

JESUS PUTTING AWAY SIN NO. 759

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JULY 7, 1867,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“...now once in the end of the age has He appeared to put
away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”
Hebrews 9:26.*

WHEN the conscience is unenlightened and the heart is rebellious, man is divided from his God by a false sense of personal righteousness. He imagines that God deals harshly with him, that He looks upon his sin in too severe a light, and that although He may be offended, yet, in some other respects, he has a claim upon the consideration of his Maker. As soon, however, as the Spirit of God illuminates the understanding, this self-righteousness disappears: It is a flimsy cobweb which the broom of the law soon sweeps away; it is no more substantial than the mist of the morning and it is at once dissipated by the rising sun of divine grace. Then man feels himself divided from his God by another and more real barrier: he has given up his self-righteousness, but now he is painfully conscious of his sinfulness, which appears to him to be an impassable gulf, separating him forever from the just and holy God. The more the conscience becomes quickened, and the more fully the understanding is enlightened, the more desponding does the man become as to any hope of his ever becoming acceptable to the Most High. He puts himself into God's position; his enlightened understanding enables him to look upon sin in some degree as God would regard it, and he is horrified to think that he should have been so ungrateful to so kind a Father; he is ashamed that he should have broken laws so perfectly just, and he is altogether out of heart with himself for having done despite to a government every way so generous and righteous as the moral government of God. The awakened sinner says within himself, “I can never make recompense for the injury which I have done to God's honor; it is not possible that anything I do or suffer may compensate for my continued rebellion and obstinacy; even if I could cease from sin in the future, yet I cannot hope to meet my God with peaceful mind when I remember the unhallowed and disgraceful past.” And thus the very enlightenment of conscience, which is one of the best signs of hope in quickened sinners, causes in him a consciousness of sin which becomes to him the ground of self-despair.

I have no doubt I have some such in this congregation. Even among you who have believed in Jesus there may be some such; for every now and then when we go back to first principles, we get again a distressingly vivid sight of sin, and need once more to understand how God can be just and yet the justifier of him who believes. Brothers and sisters, if you are now desirous to be at one with God; if your spirit longs for His embrace, and yet you feel as if you could not come to God by reason of the sin which troubles you, it will be a great joy to you to know that eternal wisdom has devised a plan, and carried it out too, for the effectually putting away of sin. This is a wonder of wonders which will create forever enthusiastic gratitude among celestial spirits. Eternity shall not diminish the amazement of our minds at the thought that the impenetrable partition wall of our sin has been broken down, and the awful veil of thick darkness which shut us out from the mercy seat has been forever removed. Belshazzar's knees knocked together, and the joints of his loins were loosened, when he saw the handwriting on the wall which declared his condemnation. What joy would have filled his despairing spirit, if suddenly that writing had been blotted out, and another hand had written “I have loved you with an everlasting love!” Can you conceive the joy of that astonished monarch, the transport of that frightened throng? Yet this morning I have as good news to tell to the penitent as though such were their position, and such the act of pardoning mercy. Jesus has blotted out the handwriting which was against us, and written words of love concerning us. The angel of wrath once stood over Jerusalem, having a drawn sword in his hand, but Jehovah has put away the sin of His people, and now the avenging sword is returned to the scabbard, and God regards His Zion with everlasting love.

I have said that this is a wonder, and so it is, when you recollect that the angels fell. The sons of the morning kept not their first estate, but for fallen angels, there is no putting away of sin. Shut up forever, chained with adamant bands, their sufferings shall know no pause, their anguish shall find no end; and yet *we*, creatures of inferior mold, we have enlisted the sympathy of the ever blessed who undertook

to make atonement for our sin, and has achieved the purpose of His grace. Beloved, it might have been easy enough for God to have put away human sin itself by the destruction of our race. It would no more need an effort of power on God's part to destroy us, than for us to tread upon a moth—no, His mere *Will* could have done it; and I do not know that one of the crowns of His glory would have lost a jewel. He might instantly have created another race superior to ourselves if so it had pleased Him, and every gap which the destruction of mankind might have caused in the universe might have been at once filled up; but, wonder of wonders, He spares us at a vast expense—He spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all! It has sometimes been asked why God did not pardon sin without atonement. That is a question which we must leave those to answer who propound it. We do not doubt but what God might have done so if so He had willed—we doubt whether He ever would have willed to do so, for our view of the constitution of His glorious character seems to require that sin should be punished—but that is not a question for us—we *know* that the Lord has not willed to let sin escape. He has been pleased to make the display of His grace to sinners an opportunity for the revelation of all His other attributes, that—

*“God, in the person of His Son,
Has all His mightiest works outdone.”*

Without raising questions which would minister no profit to us, it is ours to behold the great love which the Lord has loved us, in that He sent His Son to redeem us from our iniquities, by the shedding of His own most precious blood—

*“Oh, fathomless abyss,
Where hidden mysteries lie:
The seraph finds his bliss,
Within the same to pry;
Lord, what is man, Your desperate foe,
That You should bless and love him so?”*

I propose, this morning, as God may help me, to comfort those who are longing for reconciliation with God by showing them that no difficulties exist, since Jesus Christ has forever put away the sin which would have separated a penitent soul from its God. We shall look at the text carefully, and I think we shall notice in it several things which minister comfort to seeking sinners. Jesus Christ has appeared once, in the end of the age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

I. Let us consider, first, THE TIME OF THIS GREAT PUTTING AWAY OF SIN, in the end of the world, or the age—“in these last days”—as one of the apostles words it.

Why was that time selected? Was it not in order *to exercise the faith of ancient saints*, who, like Abraham, saw Christ's day in vision—saw Him and were glad? They were denied the great privilege which we possess. Prophets and kings desired it long, but died without the sight. Nevertheless, above the mausoleum of ancient saints we read this inscription, “These all died in faith.” They rested in confidence in the Messiah who was to come, and their faith received its reward. Did not God place the putting away of sin at the close of the age, in order *to glorify His Son*, by letting us see that the very anticipation of His death was sufficient for the salvation of men? Before Peter touched the sick, we find that his shadow had a healing efficacy, and so, before Jesus literally took upon Himself our flesh, we find that the shadow of His advent saved the chosen sons of men. Long before the sun has risen in these summer mornings, the twilight begins; before his wheel has touched the horizon, his refracted light banishes the darkness; and so, before the Savior actually came, there was a blessed twilight of gospel grace, in the light of which, patriarchs found their way to Jerusalem. Let us glorify the blood of Jesus, which in God's decree was shed from before the foundations of the world; let us magnify the divine sacrifice which, before it was led to the slaughter, was capable of redeeming from death and hell unnumbered thousands of God's elect.

Was not this sacrifice placed at the end of the world to be, as it were, *the crown of all Jehovah's works*? I see before me a stupendous pyramid, the base of it is exceedingly broad: it is the inanimate creation. Stars unnumbered lie close together at its base, like the sands of the Libyan desert; ponderous masses of matter underlie the whole amazing structure, all radiant with the glory of God, with a light like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Measureless fields of space, and all but infinite leagues of matter, form the grosser basis of the pyramid which now rises before my astonished vision. Overlying this, as though it were a layer of malachite or emerald veined with blue, and scarlet, and vermilion, I see the vegetable creation with all its beauty of form and splendor of color, cedar and hyssop, olive and lily, oak and bramble. No art of man, or polished jewels of the mine, can rival its magnificence. Over these, sparkling like the stone which was full of eyes, I see the animal kingdom

with its mingled varieties of symmetry and strength, energy and vitality. Here on high the pyramid is narrower, but its light is far more excellent, for the likeness of the living creatures sparkle and flash like burning coals of fire, with an energy unseen in the broader foundations which are placed beneath. Beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl, all magnify the master builder who has ordained for them their place in the pyramid of His manifested glory. Higher still I see man, who is made to have dominion over all the lower works of God—man, of whom it is written, “You have been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold.”

Above these, I see men twice made, the regenerated men, the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, the peculiar portion and crown jewels of Jehovah: but can my eyes endure to gaze upon the glowing brightness which forms the apex of the glittering pyramid? I look, and lo, above the firmament, higher than the heaven of heaven, I see the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the throne there sits the Son of Man in all the brightness of His Father’s glory, encircled with a rainbow like unto an emerald, and hymned by innumerable spirits in strains like these: “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.” O my soul, are you not overwhelmed with the vision of man upon the throne of God, man most true and manlike, born of a virgin, the woman’s promised seed, and yet God over all, blessed forever! When that pyramid was crowned with such a matchless Topstone, well might the morning stars sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy; well might there be from men and angels joyous shouts of “grace! Grace unto it!” The great Master of the feast has kept the best wine until now. Richest and rarest of the wines on the lees, well refined, is that which was shed on Calvary by the soldier’s spear. Rich was the store which the glorious Monarch of the ages placed upon the table of His benevolence; but in these last days He brings out the choicest of His dainties, the bread of heaven, the wine which makes glad the heart of God and man. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

The practical point I drive at in referring to the period of our Lord’s sacrifice is just this—you and I live in a period when the putting away of sin has been perfectly accomplished. Beloved, sin *is* put away. We have not to exercise the faith of a Noah, or an Isaac, or a David, in looking forward to the expiation as a blessing yet to come, but the testimony of the Holy Spirit is that Jesus has once and for all finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Jesus has been led like a lamb to the slaughter: the Passover is slain, the propitiation is made. It is a recorded fact; it is a fact that never can be blotted from the annals of time, that redemption is finished. Sin is put away by the one great sacrifice, and we may come to God, who is reconciled through the death of His Son.

May I press this upon those of you who would come to God, but are afraid? Come back, poor prodigal, the heart of God towards you is that of a loving Father; you need not fear. Come back, you wanderer, however far you may have gone—

*“Sprinkled now with blood the throne,
Why beneath your burdens groan?
On My pierced body laid,
Justice acknowledges the ransom paid.
Bow the knee, and kiss the Son;
Come and welcome, sinner, come.”*

If, in the earliest ages, you had come in the faith that this atonement would be offered, you would have been accepted, but how can you linger when the atonement is already presented? Once, in the end of the ages, the work of divine grace has been done. You have not to wait until the bridge spans the gulf; you have not to inquire who shall roll away the stone, for, behold, One greater than an angel has descended and rolled away the stone from heaven’s gate, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. There are no barriers now between a seeking soul and God, except such as unbelief shall set up. I pray you build no barricades to exclude yourself from happiness. Christ has dashed down all the partition walls that your sin had erected, and there is a straight path from your present position right up to God’s greatest glory. Come now, even now, unto the Lord, believing in the atonement which *is* achieved.

II. Secondly, let us meditate upon THE PERSON ACCOMPLISHING THE WORK.

Once, in the end of the world, has HE appeared; remember who it was that came to take away sin, that you may find solid and substantial ground for comfort, and may the Holy Spirit help you to stand upon it. He who came to take away sin did not come unsent. He was appointed and delegated by God. As Toplady has put it in his hymn—

*“The God for your unrighteousness
Deputed to atone.”*

He was not only so appointed and elected, but He was also qualified by God. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. He came in His Father's name, clothed with His Father's authority: "I do not My own will," He said, "but the will of Him who sent Me." He continually calls it His Father's work and business which He came to do. This ought to give us richest consolation. Jesus is no amateur Savior, who has no right to appear as our representative—He comes in a legal and proper manner. The King of kings has appointed Him, and what He does He does in the name and by the authority of God. God has sent His Son into the world. His death, though voluntary on His own part, was not without the consent and will of His Father. It pleased the Father to bruise Him—He has put Him to grief. Should we not, when God has set Him forth as a propitiation for sin, should we not cheerfully accept whom God appoints?

Attentively observe the constitution of His person. He who came to save men is no other than God; therefore is He capable of viewing sin from God's point of view, and capable of understanding what was due God: by bracing His Godhead to His manhood He was capable, in His twofold nature, of sustaining pangs which humanity could not have endured apart from Godhead, and of receiving into His infinite mind a sight of sin, and a horror concerning it such as no finite mind ever could have endured. You think you comprehend sin? My brothers and sisters, you cannot. It is an evil too monstrous for the human mind to fully know its heights and depths, its lengths and breadths; but Christ, who is God incarnate, knew what sin meant; He plumbed it to the very bottom, and knew how deep it was; He gazed upon it, and felt all the horror of its unrighteousness, ingratitude, and turpitude. Its sinfulness struck His mind with all its force, and overwhelmed His holy soul with a horror which none but He could bear. He was a perfect man, and therefore had no need to die, else His death were for Himself. It behooved Him to suffer, not because He was the Son of God, or the Son of man, but because He was the Redeemer, the sponsor and the surety of men. Can you trust Him? When I have felt the burden of my sin, I do confess I have at times felt as if it were too great to be taken away by any conceivable power, but, on the other hand, when I have seen the excellence of my Master's person, the perfection of His manhood, the glory of His Godhead, the wondrous degree of His anguish, the solid value of His obedience, I have felt as if my sin were too little a thing to need so vast a sacrifice. I have felt like John Hyatt who, when dying, said he could not only trust Christ with one soul, but he could trust him with a million souls if he had them. Were my sins greater than they are, and God forbid they should be—were my sense of them 10,000 times more vivid than that sense is—and I could wish I had a more clear and humbling view of my own iniquity, yet even then I know my Lord and Master is a greater Savior than I am a sinner. From the constitution of His person as God and man, I am certain that if I had heaped up my iniquities till they assailed the skies, though, like the giants in the ancient mythology, I had piled Pelion upon Ossa, mountain of sin upon mountain of rebellion, and had thought to scale the very throne of God in my impious rebellion, yet the precious blood of Jesus Christ could cleanse me from all sin.

My dear hearer, if you are trembling because of your guilt, do not try to be rid of a sense of the guilt of sin, but study much and devoutly the person of God, the sin-bearer; let your thoughts dwell upon the great Savior and His work, and so shall you be able to say, "I *will*, even *I will* believe that Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto Him, and I will cast myself upon Him. I will rest in His atonement *now*."

I feel as if I must pause to say to some here, how anxiously do I wish that they would, this morning, have done with seeking rest where no rest is to be found. Have done with reliance upon anything within or anything without, except the Son of God. God Himself puts away sin. What more do you want? You have a God to be your Savior, and will you link your pitiful weakness with His Omnipotence? Would you yoke an ant with a cherubim? Will you join your rags to the fair white linen of the Righteousness of Christ? Your nothingness—shall that contribute to His fullness? Your strength! It is perfect weakness, and your merit is a lie; will you bring these to put them side by side with Jesus? No, sinner, may the Holy Spirit compel you now to rest on Him who, in such a glorious manner, has put away sin in the end of the ages by the sacrifice of Himself.

If those two points do not yield you comfort, I will gladly hope and pray that a third consideration drawn from the text may do so.

III. Note in the text THE APPEARANCE MENTIONED. "Now once in the end of the ages has He appeared to put away sin." Dwell on this.

The way by which God has put away sin is one which is not obscure, concealed, ambiguous, inexplicable, but one which is eminently plain and manifest. You will remember that when the High Priest made atonement for sin, he took the basin filled with blood, and passed within the veil. No one saw him there; and while he stood before the mercy seat and sprinkled blood, no human eye beheld it—his typi-

cal work was a thing of mystery. But, my brothers and sisters, the great High Priest and Prophet of our profession has torn the veil and appeared openly, and the putting away of sin by Him is a manifest thing which can be seen by the understanding; no, in some respects, it was even seen by human eyes and heard by mortal ears. Christ appeared, that is to say, when He came down among men, He lived for no less than 32 years under daily human inspection. He was seen as a Child in the manger by shepherds and by Eastern wise men; He was not concealed and put away like Moses, hidden from the Egyptian murderers, but He was the Observed of all observers. As a child, no doubt, His bringing-up was well known, so that they said, "His sisters and His brothers, are they not all with us?" "As for this man, we know where He is." That short portion of His life which was allotted to public ministry was public in the highest degree. "In secret," said He, "I did nothing." "I taught openly in your streets." For "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," says John, "and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." No, more, not only was His Manhood apparent, but His Godhead, too. Did He not raise the dead with His voice? When He walked on the sea, when He healed the leper, when He opened the blind eyes, when He unstopped the deaf ears, were not all these gleams and glimpses of His eternal power and Godhead? These things were not seen by a few priests set apart to enter into the sacred circle, and then to bear witness, but throughout all Galilee and Judea it was openly heard abroad that the Messiah had come, and "these things were not done in a corner."

And further, beloved, the great act by which our Lord redeemed us was an open act. True, there were inward depths into which the human mind cannot dive. God knows, and God alone, all that His beloved suffered; but still, the scourging and the mocking, the spitting and the crowning with thorns, the nailing and the Crucifixion, and the death—these were open and manifest things. Did not all Jerusalem ring with the news that Jesus of Nazareth, a man sent of God, had been put to death?

And I will proceed a step further. Not only were the Incarnation of Christ, and His Deity, and His death, manifest things, but the way in which these things relate to the forgiveness of sin is also clearly revealed to us. We do not come to you this morning, and say, "Believe in Jesus Christ—it is a great mystery, you cannot understand it, but if you trust in Jesus Christ, God will save you," but we tell you that there is a ground for your trust which your reason may apprehend: it is this, that Jesus Christ stood in the place of sinners; that God visited Him with the stripes which were due to us; that, to use the words of our hymn—

*"He bore, that we might never bear
His Father's righteous ire."*

Now, this is a clear explanation of the plan of Salvation. Not thus is it with the mummeries of superstition. The priests of Baal tell us that when they take an infant in their arms, and put water on its face, using a certain ritual, that the unconscious baby becomes then and there a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven: can they tell us how this marvelous change is worked upon a dormant intellect, a slumbering soul? No, they can only mutter that it is by some occult influence! Occult, indeed! For the child grows up to live as others live, and perhaps to die in unbelief. Such mummeries, with their base pretensions to occult influences, are worthy to be ranked with the whispers and incantations of the witch of Endor, or the dealings of Balaam, the son of Peor. But *we* can tell you how it is that sin is put away by the sacrifice of Christ. There is nothing occult in the cross. The doctrine of the atonement appeals to the understanding and the judgment. Christ pays the debt—then, of course, the believer is free. Christ suffers for me. Then how can two suffer for the one offense? Here is something for men in their wits to think of; something for the most profound intellect to ponder over. As for the shams of confession, priestly absolution, etc., which Baal's priests are continually thrusting in your way instead of our blessed Lord and Master—such shams that my soul boils at the very thought of them—regard them not, neither endure them! With their vestments, their genuflections, and their ceremonies, they are as wizards that peep and mutter, and forge a lie to deceive. They would use an unknown language if they dared, like Babylon's priests; as it is, their intoning makes plain words hard to be understood. Their religion is not a revelation, but a rejection; not a manifestation of God, but a veiling of His face. Like the children of the old covenant of bondage, they have a veil over their faces, and they see not the truth of God; but we who preach Jesus Christ in the fullness of His gospel, use great plainness of speech, for we tell you good news which you can comprehend.

We tell you the truth of God, which appeals to your understanding and intellect—for once in the end of the ages Jesus Christ has made a disclosure of Himself, has brought life and immortality to light, and has revealed to you how God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. Surely there is no one here who does not understand the plan of substitution; if there were, I would try to explain it still further. Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, stood in the place of men—in your place, dear hearer, if you trust Him, He

suffered for *you*. You can understand how God is just in taking this sacrifice, offered voluntarily, instead of your sacrifice—punishing Christ instead of you, and then saying to you, “I have vindicated the honor of My government; I have magnified My law and shown that it must not be trifled with, and now I forgive you—freely do I pardon you, for Jesus died.” I pray you receive with your heart what you have accepted with your understanding. My dear hearer, kick not against a gospel so simple, so just to God, so safe to you. Yield to it, I pray you, yield now, and remember, if you believe in the appointed Savior, you are saved! If you will trust yourself now with Jesus Christ, He will not fail you; He will cover you with His righteousness, cleanse you with His blood, protect you by His power, and, by-and-by, enshrine you in His glory, world without end. But we must pass on.

IV. A fourth matter which should yield us consolation is, **THE SACRIFICE ITSELF.** “Once in the end of the ages has He appeared to put away sin”—how? “*By the sacrifice of Himself.*”

Observe, brothers and sisters, Christ did not come into the world merely to put away sin by His example—His example is most blessed, and if we follow it, it becomes a potent means of promoting virtue. Jesus did not come into the world merely to put away sin by His teaching—although His teaching does do that wherever it is received, since in the strength of His doctrine men become mighty through His Spirit to overthrow their inbred sin; but we are told in the text that He came to put away sin by sacrifice. Oh, how some people writhe and rage at this! Those Socinians who sat at the foot of the cross when Jesus Christ died, and said, “Let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him,” held the same beliefs as their successors who will admire Jesus everywhere but as a sacrifice for sin. Many men kick the crucified Son of God. “No,” they say, “the doctrine of the atonement, the doctrine of suffering for sin, sin being put away by blood—it is that which we cannot endure.” Know, then, you proud objectors, that this is the gospel, the sum and substance, and essence of mercy’s message; this is the good news from heaven, that Jesus Christ has put away sin not by His teaching, nor by His example alone, but by making a bloody sacrifice of Himself.

I fear that this doctrine is covertly assailed by a school of men who mingle with the orthodox, and are much admired for their intellect and boasted liberality. In some way or other they try to get rid of this sacrifice by blood. Substitution, atonement by suffering, they cannot believe in, but I pray you, dear friends, as you would be saved, hold this truth of God. No, do more, build your soul’s only hope upon it, for no other foundation can man lay than this—the foundation of salvation through faith in Jesus’ blood. “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.” And nothing but the blood; take the blood of Jesus away, and you have removed the only effectual consolation from a troubled conscience.

Note that the text affirms that our Lord took away sin by the sacrifice, not of His honor, though He left that and forsook the courts and courtiers of heaven; not by the sacrifice of His wealth, for though He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor; it does not say that He took away sin by the sacrifice of His reputation, though He did make a sacrifice of that, and made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant—but it was the sacrifice of *HIMSELF*—His body and His soul. It was that sacrifice, my brothers and sisters, which commenced in Gethsemane when the bloody sweat bedewed Him from head to foot, when every portion of His body and every power of His soul was full of anguish and dismay; it was that sacrifice which was carried on in the halls of Pilate, before the judgment seat of Caiaphas, at the bar of blustering Herod; a sacrifice which He offered when they scourged Him, when they plaited a crown of thorns, when they spat upon Him, when they struck Him with their fists and mocked Him, a sacrifice which culminated when He hung upon the cross in the extreme of thirst, and shrieked, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” O sinner, I would that you would stand at the foot of the cross, and think of Jesus till you could find comfort! I believe the shortest way to faith is to consider well the *object* of faith. The true way to get comfort is not to try and comfort yourself away from the cross, but think of Christ dying for you till you are comforted; say to your soul, “I will never depart from the cross until I am washed in His precious blood!—

‘Blest Savior, at Your feet I lie, here to receive a cure or die;

But grace forbids that painful fear, almighty grace, which triumphs here.’”

You know the healing came to the sin-bitten by looking at the serpent, not by looking at their own wounds, nor yet by hearing about the cure of others; and, even so, healing will come to you, not by looking at sin, nor hearing about Christ, so much as by fixing your mind’s eye upon the cross, and meditating upon Him who died there, till, as by considering His merits, you believe on Him, and so are saved.

Beloved, put these two or three thoughts together. God comes into the world as man—the Mediator dies. Easily said, but what a weight of meaning in it! Now, what merit there must be in the suffering and death of the dying Mediator! What power there must be in the blood of Him who, while He is man, is nevertheless God! Come, guilty sinner, plunge into this fountain filled with blood, and you shall be

made clean, or else God speaks not the truth. Come, you blackest, foulest, filthiest, most defiled of all the human race, come now and look to Jesus, dying, bleeding, and you will be saved, for God's Word is pledged to it. He cannot cast into hell the soul that rests upon the sacrifice of Christ. Only let us be well persuaded that sin is put away by nothing but by the Lord Jesus making Himself a sacrifice.

V. Still, if this should not yield comfort, though I pray it may, for one moment I ask you to think, in the fifth place, of **THE THOROUGHNESS OF THE WORK WHICH WAS CONTEMPLATED.**

In the end of the ages Christ was revealed to *put away* sin. He did not come into the world to merely make it less serious it, or to cover it up, but He came to put it away. Observe, He not only came to put away some of the attributes of sin, such as the filth of it, the guilt of it, the penalty of it, the degradation of it; He came to put away sin *itself*, for sin, you see, is the fountain of all mischief. He did not come to empty out the streams, but to clear away the fatal source of the pollution. He appeared to put away sin itself, sin in its essence and being. Do not forget that He did take away the filth of sin, the guilt of sin, the punishment of sin, the power of sin, the dominion of sin, and that one day He will kill in us the very being and existence of sin—but remember that He aimed His stroke at sin itself. My Master seemed to say, as the king of Syria did of old, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king." He aimed His shafts at the monster's head, smote his vital parts, and laid him low. He put hell itself to flight, and captivity was led captive. What a glorious word—our Lord *put away* sin! We read in the word of God, sometimes, that He cast it into the depths of the sea; that is glorious, nobody can ever find it again—in the shoreless depths of the sea, Jesus drowned our sins.

Again, we find He removed it as far as the east is from the west. Who can measure that distance? Infinite leagues divide the utmost bounds of space—so far has He removed our transgressions from us. We read again that He has made an end of sin. You know what we mean by making an end of a thing, it is done with, annihilated, utterly destroyed and abolished. Jesus, we here read, has put sin away, He has divorced it from us. Sin and my soul are no more married. Christ has put sin away—He has borne it away as the scapegoat carried the iniquity of the people in type and shadow. He has literally taken upon Himself the sins of all His people, and, stronger than Atlas, has borne the load and carried it away and hurled it into His sepulcher, where it lies buried forever. "Who shall lay anything to the charge or God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died, yes, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." Sin is clean gone. If you believe in Christ, there is nothing that can be laid to your charge. The past, the present, the future—every sin was laid on Christ; sins of tongue, and brain, and heart, and hand, and thought, were all laid on Him. Sins against men, sins against God, adultery, murder, blasphemy, everything, all were laid on Jesus. He became, as it were, the common reservoir for all the sin of His people to meet, and then He emptied it all out by His atoning sacrifice; so that the filth of His people is removed. He has crossed the Kidron and put away the filth of sin. You and I may sing concerning sin as Israel sang concerning Egypt when the ransomed nation stood upon the shore of the Red Sea. "The depths have covered them: there is not one of them left."

O for a sweeter voice than Miriam's! O for virgins more joyful and more in tune than the daughters of Israel! O for high-sounding cymbals and lofty timbrels, to resound with our exulting song! "Sing unto Jehovah Jesus, for He has gotten unto Himself the victory; He has appeared and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and now, as for our iniquities, the depths have covered them—there is not one, not one, not one of them left. They sank to the bottom like a stone; they sank like lead in the mighty waters. Sing you unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously!"

VI. O that some soul may get a ray of light from the last consideration, if all others shall have failed. **THE EVIDENT COMPLETION** of this work, upon which we have already touched, demands a word because of its being rendered conspicuous by the word, "once." "*Once* in the end of the ages He has appeared to put away sin."

If He had not put away sin, He would have come again to do it, for Jesus Christ never leaves His work unfinished. What He undertakes He achieves. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands. My brothers and sisters, Christ's one offering put away all sin forever. Away! Away with those priests of Baal with their "unbloody sacrifice," as they call it, offered daily for the propitiation of sin. Traitors to God's truth, traitors to the souls of men, may they never dominate in this land, but may their bare-faced impertinencies be cast forth as dung upon the face of the earth, and may they themselves be rejected as salt which has lost its savor. What right have they to eat the bread of a Protestant people while doing the Pope's work? Our Lord has once and for all made an atonement, and all attempts to tamper with His finished work is treason, such as shall be answered for in the court of heaven; and terrible shall be

the doom of those who have dishonored Christ in the point where He is most jealous of His honor. Brothers and sisters, Christ's being in heaven today is a proof that there is nothing to divide a sinner from God on God's part—

“If Jesus had not paid the debt, He never had been at freedom set.”

He would have been imprisoned in the prison of the tomb at the present moment, if He had not discharged all the debts and liabilities of His people; and His exaltation in heaven is the evidence that He has completed His work. There He takes His seat because the work is done. If the work had not been accomplished, He would be suffering, suffering often, until at the last He could say, “It is finished.” But His redemption work is complete, sin is put away, and believers are saved.

What I have to say, in conclusion, is this. Will you not come, poor, guilty, empty, needy sinners? Will you not come and partake of the glorious fullness of Christ's merit this morning? O why do you stand back? You need no fitness. Wait not for it. No goodness is asked of you. Do not look for it. All goodness dwells in Him. Come with your hard hearts, He will soften them; come with the stone that is within, He will take it away and give you a heart of flesh. Come to Jesus now for all—

*“True belief and true repentance, every grace that brings us near,
Without money, come to Jesus Christ and buy.”*

Oh, if I knew how to preach my Master to you plainly, I would. If the words would be called vulgar, I should not care for that as long as I could make men see what is the mystery of Christ Jesus, which was hid in the ages past, but now is made manifest in Him! O trust Him, souls, trust Him, and you shall be saved!

I heard the day before yesterday what greatly cheered me. I heard that at the late meeting of believers at Chicago, one came from the far West, who asked for a missionary to preach in a newly-formed district, and the reason he gave for wishing for the missionary was this, that they had read my sermons on Sunday, and that no less than 200 souls had been converted to God by the reading of those sermons. When I read that report I did exceedingly rejoice, but then I thought, “Alas, there are many who have those sermons first hand, and get no blessing from them.” And I thought of some of you who had heard me these many years, and I have been faithful to you—I trust I have—God knows I desire to be—and yet you are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity. While across the blue Atlantic, the echo of our words has called men from the grave of sin to life in Christ, you, though you love to listen to us, have not heard our voice in the depths of your soul! Shall it always be so? It will be, I fear, with some of you, for I foresee your ruin. You will go down to hell with the gospel sounding in your ears, and wake up in the pit of hell with this to aggravate your woe, that you knew the gospel and refused it! How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation, so great that angels cannot tell its greatness, and human tongues are dumb, at best, when they attempt to speak of the excellent glory of it? Why will you reject it when it is in your hands, when, if you with your hearts believe and with your mouths confess Christ, you shall be saved? Why those hard hearts? Why those silent mouths? May the eternal Spirit bring you to Jesus, and His shall be the praise, world without end. Amen.

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