

A
CHOICE DROP
OF HONEY FROM THE ROCK,

Christ;

OR A
WORD OF ADVICE
TO

Saints and Sinners.

By THOMAS WILCOCK, D.D.

For I will restore health to thee, and I will heal thee
of thy wounds, saith the LORD. — Jer. xxx. 17.



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WORD OF ADVICE

A WORD of advice to my own heart and thine : Thou art a professor, and partakest of all the ordinances, thou dost well, they are glorious privileges ; but if thou hast not the blood of Christ at the root of thy profession, it will wither, and prove but painted pageanty to go to hell in.

Try and examine every day, on what bottom thy profession and hope of glory are built, and whether is was laid by the hand of Christ, if not, it will never endure the storm that must come against it. Satan will throw it down and great will be the fall thereof.

Glorious professor ! thou shalt be winnowed ; every vein of thy profession will be tried to purpose : 'tis terrible to have it all come down, and to find nothing to build upon.

Soaring professor ! see thy waxen wings betimes ; they will melt with the heat of temptations. What a misery is it to trade much, and break at length ; and to have no stock, no foundation laid for eternity.

Gifted professor ! look there be not a worm at the root, that will spoil all thy fine gourd, and make it die about thee in a day of scorching ; look over thy soul daily, and ask, Where is the blood of Christ to be seen upon it ? What righteousness is it that I stand upon to be saved ; have I got off all my self-righteousness ? Many eminent professors have come at length to cry out, undone, undone, to all eternity.

Consider the greatest sins may be hid under the greatest duties. See the wound that sin hath made in thy soul, be perfectly cured by the blood of Christ; not skinned over with duties, humblings, enlargements. Apply what thou wilt besides the besides of Christ, it will poison the sore. Thou wilt find that sin was never mortified truly; nothing can kill it but the beholding Christ's righteousness.

Nature can afford no balsam fit for the cure of a soul. Healing from duty and not from Christ, is the most desperate disease. Poor ragged nature, with all its highest improvements, can never spin a garment fine enough to cover the soul's nakedness. Nothing is fit for that use but Christ's perfect righteousness.

Whatever is of nature's putting on, Satan will come and plunder it, and leave the soul naked and upon to the wrath of God. All that nature can do will never make up the least dram of grace that can mortify sin, or look Christ in the face one day.

Thou art a professor, and goest on hearing, praying, and receiving, yet miserable mayest thou be. Look about thee; didst thou ever see Christ to this day in distinction from all other excellencies and righteousness in the world, and all of them falling before the majesty of his love and grace?

If thou hast seen Christ truly, thou hast seen pure grace, pure righteousness, far exceeding all sin and misery. If thou hast seen Christ, thou wouldst not do a duty without him for ten thousand worlds. If ever thou saw Christ, thou sawest him a Rock higher than Satan or sin; and this rock doth follow thee, and there will be a continual dropping of honey and grace out of that rock to satisfy thee. Examine if ever thou hast beheld Christ as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Be sure if thou art come to Christ, that thou standest upon the Rock of Ages, hast answered his call to thy soul, hast closed with him for justification.

Men talk bravely of believing while whole and sound, but few know it. Christ is the mystery of the gospel. Grace is the mystery of Christ. Believing is the most wonderful thing in the world. Put any thing of thine own to it, and thou spoilest it; Christ will not so much as look at it for believing. When thou comest to Christ, thou must leave behind thee thy own righteousness, and bring nothing but thy sin, (O that is hard!) leave behind all thy holiness, and bring nothing but thy wants and miseries, else Christ is not fit for thee, nor thou for Christ. Christ will be a pure Redeemer, and thou must be an undone sinner, or Christ and thou will never agree. It is the hardest thing in the world to take Christ alone for righteousness; that is to acknowledge him Christ. Join any thing to him of thy own, and thou un-Christ him.

Whatever comes in when thou goest to God for acceptance, (besides Christ) call it Antichrist, bid it begone, make only Christ's righteousness triumphant; all besides that is Babylon, which must fall if Christ stand, and thou shalt rejoice in the day of the fall thereof. Christ alone did tread the wine-press, and there was none with him. Join any thing to Christ, he will trample upon it in fury and anger, and stain his raiment with the blood thereof. Thou thinkest it easy to believe; was ever thy faith tried with a thorough sight of sin? Was it ever put to the grapple with Satan, and wrath of God lying upon the conscience? When thou wast in the mouth of hell, then did God shew thee Christ a ransom? If then thou couldst say, Oh I see grace enough in Christ! thou mayest say that which is the biggest word, thou believest; but untried faith is uncertain faith.

To believing, there must go a clear conviction of sin, and the merits of the blood of Christ, and of Christ's willingness to save upon this consideration merely, that thou art a sinner: things all harder than

to make a world. All the power in nature cannot get up so high, in a storm of sin and guilt, as really to believe there is any willingness in Christ to save. When sin chargeth sin upon the conscience, then charge it upon Christ, that is gospel-like; that is to make him Christ, he serves for that purpose.—To accept his blood and righteousness alone for salvation, that is the whole sum of the gospel. When the soul in all duties and distresses, can say nothing but Christ for justification, sanctification, and redemption; not duties, not humblings, not graces, that soul hath got above the reach of the billows.

All Satan's advantages are laid in selfrighteousness; God pursueth this by setting Satan upon thee; this must be torn from thee, this alone hinders Christ from coming in, and till Christ come in guilt will not go out; and where guilt is there is hardness of heart.

When guilt is raised up, take heed of getting it alayed any way but by Christ's blood. Make Christ thy peace, not thy duties, thy tears, Christ thy righteousness, not thy graces; look at Christ, and do as much as thou wilt. Stand with all thy weight upon Christ's righteousness, take heed of having one foot on thy own righteousness, another on Christ's. Till Christ come and sit on high upon a throne of grace in the conscience, there is nothing but guilt and terror, the soul hanging between hope and despair which is an un-gospel state.

He that fears to see the utmost hell of his own heart, suspects the merits of Christ; Be thou ever such a great sinner try Christ to make him thy advocate, and wilt find him Jesus Christ the rightcons. In all doubtings; fears, storms of conscience, look at Christ continually. Do not argue with Satan, he desires no better, bid him go to Christ and he will answer him; it is his office to be our advocate, his office to answer the law as our surety, his office to answer justice as our Mediator, he is sworn to that office; put Christ

upon it ; if thou wilt do any thing thy self to give satisfaction for sin, thou renouncest Christ the righteous.

Satan may allege and currupt scripture, but he cannot answer scripture.—It is Christ's word of mighty authority : Christ foiled Satan with ; in all the scripture there is not an ill word against a poor sinner stript of his own righteousness ; nay, plainly points this man for the grace of the gospel and none else. Believe but Christ's willingness, and that will make thee willing. If thou find thou cannot believe, remember it is Christ's work to make thee believe. Put him upon it. He works to will and to do ; mourn for thy unbelief, which is setting up guilt above Christ, an undervaluing Christ, accounting his blood an unholy, a common and unsatisfying thing.

Thou complain'st much of thyself, doth thy sin make thee look at Christ, less at thyself? that is right, else complaining is but hpoecry ; to be looking at duties and graces, when thou shouldst at Christ, that is pitiful ; looking at them will but make thee proud ; looking at Christ's grace will make thee humble. In all thy temptations be not discouraged, those surges may be not to break thee, but to heave thee off thyself, on the rock Christ.

Thou mayest be brought low, even to the brink of hell, ready to tumble in ; thou canst not be brought lower than the belly of hell ; yet there thou mayest cry and look towards the holy temple. Into the old temple none might enter but purified ones, and with an offering too. But now Christ is our temple, to whom none but sinners, and that without any offering but his own blood once offered.

Thou thinkest, oh, what monument of grace should I be? there are many thousands as rich monuments as thou : The greatest sinner did never pass the grace of Christ. When the clouds are blackest then look towards Christ the pillar of the father's love, set up in heaven for all sinners to look upon continually.

His blood speaks reconciliation, redemption, remission, and righteousness to God. Not a drop of his blood shall be lost. Stand and hearken what God will say, for he will speak peace to his people, that they return not to their folly. He speaks grace, mercy, and peace; that is the language of the Father and of Christ. Wait for Christ appearing as the morning star; he shall come as certainly as the morning, as refreshing as the rain.

The sun may as well be hindered from rising as Christ the sun of righteousness. Look not a moment off Christ; look not upon sin but look upon Christ also. In every duty look upon Christ, before duty to pardon, in duty to assist, after duty to accept. Without this it is but carnal and careless duty. Do not legalize the gospel, as if part did remain for thee only to do, and Christ but an half Mediator. Let sin break thy heart, but not thy hope in the gospel.

In the highest commands, consider Christ not as an exactor to require, but as an undertaker to work. If thou hast looked at duties and qualifications more than at the merits of Christ, it will cost thee dear. No wonder thou goest complaining, graces may be evidences, but the merits of Christ alone must be the foundation of thy hope.

When come to God, we must bring nothing but Christ with us. Any ingredients or any previous qualifications of our own, will poison faith. He that builds on duties or graces knows not the merits of Christ: This makes believing so far above nature. If thou believest, thou must every day renounce thy obedience, thy sanctification, thy duties, thy graces, thy tears, thy meltings, thy humblings, and nothing but Christ must be held up; thou must take all out of God's hand. Christ is the gift of God; faith is the gift of God. Pardon a free gift. Ah! how nature storms, frets, rageth at this, that all of gift, and it can purchase nothing with its tears and duties, and

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that all its workings are excluded, and of no value in heaven.

If nature had been to contrive the way of salvation, it would rather have put it into the hands of saints or angels, to sell it, than of Christ who gives it freely. It would have set up a way to purchase by doing; therefore it abominates the merits of Christ, as the most destructive thing to it. Nature could any thing to be saved rather than come to Christ, or close with him. Christ will have nothing, but the soul will be forcing somewhat of its own upon him: Herein is that great controversy. Consider, didst thou ever see merits of Christ, and the infinite satisfaction made by his death? Didst thou ever see this when the burden of sin and the wrath of God lay heavy on thy conscience? That is grace. The greatest of Christ's merits is not known but to a poor soul at the greatest loss. High convictions will but have slight low prisings, of Christ's blood and merits.

Despairing sinner! thou lookest on thy right hand and on thy left, saying, who will shew us any good? Thou art tumbling over all thy duties and graces, to patch up a righteousness to save thee.

Look Christ, look unto him and be saved, all the ends of the earth. He is a Saviour, and there is none besides him. Look any where else, and thou art undone. God will look at nothing but Christ, and thou must look at nothing else. Christ is lifted on high, as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that sinners at the ends of the earth, at the greatest distance may see him, and look towards him. He will forgive not only seven times, but seventyseven. It put the faith to believe this, because we are hard to forgive, we think Christ is hard.

F I N I S.