

Examine Yourselves in the Light of God's Grace

by Robert Traill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trying the spirits and examining one's own state according to the doctrine of the righteousness of Christ, warning against the dangers of frustrating the grace of God and trying to please God by our own works.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 23:5, Job 40:4, Psalm 119:128, Acts 7:59, Acts 15:1, Romans 3:21, Romans 7:12, Galatians 2:21, Philippians 3:8, Hebrews 11:7, 1 John 4:1

Topics: "Gods Grace", "Christian Righteousness"

Description

Robert Traill preaches on the importance of not frustrating the grace of God by seeking righteousness through the law, emphasizing that true believers cannot commit this sin. He highlights the glorious display of God's grace in justifying sinners through the righteousness of Christ and warns against doctrines that darken, perplex, mix, or oppose the grace of God. Traill urges the congregation to test the spirits, align their thoughts with God's Word, and examine their own hearts in light of God's law, Christ's righteousness, and the grace of God.

Transcript

"I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." -- Gal. 2:21.

From this first argument of the apostle for the justifying of a sinner through the righteousness of Christ, and not by the righteousness of the law, I have raised, and opened, and spoke something to four doctrines--

1st, That the grace of God shines gloriously in the justifying of a sinner through the righteousness of Christ.

2dly, That it is a dreadful sin to frustrate the grace of God.

3dly, That all who seek righteousness by the law, they do frustrate the grace of God.

4thly, That no true sound believer can be guilty of this sin. Frustrating the grace of God is a sin that no believer can commit.

I would now come to make some application of these, which I, mean to prosecute from these two heads:--

I. To warn you to take heed and to try the spirits, as the apostle exhorts (1 John 4:1), according to this doctrine.

II. Try your own state according to your heart-thoughts of this matter.

I. You are to try the spirits -- you are to try the doctrines that you hear. When the greatest measure of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the churches, and when extraordinary officers were raised up amongst them, and in a time when some of the apostles were living, by one of them was this exhortation given, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God," (1 John 4:1). And it is very observable, that the scope of that text that the apostle there lays down, leads us plainly to the doctrine that I am upon, "Believe not every spirit, for there are many false spirits, and antichrists, that are gone out into the world." But you will say, How shall we know them? Saith the apostle, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God" (ver. 3). Now, by a very usual phrase that was well understood then, and it is not hard to be known now, by "spirit," doctrine is meant. Every doctrine that tends not this way is not of God. Aye, but, you will say, Where are there any that say Christ is not come in the flesh, save the Jews? The apostle seems to make this a grand mark of antichrist. Now, in antichrist's kingdom (and that is a fitter name for them than that of the Church, for with the church they have nothing to do) it is every where asserted that Christ is come in the flesh; for they have made a great part of their religion to consist in carnal, wicked representations of Jesus Christ; they have made a goddess of his mother, and they have made a puppet-show of his life and death, by their ridiculous representations. Aye, but the main thing that Christ came into the flesh for, that is forgotten by them; and of this the apostle speaks (ver. 10), "He hath sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Christ's business in this world was to be made a sacrifice for sin; and they that do not hold him forth as a sacrifice for sin, do, in effect, say he is not come in the flesh. Now, concerning these doctrines that I would warn you against, I would branch them forth into a few heads.

1. There are doctrines darkening the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, that you should beware of. The gospel is called by the apostle, "the gospel of the grace of God," twice in one discourse to the church at Ephesus (3:2,7); and the "word of his grace," (Acts 20:32). What judgment then should Christians make of such men's spirits, that are called ministers, and will be called so, and yet you may hear them preach from one end of the year to another, and never hear a word of the grace of God, or the righteousness of Christ? If they be sound in the faith, it is well; but the very concealing of these things is a great sin, and a great snare to people; the very name of the gospel is the gospel of the grace of God: it is miscalled by the name of the gospel, if the grace of God runs not through every vein of it.

2. There are doctrines perplexing the grace of God; they make it dark, and they make it intricate: they perplex the doctrine with methods, and they perplex people's consciences with their doctrine. There is no church canon in all the world that is much worth regarding, but that which we have in Acts 15; for those that were called by the name of General Councils, for the first three hundred years after Christ, have many weaknesses and follies in them; and they began to savour of a degeneracy already begun, though in the main points of the truths of the gospel they remained sound.

In Acts 15:1, certain men that came down from Judea had taken up this conceit, and "taught the brethren, that except they were circumcised after the law of Moses, they could not be saved." Observe where they

laid the stress of this thing, "except ye be circumcised after the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved." You know very well, that the apostle Paul looked upon circumcision as a very indifferent thing: sometimes, in his travels, he ordered some to be circumcised, but at other times he would not; he looked upon it as a matter of indifference, for the avoiding of scandals, and so the apostle reckoned it no great matter: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing."

Aye, but when once it came to be broached into a doctrine, and a necessity laid upon it, "Except ye be circumcised after the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved," -- let us see what this awful reverend assembly at Jerusalem say to it; the apostles, and elders, and brethren, a blessed company they were, a blessed church, worth all the churches in England, without any reflection: "Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying you must be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment," (Ver. 24): they trouble you, and they pervert your soul.

Sirs, There are four questions, that must always be preserved plain; plainly delivered, and plainly known by all good men: -- 1st, What is that righteousness in which a sinner can stand safe before God? The plain answer to it is, That it is the righteousness of Christ only. 2dly, How come we by this righteousness? The gospel answer is, By grace alone; it is given us as a free gift, we do not buy it. 3dly, How are we possessed of this righteousness? By faith alone; there is no putting on this raiment but by faith alone. 4thly, What warrant hath a man to believe on Jesus Christ?

The plain gospel answer is, Only the promise of the gospel. And here are two things I would caution you about, and the most part of people's mistakes lie about them. 1st, The law is no gospel but as it leads to Christ; the law not leading to Christ is against the gospel, and the gospel against the law; but the law leading to Christ serves the gospel, and the gospel serves the law by fulfilling it. 2dly, The doctrine of holiness, as it flows from Christ, is gospel; but the doctrine of holiness, without Christ, is no gospel.

To make this plain: Whosoever they be that teach people to be holy, and tell them how they may be holy, and urge them very hard that they must be very holy, for this end, that when they are holy they may believe on Jesus Christ; these people pervert and distort the gospel: but if people be persuaded of the necessity of holiness for salvation, and that they must believe on Jesus Christ that they may be holy, this is gospel. That is the second thing: Have a care of those doctrines that distort and confound the truths of the gospel.

3. There are mixing doctrines: they that would mix something with the grace of God. The grace of God they will not disown, the righteousness of Christ they will not deny; but they will put something in with them in the matter of justification. Take heed of this matter; it is a shame that this should be talked on as a matter of controversy; it is a point that every one's conscience should be fully satisfied in, as they expect salvation from the hand of God. Indeed, good men may jar and jangle about terms that neither of them well understand; but when the matter comes to a particular person's own case, there should be a full satisfaction in this point -- that the righteousness of Christ for our justification must stand pure and unmixed. It is a corrupt thing to mix any of the works of the law with the grace of God; and herein lay the error of the Galatians: the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, they liked very well; but they would join the law of Moses therewith. Let the law of Moses keep its own place, and be the rule of our sanctification; but in our justification, it hath no place at all. God never gave it any place there, and all they are fools that do: it never served any man that way.

4. There are blaspheming doctrines, opposing and blaspheming the grace of God; and the land is full of them. You may have heard of a sort of people, the Socinians, and they are gross enemies to the grace of God. These strike at the very root of the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ. If Christ be not the true God, how can he save a sinner? It is impossible that the righteousness of a creature can atone for the unrighteousness of a creature. It is the Godhead of Christ that adds that infinite virtue to his sacrifice that we are saved by. So much for this first exhortation, "Try the spirits."

II. I would exhort you to try your own state by this doctrine, "I do not frustrate the grace of God;" and as this hath been handled, it calls you to try yourselves about three things:-- 1st, What are your real thoughts of God's law? 2dly, What are your real thoughts of Christ's righteousness? 3dly, What are your real thoughts of the grace of God? A little to each of these.

First, What are your real thoughts of God's law? -- And although you may think this a far-fetched concern, yet it, is not so far-fetched but it comes near to the point: judgment will be made of a man's state before God, according to his real thoughts of the law of God. Good men have always great and high thoughts of God's law, and they have low thoughts of themselves: "I esteem all thy precepts concerning every thing to be right, and I hate every false way," (Psalm 119:128). "The law is holy; the commandment is holy, just, and good: the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin, (Rom, 7:12, 14). But you will say, "Does not everybody think so of the law of God?" I answer, No. No natural man hath a good thought of the law of God. Every corrupt, unrenewed man hath one of these three thoughts concerning the law of God:--

1. The natural man thinks the law of God easy to be kept. It is a graceless proverb that some people have in their mouths sometimes, and it flows from the corruption of their hearts, "That it is an easier thing to please God than it is to please man." Indeed, if they would take God's way, it is an easy thing to get his favour; but, according to the sense that it is commonly spoken in, it is a wicked saying and flows from this wicked meaning, -- that the natural man thinks the law of God easy to be kept, and thereupon the Scribes and Pharisees (and so do all that seek righteousness by the law), they expound the law of God so largely that one would think any body might keep it. Therefore, when our Lord hath a mind to break down this fortress of self-righteousness, he explains the law of God in its true strictness. The Pharisees' doctrine was, that nobody broke the sixth commandment but he that murdered a man; that no man broke the seventh commandment, but he that committed adultery with his neighbour's wife; that nobody broke the ninth but he that fore-swore himself: and, indeed, if this had been all the interpretation of the law of God, that part of it that concerns our duty towards man had been no hard thing. Blessed be God, a great many good people, and bad people too, have not been guilty of these gross transgressions; but when the spiritual meaning of the law comes to be considered, who is innocent? "I had not known lust," saith the apostle, "unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet," (Rom. 7:7). "The commandment came to me in another sense, with that brightness that soon convinced me of sin." This is the first thought that people have of the law of God -- that it is easy to be kept.

2. When they are forced to retreat from this, and they find the law of God to be so strict a rule that it reaches to the word, and thoughts, and heart, to the least motion either from within or without, then they begin to hope that the threatening will not be fulfilled: if God gives so severe a law, that reaches to all, even to the least sins, then they hope God will not punish every sin with the curse of the law. The Lord, by Moses, warns the people of this, "And it come to pass, when he hears the words of this curse, that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my own heart, to add drunkenness to thirst," (Deut. 29:19). The secure man is very unwilling to take up the holiness and the strictness of the law of God as forbidding every sin; but he is far more unwilling to believe that God means

to execute the threatened vengeance for these sins. And what sorry pleas have they? "God is merciful." Aye, so he is, but not to them that despise his law. God is not merciful to any law-breaker; but God is merciful in providing a law-keeper to save us; but he hath no mercy for the law-breaker. If a man expects life by the law, he must die by it. "Aye, but Christ hath died for sinners;" and so he hath; but Christ was sent to fulfil the law, and not to take it away. Christ came not to make the law of God less strict in commanding than it was, nor less severe in threatening; but Christ came to take both upon his own back, and all that believe in him shall be saved from both. Christ took not away the law, but fulfilled it; and it is the reckoning of that fulfilling of the law by Christ to us, that is our salvation; and thus "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us." The righteousness of the law was fulfilled by Christ, and this is reckoned to a believer; and so the righteousness of the law of God is fulfilled in him; fulfilled by Christ, and so fulfilled in the believer in him.

But now suppose the light of the word drives a man from both these vain imaginations, and he sees the law to be so holy that no man can escape its threatenings; When the natural man is thus forced to retreat from these two, then,

3. He rises up in rebellion against the law, and blasphemes the law of God. Sirs, there are a great many poor creatures that complain grievously that many blasphemous thoughts follow them: I do believe that next unto the advantage that Satan may have over some bad-tempered minds, and ill-disposed bodies, I am apt to believe that the main root of all these blasphemies, is this point of doctrine that I am upon. When the poor creature was secure, he thought he could easily fulfil the law of God, or avoid the curse of it; but when he comes to see both these to be in vain, then, unless grace subdues the man's heart, it naturally rises in rebellion against the law of God. "Why did God give such a strict law, that nobody can keep, but every one must be destroyed by it?" These very thoughts arose in Paul's mind: "Was then that which was good made death to me? God forbid," (Rom. 7:13). The apostle Paul never knew himself to be a sinner till the law came; and the more close the law came, it slew him the more, and quickened sin in him more. Now, how can any one think well of that law that slays the sinner, and enlivens the sin? "God forbid," saith the apostle, "that I should say this was the end for which the law was made; but this was a blessed end in Christ's hand:" "By the commandment, sin appeared to be exceeding sinful," that Paul might see his exceeding need of a Saviour. And there are two things that raise these rebellious thoughts against the law of God.

1. When clear light about the law shines upon the man's conscience, then all the Babel-building of their own works are thrown unto the ground: their praying, reading, hearing, holiness, it is all thrown to the ground by the law of God;-- the law condemns them utterly in point of righteousness. The law indeed commands them in point of practice, and it commends them as things pleasing to God; but in point of righteousness before God, the law condemns them utterly; the only language of the law is this, "Do all, and live; fail in the least, and die:" -- and thus the man sees all his own righteousness is gone. And how unwilling are people to yield to this? What a great matter is it for a man to be able to do so? When a poor awakened sinner, that never knew the grace of God, or the righteousness of Christ, when he hath by the force of good education, or the power of the word, been brought under some conviction of sin and duty, he then sets about praying, and reading, and hearing, and reforming, and, it may be, hath been doing something at this for several years; but in the mean time was an utter stranger to Jesus Christ. Now what a great matter is it for a man to forego all this, as if it had no worth in it? But why should not a man be willing to part with it? "I count it all but dross and dung," saith the apostle, "that I may win Christ," (Phil. 3:8). This blasphemous frame is expressed in Ezek. 33:10, and it hath reference to the point that I am

upon: "Therefore, O thou Son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we live?" The meaning is this: "The Lord is here, by his severe prophet, plaguing us with reproofs from the word of God for our sins, and the execution of God's threatenings are upon us in his judgments; now if we be sinners, and God deals thus severely with us, what shall come on us?" Saith the Lord, (ver. 11), "There is a way of escape, 'Turn and live;' but have a care you do not trust to your own righteousness: for if you do, you are gone for good and all." Ver. 13, "When I say to the righteous, he shall surely live, if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed he shall die for it."

2. When the sinner once finds that he is forced to forego all that he hath got already, he then also sees that there are no hopes for the time to come; that he hath no hopes at all of a righteousness by the law; and this the poor sinner reckons like the putting him into hell: he is as sorry to part with the rotten props of his own righteousness, as if the taking it away was the casting him into hell; when it is the only way to save him from it. No man can be a believer on Jesus Christ, but he that despairs of righteousness by his own doings. This is the first thing I would have you examine yourselves about, What are your secret thoughts of the law of God? There is no righteousness can come by it; and that is the excellency of the law; it is none of the law's fault, but its glory, that no righteousness can come by it: it is a rule of righteousness, but it is no means to confer righteousness upon a sinner. The law can give eternal life to a sinless man; but it can give no life to a sinner: "If there had been a law that could have given life, verily," saith the apostle, "righteousness should have been by the law," (Gal. 3:21); righteousness should certainly have come that way.

2dly, Try what your thoughts are of the righteousness of Christ. By the righteousness of Christ, I do not mean his divine excellency, as he is the Son of God, equal with the Father; nor the excellency of the man Christ Jesus, on whom the Spirit was poured forth without measure: but I mean, that righteousness that this God-man wrought out for us, as our Redeemer, for our justification, by his life and death; this is called the righteousness of God, (Rom. 10:3). And every one may know his state towards God by his thoughts of this:-- every despiser of it is a stranger to God, and every spiritual admirer of it is a man acquainted with God.

1. The believer hath high and esteeming thoughts of it, as an only righteousness, and as a very glorious one. Let us compare a little what righteousness there is, has been, or can be. The first righteousness lasted but a little while; that of the first Adam and Eve; it may be, it was not a day old; however, it was a very short one. Now, there is no comparison between Christ's righteousness and this: it is true that this comes the nearest to it; and the apostle Paul takes notice of this parallel, (Rom. 5.) The first Adam stood in the place of all his posterity, and they all stood in him, and with him as long as he stood; and this was a pretty glorious obedience that the first man performed, and if he had continued in it the time of his trial, it was to have been reckoned for the benefit of all his posterity; but it was but the righteousness of a man; it was but the righteousness of a creature; it was a righteousness that would have continued happiness, but it could bring no happiness to them that had once lost it. If such a thing could have been imaginable, that the first Adam had stood, and one of his posterity had fallen, the first original righteousness would never have been able to have obtained pardon for that sinning offspring of Adam. But the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ is that which brings in a pardon, and a title to eternal life, to them that had forfeited all. There is another righteousness, a little one, hardly worth that name, that is performed by believers, in obedience to the holy law of God; but this comes no way near to it. If we may speak of the righteousness

of the law, that is in hell. There are some poor creatures that do not imagine what hell is; they think it is the place that in all God's creation may be best spared; but let me tell you, hell is as useful a place as any:-- it is there where the righteousness of the law is proclaimed; every lash that is there given by the justice of God to the damned, proclaims aloud the righteousness and the holiness of the law. But I hope none will make any comparison between that righteousness that the law squeezes from the damned by their punishment, and that righteousness that the law found in Christ when it bruised him for our iniquities. Every believer hath high thoughts of this righteousness of Christ.

2. And not only so, but every believer hath venturing thoughts on this righteousness of Christ: the man not only thinks highly of it, but he builds upon it, and betakes himself to it. The righteousness of Christ is like a curious ark or ship, whereby all that are embarked in it, shall be safely landed in heaven. Now it signifies nothing for a poor man to stand upon the shore, and to commend the ship, and say it is a splendid vessel; he must get into it; if ever he hath a mind to escape the destruction of the world, he must get into the ark, Christ.

The apostle hath an elegant similitude, "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark, to the saving of his house! by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," (Heb. 11:7). Pray observe, the state of Noah and every man's state by nature are alike. God tells Noah, "An hundred and twenty years hence I will drown this whole world; and not a man, nor beast, nor fowl of heaven shall escape."

Sirs, it is not so long, by one half almost, to that time when we shall all be in eternity! An hundred and twenty years was but a small time to them, who lived seven or eight hundred years. We are just in the same case: warning is given us by the course of nature, and by the word, that in a few years more we may be all turned out of this world; and our dying is of equal importance, as to our eternal state, with Christ's coming: what difference is there if thou shouldst die this week, or if Christ should come to judge the world this week?

Thy eternal state is equally concerned in both. Now, God tells Noah, "I have provided an ark for thee: I will drown the whole world; but I will provide an ark for thee." But after the man had builded it, he must get into it, or he could not be saved by it. Now, here comes in the tidings of the gospel; we are not bid to prepare an ark, but we are told that God hath already prepared an ark, his own Son, who was hewed and framed by the justice of God, that he might be made a fit lodging for poor sinners.

Now, the work of all them that would be saved, is to get into Jesus Christ, and to betake themselves to this righteousness, and when they have done so, to rest quietly there. But yet this righteousness of Christ, as much as it is, and should be, spoken of in the preaching of the word, yet multitudes of professors never once thought of it; they often think we must be holy, and that Turks understand as well as you; but pray, how do you think to come by your boldness? Without righteousness?

Never man shall be holy without the reckoning of Christ's righteousness to him; without which you can never partake of Christ's Spirit to sanctify you. This seeking, and studying, and framing a holiness, without employing Christ, doth these two things:-- it dishonours Christ utterly;-- and it renders holiness altogether impossible. It is utterly impossible there should be a spark of true holiness in that heart that is a stranger to faith in Christ Jesus. Morality and Pagan civility there may be; but true gospel holiness is a blessed consequence of faith in Jesus Christ.

3dly, Try your state by your thoughts of the grace of God; what your thoughts of God's holy law are, and what your thoughts of your own righteousness are:-- and then what your thoughts of the grace of God are. And wheresoever the grace of God is, there will be right thoughts of it framed in the heart; and they will be many, and serious, and very deep, and reverent; for the matter is very great. What greater thing can a man be exercised about than the grace of God towards great sinners? Oh, what a weighty subject is this for meditation! and this I dare say, that he that hath but few and small thoughts about the grace of God, never had one spoonful of the grace of God in himself: for all the grace that is in believers is but as a little drop from this great fountain; and wherever it is really communicated, the fountain from which it flows will be greatly admired. There are a few things concerning these thoughts that I would speak a little to.

1. See that your thoughts of the law, and of the grace of God, and of the righteousness of Christ, be such as are squared with the word of God:-- we must think of these things as God hath spoken of them in his word: and not frame thoughts to ourselves, from our own imagination. What saith the word of God concerning the law, and the righteousness of Christ, and the grace of God appearing therein?

2. Let your thoughts of these things be such as you have when you are nearest to God. Pray take heed to this: all that are Christians, understand a little of this, what it is to be nearer to God one time than another. If you are true Christians you will know what this means; if you are not, this direction belongs not to you. There are some times when believers are nearer to God than at other times; and always, when a man is nearest to God, his thoughts of the things of God are best:-- He would be a happy Christian that could always retain the same sentiments and sense of the things of God that he some times hath. When a person is near to God, and he hath lifted up upon him the light of his countenance; when the glory of God appears before the eyes of a man, what doth the man then think of the holy law of God, of the righteousness of Christ, and of the grace of God? Oh, there is nothing else that makes any considerable appearance in the eyes of a man at that time! I am very well persuaded that the most confident pleaders of the cause of self-righteousness, the men that plead most for being justified by the righteousness of the law, if God would but speak to them, and bring them near to himself, they would lay their hands upon their mouths and speak no more. "Behold I am vile," saith Job, "what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," (Job 40:4,5, and 42:5, 6). -- Labour I say to retain the same impressions of these great things of God that you had when you were nearest to God.

3. Labour to have such thoughts of the law of God, and the righteousness of Christ, and the grace of God, as you find exercised souls have. Labour to entertain the same thoughts of these things, as you find the generality of exercised souls have. What a learned scholar saith of these things, is not so much to the purpose; for they may mistake in many things: but what is the current, general sense of all them on whose consciences God ever wrought; in whose consciences there is any light. What is the general sense that they all have of these things? Labour for that. Was there ever any Christian under the hand of the Spirit of God, that had any difference in this point? Never one in this world: they all forsake the law, and despair of life by it: they all commend the righteousness of Christ, and betake themselves to it: they all admire the grace of God, and venture their all upon it. Whatsoever difference there may be about this or the other ordinance, or in other lesser things, yet as to those things, in which the very nature and heart of the new creature lies, there is no scruple at all about them.

4. Labour for such thoughts of these things as you know you must have, and will have when you come to die. Labour for such thoughts of the law of God, and of the righteousness of Christ, and of the grace of

God, as you will have when you come to die. Dying thoughts are commonly the truest. When a man is launching into eternity; when the man hath, as it were, put one foot off from the shore of time, and is leaving this world -- what a poor mean thing is this little cottage of self-righteousness? It is as nothing in the man's eyes; but that great palace of the righteousness of Christ, and the great tenor of free grace, in bestowing it on the unworthy -- what a glorious thing doth it appear to be? Dying people do not usually brag of their lives and their great attainments: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," saith dying Stephen, (Acts 7:59), "I am waiting for one good turn more from Christ. Now, I am dying, Lord, take my soul." "Although my house be not so with God," saith dying David, "yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire," (2 Sam. 23:5).

5. Labour to have such thoughts of these things as all men will have, both good and bad, both on the right hand and on the left hand of the Judge, at that great day. The world will once be all of a mind, that is questionless: in the main things all believers are of one mind now; and in the main things all unbelievers are in one mind; and unbelievers reckon Christ crucified weakness and foolishness; and all believers reckon him the wisdom and the power of God: but when the last day comes, they will be all of one mind exactly, both good and bad; they on the right hand, and they on the left hand too. If this question were to go round to all the miserable assembly at the Judge's left hand, What think you of the law of God? -- "Oh! it is a holy, powerful, dreadful law," would they say; "we lie under it for evermore, and feel the lashes of it." What think you of the righteousness of Christ? "It is a safe garment, happy they that are clothed with it; we have refused it, and therefore we are destroyed." The despised grace of God is there precious to them. We use to say, "Truth is the daughter of time:" if I may reflect upon the words, "Truth is the daughter of eternity;" and this day of eternity will bring forth truth to all men, as to these three points:-- The Holiness of the law of God -- The Virtue of the righteousness of Christ -- and, The Dominion of the grace of God. These are points that all the damned in hell, and all the glorified in heaven, will eternally have the same sentiments of; but with wonderful difference as to their share therein. The damned hear nothing but the curse of the law: but it is the happiness of the glorified in being delivered from it: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," (Rom. 5:21). The words just going before are, (ver. 20), "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." There are two great things that have filled this world:-- there were but two men in it that are worth talking of the first Adam and the second; and if you know these well, it is no great matter what you are ignorant of. The first Adam is the law; the second Adam is the gospel: to the former belongs hell, and to the latter heaven. Now, these two great men brought in two great things:-- the first man brought in that woful thing we call sin; and the second man brought in that brave thing we call grace: and both these are great principles. Sin reigns, and all that it reigns over it destroys; it reigns unto death: and grace reigns, and all it reigns over it saves; "Grace reigns unto eternal life, through righteousness, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

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