

Death to Sin Through Christ

by Charles Finney

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of Christ that enables believers to be dead to sin and alive to God.

Scripture: Romans 5:20, Romans 6:11, 2 Corinthians 6:17-18, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:1-5, Philippians 3:13-14, Colossians 3:1-3, Hebrews 12:1-2, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Transformation in Christ", "Victory Over Sin"

Description

Charles Finney emphasizes the transformative power of Christ's sacrifice, urging believers to recognize themselves as dead to sin and alive to God. He explains that while sin once reigned over us, through Christ's death, we are liberated from its control, allowing us to live a life of holiness. Finney elaborates on the necessity of faith in this process, encouraging Christians to fully commit to God and reject sin as they would a betrayal in a marriage. He warns against the complacency of expecting to live in sin while claiming salvation, asserting that true faith leads to a genuine desire for purity and a life devoted to God. Ultimately, he calls for a radical expectation of victory over sin through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." -- Romans 6:11.

THE connection of this passage will help us to understand its meaning. Near the close of the previous chapter Paul had said, "The law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." He speaks here of sin as being a reigning principle or monarch, and of grace also as reigning. Then, in chapter vi., he proceeds, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

You observe here that Paul speaks of the man, the old sinner, as being crucified with Christ, so destroyed by the moral power of the Cross that he who was once a sinner shall no longer serve sin. When he speaks of our being planted or buried with Christ, we must of course understand him as employing figures of speech to teach the great truth that the Gospel redeems the soul from sin. As Christ died for sin, so by a general analogy we die to sin; while, on the other hand, as He rose to a new and infinitely glorious life, so the convert rises to a new and blessed life of purity and holiness.

But recurring particularly to our text, let me say -- The language used in our translation would seem to denote that our death to sin is precisely analogous to Christ's death for sin; but this is not the case. We are dead to sin in the sense that it is no longer to be our master, implying that it has been in power over us. But sin never was in power over Jesus Christ -- never was His master. Christ died to abolish its power over us -- not to abolish any power of sin over Himself, for it had none. The analogy between Christ's death in relation to sin and our dying to sin, goes to this extent and no farther: He died for the sake of making an atonement for sin and of creating a moral power that should be effective to kill the love of sin in all hearts; but the Christian dies unto sin in the sense of being divorced from all sympathy with sin and emancipated from its control.

But I must proceed to remark upon the text itself, and shall inquire,

I. What it is to be dead unto sin in the sense of the text.

II. What it is to be alive unto God.

III. What it is to reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV. What it is to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

V. What is implied in the exhortation of our text.

I. What it is to be dead unto sin in the sense of the text.

Being dead to sin must obviously be the opposite of being dead in sin. The latter must undeniably be a state of entire sinfulness -- a state in which the soul is dead to all good through the power of sin over it. But right over against this, to be dead to sin, must be to be indifferent to its attractions -- beyond the reach of its influence -- as fully removed from its influences as the dead are from the objects of sense in this world. As he who is dead in the natural sense has nothing more to do with earthly things, so he who is dead to sin has nothing to do any more with sin's attractions or with sinning itself.

II. What is it to be alive unto God?

To be full of life for Him -- to be altogether active and on the alert to do His will; to make our whole lives a perpetual offering to Him, constantly delivering up ourselves to Him and His service that we may glorify His name and subserve His interests.

III. What is it to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin?

The word rendered reckon is sometimes rendered account. Abraham's faith was accounted unto him for righteousness. So, in this passage, reckon must mean believe, esteem yourselves dead indeed unto sin. Account this to be the case. Regard this as truly your relation to sin; you are entirely dead to it; it shall have no more dominion over you.

A careful examination of the passages where this original word is used will show that this is its usual and natural sense. And this gives us the true idea of Gospel faith -- embracing personally the salvation which is by faith in Jesus Christ. But more of this hereafter.

IV. What is meant by reckoning yourselves alive indeed unto God through Jesus Christ?

Plainly this: that you are to expect to be saved by Jesus Christ and to calculate on this salvation as your own. You are to esteem yourself as wholly dead to sin and as consequently brought into life and peace in Christ Jesus.

V. What is implied in the exhortation of our text?

That there is an adequate provision for this expectation, and for realizing these blessings in fact. For if there were no ground for realizing this, the injunction would be most absurd. A precept requiring us to account ourselves dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God, would be utterly untenable if there were no probability of the thing -- if no provision were made for our coming into such relations to sin on the one hand and to God through Christ on the other. For if these blessings could not be reasonably expected, there could be no rational ground for the expectation. If it were not reasonable to expect it, then to enjoin us to expect it would be palpably unreasonable. Who does not see that the very injunction implies that there is a foundation laid and adequate provision made for the state required?

What is implied in complying with this injunction.

1. Believing such a thing to be possible. Believing it possible that through Christ we may live in the required manner, that we may avoid sin -- desist from sinning -- give it up and abandon it altogether, and put it forever away. There can be no such thing as an intelligent compliance with this precept, except as there shall underlie it this belief in its practicability. A state actually made practicable by adequate grace, adapted to the laws of mind and to the actual moral condition of lost men.

2. That we cease from all expectation of attaining this state of ourselves, and by our own independent, unaided efforts. There is no beginning to receive by grace till we renounce all expectation of attaining by natural works. It is only when empty of self that we begin to be filled of Christ.

3. A present willingness to be saved from sin. We must actually renounce all sin as such -- that is, renounce sin because it is sin, and for what it is. This position the mind must take: I can have nothing more to do with sinning -- for God hates sin, and I am to live henceforth and for ever to please and glorify Him. My soul is committed with its utmost strength of purpose to this pleasing of God and doing His will.

4. It implies also an entire committal of your whole case to Jesus Christ, not only for present, but for all future salvation from sin. This is absolutely essential. It must always be the vital step -- the cardinal act in this great work of salvation from sin.

5. It implies also the foreclosing of the mind against temptation, in such a sense that the mind truly expects to live a life purely devoted to God. This is the same sort of foreclosing of the mind as takes place under a faithful marriage contract. The Bible everywhere keeps this figure prominent. Christians are represented as the bride of Christ. They stand in a relation to Him which is closely analogous to that of a bride to her husband. Hence when they commit their whole hearts to Him, reposing their affections in Him, and trusting Him for all good, their hearts are strongly foreclosed against temptation. The principle here involved, we see illustrated in the merely human relation. When parties are solemnly betrothed in mutual honest fidelity, there is no longer any thought of letting the eye rove or the heart go abroad for a fresh object of interest and love. The heart is fixed -- willingly and by plighted faith fixed, and this fact shuts out the power of temptation almost entirely. It renders it comparatively an easy matter to keep the heart safely above the influence of temptation to apostasy. Before the sacred vows are taken, individuals may be excused for looking round and making any observations or inquiries: but never after the solemn vow is made. After the

parties have become one by vow of marriage, never to be broken, there is to be no more question as to a better choice -- no further thought about changing the relation or withdrawing the heart's affections. No wavering is admissible now; the pledge is made for everlasting faithfulness, settled once and forever! This is God's own illustration, and surely none need be more apt or more forcible. It shows how the Christian should look upon sin and upon all temptation to sin. He must say, Away from my heart for ever! I am married to Jesus Christ; how then can I look after other lovers? My mind is forever settled. It rests in the deep repose of one whose affections are plighted and fixed -- to rove no more! Sin? I can think of yielding to its seductions no longer. I cannot entertain the question for a moment. I can have nothing to do with sinning. My mind is settled -- the question forever foreclosed, and I can no more admit the temptation to small sins than to great sins -- no more consent to give my heart to worldly idols than to commit murder! I did not enter upon religion as upon an experiment, to see how I might like it -- no more, than a wife or husband take on themselves the marriage vow as an experiment. No; my whole soul has committed itself to Jesus Christ with as much expectation of being faithful forever as the most faithful husband and wife have of fulfilling their vows in all fidelity till death shall part them.

Christians in this state of mind no more expect to commit small sins than great sins. Hating all sin for its own sake and for its hatefulness to Christ, any sin, however small, is to them as murder. Hence if the heart is ever afterwards seduced and overcome by temptation, it is altogether contrary to their expectation and purpose; it was not embraced in their plan by any means, but was distinctly excluded; it was not deliberately indulged aforesaid, but broke on them unexpectedly through the vantage ground of old habits or associations.

Again, the state of mind in question implies that the Christian knows where his great strength lies. He knows it does not lie in works of fasting, giving alms, making prayers, doing public duties or private duties -- nothing of this sort; not even in resolutions or any self-originated efforts, but only in Christ received by faith. He no more expects spiritual life of himself apart from Christ, than a man in his senses would expect to fly by swinging his arms in the air. Deep in his soul lies the conviction that his whole strength lies in Christ alone.

When men are so enlightened as truly to apprehend this subject, then to expect less than this from Jesus Christ as the result of committing the whole soul to Him for full salvation, is virtually to reject Him as a revealed Saviour. It does not honour Him for what He is; it does not honour the revelations He has made of Himself in His word by accepting Him as there presented. For consider, what is the first element of this salvation? Not being saved from hell, but being saved from sin. Salvation from punishment is quite a secondary thing, in every sense. It is only a result of being saved from sin, and not the prime element in the Gospel salvation. Why was the infant Messiah to be called Jesus? Because He should save His people from their sins. And does the Bible anywhere teach any other or different view from this?

REMARKS.

1. This text alone, "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ" most entirely justifies the expectation of living without sin through all-abounding grace. If there were no other passage bearing on this point, this alone is adequate, and for a Christian to offer this only as a reason for such a hope in Him is to offer as good a reason as need be given. There are indeed many others that fully justify this expectation.

2. To teach that such an expectation is a dangerous error is to teach unbelief. What if the apostle had added to this injunction which requires us to account ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, this singular averment: "Yet let me warn you, nobody can rationally hope to be free from sin in this world. You must remember that to entertain such an expectation as God enjoins in this language is a dangerous error." What should be thought of this if it were attached to Rom. vi. 11?

No man can deny that the passage treats of sanctification. The whole question is, Shall Christians "continue in sin" after having been forgiven and accepted in their Redeemer? Paul labours to show that they should, and of course that they may die to sin -- even as Christ died for sin; and may also live a new, a spiritual life (through faith in His grace), even as Christ does a higher and more glorious life.

Let me refer here to another passage, in which it is said "be not unequally yoked with unbelievers -- what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." -- 2 Cor. vi. 11-18, and vii. 1. This is a very remarkable passage. Note how precept and promise are intermingled, and how, finally, upon the basis of a most glorious promise, is founded the precept enjoining us to perfect holiness. Now what should we think of Paul and of the Divine Spirit who spake through Paul, if he had immediately subjoined, "Take care lest any of you should be led by these remarks to indulge the very dangerous and erroneous expectation that you can 'perfect holiness,' or cleanse yourselves from any sin, either of flesh or spirit, in this world?" Would not this have been trifling with the intelligence and Christian sensibility of every reader of his words throughout all time? Should we not account it as substantially blasphemous?

It so happens that the Bible never gainsays its own teachings; but I ask -- What if it had? What if the Bible had solemnly asserted, "No mere man, either of himself or by any grace received in this life, has ever kept or shall ever keep the commandments of God wholly, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed?"

To teach that such an expectation is dangerous is a great deal worse than no teaching at all. Far better to leave men to their own unaided reading of God's Word, for this could scarcely in any case so sadly mislead them, however inclined they might be to the misapprehension. Dangerous to expect salvation from sin? Dangerous? What does this mean? What! Dangerous to expect victory over any sin? If so, what is the Gospel worth? What Gospel have we that can be deemed good news at all?

Many indulge the very opposite expectation. Far from expecting any such thing as the apostle authorizes them to expect, they know they have no such expectation.

Of some yet more than this is true -- they expect to count themselves always in sin. They depend on reckoning themselves, not dead indeed unto sin, but somewhat alive to it through all their mortal life, and in part alive to God through Jesus Christ. It follows as quite a thing of course that expecting no such thing as complete victory over sin they will use no appropriate means, since faith stands foremost among those means, and faith must include at least a confidence that the thing sought is possible to be attained.

In this and the following chapters we have the essence of the good news of the Gospel. Any one who has been wounded and made sore by sin -- its bitter shafts sinking deep into his moral being -- one who has known its bitterness and felt the poison thereof drink up his spirit -- such an one will see that there is glory

in the idea of being delivered from sin. He will surely see that this deliverance is by far the greatest want of his soul, and that nothing can be compared with escaping from this body of sin and death. Look at Rom. vii. There you will have the state of a man who is more than convinced, who is really convicted. It is one thing to be convinced, and a yet further stage of progress in the right direction to be convicted. This term implies the agency of another party. The criminal at the bar may be quite convinced of his guilt by the view he was compelled to take of his own case; but his being convicted is a still further step; the testimony and the jury convict him.

Some of you know what it is to see yourself a sinner, and yet the sight of the fact brings with it no smart -- no sting; it does not cut deep into your very soul. On the other hand, some of you may know what it is to see your sins all armed like an armed man to pierce you through and through with daggers. Then you cry out as here -- O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? You feel a piercing sting as if your soul were filled with poison -- with dark rankling venom, diffusing through the depths of your soul the very agonies of hell! This is what I mean by being convicted, as a state of mind beyond being merely convinced. The shafts and the smiting of sin seem really like the piercings of an arrow, as if arrows from the Almighty did really drink up your spirit. When you experience this, then you can understand what the good news of the Gospel is. A remedy for such pangs must be good news beyond all contradiction. Then to know that the blood of Christ can save, is indeed a cordial of life to the fainting soul.

Place a man in this state of cutting, piercing conviction, and then let him feel that there is actually no remedy, and he sinks under the iron shafts of despair. See his agony! Tell him there can never be any remedy for his guilty soul! You must lie there in you wailing and despair forever! Can any state of mind be more awful?

I remember a case that occurred in Reading, Pa., many years ago. There was a man of hard heart and iron frame, a strong, burly man, who had stood up against the revival as if he could shake off all the arrows of the Almighty, even as the Mastodon of which the tradition of the red man says, He shook off all the arrows of the warriors from his brow and felt no harm. So he stood. But he had a praying wife and a praying sister, and they gathered their souls in the might of prayer close about him as a party of men would hem in a wild bull in a net. Soon it was apparent that an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty had pierced between the joints of his harness and had taken hold of his innermost heart. O, was not he in agony then! It was night -- dark and intensely cold. It seemed that absolutely he could not live. They sent for me to come and see him. I went. While yet sixty rods from his house I heard his screams and wailings of woe. It made me feel awfully solemn -- so like the echoes of the pit of hell! I reached the house: there he lay on the floor rolling in his agony and wailing, such as is rarely heard this side the pit of despair. Cold as the weather was, he sweat like rain, every part of his frame being in a most intense perspiration. Oh, his groans! and to see him gnaw his very tongue for pain -- this could not but give one some idea of the doom of the damned. O, said I, if this be only conviction, what is hell? But he could not bear to hear anything about sin; his conscience was already full of it, and had brought out the awful things of God's law so as to leave nothing more to be done in that direction. I could only put Christ before him, and just hold his mind to the view of Christ alone. This soon brought relief. But suppose I had nothing else to say but this, "Mr. B., there is no help possible for your case! You can wail on and wail on: no being in the universe can help you?" Need you say to him hell has no fire? Oh, he has fire enough in his burning soul already. It seems to him that no hell of fire can possibly be worse than this.

How perfectly chilling and horrible for persons to oppose the idea of expecting deliverance from sin and yet talk calmly of going on in sin all the rest of their earthly days! As an elder whom I knew rose in meeting and told the Lord he had been living in sin thus far, and expected to go on in sin as long as he lived; he had sinned today and should doubtless sin tomorrow and so on -- and yet he talked as calmly about it all as if it were foolish to make any ado, as well as impossible to attempt any change for the better. Talk of all this calmly -- think of that! Quite calmly of living alone in sin all the rest of his days! How horrible! Suppose a wife should say to her husband, "I love you some, but you know I love many other men too, and that I find it pleasant to indulge myself with them. You certainly must be aware that all women are frail creatures, and liable to fall continually, and indeed you know that I expect to fall more or less, as it may happen, every day I live, so that you certainly will not expect from me anything so impracticable and fanatical as unblemished virtue! You know we have none of us any idea of being perfect in the present life -- we don't believe in any such thing!"

Now let me ask you to look at this woman and hear what she has to say. Can you hear her talk so, without having your soul filled with horror? What! is this woman a wife, and does she think and talk in this way about conjugal fidelity?

And yet this is not to be compared in shocking guilt and treason with the case of the Christian who says, "I expect to sin every day I live," and who says this with unmoved carelessness. You expect to be a traitor to Jesus each day of your life; to crucify Him afresh each day; to put Him each day to an open shame; each day to dishonour His name, and grieve His heart, and to bring sorrow and shame upon all who love Christ's cause; and yet you talk about having a good hope through grace! But tell me, does not every true Christian say, "Do not let me live at all if I cannot live without sin; for how can I bear to go on day by day sinning against Him whom I so much love!"

Those who are really opposed to this idea, are either very ignorant of what the Gospel is, or they are impenitent and of course do not care to be delivered from their sins; or at best they are guilty of great unbelief. Into which of these classes the opposers of the doctrine may fall, is a question for themselves to settle, as between their own consciences and their God.

There are two distinct views of salvation entertained among professed Christians, and correspondingly two distinct classes of professors -- often embraced within the same church. The one class regard the Gospel as a salvation from sin. They think more of this and value it more than the hope of heaven, or of earth either. The great thing with them is to realize the idea of deliverance from sin. This constitutes the charm and glory of the Gospel. They seek this more than to be saved from hell. They care more by far to be saved from sin itself than from its penal consequences. Of the latter they think and pray but little. It is their glory and their joy that Christ is sent to deliver them from their bondage in iniquity -- to lift them up from their wretched state and give them the liberty of love. This they labour to realize; this is to them the good news of Gospel salvation.

The other class are mostly anxious to be saved from hell. The punishment due for sin is the thing they chiefly fear. In fact, fear has been mainly the spring of their religious efforts. The Gospel is not thought of as a means of deliverance from sin, but as a great system of indulgences -- a vast accommodation to take off the fear and danger of damnation, while yet it leaves them in their sin. Now, here I do not by any means imply that they will call their system of Gospel faith a scheme of indulgences: the name doubtless will be an offence to them. They may not have distinctly considered this point, and may have failed to notice that in fact it is such and nothing better.

They seem not to notice that a scheme of salvation that removes the fear of damnation for sin, and which yet leaves them in their sins to live for themselves, to please themselves, and which holds that Christ will at last bring them to heaven notwithstanding their having lived in sin all their days, must be a vast scheme of indulgences. Indeed, it is a compromise on a most magnificent scale. By virtue of it, the whole Church is expected to wallow on in sin through life, and be none the less sure of heaven at last.

These opposite views are so prevalent and so palpable you will see them everywhere as you go round among the churches. You will find many in the Church who are altogether worldly and selfish; who live conformed to the world in various neglects of duty, and who expect to indulge themselves in sin more or less all the way through life. You may ask them -- Do you think that is right? They answer -- No. Why, then, do you do it? Oh, we are all imperfect, and we can't expect to be any better than imperfect, while here in the flesh. Yet they expect to be saved at last from hell, and to have all their sins forgiven; but how? Not on condition of sincerely turning away from all their sins, but on the assumption that the Gospel is a vast system of indulgences -- more vast by far than Pope Leo X. ever wielded and worked to comfort sinning professors in his day. For here are not merely those that sin occasionally as there, but those who live in sin and know they do, and expect they shall as long as they live, yet expect to be saved without fail at last.

The other class of professed Christians have no expectation of being saved only as they have a pure heart and live above the world. Talk to them about living in sin, they hate and dread the very thought. To them the poison of asps is in it. Sin is bitter to their souls. They dread it as they dread death itself.

No one can go round within this church or any other without finding these two classes as distinct in their apprehension of the Gospel as I have described them to be. The one class are in agony if they find themselves even slipping, and they are specially cautious against exposing themselves to temptation.

Not so with the other class. Two ministers of the Gospel being together, one urged the other strongly to engage in a certain service. The other declined. "Why not go?" said the first. "Because I do not think myself justified in exposing myself to such and so much temptation."

"But why stop for that? We expect to sin more or less always; and all we have to do is to repent of it afterwards."

Horror-smitten, the other could only say, "I hold to a different Gospel from that altogether."

Suppose a wife should say to her husband, "I am determined I will go to the theatre." "But, my dear," says he, "you know bad people congregate there, and you may be tempted." But she replies, "Never mind; if I sin I will repent of it afterwards."

The real Christian may be known by this, that the very thought of being drawn into sin drives him to agony. He cannot bear the idea of living in sin; no, not for one moment.

The young people here who are truly Christians, are careful about this ensuing vacation. You will be on your guard, for you are afraid you may be ensnared into sin. I do not mean that you need fear to go where God calls you, but it is a terrible thing to be ensnared into sin, and you cannot but feel it to be so. If you know what it is to be wounded by the arrows of sin in your soul, you will go abroad into apparent danger, walking softly and with caution, and much prayer. You will surely be much on your guard. But if you say, "Oh, if I sin I will repent," what shall I say of you? You will repent will you? And this will make all right again

so easily? Suppose you foresaw that in going abroad for vacation you would get drunk a few times, and would commit one or two murders, would you say, "Oh, I may be a good Christian notwithstanding. I will be careful to repent of it after it is all over." Horrible! And yet you can think yourself a good Christian! Let me tell you, a Christian man who repents of sin, repents of it as sin. He makes no such discriminations as between a little secret sin and a great sin -- for example, a murder. He knows no such distinction between sins as will leave him to commit the one class without scruple and to shrink from the other. With him anything that grieves God is a horrible thing. Anything that displeases God, "Ah," he cries out, "God will see it; it will grieve His heart!" How it will affect God -- this is all in all with him. One who knows what it is to appear guilty of sin before God, and then who knows also what it is to be delivered from this condition, will understand how the Christian ought to feel in circumstances of temptation, where he feels himself in danger of sinning. His hair all stands on end! How awful to sin against God! Hence, anything that seems likely to bring him into danger will rouse up all his soul within him, and put him on his guard.

The unbelief of the Church as to what they may receive from Christ is the great stumbling-block, hindering themselves and others from experiencing deliverance. Not only is this a great curse to professed Christians, but it is also a great grief to Jesus Christ and a sore trial.

Many seem to have hardened their hearts against all expectation of this deliverance from sin. They have heard the doctrine preached. They have seen some profess to be in this state of salvation from sin, but they have also seen some of this class fall again, and now they deliberately reject the whole doctrine. But is this consistent with really embracing the Gospel? What is Christ to the believer? What was His errand into the world? What is He doing, and what is He trying to do?

He has come to break the power of sin in the heart, and to be the life of the believer, working in him a perpetual salvation from sin, aiming to bring him thus, and only thus, to heaven at last. What is faith? what but the actual giving of yourself up to Christ that He may do this work for you and in you? What are you to believe of Christ if not this, that He is to save His people from their sins? Can you tell of anything else? Does the Bible tell you to expect something different and less than this? The fact is, that it has been the great stumbling-block to the Church that this thing has not been well understood. The common experience of nominal Christians has misrepresented and belied the truth. The masses forming their views much more from this experience than from the Bible, or at best applying this experience to interpret the Bible, have adopted exceedingly defective, not to say false, opinions as to the nature and design of the Gospel. They seem to forget altogether that Paul, writing to Christians at Rome, assures them that if they are under grace, sin shall not have dominion over them.

When Christians do not expect this blessing from Christ, they will not get it. While they expect so little as they usually do, no wonder they get so little. According to their faith, and not ever very much beyond it, need they expect to receive.

It is often the case that sanctification is held as a theory, while the mind does not yet by any means embrace the truth in love. The case is analogous to that of impenitent sinners who hold in theory that they must have a new heart. They profess to believe thus, but do they really understand it? No. Suppose it were revealed to their minds so that they should really see it as it is, would they not see a new thing? Would they not be startled to see how utterly far they are, while impenitent, from being acceptable to God, and how great the change they must experience before they can enter the kingdom? So of sanctification. Although this class of persons profess to hold it in theory, yet the passages of Scripture which describe it do not enter into their experience. They do not see the whole truth. If they were to see the whole truth, and

should then reject it, I believe it would be in them the unpardonable sin. When the Spirit of God discloses to them the real meaning of the Gospel, then if they deliberately reject it, how can the sin be less than what the Scriptures represent as the unpardonable sin? Having once been enlightened, and having received the knowledge of the truth that they might be saved, then turning back, is it not thenceforth impossible that they should be renewed again to repentance? One thing, at least, must be said, there is a peril which many of the professed Christians of our day seem not to realize, in having so much light before the mind as they actually have in regard to the provisions made in the Gospel for present sanctification, and then in rejecting this light practically and living still in sin as if the Gospel made no provision to save the Christian from his sins. Into this awful peril how many rush blindly and to their own destruction!

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