

THE PUTTING AWAY OF SIN

NO. 911

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 16, 1870
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”
Hebrews 9:26*

WHEN the old dispensation was becoming worn out, and like a vesture ready to be laid aside, when the end of the typical twilight had come, then Jesus Christ came forth from the Father, and brought the dawning with Him. When the often appearing of the Aaronic priests had not availed for the putting away of sin, He came whose once appearing perfected the work.

As it was said to the master of the feast, “Thou hast kept the best wine until now,” so might it be said of the great God of grace, whose crowning gift to man came late, but not too late, to enrich the banquet of His love. There was a fullness of time before which the Messiah could not be cut off, but when that hour was come He was not slow with His sacrifice, but appeared in the appointed place to make atonement for human guilt.

We have this morning to proclaim in the hearing of this congregation an old truth to which you have listened many and many a time, but it is a truth which should be and will be exceedingly delightful to all those whose consciences are troubled with sin. If there be any here who are conscious of the burden of their past guilt, are quickened so as to be sensitive of the curse, can hear the rolling thunder of the impending wrath of God, to them it will be a great joy to hear of one who can put sin away sin.

It must be for such as you are that the great Redeemer in the end of the world came among men. He could not come to put away sin from those who had none, or from those who by their own efforts could put that sin away from themselves. It must be, then, for such as you are, who are hopelessly sinful. Hopelessly so, I say, if viewed from any aspect short of the work of Jesus Christ. It must be for such as you that He has come.

If your house were on fire you would be rejoiced to hear that the fire engines were coming down the street, for you would feel an absolute certainty that they were coming to you, because your house was in a blaze, if no one's else might be.

If there were appointed today a commissioner for the relief of such traders as might be in difficulties, whose capital was little, and whose liabilities were great, if you were in that condition you would feel at once that a hope was held out to you, because the commissioner's office supposes a condition of circumstances in which you are found.

The news of Christ's coming into the world to put away sin sounds like the joy blasts of the silver trumpets of Jubilee to those who know themselves to be full of sin, who desire to have it put away, who are conscious that they cannot remove it themselves, and are alarmed at the fate which awaits them if the sin is not by some means blotted out.

Listen, ye anxious ones, and if there are no charms of eloquence about the speaker, and if he seeks out no gaudy words that might draw attention to himself, yet let the theme, so suitable to you, so necessary to you, chain your ear and win your heart, and may God the Holy Ghost make the preaching of Christ to you to be the opening of the prisons to them that are bound.

There is one thing in the text which should be sure to hold as though spell-bound, the attention of every trembling sinner. It is this—the Christ of God, who in the end of the world has appeared, did not come to deny the fact of human sin, to propagate a philosophy which might make sin appear harmless, and define it as a mere mistake, perhaps a calamity, but by no means a hell-deserving crime. I am sure

that every sensitive conscience would loathe such teaching. It could yield no comfort whatever to a soul which had felt sin to be exceeding sinful.

Jesus Christ did not come into the world to help you to forget your sin. He has not come to furnish you with a cloak with which to cover it. He has not appeared that He may so strengthen your minds (as men would have it), that you may learn to laugh at your iniquities and defy the consequences of thereof. For no such reason came the Son of Man.

He has not come to lull you into a false peace, not to whisper consolation which would turn out to be delusive in the end, but to give you a real deliverance from sin by putting it away, and so to bring you a true peace in which you may safely indulge. For if sin be put away, then peace is lawful. Then rest of spirit becomes not only a blessing which we may enjoy, but which we must enjoy and which the more we shall enjoy the better shall we please our God.

O sinner, the tidings that I bring you this morning are not the mere glitter of a hope that shall delude, not a present palliative for the woe you feel, but a real cure for all your ills, a sure and certain deliverance from all the danger that now hangs over you.

I. We will proceed at once then, to deal with our glorious text, and at the outset let us remember that **IT IS A VERY HARD THING TO PUT AWAY SIN.**

Meditate awhile upon this truth, for it will help you to magnify the power, the wisdom, and the grace of Christ who has put it away. It is a very hard thing to put away sin, *all the Jewish sacrifices could not do it*. They were very costly, sometimes thousands of bullocks were slaughtered. They were ordained of God Himself. In the tabernacle everything was done according to the pattern seen in the holy mount by Moses.

In the temple no sacrifice was presented but according to divine command. The whole Aaronic ritual was very impressive. The priests in their holy robes, pure white linen garments, the golden altar, candlestick, and table, the fire, the smoke, the incense, the whole thing was calculated very much to impress the mind.

The first covenant provided a very magnificent service, such as never will be excelled, but for all that, costly, divinely arranged, impressive, it could not put away sin. And the evidence of this is found in the fact that after one day of atonement they needed another atonement the next year.

Now, if sin had been put away that would have been the end of sin-offering. There is an end of paying when the debt is discharged, an end of punishment when penalty is fulfilled, an end of propitiation when God is satisfied. Why need the fuller cleanse the garment if it be already immaculately white? Why need the refiner cast on fresh fuel if the gold be already rid of all alloy? What need then, of a further sacrifice for sin if sin be effectually removed?

My brethren, sin was still there after all the sin-offerings, it was not washed away, and such men as David felt this when they cried, "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering." Here were thousands of years then of the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats, according to divine command, and yet sin still remained, for its removal was a harder thing to achieve than the blood of bulls and goats could compass.

Nor could sin be put away by ceremonies super-added thereto. There were those in our Lord's days who, not content with doing what God had commanded, invented rites and ceremonies of their own, or carried out those commanded in a manner never intended by God.

These men practiced washings of all kinds, fastings, and genuflexions. They broadened the borders of their garments, they wore phylacteries, they paid tithes of mint, and anise, and cumin, and so on, and hoped by carrying out these minutiae and by adding thereunto the traditions of the fathers obediently observed, they might succeed in getting up a righteousness which should cover their sin.

But our Lord expressly tells us that this was a complete failure, for though they succeeded in making clean the outside of the cup and the platter, their inward parts were very wickedness, and while they were as outwardly clean as sepulchers that had been newly white-washed, yet their inward parts were full of rottenness. There had been no cleansing of themselves by all that they had done.

And it is so now, my dear hearers, no outward forms can make you clean. The leprosy of sin lies deep within. Not even rites that God has given, I repeat it, not even rites that God has given, can avail, however reverently observed, to remove so much as one single sin.

More than this, *repentance itself cannot purge a man from sin*. If anything could do it, surely this might. Let me not be mistaken, wherever God gives real repentance of sin, there sin is forgiven, for repentance and remission go together. But no man is pardoned because of any merit in his repentance. Repentance is a gift given to us graciously at the same time as remission, but it is not the cause of remission, it comes with it, and is one of the outward evidences of it, but it is by no means the cause of it.

Now observe the proof of this in the case of David. David was as penitent as a man could well be. His penitential psalms remain forever the most wonderful expressions of a broken heart, yet David nowhere claims forgiveness because of his contrition.

Take the fifty-first psalm as a specimen. David nowhere concludes that he is forgiven because he repents or that his tears can wash him white. His petition is, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean," alluding to the sacrificial blood which was sprinkled by a piece of hyssop, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Nothing about "I have washed my couch with tears, and therefore I am whiter than snow. I have made my bed to swim with my heart-sorrow for my transgression, and therefore I am pure." His remorse was very acute, but he never rests on that. He looks to the hyssop, he turns himself to the sacred fount of the atoning blood, and there he hopes for cleansing.

Ah, dear hearer, and so must you!

*"Could your tears for ever flow,
Could your grief no respite know,
All for sin could not atone:
Christ must save, and Christ alone.*

Be it also known that *no form of suffering in this world can put away sin*. There is a notion, especially among the poorer classes of London, based very much upon a mistaken interpretation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, that in the next world those who have been very poor, and have suffered a great deal, will as a sort of recompense be taken up to heaven, while the rich, simply because they were rich, will be sent down to hell. Such was by no means the teaching of Christ. It is as wide as the poles asunder from His meaning.

No, my dear hearer, you might be as poor as Lazarus, you might even lie as he did on the dunghill with the hounds to lick your wounds, but this would not win you a place in heaven. Your sufferings here by no means make an atonement for sin.

You remember that man who suffered more in body and in estate than any other man that we have ever read of, I mean Job. You recollect how all his children were taken away at a stroke, how his property was all destroyed, how he then found himself covered from head to foot with a horrible disease, a disease so dreadful that he could not sit in the house and he betook himself to a dunghill, and laid hold upon a piece of a pot to scrape himself withal.

Now after he had passed through all that misery and a great deal more, what was his condition? God appeared to him in a whirlwind, and spoke to him, do you find that Job because of his sufferings stood up before the Lord and said, "I have suffered all this, and am now clear of all sin"? No, no, he cried in great humility, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes."

His sufferings had not made him meritorious, he did not claim anything of the kind, but in the presence of the Most High he abhorred himself, he humbled himself into the very dust. His confidence was not placed in himself but in the Savior, for you hear him say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." His hope looked to the Redeemer, and not to the sufferings which he had himself endured.

Believe me then, my friend, you may carry many grievous diseases about you, and endure great poverty and all kinds of afflictions, you might even torture yourself as Romanists and idolaters do, but all that will be of no service to you in the matter of divine forgiveness. Sin is not to be put away by anything of this sort.

Nor, my dear friends, can any form of self-denial, however terrible it might be, put away sin. Some have fancied that when they have repented of sin after a sort, and forsaken it, that then by denying their bodies, by enduring much physical suffering, they might make atonement. But it is not so.

You remember how the prophet asks what man shall give that he may be accepted with God. “Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

That last question reaches far into the realm of self-sacrifice. “Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” Yet even this would be of no avail.

When you read of fathers and mothers in heathen countries who give their children up to idols, and when your heart is thrilled by the story of Moloch, believed to have been a huge image of brass made hollow, in which a great fire was lighted until it became red hot, and then parents brought their firstborn babes and placed them in the red hot arms of this god, that they might there be consumed to ashes. I say when you hear of this, you think what cruel monsters they must have been! Ah! it was not so.

Many of those fathers were as loving to their children as you are, and the mothers as affectionate as mothers now present, but they felt an awful sense of sin, and believed that this would please God and put away sin, and therefore doing violence to all that was affectionate and tender within their nature, they gave the fruit of their body for the sins of their soul.

And what a thought it is that when they had performed this hideous self-denial and made themselves wretched for life, desolating their family hearth by giving up their dearest ones to die, yet no sin had been put away even then, not one, the spot remained indelible though washed with the blood of their own child. No, my hearer, sin is not easily put away.

It may impress our minds if we remember further that *holy living does not put away past sin.* If from this day forth we should live after the commandment of the law blamelessly, and walk before the Lord with all devotion, and before men with all uprightness, yet it would not put away past sin. And the proof of this is to be found in the fact that those men who have lived after the best fashion, undoubtedly the best men in the world, have declared that their consciences were not satisfied with themselves, and that until they looked away from themselves they did not experience anything like satisfaction.

More memorable still is the fact that *death does not put away sin.* Death puts away a great deal. A man dies, and if he has no estate his debts die with him, and many a hard thought that we had of our fellow man we bury in his tomb. But death never kills a single sin. Sin is immortal until the immortal Christ comes to deal with it.

Sin stands like the everlasting hills, and will not move from its place till He that made heaven and earth casts the mountain into the sea of His atonement. No, the rich man died and was buried, but no sin of his was buried, for in hell he lifted up his eyes, and his sins were there to torture and to condemn him.

Another thought is equally solemn—namely, that *hell itself cannot put away sin.* There is the devil and his angels for whom hell was made, for whom the fire was first kindled, and its pit first digged. But they are as great sinners after these six thousand years as they were when first they were cast down from heaven. And so those lost ones whose spirits have been in hell since the time of Noah’s flood, they are still sinners, and after all the ages of suffering they have endured, not a sin less is upon them now than there was at first.

Ah, dreadful thought! If you and I are ever cast into hell, though ages on ages may lapse and the wrath of God be poured out upon us to the uttermost, there will never be the destruction of a single sin

or particle of a sin by it all. Sin cannot be put away until the penalty is borne to the end, and that can never be by finite man.

What a work was here, then, for the only begotten Son of God to do! Speak of the labors of Hercules! they were nothing compared with the labors of Emmanuel. Speak of miracles! to tread the sea, to hush the billows, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, these are all bright stars, but their light is hid when compared with this miracle of miracles, when the Sun of Christ's righteousness arises with healing beneath His wings, and thick clouds of sin are put away by Him. Think of the difficulty, then, and adore the Christ who accomplished the task.

Before I leave this point I beseech each one here to consider the difficulty of putting away sin in his own case. In any case difficult enough, in mine, in yours, my brethren, how peculiarly so! Our sins trail their horrid length athwart for many years. Our sins are aggravated, they are piled-up sins. Ours are sins against light and knowledge, against conscience, against vows and resolution.

Our sins are sins repeated after we had tasted of their bitterness, foul sins, sins it may be of the sort which bring the blush to the cheek, sins that made us toss on our beds as we remembered them with dread, and yet sins that we returned to as the dog returneth to its vomit.

Oh! our monster sins, our horrible sins, our damnable sins! There was a difficulty indeed in putting these away. May you feel this deeply in your hearts, and you will be ready the more heartily to appreciate our next doctrine.

II. The second great truth is one that is full of joy, namely, that CHRIST HAS PUT AWAY THE SIN OF ALL HIS PEOPLE.

You notice that the word "sin" is in the singular, and for that reason, standing as it does alone, without a qualifying word, it is the more comprehensive. Sin is regarded as one great evil, and Christ has put it away. When the Lord Jesus Christ appeared at the end of the world all the sins of His people were made to meet in one tremendous mass. Jesus Christ suffered all this to be imputed to Him. "The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity"—as if it were but one—"the iniquity of us all." There it was, and He was accounted as if He had committed it all.

In Gethsemane, and on the cross, He endured the penalty due for all the sin of His people, or rather the death which God had stipulated should stand as an equivalent for the sufferings of all the guilty ones for whom He stood. He suffered all that, and by that suffering He put away the sin, the whole mass, the whole mountainous mass of the sin of all those for whom He stood as a substitute, and for whom He suffered the penalty. Sin was completely put away, everlastingly put away, when Jesus gave up the ghost, rose from the dead, and entered into His glory.

I beg you to notice the expression used by our translators. The expression in the Greek is more forcible, and I will deal with that directly. He hath "put away" sin. This phrase in the English version is used in reference to an unfaithful wife when she was "put away." Her husband gave her a bill of divorcement, and she was no longer his.

Until that deed of divorcement was made she was his lawful wife, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and under the law they were regarded as one, their property and estate one. But as soon as ever a lawful divorce was given she had no relation to him, any more than any other woman. She was utterly disowned, she had no further claim on him whatever, the separation was complete.

Now, sin before Christ comes, is, as it were, married to us. The foul thing pollutes us, for its filthiness we are responsible, we have committed it, it is linked with us so as to be, as it were, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

But oh! the blessedness of the fact, Christ has proclaimed an everlasting divorce between our souls and our sins, has put our sins away so that we are no longer knit to them, and their dread responsibility lies no longer upon us. He stands to bear the responsibility of our sin on our behalf and our personal liabilities cease, be they what they may, they are not charged on us.

"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity." He had iniquity, but it is no longer imputed to him. His sins are now no longer his, any more than a man's wife when lawfully

divorced is any longer his. There is a total separation between the believer and all his old sins, a legal separation too, fully justified and complete.

“Putting away” is used in another sense. Jacob commanded his sons to put away the false gods that were among them. We find Josiah putting away Baal and all the false gods of Israel. Now you know how they acted when they put away false gods. There was a search throughout all the house to find out every teraph, and every image, and every symbol that had been an object of reverence.

I think I see Jacob if he had found a teraph, throwing it out of the tent door with indignation, and if he saw it lying at a distance, for fear lest any of his sons or his servants should take it up and reverence it again, the patriarch would go and spurn it with his foot, or perhaps he would take it up, and finding his hammer dash it in pieces and throw the very dust of it away, as Moses ground the golden calf to pieces and threw the fragments in the water. Or as the young Josias did, who, not content with breaking down the altars, broke the images themselves, and utterly destroyed them.

Now in this way has Christ put away His people’s sins. He has utterly demolished them, made a clean sweep of them all, thrown them right away, broken them, destroyed them, and so put them away.

“Putting away” may be illustrated in yet another manner. The Israelites were commanded on the feast of the Passover to put away all leaven out of their houses, and to this day they are very scrupulous about the fulfillment of that command at the time of that great festival. The house is very carefully swept lest a crumb of common leavened bread should remain. The cupboards are ransacked, drawers emptied carefully, and swept with a little brush, and then the master of the house will go through every department of the house to see that no trace of leaven should remain. All leaven must be put away that they may keep the feast with unleavened bread.

Now Jesus Christ in this same way has put away sin. There might have been a sin left in some secret region of my heart, or soul, or conscience, or memory, hidden in a dark department of my nature, and that little sin would have ruined me, but Jesus put it all away. Every crumb and particle of the horrible leaven Christ has swept right out. He altogether and utterly put away sin by His once appearing.

If you are a believer in Christ, my dear friend, the putting away of sin for you does not consist in the forgiveness of here and there a great sin, in the plunging into the Red Sea of His blood of here and there a monster iniquity. But all your sins, of every size, shape, form, hue, degree, or fashion, are altogether gone. Crimson sins, black sins, crying sins, every sort of iniquity from your childhood until now, and right on till you enter into the rest of the Beloved, they were all taken and laid upon Christ, and He made an end of them all when He offered up His great expiatory sacrifice.

He hath put away sin as a whole for His chosen. This is a glorious truth, and if we know that it belongs to us, and that our sin was put away, it is enough to make us anticipate the joy of heaven, and sing the new song, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.”

The Greek word however, is more expressive than the English. I believe it is only used in one other place in the New Testament, and as far as Greek works extant are concerned, it is never used in any other volume. It is a word coined by the apostle, a perfectly regular word, but still made by himself to suit his theme. Though the Greek was a copious language, yet when the Holy Ghost was in the apostle there were not sufficient words extant to express all His meaning.

This word is used in another place, in Hebrews 7:18, and is there translated “disannulling,” to signify an abrogation, a total abolition, an *annihilation*, that word will do. Christ was revealed in the end of the world to abrogate, to annihilate, utterly to abolish sin.

Now we all know what it is to have a thing abrogated. Certain laws have held good up to the first of January of this year with regard to the hiring of public carriages, but now we are under a new law. Suppose a driver complies with the new law, gets his license, puts up his flag, gives the passenger his card of prices, and afterwards the passenger summons him before the magistrate for asking a fare not authorized by the old law.

The magistrate would say, "You are out of court, there is no such law. You cannot bring the man here, he has not broken the old law, for he is not under it. He has complied with the requisition of the new law, by which he declares himself no longer under the old rules, and I have no power over him."

So he that believeth in Christ Jesus may be summoned by conscience when misinformed before the bar of God, but the answer of peace to his conscience is, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." In this way Christ has abrogated the sin of His people.

By what image shall I set forth the abolishing of sin! I do not know what metaphor to use about it, but one suggests itself which is far from complete, but may help somewhat.

When Pompey was killed, Julius Caesar obtained possession of a large casket which contained a vast amount of correspondence which had been carried on with Pompey. There is no doubt whatever, that in that casket were many letters from certain of Caesar's followers making overtures to Pompey, and had Caesar read those letters it is probable that he would have been so angry with many of his friends that he would have put them to death for playing him false. Fearing this, he magnanimously took the casket and destroyed it without reading a single line.

What a splendid way of putting away and annihilating all their offenses against him! Why, he did not even know them, he could not be angry, for he did not know that they had offended. He consumed all their offenses and destroyed their iniquities, so that he could treat them all as if they were innocent and faithful.

The Lord Jesus Christ has made just such an end of your sins and mine. Does not the Lord know our sins, then? Yes, in a certain sense, and yet the Lord declares, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." In a certain sense, God cannot forget, but in another sense, He Himself declares that He remembers not the sins of His people, but has cast them behind His back. "The iniquities of Israel," saith He, "shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found."

An accusing spirit might have said to Caesar, "Do you not know that Caius and Florius were deeply involved with your enemy, Pompey?" "No," he replies, "I know nothing against them." "But in that casket there is evidence." "Ah," rejoins the hero, "there remains no casket, I have utterly destroyed it."

The metaphor fails because it does not set forth the perfectly legal way in which Jesus has made an end of sin by suffering its penalty. Justice has been satisfied, punishment has been meted out for every sin of mine and yours if we are believers. And the whole matter has been accomplished, not by an evasion of law, but by a fulfillment of it, meeting God's justice face to face and satisfying vengeance and putting away sin.

Take another illustration, common enough, but quite to the point. A debt is annihilated when it is paid, so the debts that we owed to justice were abrogated, annihilated and ceased to be because Jesus Christ to the utmost farthing paid whatever His people owed.

Now, child of God, I want you to turn this truth over and over in your mind, Jesus Christ has put away your sin, all of it, all of it, in all respects. Before God you are accepted as if you were innocent. You are even regarded as if you were something more than innocent, namely, actively righteous.

Your sin is so put away that now you are deprived of nothing that sin deprived you of. You have the access which sin once prohibited. You enjoy the favor of God, and nearness to God, and relationship to God, even as if you had never fallen. When sin was put away, all the effects of sin, in detriment and loss to us before God, were virtually put away from the pardoned one. Think of that and rejoice.

Moreover, your sin is put away forever. Do not fall into the idea it can ever return. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," that is to say on His part. The eternal God never says and unsays, never plays fast and loose with a soul. If you are pardoned, then you are so pardoned that none ever can condemn you in time or in eternity. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Oh, what bliss is this!

Do not so much listen to me as let your heart suck out the sweetness of this truth. If it be indeed so, what peace you ought to have! Are you tried and afflicted? Remember how Luther said, “Lord, strike, for I am forgiven,” as if he thought it mattered little what he suffered now that his sin was gone.

Nothing ought to make you suspend your song of praise, O pardoned sinner. You can never go down into the pit. God can never be so wrath with you as to forsake you utterly. You are saved, you have an entailed estate beyond the river. There is a crown in the King’s palace which no head but yours can ever wear, and a harp that your fingers must strike with seraphic joy. O ye banished ones, in the midst of your exile still sing the songs of Zion in anticipation of the time when you shall sing them without groans to mar their melody.

III. We shall open up to you, dear friends, with very much brevity, HOW SIN WAS PUT AWAY.

The text tells us that our Lord put it away by *a sacrifice*. It is the cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion that sin is pardoned through a sacrifice. Substitution is the very pith and marrow of the revelation of God. The Lord Jesus Christ stood in the place of the sinner, and was made a bloody sacrifice for sin. Even as the sacrificed lamb poured out its life-blood, so did He give up His life to redeem our lives.

Now, dear friends, you who are seeking peace today, remember that the place where you will find light for your darkness is where Christ made Himself a sacrifice for sin. Your comfort will not arise from studying His most pure and admirable life, but by considering His painful substitutionary death. He was made sin for you, though He knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He was made to die a death of pain, ignominy, and anguish, and to pour out His blood that you might not feel the sword of vengeance on account of your sins.

Notice that the text tells us what His sacrifice was, it was *Himself*. Sin was not put away by the offering of His living works, nor by the incense of His prayer, nor by the oblation of His tears, nor even by the presentation of His pains and groans before God, but by the sacrifice of Himself. The Lord Christ gave up for you His human body, and soul, and spirit, all that constituted “Himself” was given up freely to the death that the punishment due to our sin might be borne.

Dwell on this thought—the sacrifice of Himself. This leads you to remember who He was. He was God over all, blessed forever, the Maker of all worlds, but He gave *Himself*. See the majesty of His sacrifice, He gave *Himself*. And then behold the infinite merit that there must be in that sacrifice. Had He been a mere man—the death of one innocent man for another may be supposed to have been an atonement for one man—and it was only because He was infinite in His nature that there was infinite merit in His sufferings.

Doubts, however black they may be, ought to subside when we perceive that the atonement made must have been infinitely meritorious, because it was not an atonement of mere tears and blood and works, but an atonement made by the Lord’s giving up *Himself*, His very *self*, that He might put away sin.

Ah! my brethren I can trust an infinite Savior to put away my sin. If I were told that there was this and that to be done by some human priest to put away my sin, I should be afraid that perhaps their efforts would not answer the designed end. But if my sin is put away because God Himself dwelt among men, and suffered in human flesh in my room and stead, I can believe, and will believe, and rest in peace.

*“My soul can on this doctrine live,
Can on this doctrine die.”*

Here is solid ground work for the most guilty heavy laden sinner to build a cheerful hope for eternity upon.

Note well that there is not a word here or anywhere else in Scripture about any renewed and repeated sacrifice. The Romanists tells us that they continue to present the sacrifice of Christ in the unbloody

sacrifice of the mass, but this is a mere invention of their priests. Our Lord once appeared to put away sin, and thereby perfected forever them that are sanctified. What are you at, you pretenders to His name, would you add to what is perfect? Do you put sin away again after the great High Priest has put it away once for all? Away, ye sons of Antichrist!

Observe also that nothing is said about sins ever coming back again. He has put sin away, there is no hint given that it will ever want putting away a second time. He has appeared and put it away finally, totally, eternally. Where, then, is the sin of His people? It is so put away that it is not possible to find it, even if it be searched for, nor can it ever return.

Moreover, not a syllable is uttered concerning anyone helping the Lord Jesus to put away sin. He came to put away sin, but it is not added that others joined in the work, neither is it said that it is done if the sinner's tears should flow, or if he should feel deeply, or if he should act worthily, or if he should be obedient. Not at all, it is nakedly and boldly declared that *He hath put it away*.

Now, on the cross, my dear hearer, Christ either put all your sins away, or He did not. If He did not, you will live and die in unbelief. If He did, nothing of yours is needed to make the atonement perfect. All you have to do is to ascertain your part and lot in the great atonement.

“And,” saith one, “how can I ascertain my portion in it?” You may know by this one thing—Do you believe in Jesus? Do you trust Him? This is the evidence that your sin has ceased to be, and that before you were born Christ put it away forever, so that you need not this day be bowed down about it, or go mourning and troubled as though it even now condemned you.

If you believe, rest assured that God loved you from before the foundations of the world. You are viewed in Christ Jesus as clear before the law. In the person of the only Begotten you are accepted in the Beloved. The love of God looked on you in Christ ages ago, before you could look on it or understand it, and in the fullness of time your sins were foreseen, and their penalty endured by your Redeemer.

I think I hear then, this inquiry put, “How may I share in this blessed result of the putting away of sin?” The answer is, brethren, that the way for us to enjoy a share in it must evidently be one in which we do not, even by implication, seem to claim a part in the putting away of sin. If you think you can get a part in this gracious result by your own feelings or doings, you dishonor the perfect work of Christ, and so you make a gulf between you and Christ.

The only test as to whether Christ put your sin away is this, have you done with all idea of putting the sin away yourself? Are you willing that He should have the whole, sole, and entire glory of putting it away? Will you now trust Him with your whole heart to put your sin away? Well, Soul, there never was a man yet who gave up confidence in everything but Christ, and did rely unfeignedly and heartily upon Christ, but who had in that fact an assurance that Jesus loved him, and gave Himself for him.

“Oh,” saith one, “I have done that then, years ago.” Rejoice then, be glad, and out of love to Jesus go and perform works of holiness to honor Him by whom you are saved. Rejoice all your days, and praise the name of Him that hath washed you. Do not, O you pardoned ones, kneel down every Lord's-day, night and morning, and wail out the cry that you are “miserable sinners”! You ought not to be miserable sinners, now that you are forgiven, justified, adopted, and made one with Christ.

You are sinners, but wherefore miserable? To those believers who call themselves “miserable sinners,” the Lord might well reply, “You do not then believe Me. Have I not pardoned you, and declared that there is no condemnation to you? Is this your only gratitude? Is there no joyful thankfulness? Nothing but sullen misery?” Blessed be God, such a form of service is little suitable for believers in Jesus, though very fitting for those who trust their baptismal regeneration.

Our gladsome lips have learned—

*“Oh, how sweet to view the flowing
Of our Savior's precious blood,
With divine assurance knowing
He has made our peace with God.”*

Sin is gone, gone forever, go, believer, and rejoice therein.

But I think I hear another say, “O that I could know assuredly that my sin was put away. I fain would trust the Savior, but the question is, may I trust Him?” That, my friend, need not be a question, He commands you to trust Him. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

You are threatened if you do not believe, therefore take courage, man, and trust Christ now. “What, and having lived a sinful life up till now, if I indeed trust Him will that sinful life be blotted out? Must I not at least go home and begin to read my Bible and spend a month in preparation?” Delay not, today if thou wilt hear His voice harden not thy heart. Trust Him now.

Saul of Tarsus was struck down at once, in the midst of sin, and saved. The dying thief had not to be taken down from the cross and laid up in hospital till he passed through a probation. He prayed the prayer, “Lord, remember me!” and he received the answer, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” The pardon of sin is instantaneous. It is not a matter of even minutes or seconds.

“There is life in a look at the Crucified One.”

One glance of your soul’s eye at a crucified Savior, and the simple reliance of your spirit upon Him, and you are saved beyond all risk. The Lord grant you, by His Holy Spirit’s aid, to do this today, and I know you will go away to be amongst the dearest lovers of my Master and among the most careful of His servants, for you will love Him too well to disobey Him, and it will be your joy from this time forth, even forever, to honor Him.

I think I hear you say, “I who was the chief of sinners was met with when I least expected it by my gracious Savior, while listening to the Gospel, and I was forgiven in a moment through a simple act of faith. And now here I am, my Lord’s servant, to live and to die for Him if He will but give me grace to do so.” The Lord grant it, for His name’s sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ROMANS 9

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.