 Be assured Christ will save none in a way contrary to his Father's will. To save men in their sins would offer violence to all the attributes of God, to his justice. The righteousness of God's judgment lies in rendering to all according to their works.

Now should men soar to the flesh and yet of the Spirit wreath everlasting life, where were the glory of divine justice, since it would be given to the wicked according to the work of the righteous? To his holiness. If God should not only save sinners but save them in their sins, his most pure and strict holiness would be exceedingly defaced. The unsanctified in the eyes of God's holiness are worse than a swine or viper.

It would be offering the extremest violence to the infinite purity of the divine nature to have such dwell with him. They cannot stand in his judgment. They cannot abide his presence.

If holy David would not endure such in his house, nor in a site, Psalm 101, 3 and 7, can we think God will? Should he take men as they are from the mire of their filthiness to the glory of heaven? The world would think that God was at no such great distance from sin, nor had any such dislike to it as we are told he has. They would be ready to conclude that God was altogether such in one of themselves, as some of old wickedly did from the forbearance of God. Psalm 51, 21.

To his veracity. God has declared from heaven that if any say he shall have peace, though it should go on in the imagination of his heart, his wrath shall smoke against that man. Deuteronomy 29, 19 and 20.

He has declared that they only that confess and forsake their sin shall find mercy. Proverbs 28, 13. He has declared that they that shall enter into his hill must be of a clean hands and a pure heart.

Where were God's truth if notwithstanding all this he should bring men to salvation without conversion? O desperate sinner that dares to hope that Christ will make his Father a liar and nullify his word to save you. To his wisdom. This were to throw away the choicest of mercies on them that would not value them, nor were any way suited to them, who would not value them.

The unsanctified sinner puts but little price upon God's great salvation. He thinks no more of Christ than they that are whole do of the physician. He prizes not his balm, values not his cure, but tramples on his blood.

Now would it stand with wisdom to force pardon and life upon those that would return no thanks for them? Will the all-wise God, when he is forbidding us to do it, throw his holy things to dogs and his parils to swine, that were it as it were but turn again and rend him? This would make mercy to be despised indeed. Wisdom requires that life be given in a way suitable to God's honor and that God provide for the securing of his own glory as well as man's felicity. It would be dishonorable to God to bestow his choicest riches on

them that have more pleasure in their sins than in the heavenly delight that he offers.

God would lose the praise and glory of his grace if he should cast it away upon them that were not only unworthy but unwilling. Also, the mercies of God are in no way suited to the unconverted. God's wisdom is seen in suiting things to each other, the means to the end, the object to the faculty, the quality of the gift to the capacity of the receiver.

Now if Christ should bring the unregenerate sinner to heaven, he could take no more felicity there than a beast would. If you should bring him into a beautiful room, to the society of learned men, where as a poor thing had much rather be grazing with his fellows in the field, alas, what could an unsanctified man do in heaven? He could not be content there because nothing suits him. The place does not suit him.

He would be quite out of his element, a fish out of water. The company does not suit him. What communion has darkness with light, corruption with perfection, vileness and sin with glory and immortality? The employment does not suit him.

The anthems of heaven do not fit his mouth, do not suit his ear. Can you charm a donkey with music? Or will you bring him to your organ and expect that he should make melody or keep time with the tuneful choir? Had he skill, he would have no will, and so could find no pleasure in it. Spread your table with delicacies before a languishing patient, and it will be but an offense.

Alas, if the poor man think a sermon long and say of a Sabbath day, what a weariness is it! How miserable would he think it to be engaged in an everlasting Sabbath, to assume mutability, or else to his omniscience or omnipotence. It is enacted in heaven and enrolled in the decree of the court above that none but the pure in heart shall see God. Matthew 5.8 Now if Christ bring any to heaven unconverted, either he must get them in without his Father's knowledge, and then where is his omniscience? Or against his will, and then where is his omnipotence? Or must change his will, and then where is his immutability? Sinner, will you not give up your vain hope of being saved in this condition? The Old Ad says, Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or the rocks be moved out of their place? Job 18.4 May I not much more reason with you? Shall the laws of heaven be reversed for you? Shall the everlasting foundations be overturned for you? Shall Christ put out the eye of his Father's omniscience or shorten the arm of his eternal power for you? Shall divine justice be violated for you? Or the brightness of his holiness be blemished for you? O the impossibility, absurdity, blasphemy of such a confidence! To think Christ will ever save you in this condition is to make the Savior become a sinner and do more wrong to the infinite majesty than all the wicked on earth or devils in hell ever did or ever could do.

And yet will you not give up such a blasphemous hope? 2. To save men in their sins would be against the word of Christ. Would ye not say, Who shall ascend into heaven to bring down Christ from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring up Christ from beneath? The word is Nihus, Romans 10.6-8. Are you aggrieved that Christ shall end the controversy? Heareth in his own words, Except ye be converted, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ye must be born again.

If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me. Except ye repent, ye shall perish. Matthew 18.3 John 3.7 John 13.8 Luke 13.3 One word, would think, were enough from Christ.

But how often and earnestly does he reiterate it? Verily, verily, except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God. John 3.3 Yea, he not only asserts, but proves the necessity of the new birth from the fleshliness and sinfulness of man from his first birth, by reason of which man is no more fit for heaven

than the beast is for the chamber of the king. And will ye yet rest in your own presumptuous confidence directly against Christ's words? Ye must go quite against the law of his kingdom and rule of his judgment to save you in this state.

Thirdly, to save men in their sins would be against the oath of Christ. He has lifted up his hand to heaven. He has sworn that those who remain in unbelief and know not his ways, that is, are ignorant of them or disobedient to them, shall not inherit his rest.

Hebrews 3.18 And will ye not yet believe, O sinner, that he is earnest? The covenant of grace is confirmed by an oath and sealed by blood. But all must be made void in another way to heaven found out, if ye be saved, living and dying unsanctified. God has come to his last terms with man, and has condescended as far as in honor he could.

Men cannot be saved while unconverted, except that could get another covenant made, and the whole frame of the gospel, which was established forever with such dreadful solemnities, quite altered. And must not they be demented who hope that they shall? Fourthly, to save men in their sins would be against his honor. God will so show his love to the sinner as at the same time to show his hatred to sin.

Therefore, he that names the name of Jesus must depart from iniquity and deny all ungodliness. And he that has hope of life by Christ must purify himself as he is pure. Otherwise Christ would be thought a favorer of sin.

2 Timothy 2.19, Titus 2.12, 1 John 3.3 The Lord Jesus would have all the world know that though he pardoned sin, he will not protect it. If holy David says, Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, Psalm 6.8, and shut the doors against them, Psalm 101.7, shall we not much more expect it from Christ's holiness? Would it be for his honor to have the dogs to the table, or to lodge the swine with his children, or to have Abraham's bosom to be a nest of vipers? 5. To save men in their sins would be against his offices. God has exalted him to be a prince and a savior.

Acts 5.31 He would act against both, should he save men in their sins. It is the office of a king to be a terror to evildoers and a praise to them that do well. He is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doeth evil.

Romans 13.4 Now should Christ favor the ungodly, so continuing, and take those to reign with him, that would not that he should reign over them, this would be quite against his office. He therefore reigns that he may put his enemies under his feet. Now should he lay them in his bosom, he would frustrate the end of his regal power.

It belongs to Christ as a king to subdue the hearts and slay the lusts of his chosen. What king would take rebels and open hostility into his court? What were this but to betray life, kingdom, government, and altogether? If Christ is the king, he must have honor, homage, subjection. Now to save men while in their natural enmity were to obscure his dignity, lose his authority, bring contempt on his government, and sell his dear bought rights for naught.

Again, as Christ would not be a prince or neither a savior, if he should do this, for his salvation is spiritual. He is called Jesus because he saves his people from their sins. Matthew 1.21 So that, should he save them in their sins, he would be neither Lord nor Jesus.

To save men from the punishment and not from the power of sin were to do his work by halves and be an imperfect savior. His office as a deliverer is to turn ungodliness from Jacob. Romans 11.26 He is sent to bless men and turning them from their iniquities.

Acts 3.26 To make an end of sin. Daniel 9.24 So that he would destroy his own designs and nullify his offices to save men in their unconverted state. Arise then, what needest thou, O sleeper? Awake, O secure sinner! Lest ye be consumed in your iniquities.

Say, as a leper, if we sit here we shall die. 2 Kings 7.3-4 Verily, it is not more certain that you are now out of hell than that you shall speedily be in it, except you repent and be converted. There is but this one door for you to escape by.

Arise then, O sluggard, and shake off your excuses. How long will you slumber and fold your hands to sleep? Will you lie down in the midst of the sea or sleep on the top of a mast? There is no remedy, but you must either turn or burn. There is an unchangeable necessity of the change of your condition, unless ye have resolved to abide the worst of it and try it out with the Almighty.

If ye love your life, O man, arise and come away. I think I see the Lord Jesus lay in the merciful hands of a holy violence upon you. I think he acts like the angels to Lot.

Then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, lest thou be consumed. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, the Lord being merciful unto him. And they brought him without the city and said, Escape for thy life, stay not in all the plain.

Escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed. Genesis 19.15-17 O how willful will your destruction be, if you should yet harden yourself in your sinful state! But none of you can say that you have not had fair warning, yet I cannot leave you so. It is not enough for me to have delivered my own soul.

What shall I go away without my errand? Will none of you arise and follow me? Have I been all this while speaking to the wind? Have I been charming the deaf adder, or allaying the restless ocean with argument? Do I speak to the trees and rocks, or to men, to the tombs and monuments of the dead, or to the living? If you are men and not senseless, stop and consider where you are going. If you have the reason and understanding of men, do not dare to run into the flames and fall into hell with your eyes open, but stop and think. Set about the work of repentance! What, men, and yet run into the pit, when the very beasts will not be forced in? What, endowed with reason, and yet trifled with death and hell and the vengeance of the Almighty? Are men only distinguished from brutes, in that these, having no foresight, have no care to provide for the things to come? And will you, who are at war, not hasten your escape from eternal torments, or assure yourselves, men, and let reason prevail with you? Is it a reasonable thing for you to contend against the Lord your Maker, or to harden yourselves against His word, as though the strength of Israel would lie? Is it reasonable that an understanding creature should lose, yea, live quite against the very end of his being? Is it reasonable that the only being in this world that God has made capable of knowing His will, and bringing Him glory, should yet live in ignorance of His Maker, and be unserviceable to His use? Yea, should be engaged against Him, and spit as venom in the face of His Creator.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, and let the creatures without sins judge if this be reason, that man whom God has nourished and brought up should rebel against Him. Judge in your own selves. Is it reasonable undertaking for briars and thorns to set themselves in battle against a devouring fire, or for the potsherd of the earth to strive with this Maker? You will say, This is not reason, or surely the eye of reason

is quite put out.

And if this be not reason, then there is no reason that you should continue as you are, but there is every reason in the world that you should immediately turn and repent. What shall I say? I could spin myself in this argument, O that you would only hearken to me, that you would now set upon a new course. Will you not be made clean? When shall it once be? Listener, will you sit down and consider the aforementioned argument and debate it, whether it be not best to turn? Come, let us reason together.

Is it good for you to be here? Is it good for you to try whether God will be as good as His word, and to harden yourself in the conceit that all is well with you while you remain unsanctified? Alas, for such sinners must they perish at last by hundreds. What course shall I use with them that I have not tried? What shall I do for the daughter of my people? Jeremiah 9.7 O Lord God, help! Alas, shall I leave them thus? If they will not hear me, yet do thou hear me. O that they might live in thy sight! Lord, save them or they perish.

My heart would melt to see their houses on fire, were they fast asleep in their beds. And shall not my soul be moved within me to see them falling into endless perdition? Lord, have compassion, and save them out of this burning. Put forth thy divine power, and the work will be done.

Chapter Four The Marks of the Unconverted While we keep aloof in general statements, there is little fruit to be expected. It is the hand fight that does execution. David is not awakened by the prophets hovering at a distance in parabolical insinuations.

Nathan is forced to close with him and tell him plainly, Thou art the man. Few will, in words, deny the necessity of the new birth, but they have a self-deluding confidence that the work is not to be done now. And because they know themselves to be free from that gross hypocrisy which takes up religion merely for a color to deceive others and for covering wicked designs, they are confident of their sincerity and do not suspect that more close hypocrisy in which the greatest danger lies and by which a man deceives his own soul.

But man's deceitful heart is such a matchless cheat and self-delusion so reigning and so fatal a disease that I do not know which is the greater, the difficulty or the necessity of the undeceiving work that I am now upon. Alas for the unconverted! They must be undeceived or they will be undone. But how shall this be effected? Help, O all-searching light, and let thy discerning eye disclose the rotten foundation of the self-deceiver.

Lead me, O Lord God, as thou didst the prophet into the chambers of imagery and dig through the wall of sinners' hearts and reveal the hidden abominations that are lurking out of sight in the dark. O send thy angel before me to open the sundry wards of their hearts as thou didst before Peter and make even the iron gates fly open of their own accord. And as Jonathan no sooner tasted the honey that his eyes were enlightened, so grant, O Lord, that when the poor deceased souls with whom I have to do shall cast their eyes upon these lines, their minds may be illuminated and their consciences convinced and awakened, that they may see with their eyes and hear with their ears and be converted, and thou mayest heal them.

For the continuation of this book, please turn your cassette to side. This must be premised before we proceed that it is most certain that men may have a confident persuasion that their hearts and states are good while yet they are unsound. Hear the truth himself, who shows in Laodicea's case that men may be wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked and yet not know it.

Yea, they may be confident they are rich and increased in grace. Revelation 3.17 There is a generation that appear in their own eyes and yet are not washed from their filthiness. Proverbs 30.12 Who better persuaded of the state than Paul while he yet remained unconverted? Romans 7.9 So that they are miserably deceived who take a strong confidence for a sufficient evidence.

They that have no better proof than barely a strong persuasion that they are converted are certainly as yet strangers to conversion. But to come closer, as it was said to the adherents of Antichrist, so here. Some of the unconverted carry their marks on their forehead more openly and some in their hands more covertly.

The apostle reckons up some upon whom he writes the sentence of death. And in these dreadful catalogs which I beseech you to attend to with all diligence. For this ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no man deceive you with vain words because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Ephesians 5.5-6 But the fearful and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death. Revelations 21.8 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6.9-10 Woe to them that have their name written in this catalogue! Such may know as certainly as if God had told them from heaven that they are unsanctified and under an impossibility of being saved in this condition. There are then these several classes that, past all dispute, are unconverted. They carry their marks in their foreheads.

First, the unclean. These are ever reckoned among the goats and have their names, whoso else is left out, in all the aforementioned catalogues. Secondly, the covetous.

These are ever branded for idolaters, and the doors of the kingdom are shut against them by name. Thirdly, drunkards. Not only such as drink away their reason, but withal, yea, above all, such as are too strong for strong drink.

The Lord fills his mouth with woes against these, and declares them to have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. Isaiah 5.11-12 Galatians 5.21 Number four, liars. The God that cannot lie has told them that there is no place for them in his kingdom, no entrance into his heel.

But their portion is with the father of lies, whose children they are in the lake of burning. Revelations 21.18-27 John 8.44 Proverbs 6.17 Number five, swearers. The end of these without deep and speedy repentance is swift destruction and most certain and unavoidable condemnation.

James 5.12 Zechariah 5.1-3 Number six, railers and backbiters that love to take up a reproach against their neighbor and fling all the dirt they can in his face or else wound him secretly behind his back. Psalm 15.1-3 1 Corinthians 5.11 Number seven, thieves, extortioners, oppressors that grind the poor or defraud their brethren when they have opportunity. These must know that God is the avenger of all such.

1 Thessalonians 4.6 Hero, you false and purloining and wasteful servants! Hero, you deceitful tradesmen! Hear your sentence! God will certainly shut his door against you and turn your treasures of unrighteousness into the treasures of wrath and make your will goth and silver and gold to torment you like

burning metal in your flesh. James 5.2-3 Number eight, all that do ordinarily live in the profane neglect of God's worship that do not hear his word, that do not call on his name, that restrain prayer before God, that do not mind their own nor their family's souls but live without God in the world. John 8.47 Job 15.4 Psalm 14.4 Number nine, frequenter and lovers of vain company.

God has declared that he will be the destroyer of all such and that they shall never enter into the hill of his rest. Proverbs 4.6 and 13.20 Number ten, scoffers at religion that make a scorn of precise living and mock at the messengers and diligent servants of the Lord and at their holy profession and make themselves merry with the weakness and failings of professing Christians. Hear ye, despisers, hear your dreadful doom.

Proverbs 19.29 2 Chronicles 36.16 Sinner, consider diligently whether you are not to be found in one of these ranks. For if this be the case, you are in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. For all these do carry their marks into their foreheads and are undoubtedly the sons of death.

And if so, the Lord pity our poor congregations. Oh, how small a number will remain when these ten sorts are left out. Sirs, what efforts you make to keep up your confidence of your good state when God from heaven declares against you and pronounces you in a state of damnation, I would reason with you as God with them.

How canst thou say I am not polluted? See thy way in the valley. Know what thou hast done. Jeremiah 2.23 Man, is not your conscience aware of your tricks of deceit, of your secret sins, of your way of lying? Yea, you are not your friends, your family, your neighbors' witnesses to your profane neglect of God's worship, to your covetous practices, to your envious and malicious behavior.

May they not point at you as you go? There goes a gaming prodigal. There goes a drunken navel, a companion of evil doers. There goes a railer, or a scoffer, or a loose liver.

The love of God is written, it is with the sunbeam in the book, by which you must be judged. That these are not the marks of his children, and that none such, except renewed by converting grace, shall ever escape the damnation of hell. O, that you would now be persuaded to repent and turn from all your transgressions, or else iniquity will be a ruin.

Ezekiel 18.30 Alas for poor hearted sinners! Must I leave you at last where you are? Must I leave the drinker's steel at his bar? Must I leave the malicious steel in his venom? However, you must know that you have been warned, that I am clear of your blood, and whether men will hear it or whether they will forbear, I will leave these scriptures with them, which will prove either as thunderbolts to awaken them, or as searing irons to harden them. God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp with such and warm as goeth on steel in his trespasses, even being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand in no man regarded.

I will laugh at your calamity, when your destruction cometh as a whirlwind. And now, I imagine, many will begin to bless themselves and think all is well, because they cannot be reproached with these grosser evils. But I must tell you that there is another sort of unsanctified persons who carry their mark not in their foreheads, but more secretly and covertly.

These frequently deceive themselves and others, and pass for good Christians, when they are all the while unsound at heart. Many pass undiscovered till death and judgment bring all to light. These self-deceivers seem to come even to heaven's gate with confidence of their admission, and yet are turned away at last.

Matthew 7.22 I beseech you deeply to lay to heart and firmly retain this awakening consideration that multitudes perish by the hand of some secret sin that is not only hidden from others, but from want of observing their own hearts is hidden even from themselves. A man may be free from open pollutions and yet die at last by the hand of some unobserved iniquity. And there are these twelve hidden sins through which souls go down by numbers into the chambers of eternal death.

These you must search carefully for, and take them as black marks wherever they are found, revealing a graceless and unconverted state. And as you love your lives, read carefully with the holy jealousy of yourselves, lest ye should be the persons concerned. 1. Gross Willful Ignorance Hosea 4.6 O how many poor souls does this sin kill in the dark! While they think verily they have good hearts and are all set for heaven, this is a murderer that dispatches thousands in a silent manner when they suspect nothing and do not see the hand that destroys him.

Ye shall find whatever excuses ye make for ignorance, that it is a soul ruining evil. Ah, would it not have grieved a man's heart to see that dreadful spectacle when the poor Protestants were shut up in a barn and a butcher came with his hands warmed in human blood and led them one by one blindfold to a block, where he slew them one after another by scores and cold blood? But how much more should your hearts bleed to think of the hundreds that ignorance destroys in secret and leads blindfold to the block? Beware that this is not your case. Make no plea for ignorance.

If you spare that sin, know that it will not spare you. And would a man keep a murderer in his bosom? Number two. Secret reserves in closing with Christ.

To forsake all for Christ, to hate father and mother, yea, a man's own life for him, this is a hard saying. Luke 14.26 Some will do much, but they will not have the religion that will save them. They never come to be entirely devoted to Christ, nor to be fully resigned to him.

They must have the sweet sin. They mean to do themselves no harm, the secret exceptions for life, liberty, or estate. Many take Christ thus and never consider his self-denying terms, nor count the cost.

This error in the foundation mars all and ruins him forever. Luke 14.28-33 Number three. Formality in religion.

Many rest in the outside of religion and in the external performance of holy duties, and very often this most effectually deceives men. And most certainly undoes them than open profaneness as it was in the Pharisees' case. They hear, they fast, they pray, they give alms, and therefore will not believe but their case is good.

Whereas resting in the work done and coming short of the heart work and the inward power and vitality of religion, they fall at last into the burning from the flattering hope and confident persuasion of their being all set on the way to heaven. O dreadful case! When a man's religion shall serve only to harden him, and effectually to delude and deceive his own soul. Number four.

The prevalence of wrong motives and holy duties. This is a bane of the Pharisees. O how many a poor soul is undone by this and drops into hell before he discerns his mistake.

He performs his good duties and so thinks all is well, but does not perceive that he is actuated by carnal motives all the while. It is too true that even with the really sanctified many carnal ends will often creep in, but they are the matter of their hatred and humiliation and never come to be habitually prevalent with them and bear the greatest sway. But when the main thing that ordinarily moves a man to religious duties is some carnal end, as to satisfy his conscience, to get the reputation of being religious, to be seen of men, to show his own gifts and talents, to avoid the reproach of being apophane and irreligious person or the like, this reveals an unsound heart.

O Christians, if you would avoid self-deceit, see that you mind not only your actions but your motives. 5. Trusting in Their Own Righteousness This is a soul-ruining mischief. When men trust in their own righteousness, they do indeed reject Christ's beloved.

You would need to be watchful on every hand, for not only your sins but your duties may undo you. It may be you never thought of this, but so it is, that a man may as certainly perish by his seeming righteousness and supposed graces as by gross sins. And that is when a man trusts to these as his righteousness before God, for satisfying his justice, appeasing his wrath, procuring his favor, and obtaining his pardon.

This is to put Christ out of office and make a Savior of our own duties and graces. Beware of this, O professing Christians. You are much in duties, but this one fly will spoil all the ointment.

When you have done most and best, be sure to go out of yourselves to Christ. Reckon your own righteousness as filthy rags. Philippians 3.6 6. A Secret Enmity Against the Straightness of Religion Many moral persons, punctilious in their formal devotions, have yet a bitter enmity against strictness and zeal, and hate the life and power of religion.

They do not like this forwardness, nor that men should make such a stir in religion. They condemn the strictness of religion as singularity, indiscretion, and intemperate zeal, and with them a zealous preacher or fervent Christian is but a wild enthusiast. These men do not love holiness, as holiness has holiness, for then they would love the height of holiness, and therefore are undoubtedly rotten at heart whatever good opinion they have of themselves.

7. The Resting in a Certain Degree of Religion When there is so much as will save them, as they suppose, they look no further, and so show themselves short of true grace, which always sets men aspiring to perfection. Philippians 3.13 Proverbs 4.18 8. The Predominant Love of the World This is the sure evidence of an unsanctified heart. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2.15 But how often does a sin lurk under the fair cover of forward profession! Yea, such a power of deceit is there in this sin that many times when everybody else conceives a man's worldliness and covetousness, he cannot see it himself. But has so many excuses and pretenses for his eagerness after the world that he blinds his own eyes and perishes in his self-deceit. How many professing Christians are there with whom the world has more of their hearts and affections than Christ, who mind earthly things, and thereby are evidently after the flesh and likely to end in destruction! Yet ask these men and they will tell you confidently that they prize Christ above all.

For they do not see their own earthly mindedness for lack of a strict observance of the workings of their own hearts. Did they but carefully search, they would quickly find that their greatest satisfaction is in the world, and that their greatest care and main endeavor are to get and secure the world, which are the certain signs of an unconverted sinner. May the professing part of the world take earnest heed, lest they perish by the hand of this sin unobserved.

Men may be and often are kept off from Christ as effectually by the inordinate love of lawful comforts as by the most unlawful courses. 9. Reigning Malice and Envy against those that disrespect them and are injurious to them. How do many that seem to be religious remember injuries and carry grudges, rendering evil for evil, loving to take revenge, wishing evil to them that wrong them? This is directly against the rule of the gospel, the pattern of Christ, and the nature of God.

Doubtless where this evil is kept boiling in the heart and is not hated, resisted, and mortified, but habitually prevails, that person is in the very gall of bitterness and in a state of death. Matthew 18, 32-35, 1 John 3, 14-15 10. Unmortified Pride When men love the praise of men more than the praise of God and set their hearts upon men's esteem, applause, and approbation, it is most certain that they are yet in their sins and strangers to true conversion.

When men do not see, nor complain, nor groan under the pride of their own hearts, it is as though they are stark dead in sin. Oh, how secretly does this live and reign in many hearts! And they know it not, but are very strangers to themselves. 11.

The Prevailing Love of Pleasure This is a black mark. When men give the flesh of the liberty that it craves, and pamper and please it, and do not deny and restrain it, when their great delight is in gratifying their bellies and pleasing their senses, whatever appearances they may have of religion, all is unsound. A flesh-pleasing life cannot be pleasing to God.

They, their Christs, have crucified the flesh and are careful to keep it under as their enemy. Galatians 5.24, 1 Corinthians 9.25-27 12. Carnal Security or a presumptuous confidence that their condition is already good.

Many cry peace and safety when sudden destruction is coming upon them. This was that which kept the foolish virgins sleeping when they should have been working, upon their beds when they should have been at the market. They did not perceive their lack of oil till the bridegroom was come, and while they went to buy, the door was shut.

And all these foolish virgins had no successors. Where is a place, yea, where is a house almost where these do not dwell? Men are willing to cherish themselves upon ever so slight grounds. They hope that their condition is good, and so are not concerned about a change, and by these means perish in their sins.

Are you at peace? Show me upon what grounds your peace is maintained. Is it Scripture peace? Can you show the distinguishing marks of a sound believer? Can you evidence that you have something more than a hypocrite in the world ever had? If not, fear this peace more than any trouble, and know that a carnal peace commonly proves a most mortal enemy of the soul, and whilst it smiles and kisses and speaks fairly, it fatally smites, as it were, under the fifth rib. By this time I think I hear my listeners crying out with the disciples, Who then shall be saved? Set out from our congregations all those ten ranks of the profane on the one hand, then take out all these twelve classes of self-deceiving hypocrites on the other hand, and tell me whether it is not a remnant that shall be saved.

How few will be the sheep that shall be left when all these shall be separated and set among the goats. For my part of all my numerous hearers, I have no hope to see any of them in heaven that are found among these twenty-two classes that are here mentioned, except by sound conversion, they are brought into another condition. And now, conscience, do your work.

Speak out and speak home to him that hears or reads these lines. If you find any of these marks on him, you must pronounce him utterly unclean. Do not take a lie into your mouth.

Do not speak peace to him to whom God speaks no peace. Do not let sense bribe you or self-love or carnal prejudice blind you. I summon you from the court of heaven to come and give evidence.

If you will answer it at your peril, give a true report of the state and case of him that reads this book. Conscience, will you altogether hold your peace at such a time as this? Are you sure you buy the living God that you tell the truth? Is a man converted or is he not? Does he allow himself in any way of wickedness or does he not? Does he truly love and please and prize and delight in God above all things or not? Come, give a definite answer. How long shall this soul live in uncertainty? O conscience, bring in your verdict.

Is this man a new man or is he not? How do you find it? Has there passed a thorough and mighty change upon him or not? When was the time? Where was the place? Or what were the means by which this thorough change of the new birth was wrought in his soul? Speak, conscience. If you cannot tell the time and place, can you show scripture evidence that the work is done? Has the man ever been taken off from his false foundation, from the false hopes and false peace in which once he trusted? Has he been deeply convinced of sin and of its lost and undone condition and brought out of himself and from his sins to give himself up entirely to Jesus Christ? Or do you not find him to this day under the power of ignorance or in the mire of worldliness? Have you not found upon him the gains of unrighteousness? Do you not find him a stranger to prayer, a neglecter of the word, a lover of this present world? Do you not sometimes catch him in a lie? Do you not find his heart fermented with malice or burning, with lust or going after his covetousness? Speak plainly to the aforementioned particulars. Can you acquit this man, this woman, from being in any of the twenty-two classes here described? If he is found in any of them, set him aside.

His portion is not with the saints. He must be converted and made a new creature, or he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Beloved, be not your own betrayers.

Do not deceive your own hearts, nor set your hands to your own ruin by a willful blinding of yourselves. Set up a tribunal in your own breasts. Bring the word and conscience together to the law and to the testimony.

Hear what the word concludes of your state, or follow the search till you find how the case stands. Make a mistake here and you perish. And such is the treachery of the heart, the subtlety of the temper, and the deceitfulness of sin, all conspiring to flatter and deceive the poor soul.

And so common and easy is it to make a mistake that it is a thousand to one that you will be deceived unless you are very careful and thorough and impartial in the inquiry into your spiritual condition. Oh, therefore, be diligent in your work. Go to the bottom.

Search with candles. Weigh yourself in the balance. Come to the standard of the sanctuary.

Bring your coin to the touchstone. Satan is a master of deceit. He can draw to the life.

He is perfect in the trade. There is nothing which he cannot imitate. He cannot wish for any grace, but he can fit you with a counterfeit.

Be jealous. Trust not even your own heart. Go to God to search you and try you to examine you and prove your reign.

If other helps do not suffice to bring all to an issue, but you are still at a loss, consult some godly and faithful minister or Christian friend. Do not rest till you have put the business of your eternal welfare out of doubt. Oh, searcher of hearts, set this soul searching and help him in his search.

The miseries of the unconverted. So unspeakably dreadful is the case of every unconverted soul that I have sometimes thought. If I could only convince men that they are still unregenerate, the work were more than half done.

But I find by sad experience that such a spirit of sloth and slumber possesses the unsanctified that, though they are convinced that they are yet unconverted, often they carelessly sit still. Through the love of sensual pleasure or the hurry of worldly business or the noise and clamor of earthly cares and lusts and affections, the voice of conscience is drowned and men go no further than some cold wishes and general purposes of repenting and amending. It is therefore of high necessity that I not only convince men that they are unconverted, but that I also endeavor to bring them to a sense of the fearful misery of this state.

But here I find myself aground at first setting off. What tongue can tell the ears of hell sufficiently of their misery unless it were died since that flame? Luke 16.24 Where is the wretty writer whose pen can depict their misery who are without God in the world? This cannot fully be done unless we know the infinite ocean of bliss which is in perfection in God and from which a state of sin excludes men, who knoweth, saith Moses, the power of thine anger. And how shall I tell men that which I do not know? Yet so much we know as one would think would shake the heart of that man that had the least degree of spiritual life and sins.

But this is yet the more perplexing difficulty that I am to speak to them that are without spiritual sense. Alas, this is not the least part of man's misery, that he is dead, dead in trespasses and sins. Could I bring paradise into view or represent the kingdom of heaven to as much advantage as a tempter did the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof to our Savior? Or could I uncover the face of the deep and devouring gulf of prophet and all its terrors and open the gates of the infernal furnace alas he has no eyes to see it? Could I paint the beauties of holiness or the glory of the gospel? Or could I expose to view the more than diabolical deformity and ugliness of sin? He can no more judge of the loveliness and beauty of the one and the filthiness and hatefulness of the other than a blind man of colors.

He is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him because of the blindness of his heart. He neither knows nor can know the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2 14 His eyes cannot be savingly opened but by converting grace.

He is a child of darkness and walks in darkness yea the light in him is darkness. Shall I wring his nail or read his sentence or sound in his ear the terrible trump of God's judgments that one would think should make both his ears tingle and strike him into Belshazzar's fit even to change his countenance lose his joints and make his knees smite one against another. Alas he perceives me not he has no ears to hear or shall I call up the daughters of music and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb yet he will not be stirred.

Shall I allure him with the joyful sound and lovely song and glad tidings of the gospel with the most sweet and inviting calls comforts and cordials of the divine promises so exceedingly great and precious it will not affect him saliently unless I could find him ears as well to tell him the news. What then shall I do shall I show him the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone or shall I open the box of spikenard very precious that fills the whole house of the universe with his perfume and hope that the savor of Christ's ointments and the smell of his garments will attract him.

Alas dead sinners are like the dumb idols they have mouths but they speak not eyes have they but they see not they have ears but they hear not noses have they but they smell not they have hands but they handle not feet have they but they walk not neither speak they through their throat their destitute is spiritual sense in motion but let me try the sense that last leaves us and draw the sword of the word yet though I choose mine arrows from God's quiver and direct them to the heart nevertheless he does not feel it for how should he being past feeling Ephesians 4 19 so that though the wrath of God abideth on him and the mountainous weight of so many sins yet he goes up and down as light as if nothing ailed him in a word he carries a dead soul in a living body and his flesh is but the

walking coffin of a corrupt mind that is twice dead Jude 12 which way then shall I come at the miserable object that I have to deal with who shall make the heart of stone relent or the lifeless carcass to feel and move that God who is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham that raises the dead and melts the mountains and strikes water out of the flint that loves to work beyond the hopes and belief of man that peoples his church with dry bones he is able to do this therefore I bow my knee to the most high God and as our savior prayed at the sepulcher of Lazarus and the Shunammite ran to the men of God for her dead child so your mourning minister carries you in the arms of prayer to that God in whom your help is found O thou all-powerful Jehovah who workest and none can hinder

thee who has the keys of death and hell pity thou the dead souls that lie here entombed and roll away the gravestone and say as to the dead body of Lazarus come forth lighten thou this darkness O inaccessible light and let the day spring from on high visit the dark regions of the dead to whom I speak for thou canst open the eye that death itself hath closed thou that forms the ear canst restore the hearing say thou to these ears Ephatha and they shall be opened give thou eyes to see thine excellencies a taste that may relish thy sweetness a scent that may savor thy ointment a feeling that may discern the privilege of thy favor the burden of thy wrath the intolerable weight of unpardoned sin and give thy servant order to prophesy to dry bones and let the effects of this prophecy be as of

thy prophet when he prophesied the valley of dry bones into a living army exceeding great but I must proceed as I am able to unfold that misery which I confess no tongue can unfold no heart can sufficiently comprehend know therefore that while you are unconverted number one the infinite God is engaged against you it is no small part of your misery that you are without God how does Micah run crying after the Danites you have taken away my gods and what have I more Judges 18 24 what in mourning then must you lift up who are without God who can lay no claim to him without daring usurpation our piercing amon is at us all in his last extremity the Philistines are upon me and God has departed from me 1 Samuel 28 15 sinners what will you do in the day of your visitation where will you flee to

for help where will you leave your glory what will you do when the Philistines are upon you when the world shall take its eternal leave of you when you must bid your friends houses and lands farewell forevermore what then I say will you do who have not God to go to will you call on him will you cry to him for help alas he will not own you he will not take any notice of you what will send you away with I never knew you

depart from me ye that work iniquity Matthew 7 23 they who know what it is to have a God to go to a God to live upon they know a little what a fearful misery it is to be without God this made a holy man cry out let me have God or nothing let me know him and his will and what will please him and how I may come to enjoy him or would I never had an understanding to know

anything but you are not only without God but God is against you or if God would stand neutral though he did not own nor help the poor sinner his case were not so deeply miserable though God should give up the poor creature to the will of his enemies to do their worst with him though he should deliver him over to the tormentors the devil should tear and torture him to their utmost power and skill if this were not how so fearful but God will set himself against the sinner and believe it it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God Hebrews 10 31 there is no friend like him no enemy like him as much as heaven is above the earth omnipotence above impotence so much more terrible is it to fall into the hands of the living God than into the paws of bears and lions yea furies of

devils God himself will be your tormentor your destruction shall come from the presence of the Lord 2 Thessalonians 1 verse 9 if God be against you who shall be for you if one man sin against another the judge shall judge him but if a man sin against the Lord who shall entreat for him 1 Samuel 2 25 thou even thou art to be feared and who shall stand in thy sight when thou art angry Psalm 76 7 who or what shall deliver you out of his hands can money riches profit not in a day of wrath Proverbs 11 4 can kings or warriors no they shall cry to the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of his wrath has come and who shall be able to stand Revelation 6 15 to 17 sinner I think this should

go like a dagger to your heart to know that God is your enemy where will you go where will you shelter yourself there is no hope for you unless you lay down your weapons and sue out your pardon and get Christ to stand as your friend and make your peace if it were not for this you might go into some howling wilderness in their pine and sorrow and run mad for anguish of heart and horrible despair but in Christ there is a possibility of mercy for you yea an offer of mercy to you that you may have God more for you than he is now against you but if you will not forsake your sins nor turn thoroughly and purposefully to God by a sound conversion the wrath of God abides on you and he proclaims himself to be against you as in the prophet therefore thus saith the Lord God behold I even I am against

thee Ezekiel 5 verse 8 his face is against you the face of the Lord is against them that do evil to cut off the remembrance of them Psalm 34 verse 16 Woe unto them whom God shall set his face against when he did but look on the host of the Egyptians how terrible was the consequence I will set my face against that man and will make him a sign and a proverb and will cut him off from the midst of my people and ye shall know that I am the Lord Ezekiel 14 verse 8 his heart is against you he hates all the workers of iniquity man does not your heart tremble to think of your being an object of God's hatred though Moses and Samuel stood before me yet my mind could not be towards this people cast them out of my sight Jeremiah 15 verse 1 my soul loathed them and their souls also abhorred me

Zechariah 11 verse 8 all his attributes are against you his justice is like a flaming sword unsheathed against you if I wet my glittering sword in my hand take hold on judgment I will render vengeance to mine adversaries and will reward them that hate me I will make mine arrows drunk with blood Deuteronomy 32 verse 41 and 42 so exact his justice that it will by no means clear the guilty God will not discharge you he will not hold you guiltless but will require the whole debt in person from you unless you can make a scripture claim to Christ in his satisfaction when the enlightened sinner looks on justice and sees the

balance in which he must be weighed and the sword by which he must be executed he feels an earthquake in his breast but Satan keeps us out of sight and persuades us all while

he can that the Lord is all made up of mercy and so lulls us to sleep in sin divine justice is exact it must have satisfaction to the utmost farthing for the continuation of this book please go to cassette 3 at this time

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