

Sinners Given and Coming to Christ

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by J. K. POPHAM

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

What encouragement we need as being convinced of our sins, as feeling the guilt of them, as often realizing the working of temptation, and often it may be being under an unperceived temptation of unbelief; the deceivableness of unbelief God only knows fully. The difficulties between a coming sinner and coming is a lifelong business-between a coming sinner and a crucified Saviour can never be fully, properly expressed. They are many, they are powerful, they are subtle. Happy he who is made an overcomer, for "to him that overcometh Christ will grant to sit with Him in His throne, even as He Himself overcame and is sat down with His Father in His throne." (Rev. 3:21) And the compassion of the Lord the Holy Ghost toward His poor feeble people, ready to be cast down at every faltering step they take, in giving the Holy Scripture, in writing such suitable words as the words of the text and words scattered throughout the whole Bible, is very great. He knew what some here would often feel. "How can I come? What am I to go with? How shall I get through these difficulties? How meet this temptation?" God knows how shame in your heart will often interpose, as if it were a righteous thing to keep away from Him whom you have so basely treated. O that shame which is subtle and false, but which looks so right, so proper, so good to those who feel it! "May I come after these years of sinning; may I come after my ingratitude; may I come with all my base hypocrisy and guile; may I come to Him who is so holy and glorious?" And the enemy comes in and works on the unbelief and hypocrisy of our nature, and he would make it out that it is humble to keep away; that you ought not to venture at any rate in your present hard and bad condition. O but no tongue can adequately express the difficulties that are in the way of poor sinners who cannot keep away from the Lord, who are afraid to go to Him, who have too little understanding of His compassion, His mercy, His tenderness, His liberality, His open hand, His gracious heart! We do not understand much of Jesus Christ. We do not enter much into His compassion. Here He is reigning in heaven, as we were singing just now in that beautiful hymn: "A Man there is, a real Man;...His heart is made of tenderness, His bowels melt with love." He is rich, we are poor; and yet our poverty seems to our unbelieving hearts a reason why we should not go and beg. Too proud is this wicked heart to beg, too proud to kneel down before a great and gracious Saviour; and so the Holy Ghost has interspersed throughout the Scriptures the most gracious encouragements, and here He inspired the Apostle John to write these words of Jesus Christ. Among all other teaching this holds a very gracious and outstanding place for poor people, poor needy sinners: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out; for no reason that he can bring will I cast him out."

The text is a very full one. I may not be able to say much about it. I hope the Lord will help me to say something at least that may meet some of our bad cases; but it is a very full text. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." We must look at this. The gift of sinners by the Father to Jesus Christ is not that terrible doctrine that the devil represents election to be. It is not that forbidding thing that our unbelieving and proud hearts say it is. It is a merciful, tender, loving doctrine, the only doctrine that opens a door of hope for dead ruined men. Free-will, the election of God by a sinner, that is the most terrible, forbidding, hopeless, hard doctrine that can ever be breathed by any man. There is nothing so merciless as to tell the man who is utterly helpless, absolutely ignorant, and teeming with enmity against God if he will but choose God and love God, then God will choose him and love him. I say there is nothing so merciless, so cruel, so abominable, so untrue in the whole world as that. Just as well go to the grave, dig into it for purity, and call upon the dead to live with your own feeble voice, as to say that. There is as much reason in it too. O but we have here something different. A sovereign God, loving to exercise His indisputable sovereignty with regard to a numberless number of poor sinners, and giving them to His dearly-beloved, only begotten Son and telling Him that they are His; giving them to Him to redeem, honourably redeem, to obey for them the law they broke, to make up, on their behalf, every breach of that law, to bring in for them, by His own infinitely gracious and wondrous obedience, a righteousness that justifies the ungodly that believeth in Jesus; to open a new and living way for them, whereby they might and should approach the Lord God and find mercy in the day of trouble; to redeem them from evil, defend them from sin, against the devil, carry them honourably through the difficulties of their pilgrimage, and bring them at last to heaven.

This is involved in the gift of sinners by the Father to the Lord Jesus. What a gift! What a God to give sinners to His beloved Son Jesus Christ to redeem! Here, I say, is a door of hope. There is no other door of hope anywhere to be found. The Scripture knows nothing about another door of hope, and there is not another door to be found anywhere. And all of them, not one shall be left behind. It does not matter where they are, what they are, what their life is, what their conduct, what their ignorance, their distance, their guilt, their deformity, they shall all come; from the east, from the north, from the west, from the south, they shall all come. "God will say to the north, give up, and to the south, keep not back My sons;" (Isa. 43:6) they shall all come. It is good for us to have wisdom to take heed to what is said concerning the Lord Jesus, to whom this people are given. Is He able to do what is necessary to save them? Is He able to produce in the court of heaven a righteousness that shall answer the need of guilty people? Can He produce to His Father a perfect obedience that shall answer to the necessity of despondent persons? Can He sanctify polluted sinners? Is He in a position to do that, so that there shall not be found a spot of any sort or kind that shall stand against these people?

Well, these important questions are answered by the Scripture, and they are answered blessedly in the affirmative: "He is able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25) His name is "The Lord our righteousness." (Jer. 23:6) With regard to the pollution of this people, it is written: "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13:12) They are distant, and so it is written, "He is the way;" yea, Himself said, "I am the way," the only way; "I am the door," access is to be had, and is had through Jesus Christ. O the ability of Christ is infinite, infinite! And the fullness of Christ is infinite: "It pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell." (Col. 1:19) The fullness of divine love, the fullness of redemption, the

fullness of justification, the fullness of wisdom, the fullness of sanctification. It is written of Him that "He is All in all." (Col. 3:11) And such is He, and so is He before the Father, that in all who are brought to the Father through Him and to Him Himself, the Father sees perfection, and finds well pleasingness. We have a great Christ, though we have but little faith. It is a poor faith that the strongest believer has, compared with the greatness of Christ. A strong faith, as a rule, has strong enemies. If you have strong faith, you may look out for much opposition, much temptation, and probably the most of it you will find to be in your own heart. That is the trouble, the wretchedness of a sinner's heart; that is the trouble. "They shall come." Whatever there may be in between this Christ and these people, they shall come.

This coming has many points in it to be observed by us. It has in it this, that the coming person is a living person. No life, no motion. If you have life in your soul you cannot keep away from the Lord. If you are dead, there is no motion towards Him. This is truth. Every praying person is a coming person, because he is a living person; and there will be times when the life will be so strong and the hunger so keen and the thirst so consuming and the dangers so great to the apprehension of the comer, that he will be like one who runs: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe." O to be a living person is to be a great person! "A living dog is better than a dead lion." A living person is a wonderful person; life in his soul, life sometimes in every feeling. Life in his convictions so that they are not merely dead thoughts about sin. Life in his confessions, so that they are honest. He is a sincere person, and the Lord looks for truth; yea, He gives it. "He desires truth in the inward part, in the hidden part He makes His children to know wisdom." (Ps. 51:6) If you move, you have life. Who can move that is dead? And this life rises to its source. Water in the valley that must be used on the top of the hill, cannot rise of itself; you must force it, but the life of God in a sinner's soul has no forcing; needs none. Of its own sweet blessed purity and in the power of it given by the Spirit, it rises to its source; rises to its end. So it is a great thing to be a living person. God's people are all made alive. The Father has given life to His Son, and He gives it to whosoever He will. Yes, they are born of His Spirit, they are quickened: "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1) That is the first thing to notice, and dear friends, the first thing in vital religion is life, being born again: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God." (John 1:13) And that birth, that new life must evidence itself in man. The person living may not know the nature of the life that has come to him, but he lives to God; he lives to Him, he lives on Him, he draws His life, he draws fresh sap from Christ from time to time, ignorant though he may often be of that truth.

And the second thing to notice is this coming is living faith, true faith. Real faith moves Godward. It is called faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and yet it may be exercised on other objects than Christ. As for instance, if and when any threatening of the Lord comes into the heart by the Spirit, that faith that is born of Him is exercised on it, and that brings death to the soul. If it pleases God to show Himself in His divine justice, faith believes that manifestation, and so the soul knows something of the terrors of the Almighty. Ah, and it is very solemn to know that! But think this as the Lord may help you: "The dead know not anything." A dead sinner never properly, spiritually knows the terrors of the Almighty. It is a living soul that is sensitive to that as that is revealed. There is a susceptibility, a sensibility in a living soul which makes it very painfully aware of every manifestation of God in a broken law; every manifestation of His righteous character whereby a sinner says, "Where that God is I never shall be."

But also this same, not another faith, the same faith is exercised toward God in other respects according as there may be manifestations of God in different ways. For instance, if the eternal Spirit is pleased at any moment to give a view of the Lord Jesus Christ crucified, unless you have had it you can never understand the moving, the melting, the hope, the contrition, that a sinner realizes under that view. Ah, his faith prophesies, it teaches, it helps him! It says: "This is the Saviour you need. This is the fountain in which you must be plunged. This is the death by which you must live. This is the way to heaven. Here is the giver of heaven. Here is the justifier of the ungodly, the Saviour of the lost, the strength of the weak, the food of the hungry, the nourishment of the feeble, the light of the blind." Faith will tell you all that as you get a manifestation of Christ. A manifestation is the instruction, and faith receives it and tells the sinner that. He comes believing.

But then also this is to be noticed the same sinner who believes and feels as I have just spoken, comes with repentance. He comes with repentance. "Repenting saints the Saviour own," and as long as they live they groan under sin and confess it. Repentance. People think it is gloomy. If it be an Esau repentance it is gloomy, for there is no way of escape for Esau, though he repent. He never gets to God; but when repentance is given to a living soul, that is different. O how his spirit sighs and sobs sometimes! O what groans go out of his heart before the Lord because he is a sinner, because he is a hypocrite, has malice and guile and hypocrisy and all manner of evil in him; because he is covetous and a murderer and a persecutor and everything that is evil; because he has all these things to confess before God! God never has a perfect person at the foot of the cross; that is, perfect in nature; He makes sinners perfect, but they are sinners when they come and they come as sinners as long as they live. They come with repentance. "Repenting saints the Saviour own;" and I am sure every living soul here will unite with me when I say that there are moments when each one feels that if he could have his own way, he would have a daily and deep repentance, a daily living sense of pardon. Is it not so with you? Would you not live at the cross? Would you not weep out your souls in love and gratitude, and bitter enmity and revenge against sin? O, a repenting sinner clears himself again and again! He has revenge against Himself; he confesses, he hates, he departs from sin; he has that universal hatred to sin as sin, which alone is begotten in him by the grace of God. He comes with repentance. How soft the spirit, how meekened and therefore meek the spirit is! How tender the conscience when you are filled with an evangelical repentance! I say, it is not gloomy; it is sweet, it is healthy, it is good, it is pleasing to God; for repentance is toward Him, not toward yourself. Revenge is toward yourself; repentance is toward God. It looks to Him, to His character, and says: "How I have trampled on that glorious Being in my nature!" It looks to His name: "How I have dishonoured Him!" It looks to His law: "How I have broken that!" It looks to Christ and says: "O if I could only believe that my sins were with Him, were part of His crucifixion, then all would be well!" His repentance is toward God, and having faith united with it it is toward our Lord Jesus Christ also. Repentance has a sincerity in it that is very beautiful. It has this sincerity in it it would make the repenting one willing to part with every sin at once and for ever from this day forward. A repenting sinner would gladly part with all his sins, and one day he will. He will have all his wishes one day and part with every sin and be with His Lord in that place into which nothing that defileth or maketh a lie enters. O would not it be good if this place were now a Bochim, if we could all weep for our sins; weep over a suffering Saviour; weep at the footstool of mercy and at the foot of the cross; weep by the side of the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, (Zech. 13:1) hating all evil and loving the Lord?

And this coming person has also real love. Yes, I am not afraid to say it, though some of us may sometimes feel as if there were no love in us at all; yet it is a truth whenever you come by prayer and supplication, in faith and repentance to the Lord, you have love also. Sometimes this love might be drawn out, may have been drawn out of some of your hearts by hearing the name of the Lord spoken against. Your circumstances may keep you from people who speak against Him, but your hearts speak against Him; nature speaks against Him. We all have the Jew in us, the Jew who said, "He casteth out devils by the prince of devils." No nature so good as to prelude that abomination. Your lips may never have uttered it, but the dreadful infidelity of your hearts will have muttered it. And then what? "O," says this inward life, "What a dreadful thing! Lord, canst Thou forgive such iniquity as this? I have in my heart the very things that Thy enemies in the days of Thy sojourn here said against Thee, and canst Thou forgive this?" That is love, my friends.

But sometimes love is very positive. Sometimes we have said: "Jesus I love thy charming name, 'Tis music to my ears;" and the spirit has melted under a feeling of the suitableness and the mercy and the tenderness and the goodness of the Lord Jesus. Who like Him in our eyes; who so beautiful, so wonderful as Christ? Has not that word been loved by us: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," (Isa. 9:6) and we have wondered at that, "Of the increase of His peace and government there shall be no end?"

But notwithstanding all these things in the comer to Christ, there is that in him which will make him tremble and fear, namely sin, indwelling sin, an inbred law of sin, something that is always rising up that is wrong wrong motives, unlawful looks, covetousness, malice, envy, enmity, guile, hypocrisy, and all evils at work in us, covering us with guilt and pollution and filling us at times with shame. This is not a strange language to all of you, is it? Shame on us, but it is so, and therefore it makes coming very difficult. "How am I to go with all this sin? What will He say to me?" If God said to Moses of the rebellious Israelites, "How long will it be ere ye believe Me?" what are we to say, and what can be said of us who are perpetually sinning? "How long will it be ere you have loyalty and love and faith and hope in your spirits and in Me? How long will it be ere you sincerely come to Me? How long will it be ere you forsake these sins? How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" And the question does not imply an ability in us to overcome and cast out these evils; it implies that little have we benefited by His mercies; little have we received out of His fullness, and therefore we are poor and empty and miserable and blind and stumbling sinners still; yet the man comes.

"Him that cometh to Me." He comes. He shall come, shall come. Yes, who shall cause this 'shall' to be realized? Why, the Spirit; "He shall guide you into all truth; He shall glorify Me; He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you." (John 16:13-15) And My death shall effect it. "If I be lifted up, I will all draw men unto Me," (John 12:32) and what can overcome the attractions of Christ? If the enemy, if our own hearts detract from Him so much, what shall overcome all that? Why this: "I will draw him by My death. The beauty, the sufficiency, the blessedness of My death shall draw this coming sinner." And the Spirit shall draw him, He shall come alongside of him. When his infirmities stumble him and when he is ready to fall, then the Spirit shall come and bring him, come alongside of him, take him on the wings of His gracious power and carry him to the throne of God's heavenly grace. He shall come. And I venture to say this that there is

no living soul here that has not found at times this "shall" effectually in him. Not to his deliverance, it may be, even as yet; but he has been blessed with hope. A glimpse of Christ, though only passing, has had a blessed effect upon him. A testimony of Christ, though not all-overwhelming, has had a good effect upon him, has made him say: "With this I venture nigh;" has enabled him to feel this perhaps:

"Thou callest burdened souls to Thee,
And such, O Lord, am I."

And sometimes His compassions have been seen by faith, and who could keep away when that sight was had? Who could keep away when the compassions of the Saviour have been looked on by faith? "All that the Father giveth Me" to take care of shall come to Me and put themselves under the wings of My merit, desperate as they are for protection.

"All that the Father gave Me to save shall come to Me for salvation; shall come to Me for justification; shall come to Me for sanctification; shall come to Me for heaven;" for the Lord Jesus received this people to be to them whatever their lost condition needed. He is made all that. He is made of God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, and being all this in Himself and they needing all that in themselves, they come together. Yes, they come together. A loving Saviour and a lost sinner desiring to be loved; they come together. An empty sinner and a full Saviour, they meet and love each other. An invited sinner causes the sinner to invite the Saviour to bless him, to invoke His divine aid and mercy. They shall come. Though hell stand between the Lord Jesus and the sinner, the sinner shall come, for Christ hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil; (Heb. 2:14) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, against a coming soul that would often be part of the church. He shall come. Though guilt like a mountain should stand between, the Lord has said He will level the mountain; though depression through guilt be so deep that the sinner can see no daylight, yet God will exalt that valley and the sinner shall come. Though the enemy shall say to him, "You are lost," the Lord will say, "I am thy salvation." He shall come.

His will is to come. Yes, his will is to come. He says, "I cannot," but his will is to come, and when the sinner is willing, he is there; he has come, that is, in God's esteem: "If there be first a willing mind." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." (Ps. 110:3) What a change the new birth makes! What a change the Holy Spirit makes in the people of God from what they were by nature! What they were by nature made them say to Him, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." Grace makes them willing. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power;" and it is this God working in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Now if I were, in conclusion, to appeal to every new-born person here as to whether he has not come, I don't think one would say he had not come. You could not say it honestly. When you bend the knee of confession, when you have cast the eye of faith on Christ, when you beg of Him to bless you, when you felt willing to part with sin and deny self, when you looked a little into the fountain of His infinite merit and felt persuaded that was sufficient to cleanse you from all your sin, and when you have felt that, sink or swim, accepted or rejected, saved or lost, here you would desire to die, here you were resolved to die at the throne of God's heavenly grace, could

you, would you, in the face of such an experience as that say you never came? O what a mercy to have come! I will tell you a thing, as you may fear being lost, I will tell you this, that from that place to which you have come by the Spirit of God, from that place there is no way to hell, but from that place there is an open way to heaven. "I will in no wise cast out" the person who comes. Come then, repenting sinner. Your whole life will be a coming as it is believing, for coming and believing are the same thing.

"Come then, repenting sinner, come,
Approach with humble faith,
Owe what thou wilt, the total sum
Is cancelled by His death."

And when the sweet witness of the Spirit is given to your own spirit that it is well with you, that you are a child of God, then you will say, "Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed."

I must leave the second part of this so full and beautiful text, Christ's own promise: "I will in no wise cast him out. May the Holy Spirit open it and apply it.

This gracious word is intended to be a weakening and dethroning of that mightily monster unbelief, and to remove difficulties which stand in the way of coming sinners; to set out before them the love of God in giving them His beloved Son; and make them conscious of the grace and goodwill of the Son who came to do the will of Him that sent Him. We have this evening to look at the second part of the text, having noticed the first part this morning "And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." There are certain reasons for this great and most encouraging statement of the Lord Jesus. It exhibits His greatness and goodness, this blessed word, and the reasons for it are as follows:

First, the will of His Father who sent Him to take charge of the church, to keep the children He had given to Him. To preserve them, to save them from sinking into a deserved hell, from being deceived by the many Christ's who shall arise here and there, and are preached so speciously as, if it were possible, to deceive the very elect. This will of the Father concerning the charge of Christ He speaks of in verses which follow the text: "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Christ is responsible for her safe conduct through a dangerous wilderness, a trackless stormy sea, and various subtle, violent temptations. He is responsible for every individual member of the church. Said Judah to Jacob, "Let Simeon go with us, I will be responsible for him; if I bring him not again the blame shall be mine for ever." (Gen. 43:9) How much more may we say that Christ has taken on Himself the responsibility of all His own children given to Him by His Father, so that they shall infallibly reach that place to which they are predestinated. How then could He cast out a person who should come to Him? How could He cast away one who had been given to Him by His Father? How could He look with disdainful look upon one who weary of sinning, weary of sin, weary of self, weary of the world, anxious to be right, to walk in all humbleness of mind and sincerity, should come to the throne of His heavenly grace and ask for these blessings which

Christ has to impart, and without which the sinner must perish? O if you have a heart to go to God, He has a heart to receive you! If you have a case to go with, He has a remedy for it; if you are guilty, He has righteousness to justify you; if you are polluted, He has blood to sanctify you; if you are ignorant, He is wisdom to guide you; if you are a captive, He is a Redeemer to liberate; if you are engaged in a warfare and wish not to go, feel unable to go at your own charges, God has given Him for a Leader and Commander to the people, (Isa. 55:4) and He has all this liberty; He has all this by the will of His Father: "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise him up again at the last day." The dangers are not to be denied; for their safety depends not on their skill nor on their prowess, not on their determination, but on Him who has made Himself responsible for them and who was sent to save them by His Father. That is the great reason. You may not be aware of this holy and immutable will of God as being for you, you may not be in the enjoyment of an assurance that you are wrapped up in it, but if you are a coming one very tremblingly you may come, very full of fear, very depressed by guilt, very perplexed by ignorance, very tempted by the devil this shall be true, Christ won't cast you out. How could He do it? How could Christ cast out a sinner who comes to Him by the will of His Father? Are you afflicted by sin? He is able to understand it, because He was made sin. Are you tempted of the devil? He is able to succour you, in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted. (Heb. 2:18) Are you weak? So was He. He was crucified through weakness. Then raise thy downcast eyes and see this mighty willing Saviour doing he will of His Father in extending to the vilest sinner a divine welcome to the throne of His heavenly grace.

The second reason is this, His own love: "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." (John 13:1) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man will lay down His life for his friends." (John 15:13) "When they were without strength," (Rom. 5:6) for if, when we were enemies, He came to reconcile them unto God in the body of His flesh through death. (Rom. 5:10) This was His love. Greater love does not exist, cannot be; and if one, seeing his sins and feeling them, and seeing the cross of Christ and being drawn by it, as Christ said: "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Me," how could he cast out one so coming to Him? Think of it, poor sinner! You see your ruin; you feel the hell of sin in yourself; you feel a destitute creature without strength, wisdom, goodness, or anything that could possibly recommend a person to God; you see also, to your great astonishment perhaps at times, the cross of Christ, His death, His vicarious death, His real atonement, and you feel that it draws you, it stops the running sore of despair, it inspires hope in your breast, it says,

"The vilest sinner out of hell
Who lives to feel his need,
Is welcome to the throne of grace
The Saviour's blood to plead."

But while you are coming to Him, the devil comes and casts you into the water, threatening to drown you; or into the fire of some fiery temptation, threatening to consume you and you think: "I may not go, I must not go." You fear, "I shall never reach Him; He is high and I am a sinner; He is holy and I am polluted; He is good and I am full of evil;" and so there is a difficult hedge powerfully surrounding. O but Christ sees not the difficulty only, but the subject of it! And as the father in the case of the prodigal son, seeing him a great way off ran and fell on his neck and

kissed him and welcomed him; so will the dear and ever watchful and loving Saviour graciously come out, may I say, come out of His way to bless you. You were singing just now what is true: "Christ has blessings to impart." Yes, He will come if need be, out of His ordinary way and lay hold of a sinner and take him in; His love moves Him to do it. For love of whom did He come to die?

"For love of whom? of sinners base,
A hardened herd, a rebel race
That mocked and trampled on His blood
And wantoned with the wounds of God."

Wherefore,

"Let not conscience make you linger."

O venture hard; venture wholly, without any goodness, even though you confess out of a painful heart that you feel insincere and a hypocrite in some says, yet venture wholly on Him who came to sanctify His people with His own blood! The love of Christ is infinite; it is not a grace in Him, it is an attribute. It never can be more than it has been eternally, it never can be less; it is one great attribute that in the very important and true sense is not kept back from its manifestations by the untowardness of all its blessed and yet to be happy subjects. If you venture you will find that you made a wonderfully good venture. If you have faith He will honour it. If you can cast a yourself on the mighty Saviour, He will honour that and never cast you out.

A third reason is His death. The death of Christ was the death of a Substitute. A Substitute is one who takes the place of another; that other benefits by all that the suretyship involved. Christ was the substitute of His people; that rendered His death vicarious. He did for another what that other could not do for himself. It was particular: "None of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." He died, He gave Himself a ransom for many, to be testified in due time. This death must prevail in two places, must terminate in two places. In God Himself first of all, and that affords a wonderful plea. You have guilt, God has satisfaction for that guilt. You are self-condemned, God was satisfied by the death of Christ so that justification shall take place. You are distant from God by your sin, the death of Christ is to bring you near: "And you that were sometimes far off He made nigh by the blood of Christ, for through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father," (Eph. 2:17,18) so that the death of Christ is with God an absolute satisfaction, an eternal reason for justification and for acquittal and a title to heaven.

Now sinner, if you have that in view you cannot despair: "The dying Lamb utterly forbids despair to all who love His name." O there is no despair where the death of Christ appears! It will give courage to pray; it will give boldness to ask for forgiveness; it will give a spirit to the sinner to plead with God and urge that suitable, that all-sufficient reason for forgiveness; it will give the soul everything in the way of encouragement, saying to him: "Give not up."

"Yield not then to unbelief;
Courage, soul, there yet is room."

Though of sinners thou art chief;
Come, thou burdened sinner, come."

Come to the living Saviour who said on the cross as He expired "It is finished;" and plead that dying word with God; and ask, as Hart has it, ask the Holy Ghost to repeat it:

"Holy Ghost, repeat that word;
Full salvation's in it."

It is so. The death of Christ unites the sinner to God. The death of Christ delivers from a deserved hell and deserved curse. The death of Christ brings peace to the conscience, it fills heaven with peace and satisfaction, and it fills conscience with the same. It fills the sinner with humility as it sanctifies him and delivers him from all bondage of corruption. The death of Christ is the song of the church above and the song of the church on earth: "We sing the praise of Him who died," We sing:

"Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

Now brethren, can you plead this death? Is it in your heart to mention it when you pray? Is it the ground of your praying, the reason of your praying; the reason of your asking God to bless you, to give you all you need in your conscience, to guide your wandering footsteps into the way of peace; to save you from the dissipation of sin and the deceiving of the tempter and the violence of all evil? Is it in you to mention as a reason why you can ask these inestimable blessings, that Jesus Christ died? Then I will say this in so pleading, you mention to God the Father a reason, a plea, He cannot turn away from. Can you believe it? You will one day. O seeker, seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face evermore! The ground for praying, the reason for pleading and hoping, the death of Christ affords. How shall I lift this death up before you? God help me to do it a little. It is that wondrous life that the church lives, that wondrous holiness that she is to have and inherit and enjoy through eternity. The death of Christ is her liberty from all bondage, from all fear, from all tormenting fear; the death of Christ is that that will fill the soul with peace, with holiness, with happiness.

Another reason is the wisdom of Christ. This may not appear on the face just at the first moment what the wisdom of Christ can have with respect to a coming sinner and Christ not casting him out; but look for a minute at the matter. We are ignorant, very ignorant; ignorant of our own hearts; very, very largely ignorant of Satan's devices in many particulars; ignorant of the way of life; ignorant of God's way. His way often is in the sea, His path in the mighty waters, and His footsteps are not known; and we are apt, very apt, through ignorance and unbelief to judge by appearances; very apt to judge of God's intentions by some of His dealings, as if His hand always when it is contrary interpreted His heart and His purpose; and if we were left in this our ignorance, how could we reach Him? But then we are not left. He says: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me should not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." And what is that light? Is it not the light of redemption that comes beaming sometimes into

a dark heart from the blessed cross? Yes, it is. Therefore it is said by the Apostle Paul who understood what He meant: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6:14) Why? For everything is in it. His wisdom He has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and this means that when He sees a sinner perplexed and overcome and ready to give up and turn his back in dismay, if not despair, He, the Lord Jesus, sends His good Spirit to him, who helps his infirmities, teaches him once more to go to the cross, once more to plead and open his mouth wide. The wisdom of Christ will always circumvent the wisdom of the serpent, will always undo the work of our ignorance, always.

And the power of Christ is a reason. Yes, "Able to save unto the uttermost all that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." My friends, there are no difficulties with Christ, they are all with us. Which shall prevail, our difficulties or omnipotence? O that we had faith in Christ's omnipotence! O that we could trust His power!

And lastly here, the faithfulness of Christ, the faithfulness of Christ. He begins and He finishes. He is the author and finisher of our faith. (Heb. 12:2) The Apostle Paul's confidence concerning the Philippians was not in their steadfastness, not in their determination. No, not even in the willing mind which was wrought in them by God. These graces are not to be denied or belittled, but confidence respecting their good end in the mind of the Apostle was grounded here: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Faithfulness in God ties a sinner up to Him. Faithfulness in God will undo all the bondage and the fear of a sinner respecting his end. Faithfulness in God will bring you through, though hell should resist you in your course. "And him that cometh to Me." I see him coming, I draw him, so therefore he comes; I love him, therefore he comes; I died for him, therefore he comes; I am wise to bring him through his difficulties, therefore he comes; I am Omnipotency to carry on the good work notwithstanding all the opposition that may be offered, therefore he comes; I am faithful to My Father, faithful to the covenant, faithful to the promises, faithful to Him in undertaking, therefore he comes. "Our seeking Thy face is all of Thy grace," from the first breath of prayer to the last. It is a sovereign grace that is at work, from the first motion of faith to the last when a sinner's faith shall expire in a sweet realization. It is all of God. Goodness and might working from the first beam of living hope and divine goodness to the very last, when hope shall die in a wonderful fruition. It is all of sovereign grace. "Grace, 'tis a charming sound, Harmonious to the ear."

And now look at this in conclusion: "I will in no wise cast out." Look at the word: "Cast out." It means to throw, to hurl with violence, to despise, to turn away from. Well, one says, "That is just what I deserve if He dealt with me as I deserve, He would hurl me from His presence and cast me into outer darkness, where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." And I should judge that a goodly number of you, my hearers, would say, may now be mentally saying, "That is exactly what we deserve." But will He do it? Will this dear loving Redeemer do it? Will He so take knowledge of our sins as to say He will have nothing to do with us when we pray? Will He take such knowledge of our unbelief as to say, "You have always been dishonouring Me, I will have nothing to do with you!" If He did, who could complain of Him? But He will not; "I will in no wise," for no kind of reason that can be produced by the coming sinner who honestly feels he is not worthy to come, who greatly fears that if he attempts to come his attempts will end in

dreadful failure; for no reason, that such a person can produce will Christ be induced to cast him out.

What are the reasons that we could bring to God why He should cast us out? I could give you many out of my own painful experience, which I judge would be like your own, and yours would be like mine. Take this first our original sin, our loss of God's image in which we were created; the loss of all goodness, of all righteousness, of all honesty, of all knowledge of God. What a solemn position we are in by the Fall! This congregation, in each member of it, is in that position, the loss of the image of God and of righteousness. Who could complain of God if He said He will have nothing to do with such a person except to judge and condemn him? All the notice that we do, so to speak, deserve at God's own great wonderful majesty is the notice of a judge to condemn and sentence to eternal perdition. Do you believe this? How many of us believe this?

Secondly, our personal transgressions. We have gone astray speaking lies from our birth. We possess a heart of which God Himself speaks thus: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9) We have idolatry in our hearts, and God is jealous and will not tolerate idols. You may live to wonder that the Lord God while breaking your idols, spared you, the idolater. I need not enter particularly into this, it must surely be the painful experience of every person here who is instructed by the Holy Ghost; and this will be a great and grave reason with us why Christ should cast us out, hurl us away from His holy presence, and say to His servants the angels: "Bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." But for none of these reasons will the Lord Jesus cast us out. For He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Now there are two things to which we are completely shut up. The first is this we cannot, however we would, however we may desire it, we cannot deliver ourselves from bondage; we cannot scatter our own seemingly well-grounded fears; we are just at the disposal of God. The second thing is this:

"If the Lord no grace will grant,
We must lie down and die."

Now here are two things, let us look at them honestly as we can in the Spirit of God. Here we have our helplessness, here we have all that is dismal; but I would not look too close at that. No, we have in Christ everything that inspires hope, and His good Spirit works this living hope at times, so that the sinner goes to Him, the Friend of sinners. O let me quote that favourite word of mine:

"Christ is the friend of sinners,
Be that forgotten never,
Sinners can say, and none but they,
How precious is the Saviour."

"Come then, repenting sinner, come." Come with humble faith; come with the fears that distract you, with the guilt that depresses you, with the temptations that perplex you, with the many

heavy fears that fill your mind, and the dear Redeemer won't cast you out. He has a way of pulling sinners to Himself; while the devil pulls one way, the Saviour pulls another way. He has a way of drawing sinners by that power of pulling them: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." (John 12:32) Draw, what is that? The attractions of Christ's Person, the attractions of His death, the attractions of His priestly office and sacrifice, the attractions of His intercession in heaven, the attractions of His promises, the attractions of His gospel. O by these attractions He draws sinners! There is a conflict, heavy conflict, but Christ will end it well, He is the Friend of coming sinners. He sees them afar off, He sees the backslider returning from his ways, He hears him say,

"False to Thee like Peter, I
Would fain like Peter weep,"

and He pities him. He sees the sinner and hears him saying sometimes, "Lord, give me a prayer," and that prayer for a prayer is a prayer which enters His ear. He sees one who feels often held down by the world, by certain duties and possessions and perplexities, and says: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) A full gospel suits an empty sinner; a mighty Saviour suits a lost sinner; a Justifier of the ungodly suits a guilty sinner; Christ is all that is suitable, all of it. O sinner, if you have a heart to come to Him, He has a heart to embrace you; ah, to embrace you! In the covenant, in the promise, in the gospel, in His mercy, in His love, He has a heart to embrace you. More ready to save than you are to be saved. You may not be able to receive that; you may think the unwillingness is on Christ's side, and the willingness is on yours. If you are willing He has made you, but your willingness is an eternal determination. Your willingness is born of His own eternal love and counsel with His Father and His Spirit. Your willingness rises one day through some merciful operation, and dies when that operation ceases to act upon you. His willingness knows no increase, no decrease. This is the will of God, this is the kindness of the Saviour, this is the goodness of God to His children. Therefore may the Lord help us to venture near.

One more word. This will of God, to do which Christ freely lovingly came, involves the resurrection of the body. "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." The gospel is comprehensive; it comprehends time; it comprehends the resurrection; it comprehends the judgment day; it comprehends the sweet welcome into heaven of the sheep who shall be at Christ' right hand. And the atonement embalms the bodies of the saints as they lie in a corrupting grave and holds them, so to speak; for Christ, so that when the day of the resurrection comes, there shall be found all those who were bought with the precious blood of Christ. May the Lord make out this gospel to us and seal it upon us with His gracious power.