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## Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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### A Practical Exposition Upon The Fifty-Third Chapter Of Isaiah.

by Thomas Manton

#### THE FIFTH VERSE.

*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed.*

**T**HE prophet having in the former verse briefly touched upon the sufferings of Christ, and the cause of them, by way of confutation of the Jews, he now amplifieth the argument, and enlargeth himself by setting it out in other expressions. All words and all thoughts are little enough for so great a mystery. It should not be tedious, though a man do always dwell upon it. St Paul's *ekkrina* justifieth a minister, if he should preach no other thing to you: 1 Cor. 2:2, 'For I determined not to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.' Christ's sufferings are like the widow of Sarepta's cruse; though we spend much of the oil of it, it will not fail, it will afford more consolation still; and therefore it should not be grievous to you, if we hold your meditation to it. The prophet here, now he is fallen upon the subject, will not give it over. Though he had told you that surely he bore our sorrows and carried our griefs, yet he will not quit it so till he hath more fully expressed it to you, as he doth in the text: 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,' &c. You may here in this verse observe three things

1. The history of Christ's sufferings.
2. The cause of them.
3. The fruit and benefit of them. These three things are scattered in divers expressions throughout the verse.
  1. The history of Christ's sufferings, set out by *wounds*, *bruises*, *chastisements*, *stripes*; which expressions are multiplied to fasten the thought of it

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the more upon our minds. And the words do not only imply those wounds in Christ's body by the nails, the spear, the scourge, but the whole bitterness of his bloody death; and some of the expressions will bear it. 'He was wounded.' It is the manner of the scripture to use wounding for killing. 'He was bruised,' or broken, as it were crushed to pieces by the hand of God. 'The chastisement of our peace.' Chastisement, the word is applied to learning; and because lazy and slow learners must be whipped, it is applied to signify punishment. Some think the prophet alludeth to those that were whipped by the sentence of the law, and by way of punishment. And then 'stripes,' *mw'lwpi autou*, the word signifieth sometimes gore, blood, or scars. And I conceive these things are the rather mentioned, wounds, stripes, scars, because Christ after his resurrection, for a testimony of the reality of his sufferings, retained these wounds and scars. So much for the first thing, the history.

2. The cause of it: *for our transgressions, for our iniquities*. The first word noteth more properly the doing of evil, the latter swerving from good; sins of omission and commission: Christ suffered for them all: the least neglect of duty, and the least obliquity in duties needed Christ to satisfy for them. It was for our iniquities as well as our transgressions, our defections from the right way.

3. The fruits and benefits: they are two—peace and healing.

[1.] Peace: *the chastisement of our peace was upon him*. Some understand *by peace* whatsoever is good and precious; it being usual with the Hebrews to express it by the word peace. And because the Septuagint sometimes turn *shelomim*, the plural word for peace, into retributions, some read it thus, 'The chastisement of retributions was upon him;' that is, God payed him what should have been payed us, namely, punishment and wrath. But I conceive it noteth here that peace and reconciliation that is between God and a sinner. Christ was chastised to procure it for us. Sin made us odious, and enemies to God. Here is the first privilege: Christ bore the chastisement of our peace.

[2.] Healing. A strange paradox, you will think, that we should be healed by another's stripes; but so it is. The meaning is, by this our souls are cured from the wounds and infection of sin. From the wounds, Christ took them upon himself. From the infection, sin is wounded by it, as you will see hereafter.

I come to the points, which are three, according to the parts of the text.

1. That the Lord Jesus at his death endured many cruel and bitter sufferings.

2. That all these sufferings were undergone for our sins and transgressions.

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3. That by these sufferings Christ hath purchased for us peace and healing.

*Doct.* 1. That Jesus Christ at his death endured many cruel and bitter sufferings. The prophet sets them out here by *wounds, bruises, stripes*; which words, because they imply most of all his outward and bodily sufferings, and what he suffered from the cruelty and malice of man, I shall most of all touch upon these things, that they may be matter of meditation to you.

1. He was betrayed by his own disciple; that is sad. It was a double stab to Caesar's heart when Brutus was among the conspirators; the grief is the more by far. David, in the person of Christ, complaineth of it, Ps. 45:12,13, 'It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid my face from him. But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.'

2. Forsaken by the rest of the disciples: Mark 14:50, 'And they all forsook him and fled;' that is, all the disciples. And that is a misery, to be deprived of the solace of friends when we most want them. A friend is for adversity; that is the reason of our choice, that we may have some to stand by us in evil times. But all are gone.

3. He was an object of the common hatred. They do not only come out against him with swords and staves, the usual instruments of vulgar fury, but thirst after his blood, cry against him, 'His blood be upon us and on our children.' They would rather have Barabbas released than Christ.

4. Then he was haled to the judgment-seat, and there accused and sentenced contrary to all law, and their own conscience. When Pilate asked of them what evil they found in him, they could rejoin nothing but a tumultuous noise, 'Crucify him, crucify him;' that is all the reason they urge.

5. There are several expressions of contempt used to him, which are like vinegar to wounds, the very smart and quintessence of grief. They buffeted him, that is an ignominious expression of cruelty; buffeting being the punishment of slaves. Spitting, which was another token of contempt among the Jews: 'If her father had spit upon her, should she not be unclean seven days?' Numb. 12:14. Yea, Job reckoned it as a great aggravation of his sufferings: Job 30:10, 'They abhor me, they even dare to spit upon me.' And then they whipped and mocked him with a robe, a sceptre of reeds, and a crown of thorns. There can be no greater dishonour done to a man than to twit him with his dignity, to put the mock habiliments of majesty upon him. And then as to

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their several beatings and smitings, I cannot mention all. And at last they crucified him, a death designed for men accursed. Usually those that suffered that death were looked upon as accursed by God and men: Deut. 21:23, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.' It was the death of grievous malefactors, such as blasphemers and idolaters. Nay, he was hanged between two thieves, *in medio latronum, tanquam latronum maximus*; he was put in the midst, as if he was the greatest malefactor of the three. And when he was dead, he was wounded with a spear, John 19:34. An impotent, silly malice, to triumph over the dead! Thus I have given you a taste of what you may read more fully in the evangelists.

I come now to apply it.

*Use 1.* It serveth for consolation, for examples are apt to ease the soul. The great sting of misery is, that we think it strange, and such a thing as never happened: 'Is there any sorrow like my sorrow?' Lam. 1.12. We are all apt to say so. Why, here is a great example. Christ, that he might sanctify afflictions to us, endured them in his own person. Comfort is never so well taken as when we speak to the particular case. Why, here in Christ's instance there is comfort. Whatever the case and distress be, there is some use in the argument 1 Peter 2:21, 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.' There is a great deal of merit in Christ's sufferings. Example is not all, and yet example is much. God would suffer too, that he might provide against all the terrible troubles you can be cast upon. I shall instance a little in those things that cause the greatest storm and tumult in the heart.

1. In case thy greatest woe is brought about to thee by the men of thine own family and cherishing, remember Christ was so used, and so was St Paul. Among the other dangers that he reckoned up, he saith, 'In perils among false brethren.' And divers of the martyrs in church history have been betrayed into the hands of their enemies by their friends and allies. It is much, I confess, to meet with evil usage from whom we least looked for it. And yet you see this hath been the lot of Christ and the people of God before you.

2. Is the case so, that you are in misery and forsaken of friends? It is a very miserable case, that you find respect no longer than you are able to purchase it. Why, Christ was left by his own disciples; and it is the lot of many a faithful servant of God, and will be till you can weed self-love out of men's hearts. Usually they aim at their own good in dispensing of their respects; and when they cannot serve themselves of us, they will leave us: Prov. 14:20, 'The poor is hated by his neighbour, but the rich hath many friends.'

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3. Is it so that thou art an object of the common hatred, like Ishmael, thy hand against every man, and every man's hand against thine? Christ suffered it, and it is the lot of many a public-spirited servant of God. *Lapidibus nos invadit inimicum vulgus*, saith Tertullian. The common people are ready to brain us with stones wheresoever we go. Remember the Ephesian tumult, where the common people raged against Paul, so that he speaketh of them as if they had put off all humanity: 1 Cor. 15:32, 'If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me?' Hinting at that story in Acts 19: And it is the lot of many of God's people now to be cruelly handled by rude hands; and evil neighbours look upon the day of their brethren's adversity, and are as some of them that do it.

4. To be denied the benefit of law, the wall of our safety, the fence of our privileges and interests. The thing we suffer many times doth not grieve us so much as the injustice of it. Why, remember it was Christ's case; he was condemned, though none could fasten the least guilt upon him. So it is many a Christian's case to be denied all right and equity: Eccles. 5:8, 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of justice and judgment in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' The primitive martyrs were condemned before they were heard. Tertullian complaineth much that they would not hear the Christians plead for themselves. So it would make a man gnash his teeth for indignation to see what undue proceedings there were against the martyrs that were convened before the bishops here in England; the case was determined before heard. It was likewise so of late, agreeable to what Tertullian spake of the heathen.

5. Art thou handled with a great deal of contempt, as in all the instances of Christ's sufferings, buffeted with the back of the hand? So was Christ: Mat. 5:39, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.' A transverse blow, such as might light upon the right cheek, expresseth great contempt. Christ would have you bear it. Again, be it spitting upon us, any expression of contempt, this is that which the nature of man stormeth at; everyone counteth himself worthy of some respect. And yet Christ submitted to it. So Job, 'they even dare to spit upon me.' See how the prophet speaketh in the person of Christ, Isa. 50:6, 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Suppose thy case to be an opprobrious punishment. John Frith was put in the stocks, mocked, and made a laughing-stock, marked as a common vagrant. So was Christ, so was Samson, and so it was with Israel: Jer.

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48:27, 'For was not Israel a derision unto thee? Was he found among thieves? 'They did hoot at them, as boys do in the street after a thief when he is taken. Again, is there some upbraiding pageantry used in contempt of thee? Why, they gave Christ a reeden sceptre and a thorny crown. John Huss and Jerome of Prague had painted coats put upon them with devils round about them; and many poor souls have been served in that manner. I remember a story of a king of England in his distress, whom they would trim upon a hill with cold water. Ay but, saith he, Hot water will come, meaning his tears. Is thy case so, that thou art called to suffer a shameful death for Christ? Christ suffered the shamefulest death that can be for thee. Hanging is no dishonour to a Christian. It is not the death, but the cause that maketh it shameful. Ludovicus Marsaius thought himself honoured by his rope. *Cur non et mihi quoque torquem donas, et hujus ordinis equitem creas?* Give me a rope likewise, saith he, and make me a knight of this noble order. St Paul saith, 'With this chain,' holding it up by way of triumph. A man would have thought that it had been a golden chain that he spake of, since he honoured it so much, when, alas! it was iron. Christ hath taken away all shame of punishment. And then they gave Christ vinegar instead of drink. This has been the lot of many Christians upon the inquisition-rack. So to have your dying words misconstrued and misreported; there have not been wanting in all ages those that have turned the saints' *Eloi* into *Elias*. What reports have there been of Tremellius turning Jew, and of divers Protestants turning papists! So after death; for you may live in such calamitous times in which you may see a great deal of cruelty exercised, not only upon the bodies of the saints here, but even after death; so it was with Christ, and so with his people. They were not safe when they had taken sanctuary in the grave. So the papists did against the bones of Wickliffe, Bucer, and others. Nay, if it were possible, they would reach to the damnation of the soul. As the papists said of John Huss, *mandamus animam diabolo* (we deliver the spirit over to the devil). And then, as Christ was crucified in the midst of two thieves, so it may be your case to be numbered among transgressors, to be counted heretics, factious, schismatics; this is what the people of God hath suffered from the proud men of the world. Papists would make Protestantism a bundle of old errors, as Baily says in the Jesuit's Catechism. Thus the enemies, like the cruel watchmen, would fain take away the garment from the spouse, expose her to shame and contempt in the world. But remember, in all these cases Jesus Christ has gone before you.

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*Use 2.* Did Jesus endure such cruel and bitter sufferings? It informeth you how unlike Christ they are who live in away of pleasure and ease, as if the way to heaven were over a bed of roses. If Christ were a Man of Sorrows, certainly they are men of pleasures, such as mind nothing but present contentments and satisfactions. Thus I have given you the history of Christ's sufferings.

I now come to the cause. We must not only look upon the sufferings of Christ, but must look upon the cause of it: The point is:—

*Doct.* That Jesus Christ endured all these bitter sufferings at his death for our sins. Take a place or two of scripture to prove this Rom. 4:25, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.' You have need of places to confirm you when the most substantial truths are questioned. Delivered, that is delivered to death for our transgressions: 1 Cor. 15:3, 'For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.' This was the doctrine St Paul would preach among them, and the doctrine that contained the drift of the scriptures. He suffered for our sins, that he might become a sacrifice to appease God for us. That was it that all the world thirsted after, an expiation; and it is fully performed by Christ. God for a while trained up his people in sacrifices, that he might type out the Lamb of God that was to be slain for the satisfying of wronged justice. But I shall say no more to that here, but proceed to application.

*Use 1.* It confuteth divers errors and mistakes in doctrine, viz.:—

1. That evil blasphemy of the Socinians, that say that Christ only died by occasion of sin, not for sin. The scriptures speak plainly, and yet vain men list to blaspheme, that they may take away the merit of Christ's passion, and establish only his example. Christ did not only leave us an example, but satisfied for our sins. Adam left us more than an example of sin, and Christ left us more than an example of suffering.

2. The derogatory doctrine of the papists, who extend this full satisfaction of Christ to sins only committed before baptism; but as for mortal sins, and sins committed after baptism, they say we receive forgiveness only of the eternal, but not of the temporal punishment of them, which remaineth to be suffered by us to the satisfaction of divine justice. But when the scriptures speak so fully of all sins, transgressions, and iniquities satisfied for, why should men fancy a restraint? In human matters we account those things that are in our favour may be construed in



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the largest sense that they can bear with probability. Christians, stand for your liberty against those encroachments of Antichrist.

3. That fond dream of some that think Christ's sufferings were any way for himself. They urge for it Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his glory?' That proveth it an antecedent, not a cause or merit of glory. There is a difference between consequents and effects: Phil. 2:8,9, 'He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him:' *dio* signifieth *after which*. In Dan. 9:26, it is said, 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.' And so here, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.'

*Use 2.* Is exhortation to look upon the cause of Christ's sufferings. Mr Perkins well observeth it to be a superstitious looking upon Christ, when we reflect upon his passion without looking upon the cause. So to look upon him in a crucifix is superstition to the eye; and to look upon his sufferings as a dolorous and sad story, is superstition to the ear. Look, then, upon them as they refer to the cause, to wit, our sins. This is the consideration that maketh them profitable and useful to us. The cause yieldeth this profit.

1. Here is matter for our faith to work upon. Christ died for those things that trouble a gracious heart, viz., sins. One saith, Send drooping Christians to the 53d of Isaiah, send them to this place, 'He was wounded' for that for which your consciences were wounded. When the soul groaneth under the sad apprehensions of God's wrath and hell's horror, why here is thy comfort, 'He was wounded for our transgressions.' Pray as those for the distressed: Job 33:24, 'Deliver me from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.' O Lord, here I have found a ransom; show him Christ's wounds: O Lord, wilt not thou forgive in a servant what thou didst punish in a Son? What is there in sin that there is not in Christ's sufferings? Are they manifold? Tell God here are wounds, bruises, stripes, chastisements. Are they great? Here is infinite wrath suffered, divine justice fully satisfied. Art thou a base, vile, filthy person? Christ is a glorious and all-sufficient Saviour. Every way here is triumph for faith.

2. Here is an object for your love. It is a great testimony of the love of Christ, that he was wounded for our transgressions. *Viscera patent per vulnera*—*you* may see his bowels through his wounds. A strange kind of surgery! The whole body is sick, and the head wounded to cure it. We committed the sins, and Christ suffered the punishment due to them. Usually, we love them more that suffer for us, than those that otherwise do us good. Oh, work it upon your affections!

3. It giveth you help in your endeavours against sin.

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[1.] It is a help to humble us for sins past. There is a leanness in the soul many times, and we cannot make sin so odious and grievous to our souls as we would. Take in this circumstance; all Christ's sufferings and wounds were but the effects of our sins. This is a glass which will discover it to us, our knowledge is by the effects. The effects of sin were never so apparent and eminent as in Christ. Oh, look upon him whom you have pierced, and then mourn, Zech. 10:12.

[2.] To caution you against sins to come. Here is a double argument, from experience, and from love.

(1.) From experience. Sin is not so sweet as the sinner imagines. Christ suffered bitter things when he bore it in his body upon the tree. It lieth when it flattereth you with hopes of some contentment. Sin indeed smileth upon the soul at the first coming. Therefore Solomon saith, Prov. 23:31, 'Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright;' that is, upon the seeming pleasure of it. Oh, remember, it cost Christ dear; it is a flattering, deceiving thing.

(2.) From love. Oh, shall I wound Christ again? Shall I grieve God once more? We hate that which hath injured our friends. Shall I allow that in my bosom which Christ hates? Use yourselves to these meditations upon the least solicitations to drunkenness, adultery, and the like: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.' The apostle meaneth, we should arm ourselves with such contemplations as Christ's death affordeth us. He speaketh of it as a great remedy against temptations. By such thoughts the work of the Spirit is perfected. By drunkenness, thou givest him vinegar to drink; thy oppression is a wounding of his sides; wresting scripture is a turning of *Eloi* into *Elias*; scoffing at religion is spitting upon him; jeering of his ministers is like the soldiers jeering at him; professing him for fashion's sake, and hating him in your hearts, is a putting mock habiliments upon him; by abusing of his servants thou dost again buffet and beat him. Thus you may exemplify in every sin.

I am now to make entrance upon the last point—That by these sufferings, Christ hath purchased for us peace and healing.

I begin with the first of these benefits.

1. That Christ hath purchased peace for his people, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him.' Peace, among other expositions of the phrase, I take to be that reconciliation and amity that was wrought out between God and a sinner.

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Christ was chastised to procure it for us, and all other good things that follow upon it.

I shall prove it to you by scripture, that one of the great benefits that we enjoy by Christ's sufferings is peace, or the favour of God. Take a few scriptures: Rom. 5:1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' There is peace of conscience, and peace with God, which is nothing else but our atonement and reconciliation with him. Everyone that is justified hath not peace of conscience; but every one that is justified hath peace with God. There is a quarrel between God and the soul because of sin; your sins have separated between God and you. Sin maketh God not only an utter enemy, but a severe punisher. Now this strife and quarrel is taken up by Christ: through Jesus it is said we have peace. He maketh God our friend; so Col. 1:20, 'And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.' By the blood of his cross; that is, by the bloody cruel death he suffered upon the cross, he took away sin and wrath. The scriptures speak of what is most visible: so Eph. 2:14, 'He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.' He is our peace, the abstract for the concrete; such a speech as is usual in relation to the business of Christ's undertaking; even as he is wisdom to us, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so Zech. 9:10, 'He shall speak peace to the heathen;' so Isa. 9:8, Christ is called 'the Prince of peace.' Look, as we call men by the better title, as we say the king of England, not mentioning the lesser dominions, as Scotland, Wales, Ireland; and the king of France, not taking in the petty governments in our ordinary way of speaking; so Christ is set forth by the great privilege he hath purchased for mankind, which includes other things: Mic. 5:5, 'And this man shall be the peace.' This man shall be our peace, the Prince of peace. All these expressions imply, that as we are said to have it this way, so we can have it no other way.

I come to the reasons of the point.

1. Because Christ by his death hath slain all hatred. It is the apostle's phrase: Eph. 2:16, 'And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;' that is, took away the cause of hatred; and the cause being taken away, the effect ceaseth. Look, as when there is a whisperer that goeth between party and party, and sets them at odds and variance, we say we shall never be friends till such an one be removed out of the way; so it was between God and the soul, there is 'no hope of agreement till those that do the ill offices between God and us be removed. And therefore Christ himself would die rather than not slay our enemy. He hath slain hatred by taking away the cause of it, which was:—

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[1.] The just wrath of God. Now that was abolished by Christ; he conquered it by suffering it; insomuch that God saith, 'Fury is not in me,' Isa. 27:4. God's justice being satisfied in Christ, he doth not pursue revenge against his people. Is there any fury in God?

[2.] Sin in us, that was the cause of hatred. You may consider it both in its guilt and power, and both sit heavy upon the soul.

(1.) The guilt of it. There can be no peace as long as this lieth charged upon the soul. This works all that distance and hatred between us and God; and therefore guilt will cause horror: Job 13:26, 'Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me possess the iniquities of my youth;' that is, bitter enough to possess sins, to own the guilt of them. It was as great a threatening as Christ could use, when he told the Jews they should die in their sins, John 8:21-24. Oh, it is a miserable thing that death should seize upon us in our sins! What a perplexity is the soul then left to! Whither will it go when it dieth in its own guilt? Now this is taken away by Christ; and therefore it is so often said that we have remission of sins by his blood 1 John 1:7, 'And the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

(2.) The power of sin. This disturbeth and filleth the soul with the sense of God's wrath, and embittereth the soul against God. Through the strength of sin we hate God, because we cannot but look upon him as a punisher of it. Now Christ slayeth this hatred by sending his Spirit to kill our enmity, to heal our poisoned natures, and maketh us more willing and careful to please God. It is said, Titus 3:6, 'The Spirit of regeneration is shed on us abundantly (or richly), through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' He taketh away that rancorous disposition that is in the heart. This is the first reason: Christ taketh away hatred, and therefore purchaseth peace.

2. Because he hath taken away all show of hatred. The ceremonial law was an ordinance hinting out our guilt. Now Christ would take away whatever in show made against us, or was contrary to us: Col.2:14, 'He took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.' He would not leave any ground for doubt or suspicion; he hath provided against all our scruples: Christ would not leave the least line uncrossed, our own confessions do not make against us. As soon as you give in the bill, Christ teareth it; he hath nailed all in triumph to his cross. You can urge many things against yourselves; ay! but all these things are pardoned, and God hath nothing to show for the debt. St Paul says, 1 Tim. 1:13, 'I was a blasphemer and a persecutor;' a heavy bill, 'but I obtained mercy.' All this was taken out of the way. Christ hath not only paid the debt, but torn also the bonds. By his death on the cross he did as it were declare to the believer that

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God hath nothing to show against him. As there is not anger, so there should not be suspicion of anger. He hath taken up the controversy that was between God and the soul.

3. Christ hath procured us favour. Not only the matter that kindleth anger, and all show of it is taken away, but love is procured: the children of wrath are become the children of love: Mat. 3:17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' The eyes of God's holiness cannot but be offended with a filthy, polluted sinner, yet he is well-pleased with them in Christ, and so they are not only objects of his love but of his delight: Isa. 62:4, 'But thou shalt be called Hepbzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee; and in another place, 'He shall rejoice over them to do them good.' A man delighteth in things that are most suitable and agreeable to his nature. There cannot be a more pleasing work to God than to do his people good. It is said, Luke 15:5, of the lost sheep, that 'when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.' Before there could be no work more suitable to God's justice than to punish sinners; whereas now it is, as the prophet calleth it, 'his strange work,' Isa. 28:21, a thing that he would not be acquainted with towards his people. Whereas, to the wicked, still he laughs at their destruction, Prov. 1:26. Therefore, Christ hath purchased peace for us, because he hath not only taken away anger but procured favour. Among men, anger many times may be taken away, but they have not love. Rebels, after a pardon, live in a great deal of umbrage, and are under suspicion; the scars remain though the wound be cured: as Absalom, when pardoned, did not see the king's face. Artificial cracks will be seen though soldered; but it is not so here, for we are reinstated in God's love and affections. Christ hath satisfied wrath and merited favour; so that the soul can look upon

God with a great deal of comfort and joy.

*Use 1.* This serveth to reprove those—

1. That fetch their peace anywhere else. No comfort is lasting but what floweth from the blood of Christ; that only is the true peace that he hath merited.

2. Those that are against peace, or the settling of the heart in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. I begin with these first, and they are of two sorts:—

[1.] Such as are grossly ignorant of Christian privileges, and think it a duty to doubt, and a matter of merit to keep themselves upon terms of perplexity. A popish spirit haunts many; they think assurance a dry doctrine, and therefore do not strive to settle their hearts; as if there could be no duty where there is no fear. Hereby they plainly discover out of what principles they act for God,—to

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wit, out of a servile spirit; and therefore they cannot be kept right any longer than they fear wrath. O brethren! turn these evil thoughts out of your hearts. True peace is a great benefit that Christ hath purchased for us.

[2] Such as would fain apply themselves to Christ, but are loth to busy themselves with what should make for the settling of their hearts and establishing their spirits; as if it were more pleasing to God to keep the conscience, raw with sins, than to heal it with Christ's righteousness. A man should labour after peace with God, and peace of conscience too. It is a natural superstitious thought to think God is pleased with the mere sorrow of a creature; and, therefore, false worshippers have wounded themselves, that they might make some dolorous impressions upon his mind. Christ suffered the sorrows that you might have the peace; the chastisement of your peace was upon him. Why should you stand out against comfort, if there were not some secret thought of satisfying by your sorrow? Now you are not to satisfy, but Christ. It is good to reflect upon wrath, to drive us to mercy; but it is not good to dwell always in the preparations, for that is to forget our errand, and to stay in the porch when we should enter into the temple. Labour to get an interest in him in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

3. It reproveth such as would have peace, but not this way, but upon wrong grounds. Now that is an evil peace that cometh any other way. Look to the grounds of your peace. How came you to such a peaceable frame of heart? The false grounds are:—

[1.] Ignorance of our condition. A man doth not fear danger till he be sensible of it. Now many do not know that God and they are at such terms of distance and anger. Little doth a man trouble himself when he doth not know what evil is determined against him: Rom. 3:11, 'There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, they have no understanding.' And it is easy to go hoodwinked to hell. Blinded sinners go merrily to the pit of destruction, never dreaming that danger was so near hand. Poor souls that do not know the worst by themselves! This is the greatest judgment that can befall them.

[2] Carelessness in others. When men cannot put off sorrow, they put it by, and will not so much as reflect upon themselves. You may know it is bad with men when they cannot endure to look inward. Things that are evil cannot brook a trial; men will put all care out of their hearts as to their eternal concerns.

[3] When men avoid whatever may put them in mind of their misery. There are two things that humble men, doing of duty and striving against sin.

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(1.) Doing of duty seriously, that will make men see what profane, unsavoury, and senseless spirits they have. A man that lieth abed doth not feel his lame leg, but when he goeth to walk upon it he does. Exercise the soul in inward duties, and you will see it diseased. We know things when we come to make trial of them: therefore, wicked men will not meddle in inward and hearty duties, lest thereby they should discover the soul to itself. Formal duties make men the more secure: they are thereby apt to think better of themselves than they ought. The pharisee thought himself in a good case, because of his vain fasting, giving alms, and paying tithes. So formal duties are a vain refuge. But now duties wholly spiritual, and spiritually performed, make men see the weakness and wickedness of their spirits; but they are looked upon as such a disturbance to wicked men that they cannot endure to hear of them.

(2.) Resisting of sin. Tumult is caused by opposition. When a man tamely yieldeth to Satan, no wonder if he be let alone. The devil rageth most when we set against him: Rev. 12:12, 'For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' Dying beasts bite shrewdly. Oh, how is the poor soul tortured with sin, when it is about to quit it! The sea doth not rage so much when the wind and the tide go together. Please the worst natures and they will not disturb you. This is a peace that will end in trouble: there will be a quarrelling between affections and convictions when a sinner cometh to be serious and thoughtful.

[4] When men do what they can to divert all care and minding of their condition: this is like a few stolen waters, when they can get conscience asleep. As it is said, Prov. 9:17, 'Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.' They lull the soul asleep by pleasures, or distract it by business. They never keep the heart empty that they may enter into themselves. As Cain built cities, so carnal men drown themselves in business or pleasures.

*Use 2.* Is direction, to teach us what to do if we would have peace when our consciences are enraged. Go to Christ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him. Get an interest in Christ, and you have an interest in God. God is not to be had as a friend without Christ. Get him and you are presently interested in God's favour. For 'he that has the Son hath the Father also.'

But, you will say, how shall I get an interest in Christ? I answer in one word—By faith; that is the *way* to get Christ to you with all his benefits; and, therefore, faith is expressed by receiving Christ John 1:12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;' and Eph. 3:17, Christ is said to 'dwell in our hearts by faith.' You must say, in the language of faith here, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him.' Those that

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offered a peace-offering were to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice, which implieth a kind of joining. So Christ is the peace-offering, and you must lay your hands upon his head. When Thomas believed, he cried, 'My Lord and my God.' That gives your souls the possession of Christ; and if of Christ, of God. But briefly I might from this speak to two sorts of persons:—

1. To secure sinners.

2. To poor broken-hearted sinners that labour under the sense of wrath. But having spoken from several passages of Christ's sufferings for them, and more remaining to be insisted on from other verses, I shall now only speak a little to secure sinners. I shall press them to two things:—

[1.] To consider their condition; and,

[2.] The danger of their condition.

[1.] Consider your condition. You are in a state of enmity with God; God is at war with you. That this may appear to you, weigh these things following:—

(1.) That your condition is not to be measured by your present feeling and apprehension. A man may be in danger, though he be not sensible of it: Isa. 57:21, 'There is no peace, saith my God; to the wicked: they are like a troubled sea when it cannot rest.' The wicked do not think so, but my God saith so. It is what God speaketh to you, not what you think of yourselves. Wicked men's lives slide away in pastimes, and pomp, and pleasure; but still they are under continual danger, though they mind it not. Mark that expression; 2 Peter 2:3, it is said, 'Their damnation slumbereth not.' Though they slumber, their damnation, doth not slumber. 'If men could make their condemnation sleep as well as themselves, it were well. Do not measure your estate by your own thoughts, but by God's heart towards you, how he looketh upon you in Christ. God may be angry with you and you not know it.

(2.) Remember that God is angry with every man in his natural condition. Till you get an interest in Christ, you have not God for a Father. There is a war between God and every natural man. Those that think themselves at peace with God from their cradles upwards, never were at peace with him. You are at peace with God, you say, when you are at war with him. The scripture speaks otherwise of you: Eph. 2:2, You are 'children of wrath, even as others.' And, John 3:36, 'The wrath of God abideth on them.' This you must take for granted. There was a time when you were fallen out with God and God with you, even as well as others—those that embraced the Christian profession, as well as Turks and pagans. We are indeed estranged from the womb, but we are not reconciled from



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the womb, Ps. 58:3; therefore, whatever you think, you must conclude that God is angry till you can get him pacified in Christ.

(3.) There are expressions of this anger and enmity that pass between God and the soul, though we do not take notice of it.

(1st.) On our part there are a great many expressions of our enmity to God; as hatred of his being, wishing he were not, slighting of his ordinances, rebellion against his laws, a rising of heart against his servants; a rancorous tumult, and rebellious storming in our affections against his providence; a vexing that he doth so thwart us in our ways and courses. This is our war. Then vexing and grieving his blessed Spirit. God hath told us what will grieve him, and yet, contrary to all the motions of his blessed Spirit, and the checks of our own consciences, we will go on our own way. As Esau took a wife from the daughters of Heth, which was a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah, Gen. 26:35.

(2dly.) From God to us. There are some flashes of wrath, and opening of our consciences, fears of hell, horrors, Hosea 2:6. Hedging up our ways with thorns, and making a wall that we should not find our paths, which maketh us to vex and storm when we cannot have as much as we desire. So likewise by turning all providences into a snare, cursing all ordinances to us. Now and then, I say, God discovereth much wrath to the soul, that it cannot but see it. Oh, then, labour to be sensible of your condition. You think to rub it out well enough, and yet you see there are many expressions of war between God and you.

[2.] Consider the danger of your condition. Oh, it is a sad thing to be at war with God. If a man were at war with one with whom he were able to make his party good, it were no such matter; but this you can never do with God. Foolish man thinketh so, and therefore the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10:22, 'Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?' Will ye act so flatly against his commandments, as if you thought you should be able to bear out yourselves in the transgression? That you may not think so, consider:(1) He it is that upholdeth you in your beings, and he can resolve you into nothing, as easily as he could create you out of nothing. Solomon saith, Prov. 16:14, that 'the wrath of a king is as the messenger of death;' that is, you had as good have one to come and tell you that you shall die, as to come and tell you that a king is angry with you. A wrinkle in the brow of majesty is as a grave to you. If men were sensible, it is much more true of the wrath of God; he can speak you out of your beings in an instant. It is said, Heb. 1:2, 'He upholdeth all things by the word of his power.' And would a man be angry with him that is able to speak him into nothing? Now thus it is with God.

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(2.) Besides his power, consider the whole creation taketh part with God; and when he pleaseth he is able to arm the meanest creatures against you. As he said that would not dispute with a king, 'I have learned not to contend with him that is able to command legions;' so should we say, that we will not contend with God, that is able to command the creatures. The meanest worn, is able to revenge God's quarrel against you. Sometimes God declareth his power against his enemies by frogs, flies, mean contemptible things, as we read concerning the plagues of Egypt. So Herod was eaten up of worms, Acts 12:23; and Pope Adrian was choked with a gnat. I would not willingly expatiate on these things, to offer only matter to your fancies, but beseech you to weigh it in your thoughts. God might kill you with the least fly that hummeth about you, and you have deserved it. It is not only the more dangerous things that can do man hurt, but all things. Consider this, I pray you; God doth more eminently discover it to you, that you may consider it.

(3.) If nobody else, yet God can make use of your own selves against yourselves. He need plague a man no worse than to open his own conscience against him. As Luther said, for a man to see but his own sins, is as great a hell as can be imagined. This hath made saints to roar, Ps. 32:3. This dried up David's moisture, ver. 4. Spira would give all the world for one motion of the Spirit to make him believe what was proposed to him concerning Christ. See that expression, Job 6:4, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.' Just as a man runneth up and down in distraction that hath a poisoned arrow shot into his bowels. In the whole circuit of nature you cannot find one medicine that will heal this grief. All friends, comforts, and relations, are nothing, and all other troubles are but sport and recreation to these. Spiritual good and evil, both are not known till felt. Oh, consider how it will be with you when God shall bring out all those unclean thoughts, horrid oaths, lies, deceits that you have been guilty of. All shall be set on upon the heart, and you become a terror to yourselves.

(4.) He is able to ruin you, body and soul, eternally; and so he will deal with all his enemies: Mat. 21:41, 'He will miserably destroy those wicked men.' Not only destroy, but miserably destroy. Many are encouraged in their attempts, that if they be ruined, it is but their fortune, there is the worst of it. Now he is able to destroy you so as you shall not know the worst of it; he is able to sink you below all happiness of being or subsistence. Oh, consider the end of those whose peace is not made with God! Judgments without measure, most extreme and exquisite sufferings without mitigation, not a drop of cold water to cool the tongue; judgment without mercy.

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*By his stripes we are healed.*

*Doct.* That the healing of our natures, as well as peace and reconciliation with God, is the fruit of Christ's sufferings. Three things are here to be taken notice of:—

1. Healing puts us in mind of a disease incurable by human art, or any remedies that are in our power.
2. Health implieth our recovery out of this disease, or our salvation by Christ.
3. The means of this recovery is by Christ's stripes.

*First,* For the disease.

1. The soul hath its diseases as well as the body, and may be in a good or ill plight, as well as the body. It is in a good plight when it is fit to serve 'God or enjoy him. It is in an ill plight, or diseased, when it is disabled for these ends. The diseases therefore of the soul are those inordinate dispositions by which it is hindered from bringing forth actions agreeable or belonging to the spiritual life. This came to pass by Adam's sin, which, according to the tenor of the first covenant, is imputed to all those who were naturally propagated from him, they being thereupon deprived of original righteousness; whereby we became blind in our minds, perverse in our hearts, and so sold under sin; and till we be freed by the grace of God, we cannot but act sinfully, and daily contract and strengthen evil habits and inclinations. Therefore the work of conversion is expressed by healing: Isa. 6:10, 'And convert and be healed.' When these distempers and perverse inclinations of the soul are done away, we are healed, otherwise we lie under the power of a blind mind, and a hard heart, a guilty conscience and carnal affections, which are as so many deadly wounds and diseases of the soul.

2. The diseases of the soul are greater than those of the body, as being seated in the nobler part, and so the wound is the more grievous. As a cut in the body is worse than a rent in the clothes, so is a wound in the soul more grievous than a cut in the body. The diseases of the body tend only to the death of the body, which of itself must necessarily die: Eccles. 12:7, 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was;' and then by the power of God shall certainly rise again. But the diseases of the soul, as they make its unuseful to God for the present, so

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they tend to eternal destruction and death both of body and soul for ever: Mat. 10:28, 'But rather fear him that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.'

3. I assert that sin is the great sickness of the soul. There are two sorts of diseases in the soul:—

[1.] Terrors, or spiritual bondage, by which the soul is driven from God, and cannot think of him, or seek after him, with any comfort or peace. And this is a sore and evil disease indeed, for the curing of which Christ also came; for it is said, Ps. 147:3, 'He hath healed the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds;' Luke 4:18, 'He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted.' Which he doth by pardon or peace, the former benefit mentioned in this verse.

[2.] Sins, or evil habits and inclinations, which disable us from pleasing of God. These are the worst sort of diseases, as being the cause of the other; for terrors entered into the world with sin. When Adam had sinned against God he was afraid of him, and ran to the bushes, Gen. 3:8 10. And when sin is taken away, the others cease. Now that sin is the great sickness and wound of the soul, I shall prove by these considerations:—

First, It is a wasting disease; it bringeth the soul into a languishing condition, and wasteth the strength of it. Therefore our natural estate is described to be an estate without strength: Rom. 5:6, 'When we were yet without strength, Christ died for us;' that is, without strength to help ourselves out of that misery into which sin had plunged us. Sin hath weakened the soul in all the faculties of it, which all may discern and observe in themselves. The mind is weakened; for how acute and discerning soever it be in earthly things, it is stupid and dull in things spiritual and heavenly. We see little of the danger of eternal damnation, or the worth of eternal salvation, or the need of Christ, or the serious preparation for the world to come: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.' These things, that is, faith and other graces of the Spirit. And then the memory is weakened; it is true and faithful in retaining what is evil, but slippery and treacherous in what is good. These things we easily let slip, as leaky vessels do the liquor contained in them Heb. 2:1, 'Therefore we ought to give the more diligent heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.' Our will is fixedly inclined to evil, and averse to good: 'Their heart is fully set in them to do evil,' Eccles. 8:11. The affections are like tinder, apt to catch fire at the spark of every temptation: Prov. 7:22, 'He goeth after her straightway.' But they are like wet wood as to the entertainment of any heavenly motion: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Therefore sin hath made fearful havoc in

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the soul, and destroyed the strength and right constitution of it. The strength of man lieth not in the robust, healthy temper of his body; that is a brutish strength, and a bull or an ox exceedeth us in that; nor merely in the strength of natural parts, for therein many pagans excel many Christians.: but it lies in the strength of grace, strength to overcome temptations to sin, to govern our passions and affections, to do the things which God commandeth, that is strength indeed, the strength of the inward man. See, on the other side, man's proper strength described, Prov. 16:32, 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.' On the other side see weakness described, Ezek. 16:30, 'How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman!' That is a weak heart that lieth open to every temptation; that is at the beck of every foolish and hurtful lust, as pride, sensuality, worldliness, carnal fear and sorrow. An imperious heart is a weak heart, and this weakness sin hath brought upon us.

Secondly, It is a painful disease, it woundeth the spirit; and a wounded spirit who can bear? Prov. 18:14. Greatness of mind may support us under a wounded body, but when there is a breach made upon the conscience, what can relieve us then? Take either a tender conscience, or a raging, stormy conscience, for an instance to show what sin is. Ask of Cain and Judas, and they will tell you what horror and anguish it breedeth in the soul, what storms and tempests it raiseth in the mind: Gen. 4:13, 'My iniquity is greater than I can bear.' Their lives, yea, all their comforts, are a burden to them. Nay, ask any man whose heart is well awaked, and he will tell you, that the sense of the guilt of sin is bitterer to the soul than the gall of asps, and that no tortures are comparable to the piercing stings of an accusing conscience. Even holy David could say, Ps. 38:1-3, 'Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thine hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.' If this holy man, whose heart was upright with God, did thus complain, what should they do who are nothing else but wounds and putrified sores from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot? We think a man in a fever is in a miserable condition, who hath little rest day or night: but alas! feverish flames are nothing to the scorplings of conscience, and the fearful apprehensions of divine wrath: they that are under these are miserable indeed, because the pains of hell do compass them round about, and wherever they go, they carry their own hell along with them.

*Object.* But you will say, They that are most infected with sin feel little of this; how is it then so painful a disease?

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*Ans.* 1. If they feel it not, the greater is their danger; for stupid diseases are the worst, and usually most mortal. It is an ill crisis and state of soul when men are past feeling: Eph. 4:19, 'Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness.' These have outgrown their consciences. There is hope of sensible sinners; their anguish may drive them to the physician, and make them inquisitive after a remedy: Acts 2:37, 'When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' But it is more dangerous when sins do not terrify but stupefy. A spiritual lethargy is the common disease that ruineth the far greatest part of the world.

2. The soul of a sinner never sits so easy but that he has his qualms and pangs of conscience, and that sometimes in the midst of jollity; as was the case of Belshazzar, while carousing in the cups of the temple. Certainly they feel enough to show that if they were cured of this disease, it would be a great comfort and felicity to them; their best pleasures are but stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret, poor sneaking delights, when they can get conscience asleep.

3. Though they feel not their diseases now, they shall hereafter. Oh, what a pain will sin be to them when God awakeneth them, either in this life, by letting a spark of his wrath fall into the conscience, and then they become a terror to themselves; or, if not here, yet in hell hereafter, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth!

Thirdly, It is a loathsome disease. The pain of sin, which worketh upon our fear, is first and soonest felt: but the loathsomeness of sin, which worketh on our shame, requireth a quicker and more tender sense. As a man overgrown with noisome boils and sores, is first affected with the pain caused by them, and then with the sight and smell of them; so it is with soul-distempers: Ps. 38:5, 'My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness;' and ver. 7, 'My loins are filled with a loathsome disease.' The soul abhors, and is ashamed of itself, when it hath anything of tenderness, or lively sense of the purity of God. Solomon telleth us that 'a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame,' Prov. 13:5. How loathsome? He is loathsome to God, who is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,' Hab. 1:13. Loathsome to good men, who can no more delight in him than a sound man can in the conversation of a leper: Prov. 29:27, "An unjust man is an abomination to the just." Loathsome to indifferent men, for those that can allow sin in themselves dislike it in others: Titus 3:3, 'Hateful and hating one another.' Another's pride, sensuality, and worldliness, is offensive to us. Though we be proud, sensual, and worldly ourselves, yet it is an offence to ourselves; therefore a sinner dareth not converse with his own heart, but doth what he can *to fly* from himself, to divert his thoughts from the sight of his own natural face in

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the glass of the word, as being ashamed of himself and his own ways: Rom. 6:21, 'What fruit had ye then of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' However it is enough for our purpose, if loathsome to God: Ps. 14:2,3, the psalmist telleth us, 'The Lord looked down from heaven.' And what did he see here below? 'They are altogether become filthy and abominable.' All their persons, all their actions flowing forth from their corrupt hearts, are vile and loathsome in God's sight. When God looked upon his creatures just as they passed his hand, all was very good, Gen. 1:31. But when once they were infected with sin, the case is altered, they are all become filthy and abominable; some more, some less gross, as to the outbreking of sin; but they are all odious to God, and we are sensible of it, as appeareth by our shyness of God, and backwardness to look him in the face.

Fourthly, It is an infectious and catching disease. Sin cometh into the world by propagation rather than imitation: yet imitation and example hath a great force upon the soul: Eph. 2:3, *kata ton aiwna*, Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others;' Isa. 6:5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips.' Living among such, he had contracted some contagion and taint. It is hard to converse with wicked ones and not to be defiled: Micah 1:9, 'Her wound is incurable, for it is come into Judah.' Samaria was desperately sick of provocations, and the taint reached to Judah also.

Fifthly, It is a mortal disease if we continue in it without repentance, for 'by sin came death' into the world, Rom. 5:12; and 'the wages of sin is death,' Rom. 6:23. Not only death temporal, which consists in the separation of the soul from the body, but death spiritual, which consists in an estrangement from God, as the author of the life of grace; yea, death eternal, which consists in a separation both of body and soul from the presence of God for ever, and is a perpetual living in deadly pain and torment. The second death is set forth by two notions—'the worm that never dieth,' and 'the fire that shall never be quenched,' Mark 9:44; by which is meant the sting of conscience and the wrath of God. Conscience worketh on what is past, present, and to come. There is a vexing remembrance of what is past, your past folly and evil choice, past neglects of grace, past misspense of time, past abuse of mercies, past despising of the offered salvation. Oh, what cutting thoughts will these be to the damned to all eternity! There is a sense of what is present; they have nothing to divert their thoughts from their misery, no company nor sensual comforts, but are left to the bitter apprehension of their sad estate. There is also a fear of what is to come, or a fearful looking for of more wrath from God. The fire is the wrath of God, which

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inflicts pains upon the damned both in body and soul. There is no member or faculty free, but feeleth the misery of the second death. The agonies of the first death are soon over, but those of the second endure for ever. The first death is the more terrible because of this death which is to succeed it. In the first death our struggling is for life, we would not die; but here, for death and destruction, we would not live. This is the fruit of sin.

*Secondly*, Our recovery out of sin, and all the effects of it, which is our health. Before the application of the blood of Christ, every man in his natural estate is in no less dangerous a condition than a man that is wounded and bleeding to death: Luke 10:30, ‘A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.’ Not as if he had any spiritual life at all, but it is spoken in respect to his natural life. So before Christ’s blood is applied, every man is dead spiritually, and is posting towards eternal death; but when he is regenerated and converted to God, then he is translated from death to life. Therefore this healing must be considered—

1. As to its nature.

2. With respect to the several periods of this benefit, as to its beginning, progress, and final consummation.

1. The nature of this cure, or health bestowed upon us, will be best understood by considering what is in sin. There are in sin four *things*—*culpa*, *macula*, *reatus*, *poena*.

[1] *Culpa*. The fault is the criminal action, which is the foundation of our guilt. Now this properly is not healed, but passed by, or not brought into judgment against us, for as it is an action it cannot be reversed. *Factum infectum fieri nequit* (That which is done cannot be undone.) As it is a criminal action against the law of God, it cannot lose its nature, for Christ came not to make a fault to be no fault. This properly is not healed. Indeed some phrases express pardon but by a passing by: Micah 7:18, ‘That pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage.’ The Lord passeth over the fault, or quits the plea towards them that own their faults, The Lord seeth them, and not seeth them; that is, will not lay them to their charge: Isa. 57:18, ‘I have seen his ways, and will heal him;’ that is, not enter into judgment with him. In short, the fault is not disannulled, but passed over, and cast behind God’s back. The offender is not made innocent, but pardonable on certain terms. We must remember the fault, but God forgets it.

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[2] Here is *macula*, which is the blot or inclination to sin again. So he healeth us by sanctification, renewing and cleansing us by the Spirit, which is the work of God: Exod. 15:26, 'I am the Lord that healeth thee.' This is most properly his healing grace. So God reneweth and healeth our natures: Ps. 103:3, 'Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.'

[3.] There is *reatus*, the guilt or obligation to punishment. God dissolveth this by his sovereign authority, according to his new covenant: 2 Chron. 30:20, 'The Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.' There was no actual stroke or judgment upon them, but healing—there is dissolving the guilt. He forgave their sin, or remitted the penalty which they had incurred by eating the passover otherwise than it was written.

[4.] There is *poena*, the punishment, which is external, internal, or eternal. The external punishment is *affliction*. This is the wound that sin maketh in us. This wound God healeth by restoring prosperity: Hosea 6:1, 'Come, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up;' 2 Chron. 7:14, 'I will forgive their sin, and heal their land.' The internal punishment consists in trouble of conscience, or the anguish and pain occasioned by the fear of God's wrath, which he healeth: Ps. 6:2, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed;' Ps. 12:4, 'Lord, be merciful unto me, and heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.' As to eternal, or the mortal wound of sin, he healeth that by reversing the sentence of eternal death, and bestowing upon us eternal life, that from children of wrath we may be made heirs of glory. This grant is the true balsam for a wounded soul, when it is not only freed from the fears of the flames of hell and the sting of death, but made heir according to the hope of eternal life. If God and heaven be not matter of comfort, I know not what is. This is the portion of one that believeth in Christ.

## 2. The several periods of this benefit.

[1.] The cure is begun when we repent and believe, and so are renewed and reconciled to God; then the danger of death is over: John 5:24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.' The disease will not prove mortal.

[2] It is carried on by degrees, as he doth sanctify us more and more by his Spirit, and settles us in the peace of the gospel. Christ is still in hand with the cure: Mal. 4:2, 'The Sun of righteousness shall arise upon you with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up like calves in the stall.' Increase of grace and joy in the Holy Ghost is our continued healing. Dangerous

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sores and deadly wounds are not so soon cured. We have defects and distempers which disable us for duty, but the healing virtue prevaieth more and more. The wicked grow more and more diseased, and in the godly there are some ups and downs; but the Lord promiseth to heal our backslidings: Hosea 14:4, 'I will heal your back-sliding, and I will love you freely; for mine anger is turned away from you.' He will take away more and more the guilt, pollution, and other effects of sin.

[3.] Our state of perfect health is in heaven; there is our complete and eternal welfare, when sin and misery shall be no more. Therefore heaven is set forth by the tree of life which groweth in the midst of paradise, and 'beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations,' Rev. 22:2; and ver. 14, it is said, 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to eat of the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city;' that is into the happiness of the saints in glory. These enter into the New Jerusalem, and are there fully healed.

*Thirdly,* The means of our recovery is by Christ's stripes.

1. None but Christ can cure us, for he is the physician of souls —all else are physicians of no value. Sin is the disease, the Redeemer's grace the medicine, and salvation is our health; and then it is perfect when we are fully saved from sin, and all the consequents of it. Now this is above the sinner's cure, till God himself takes us in hand. Christ is the Sun of righteousness, who hath healing in his wings, and hath set forth himself under the notion of a physician Mat. 9:12, 'The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.' This sore sickness can be cured by no other hand. And the proper nature of his grace is to be medicinal, that is, a healing dispensation.

2. Christ cureth us not by doctrine and example only, but by merit and suffering; for it is said in the text, We are healed by his stripes. I confess the doctrine of Christ hath a great tendency this way; for it is said, Prov. 4:22, 'My word is life to them that find it, and health to their flesh.' There is the medicine for sick souls; there are our cordials and encouragements to prevent sinkings and despondences of spirit; there are potent arguments against distrustful cares and fears, excellent remedies against covetousness, sensuality, and pride; forcible dissuasions from unkind and unholy walking. In short, it is the common shop and storehouse against any distemper incident to the soul. The words of the Lord Jesus are wholesome words, but yet the virtue of the word mainly results from his merit and satisfaction: John 17:19, 'And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth;' and Eph. 5:25,26, 'Christ

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loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' So his example hath a great force, seeing how prone the nature of man is to imitate. And this example is so much commended to us by his kindness and condescension in coming down to be subject to the same laws we live by, by the exactness of it, and the issue and consequent—life and immortality—into which he entered to give us a visible demonstration of the success of our obedience. But an example would nothing at all have profited those that are dead in sin and hated of God, if some other means had not been used. Compare 1 Peter 2:21 with 24; 'For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps;' then ver. 24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed.' There needed grace to make example effectual: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

3. Christ's merit and sufferings do effect our cure, as they purchased the Spirit for us, who reneweth and healeth our sick souls: Titus 3:5,6, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' We have it by virtue of Christ's sufferings: Gal. 3:13,14, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' So in many other places. He is powerful to change our hearts, and to take away sin. Our wound is not incurable. The Spirit of God can and will heal the diseased soul. God's justice being satisfied in Christ, he is at more liberty now to dispense his grace.

*Use* 1. Is for reproof, and that to divers sorts; as—

1. Those that are not sensible of their deadly wounds and the diseases of their souls. There is a carelessness and insensibility in most of soul diseases. If the body be but ill at ease, they complain presently, and seek help for their bodies, but never think of the languishing condition of their souls, and how lamentably distempered they are. They are hard by death's door, on the brink of destruction, yet are merry and laugh, lay not their condition to heart; nay, think it an injury done them, if you mind them of their cure. Though they are spiritually sick, yet they will not know nor acknowledge it, but, like persons of a distempered brain, who take the physician for an enemy, they murmur at and resist

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all Christ's healing methods, as if their duty were their torment, and not their disease. These are in love with their diseases: John 3:19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.'

2. Some would have peace and comfort by Christ, but neglect healing; whereas both were purchased by him, and both must be regarded by us. We should aim at a sound cure, not to have the grief assuaged only, but the distemper removed. It is a mountebank's cure to stop the pain and let alone the cause; yet such a cure do they seek after that are more earnest for ease and comfort than grace. A good Christian is troubled with the strength of sin, as well as the guilt of it, and mindeth the rectitude of all his faculties as well as the ease and peace of his conscience, that he may be enabled to walk with God cheerfully, in the way of holiness, as well as enjoy the pardon of sins 1 John 1:9, 'He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' He would be an unwise man who, having his leg broken, should only mind to be eased of the pain, but not take care to have it set right again. So foolish is that Christian who is earnest for comfort, but taketh no care how to be directed and enabled to please God. Sin, in some sense, is worse than damnation.

3. It reproveth those who think it impossible to get rid of their carnal distempers. Will you lessen the merit of Christ and the power of his Spirit, or doubt of the promise of God? Jer. 3:22, 'Return, and I will heal you.' Now, upon these terms we should come to Christ with confidence, to be the better for coming: Jer. 17:14, 'Heal me, and I shall be healed.' God can heal, and he will; that is, he is ready to do it, or else why did he take this course?

*Use 2.* Is to press us to come to God for healing. I shall give you a few directions.

1. You must, in a broken-hearted manner, be sensible of your sickness. It is the sensible sinner Christ undertaketh to cure; the heart-whole are not within the compass of his commission: Luke 5:31,32, 'They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' A sense of our disease is a good step toward our cure. God will so heal that he will make us feel our sickness, that the smart of it may be a warning to us for the future, that we may not presume to offend again when we are recovered: Josh. 22:17, 'Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day?' We must not make too bold with God.

2. We must by earnest prayer seek this blessing of God, for God will be entreated for all things which he meaneth to bestow: Isa. 19:22, 'He shall be

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entreated of them, and he shall heal them;’ Ps. 91:14, ‘Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.’ The leaven of these distempers is so kneaded into the nature of man that it cannot be gotten out presently; therefore come often to God by prayer for healing, sometimes this, sometimes that distemper; now that our pride may be mortified, and anon our impatience; at another time our carnal fear, our sensuality; still praying as occasion requireth. We speed well at the throne of grace if we obtain the riddance and abatement of any one spiritual disease.

3. We must use God’s means, viz.:—(1.) The word, which is our medicine: 2 Tim. 1:13, ‘Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.’ Keep the soul healthy. (2.) The sacraments, they are a part of the medicinal dispensation, sealing the great benefits of God towards us, and our duty towards him, and so are a help against backsliding. (3.) Meditation on the death of Christ, not only as a price and ransom, but morally, as it represents the odiousness of sin, and also the love of Christ towards us. So that, out of gratitude to him, and kindness to ourselves, we are bound to abstain from sin for the future. *Viscera patent per vulnera*. By his stripes we see what we have deserved, and what Christ hath endured.

4. When God is seriously dealing with us about a cure, and applying means of healing, let us take heed we do not lose the advantage and grow worse: Jer. 51:9, ‘We would have healed Babylon, but she would not be healed’ So of Sion it is said, Hosea 7:1, ‘When I would have healed Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered.’ God is willing to offer us help to cure us of our sins, and affordeth us special means and excitations to that purpose. Now, when the waters are stirred, we should step in that we may be made whole; otherwise the disease is the more irritated, and breaketh out in a worse manner than it did before. The great Physician of souls must be carefully observed and constantly waited upon, and in time he will give us perfect ease and health.

5. Take heed, when you are healed, of casting yourselves into new diseases: John 5:14, ‘Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;’ Heb. 9:14, ‘How much more shall ‘the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?’

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