

Sermons and Tracts by That Worthy Martyr of Christ, John Bradford

by John Bradford

The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance for salvation and critiques the false teaching of penance, emphasizing the need for a sorrowing for our sins, a trust of pardon, and a purpose to amend.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 55:7, Matthew 4:17, Luke 13:3, Acts 3:19, Romans 2:4, Hebrews 9:22, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "God's Mercy", "Repentance"

Description

John Bradford, in his sermon on repentance, emphasizes the dire need for heartfelt contrition and the recognition of God's judgment against sin, particularly in light of the recent death of King Edward VI. He warns that the absence of true repentance will lead to the loss of God's gospel and the ensuing wrath upon the nation. Bradford outlines the components of true repentance: sorrow for sin, trust in God's mercy, and a commitment to amend one's life. He urges his listeners to seek God's grace and to remember the sacrifice of Christ as the ultimate remedy for sin. The preacher calls for a collective return to God, highlighting that without repentance, the kingdom of heaven remains unattainable.

Transcript

Sermons and Tracts by that Worthy Martyr of Christ, John Bradford *

A fruitful Sermon of Repentance, made by that Constant Martyr of Christ, John Bradford, 1553 *

A Sermon upon the Supper of the Lord *

A Fruitful Treatise, and Full of Heavenly Consolation against the Fear of Death *

An Exhortation to the Patient Suffering of Trouble and Affliction for Christ's Cause *

A Short and Pithy Defence of the Doctrine of the Holy Election and Predestination of God *

A Brief Summary of the Doctrine of Election and Predestination *

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To the Christian reader, John Bradford wishes the true knowledge and peace of Jesus Christ, our alone and all-sufficient Saviour.

Great and heavy is God's anger against us, as the most grievous plague of the death of our late king (Edward VI, editor), (a prince the most peerless of all that ever were since Christ's ascension into heaven, in any region,) now fallen upon us does prognosticate. For when God's judgment has begun with his child, this our dear dearling, let other men think as they can, I surely cannot be persuaded otherwise, but that a grievous and bitter cup of God's vengeance is ready to be petered out for us Englishmen to drink of. Judgment is begun at God's house. In God's mercy towards him he is taken away, that his eyes should not see the miseries which we shall feel. (Heb. xi.) He was too good to tarry with us, a generation so wicked, so froward, so perverse, so obstinate, so malicious, so hypocritical, so covetous, unclean, untrue, proud, and carnal. I will not go about to paint us out in our colours. All the world which never saw England, by hearsay sees England; God by his plagues and vengeance, I fear, will paint us out, and point us out. We have so mocked with him and his gospel, that we shall feel it is no bourding (trifling, jesting, editor) with him.

We have long covered our covetousness and carnality under the cloak of his gospel, so that all men shall see us to our shame, when he shall take his gospel away, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruits of it. Then shall we appear as we are. Let his gospel tarry with us, he cannot; for we despise it, condemn it, are glutted with it. We disdain his manna, it is but a vile meat as we think. We would be again in Egypt, and sit by the greasy fleshpots, to eat again our garlic, onions, and leeks. Since God's gospel came among us, we say now, we never had plenty, therefore again let us go and worship the queen of heaven. (Jer. vii. xlv.) Children begin to gather sticks, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women make the cakes, to offer to the queen of heaven and to provoke the Lord to anger. The earth now cannot abide the words and sermons of Amos; the cause of all rebellion is Amos, and his preaching. (Amos vii.) It is Paul and his fellows that make all out of order; the gospel is now the outcast and curse of the realm, and so are the preachers, therefore out of the doors with them. So that I say God cannot let his gospel tarry with us, but must needs take it away to do us some pleasure therein, for so shall we think for a time; as the Sodomites thought when Lot departed from them; as the old world thought, when Noah went into his ark; as the Jerusalemites thought, when the apostles went thence to Peltis (Pella, editor); then were they merry, then was all pastime; when Moses was absent, then went they to eating and drinking, and rose up again to play, (Exod. xxxii.) then was all peace, all was well, nothing amiss. But, alas! the flood came suddenly, and drowned them; God's wrath waxed hot against them; then was weal away (happiness departed, editor), mourning, and woe; then was crying out, wringing of hands, rending of clothes, sobbing and sighing, for the miseries out of which they could not escape. But oh! ye mourners and criers out, ye renders of clothes, why mourn ye? What is the cause of your misery? The gospel is gone, God's word is little preached, you were not disquieted with it; Noah troubled you not, Lot is departed, the apostles are gone. What now is the cause of these your miseries? Will you at length confess it is your sins? Nay, now it is too late, God called upon you, and you would not hear him, therefore yell and cry out now, for he will not hear you. You bowed your ears from hearing of God's law, therefore your prayer is execrable.

But to come again to us Englishmen. I fear me, I say, that for our unthankfulness' sake, for our impiety and wickedness, as God has taken away our king, so will he take away his gospel; yea, many think so we would have it, then should all be well. Well, if he take that away, for a time perchance we shall be quiet, but at length we shall feel the want to our woe; at length he will have at us, as at Sodom, at Jerusalem, and other places. And now he begins to brew such a brewing, wherein one of us is likely to destroy

another, and so to make an open gap for foreign enemies to devour us, and destroy us. (He refers to the hostilities which then appeared likely to ensue between the partisans of queen Mary and lady Jane Grey. Editor.) The father is against the son, the brother against the brother and with what conscience! Oh, Lord !be thou merciful unto us! and in thine anger remember thy mercy; suffer thyself to be entreated, be reconciled unto us, nay, reconcile us unto thee. Oh! thou God of justice! judge justly. Oh! thou Son of God! who comes to destroy the works of Satan, destroy his furies now smoking, and almost set on fire, in this realm. We have sinned, we have sinned, and therefore thou art angry. Oh! be not angry for ever. Give us peace, peace, peace in the Lord; set us to war against sin, against Satan, against our carnal desires, and give us the victory this way. This victory we obtain by faith; this faith is not without repentance, as her gentleman-usher before her. Before her, I say, in discerning true faith from false faith; lip faith, English-men's faith; for else it springs out of true faith.

This usher then, Repentance, if me truly possessed, we should be certain of true Faith, and so be assured of the victory over death, hell, and Satan. His works then, which he has stirred up, would quail. God would restore us political peace, right should be right, and have right; God's gospel should tarry with us, religion should be cherished, superstition suppressed, and so we should yet be something happy, notwithstanding the great loss of our most gracious liege sovereign lord. All this would come to pass, if the gentleman-usher I speak of, I mean, Repentance, were present with us. As if he be absent, we may be certain that lady Faith is absent. Wherefore we cannot but be vanquished by the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so will Satan's works prosper, though not in all things to blear our eyes, yet in that thing which he most of all desires. Therefore let us to repentance for ourselves privately, and for the realm and church publicly; every one should labour to stir up both themselves and others. This to the end that for my part I might help, I have now put forth a Sermon of Repentance, which has lain by me half a year at the least, as to the most part of it. For, the last summer, as I was abroad preaching in the country, my chance was to make a Sermon of Repentance, which was earnestly by divers desired of me, that I should give it them written, or else put it forth in print. The which as I could not grant, for I had not written it, I told them so, who had so earnestly desired it. But when no way would serve, but I must promise them to write it as I could, I consented to their request that they should have it at my leisure. This leisure I prolonged so long that as, I think, I offended them, so I pleased myself, and, one more glad to read other men's writings, than to publish my own for other men to read; not that I would others should not profit by me, but that I, knowing how slender my store is, would be loath that the enemies should have just occasion for evil speaking, and wresting that which is simply spoken. But when I considered this present time, to occasion men now to look upon all things in such sort as might move them to godliness, rather than to any curious questioning, I, for the satisfying of my promise, and profiting of the simple, ignorant, and rude, have now caused this sermon to be printed; which I beseech God, for his Christ's sake, to use as a mean, whereby of his mercy it may please him to work in me and many others true hearty repentance for our sins, to the glory of his name.

Thus fare thou well in the Lord. This 12th of July 1553.

(Thomas Sampson, in his preface to this Sermon on Repentance, remarks, "Our Bradford had his daily exercises and practices of repentance. His manner was to make for himself a catalogue of all the grossest and most enormous sins which he had committed in his life of ignorance and to lay the same before his eyes when he went to private prayer, that by the sight and remembrance of them he might be stirred up to offer to God the sacrifice of a contrite heart, seek assurance of salvation in Christ by faith, thank God for his calling from the ways of wickedness, and pray for increase of it, grace, to be conducted in holy life,

acceptable and pleasing to God. Such a continual exercise or conscience he had in private prayer, that he did not count himself to have prayed to his contention, unless in it he had felt inwardly some smiting of heart for sin, and some healing of that wound by faith, feeling the saving health of Christ, with some change of mind into the detestation of sin, and love of obeying the good will of God, which things require that inward entering into the secret parlour of our hearts of which Christ speaks, and is that smiting of the breast which is noted in the publican." (Luke, xviii.)

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The life we have at this present is the gift of God, in whom we live, move, and are, and therefore he is called Jehovah. For this life we should be thankful, and we may not in any wise use it after our own fancy, but only to the end for which it is given and lent us; that is, to the setting forth of God's praise and glory, by repentance, conversion, and obedience to his good will and holy laws whereunto his longsuffering, as it were, even draws us if our hearts were not hardened by impenitence. And therefore our life in the scripture is called a walking; for as the body daily draws more and more near its end, that is, the earth, even so our soul draws daily more and more near unto death, that is, to salvation or damnation, to heaven or hell!

Since we are most careless of this, and very fools, (for we, alas! are the same today we were yesterday, and not better or nearer to God, but rather nearer to hell, Satan, and perdition; being covetous, idle, carnal, secure, negligent, proud, &c.) I think my labour cannot be better bestowed, than with the Baptist, Christ Jesus, and his apostles, to harp on this string, which of all other is most necessary, and most especially in these days. What string is that? says one. Truly, brother, it is the string of repentance, which Christ our Saviour used first in his ministry; and as his minister at this present time, I will use it to you all, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iv.

This sentence, thus pronounced and preached by Our Saviour Jesus Christ, as it commands us to repent, so to the doing of the same, it shows us a sufficient cause to stir us up thereunto, namely, because the kingdom of heaven, which is a kingdom of all joy, peace, riches, power and pleasure, is at hand, to all such as do repent. So that the meaning hereof is, as though our Saviour should thus speak at present: "Sirs, since I see you all walking the wrong way, even to Satan and unto hell-fire, by following the kingdom of Satan, which now is coloured under the vain pleasures of this life, and foolishness of the flesh most subtle, to your utter undoing and destruction—behold and mark well what I say unto you, The kingdom of heaven, that is, another manner of joy and felicity, honour and riches, power and pleasure, than you now perceive or enjoy, is even at hand, and at your backs; as, if you will turn again, that is, repent you, you shall most truly and pleasantly feel, see, and inherit. Turn again therefore, I say, that is, repent; for this joy I speak of, even the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Here we may note, first, the corruption of our nature since to this commandment, Repent you, he adds a clause, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; for by reason of the corruption and sturdiness of our nature, God unto all his commandments commonly either adds some promise to provoke us to obedience, or else some sufficient cause which cannot but excite us to hearty labouring for doing the same; as here, to the commandment of doing penance, he add this cause, saying, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Again, since he joins the cause to the commandment, saying, "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand," we may learn, that of the kingdom of heaven, none, to whom the ministry of preaching does appertain, can be a partaker, but such as repent, and do penance. Therefore, dearly beloved, if you regard the kingdom of heaven, as you cannot enter therein, except you repent, I beseech you all; of every estate, as you desire

your own weal, to repent and do penance: the which that you may do, I will do my best how to help you by God's grace.

But first, because we cannot well tell what repentance is, through ignorance and for lack of knowledge and false teaching, I will show you what repentance is. Repentance, or penance, is no English word, but we borrow it of the Latinists, to whom penance is 'forethinking' in English; in Greek, it means 'being wise afterwards;' in Hebrew, 'conversion or turning;' which conversion or turnings, cannot be true and hearty, unto God especially, without some good hope or trust of pardon for that which is already done and past. I may well in this sort define it, namely; that penance is a sorrowing or thinking upon our sins past, an earnest purpose to amend, or turning to God, with a trust of pardon.

This definition may be divided into three parts; first, a sorrowing for our sins, secondly, a trust of pardon, which otherwise may be called a persuasion of God's mercy by the merits of Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, and thirdly, a purpose to amend, or conversion to a new life; which third or last part cannot properly be called a part; for it is but an effect of penance, as towards the end you shall see by God's grace. But lest such as seek for occasion to speak evil should have any occasion, though they tarry not out the end of this sermon, I therefore divide penance into the three aforesaid parts: I. Of sorrowing for our sins: II. Of good hope or trust of pardon: and III Of a new life. Thus you now see what penance is, a sorrowing for sin, a purpose to amend, with a good hope or trust of pardon.

I. This penance not only differs from that which men commonly have taken to be penance, as saying and doing our enjoined lady psalters, seven psalms, fastings, pilgrimages, alms-deeds, and such like things, but also from that which the more learned have declared to consist of three parts, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

Contrition they call a just and a full sorrow for their sin. For this word just and full, is one of the differences between contrition and attrition.

Confession they call a numbering of all their sins in the ear of their ghostly father; for as, say they, a judge cannot absolve without knowledge of the cause or matter, so the priest or ghostly father cannot absolve from other sins, than those which he hears.

Satisfaction they call amends-making unto God for their sins, by their undue works, or opera indebita, works more than they need to do, as they term them. This is their penance which they preach, write, and allow. But how true this their plan is, how it agrees with God's word, how it is to be allowed, taught, preached, and written, let us a little consider. Dearly beloved, if a man repent not until he have a just and full sorrowing for his sins, when shall he repent? For inasmuch as hell-fire, and the punishment of the devils, is a just punishment for sin, inasmuch as in all sin there is a contempt of God, who is all goodness, and therefore there is a deserving of all illness (suffering, editor), alas! who can bear or feel this just sorrow, this full sorrow for our sins, this their contrition, which they do so discern (distinguish, editor) from their attrition? Shall not man by this doctrine rather despair than come by repentance? If a man repent not until he has made confession of all his sins in the ear of his ghostly father, if a man cannot have absolution of his sins until his sins are told by tale and number in the priest's ear, since, as David says, none can understand, much less, then, utter all his sins; who can understand his sins? Since David complains of himself elsewhere, how his sins have flowed over his head, and as a heavy burden do depress him, alas! shall not man by this doctrine be utterly driven from repentance? Though they have gone about something to make plaster for their sores, of confession or attrition to assuage their pain,

bidding a man to hope well of his contrition, though it be not so full as is required, and of his confession, though he have not numbered all his sins, if so be that he do so much as in him lies. Dearly beloved, since there is none but that herein he is guilty; for who does as much as he may? trow ye (do you suppose, editor), that this plaster is not like salt for sore eyes? Yes, undoubtedly, when they have done all they can for the appeasing of consciences in these points, this is the sum, that we yet should hope well, but yet so hope that we must stand in a mammering (hesitating, editor) and doubting whether our sins are forgiven. For to be certain of forgiveness of sins, as our creed teaches us, they count it a presumption. Oh! abomination, and that not only herein, but in all their penance as they paint it.

As concerning satisfaction by their opera indebita, undue works, that is, by such works as they need not to do, but of their own voluntariness and wilfulness, (wilfulness indeed,) who sees not here monstrous abomination, blasphemy, and even open fighting against God? For if satisfaction can be done by man, then Christ died in vain for him that so satisfies; and so he reigns in vain, so is he a bishop and a priest in vein. God's law require love to God with all our heart, soul, power, might, and strength, (Deut. vi. Matt. xxii. Mark, xii. Luke, x.) so that there is nothing can be done toward God which is not contained in this commandment, nothing can be done over and above this. Again, Christ requires of men, "that we should love one another as he loved us." (1 John, iv.) And trow we that we can do any good thing toward our neighbour which is not herein comprised?

Yea, let them tell me when they do anything in the love of God and their neighbour, so that they had not need to cry, "Forgive us our sins?" (Matt. vi.) So far are we off from satisfying, does not Christ say, "When you have done all things that I have commanded you, say that you are but unprofitable servants." (Luke xvii.) "Put nothing to my word," says God. (Deut. iv.) Yes, works of supererogation, (yea, super-abomination,) say they. "Whatsoever things are true, (says the apostle Paul,) whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things pertain to love, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, have you them in your mind, and do them, and the God of peace shall be with you." I mean, this well looked on will pull us from popish satisfactory works, which do deface Christ's treasure and satisfaction.

In heaven and in earth was there none found that could satisfy God's anger for our sins, or get heaven for man, but only the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who by his blood has wrought the work of satisfaction, and alone is worthy all honour, glory, and praise, for he has opened the book with the seven seals.

Dearly beloved, therefore abhor this abomination, even to think that there is any other satisfaction toward God for sin, than Christ's blood only. Blasphemy it is, and that horrible, to think otherwise. "The blood of Christ purifies (says St. John) from all sin," and therefore he is called the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, because there never was sin forgiven of God, nor shall be from the beginning unto the end of the world, but only through Christ's death, though the pope and his prelates prate as please them, about their pardons, purgations, placeboes, trentals, dirges, works of supererogation, super-abomination, &c.

"I am he (says the Lord) which puts away thine offences, and that for mine own sake, and will no more remember thine iniquities. Put me in remembrance, (for we will reason together,) and tell me what thou hast for thee, to make thee righteous. Thy first father offended sore, &c." (Isa. xliii.) And thus writes St. John: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation, or satisfaction, for our sins." As in chapter iv. he says, that God has sent his Son to be a propitiation or mean for the taking away of our sins, according to that which Paul writes, where he calls

Christ a merciful and faithful priest, to purge the people's sins, (Heb. ii.) so that blind buzzards and perverse papists are they, which yet will prate of our merits or works to satisfy for our sins, in part or in whole, before baptism or after. For to omit the testimonies I brought out of John and Paul, which the blind cannot but see, I pray you remember the text out of Isaiah, which even now I rehearsed, being spoken to such as were then the people of God, and had been a long time, but yet were fallen into grievous sins after their adoption into the number of God's children. "It is for mine own sake (says God) that I put away thy sins." Where is your parting of the stake now? If it is for God's own sake, if Christ is the propitiation; then recant, except you will become idolaters, making your works God and Christ. Say as David teaches us, "Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory."

And it is to be noted, that God casts in their teeth, eyed the sin of their first father, lest they should think thin perchance for the righteousness and goodness of their good fathers, their sins might be the sooner pardoned, and so God accept their works.

If they had made satisfaction for that which is done to the congregation, publicly, by some notable punishment, in the primitive church was used to open offenders, sparkles whereof and some traces yet remain, when such as have sinned in adultery go about the church in their shirts with a taper. Or if they had made satisfaction for restitution toward man of such goods as wrongfully are gotten, which true penance cannot be without; or if by satisfaction they had meant a new life to make amends to the congregation thereby, as by their evil life they offended the congregation, in which sense the apostle seems to take that which he writes in 2 Cor. vii., where the old interpreter calls apologium, satisfaction, which rather signifies a defence or answering again; if, I say, they had taken satisfaction any of these ways, then they had done well, so that the satisfaction to God had been left alone to Christ.

Again, if they had made confession either that which is to God privately, or that which is to the congregation publicly, either that which is a free consultation with some one learned in God's book, and appointed thereto, as first it was used, and I wish were now used amongst us; or that which is a reconciliation of one to another, it had been something. Yea, if they had made it for faith, because it is a true demonstration of faith, as in Paul we may see, when he calls Christ the captain of our confession, that is, of our faith, so confessors were called in the primitive church such as manfully did witness their faith with the peril of their lives; if, I say, they had taken it thus, then had they done right well.

And so contrition, if they had left out their subtle distinction between it and attrition, by this word just or full, making it a hearty sorrow for their sins, then we would never have cried out against them therefore. For we say penance has three parts; contrition, if you understand it for a hearty sorrowing for sin; confession, if you understand it for faith of free pardon in God's mercy by Jesus Christ; and satisfaction, if you understand it not to be towards God, (for that must be left alone, only to Christ,) but toward man in restitution of goods wrongfully or fraudulently gotten, of name hindered by our slanders, and in newness of life; although, as I said before, and presently will show more plainly, by God's grace, that this last is no part of penance indeed, but a plain effect or fruit of true penance.

I might here bring in examples of their penance, how perilous it is to be embraced; but let the example of their grandsire Judas serve, in whom we see all the parts of their penance, as they describe it, and yet notwithstanding he was damned. He was sorry enough, as the effect showed; he had their contrition fully, out of the which he confessed his fault, saying, "I have betrayed innocent blood;" and thereunto he made satisfaction, restoring the money he had received. But yet all was but lost, he hanged up himself, his bowels burst out, and he remains a child of perdition for ever. I would wish that this example of Judas, in

whom we see the parts of their penance, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, would move them to penance, and to describe it a little better, making hope or trust of God's free mercy a piece thereof, or else with Judas they will mar all.

Perchance these words contrition, confession, and satisfaction, were used at the first as I have expounded them. But as we see so much danger and hurt by using them without expositions, either let us always join to them open expositions, or else let us not use them at all, but say as I write, that penance is a hearty sorrow for our sins, a good hope or trust of pardon through Christ, which is not without an earnest purpose to amend, or a new life. This penance is the thing whereto all the scripture calls us. This penance I now call you all onto; must be continually in us, and not for a Lent season, as we have thought; this must increase daily more and more in us; without this, we cannot be saved.

Search therefore your hearts, all ye swearers, blasphemers, liars, flatterers, filthy or idle talkers, jesters, bribers, covetous persons, drunkards, gluttons, whore-mongers, thieves, murderers, slanderers, idle livers, negligent in their vocation, &c. All such and all other as lament not their sins, as hope not in God's mercy for pardon, as purpose not heartily to amend, to leave their swearing, drunkenness, fornication, covetousness, idleness, &c.; all such, I say, shall not and cannot enter into God's kingdom, but hell-fire is prepared for them, weeping and gnashing of teeth, whereunto, alas! I fear, very man, will needs go, since very many will be as they have been, let us even, to the wearying of our tongue to the stumps, preach and pray ever so much to the contrary; and that even in the bowels of Jesus Christ, as now I beseech you all, and every one, to repent and lament your sins, to trust in God's mercy, and to amend your lives.

Now methinks you are somewhat astonished, whereby I gather that at present you desire this repentance, that is, this sorrow, good hope, and newness of life; to the which that you may the rather attain, and get to your comforts. As I have gone about to be a mean to stir up in you, by God's grace, this desire of repentance, so through the same grace of God will I now go about to show you, how you may have your desire in this behalf.

And first, concerning this part, namely, sorrow for your sins and hearty lamenting of the same; for this if you desire the having of it, you must beware that you think not that of yourselves, or of your own free will, you can by any means get it. You may easily deceive yourselves, and mock yourselves, thinking more of yourselves than is seemly. All good things, and not pieces of good things, but all good things, says St. James, come from God, the Father of light. If therefore penance is good, as it is good, then the parts of it are good: from God therefore do they come, and not of our free will. It is the Lord that mortifies, that brings down, that humbles, says the scripture in sundry places. "After thou had stricken my thigh (says Jeremiah, xxxi.) I was ashamed. Lo!" he says, "After thou had stricken me", and therefore prays he; even in the last words almost he writes, "Turn us, Lord, and we shall be turned," which David uses very often. Wherefore, first of all, if thou wouldst have this part of penance, as the whole is God's gift, so for this part go thou unto God, and make some little prayer, as thou canst, unto his mercy for the same, in this or the like sort:

"Merciful Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because I have sinned, and done wickedly, and through thy goodness have received a desire of repentance, whereto this thy long-sufferance does draw my hard heart, I beseech thee, for thy mercy's sake in Christ, to work the same repentance in me, and by thy Spirit, power, and grace, so to humble, mortify, and fear my conscience for my sins, to salvation, that in thy good time thou may comfort and quicken me again, through Jesus Christ, thy dearly beloved Son. Amen."

After this sort, I say, or otherwise, as thou thinks good, if thou wilt have this first part, contrition or sorrow for thy sins, do thou beg it of God through Christ. And when thou hast asked it, as I have laboured to drive thee from trusting in thyself, so now I go about to move thee from flattering of thyself; from sluggishness and negligence, to be diligent to use these means following.

First unto prayer, which I would thou should use as thou can; secondly, get God's law as a glass to look in, for in it and by it comes the true knowledge of sin, without which knowledge there can be no sorrow. For how can a man sorrow for his sins, who knows not his sins? As when a man is sick, the first step to health is to know his sickness; even so to salvation, the first step is to know that thy damnation is due for thy sins.

The law of God therefore must be gotten and well looked in, that is, we must look in it spiritually, and not corporally or carnally, as the outward word or letter declares and utters; and so our Saviour teaches us in Matthew, expounding the sixth and seventh commandment, not only after the outward deed, but also after the heart; making there the anger of the heart a kind of murder, and lusting after another man's wife, a kind of adultery.

And this is one of the differences between God's law and men's law; that of this, man's law I mean, I am not condemnable, so long as I outwardly observe the same. But God's law goes to the root, and to the heart, condemning me for the inward motion, although outwardly I live most holily. As for example: if I kill no man, though in my heart I hate, man's law condemns me not, but God's law does otherwise. And why? for it sees the fountain whence the evil does spring. If hatred were taken out of the heart, then loftiness in looks, detraction in tongue, and murder by hand, could never ensue. If lusting were out of the heart, curiosity in countenance, wantonness in words, indecent boldness in body, would not appear.

Since therefore this outward evil springs out of the inward corruption, seeing God's law also is a law of liberty, as says St. James, (chap. i.) and spiritual, as says St. Paul, (Rom. vii.) it is to be understood perfectly and spiritually, if we will truly come to the knowledge of our sins. For of this inward corruption, reason knows but little or nothing. "I had not known," says Paul, (Rom. vii.) "that lusting," (which to reason, and to them which are guided only by reason, is thought but a trifle), "I had not known," says he, "this lusting to have been sin, if the law had not said, Thou shalt not lust."

To the knowledge therefore of our sins, without which we cannot repent, or be sorry for our sin, let us secondly get us God's law as a glass to look in, and that not only literally, outwardly, or partly, but also spiritually, inwardly, and thoroughly. Let us consider the heart, and so shall we see the foul spots we are stained withal, at least inwardly; whereby we may the rather be moved to hearty sorrow and sighing. For, as St. Austin says, it is a glass which fears (affrights, editor) nobody; but even look, as thou art, so it paints thee out.

In the law we see it is a foul spot, not to love the Lord our God with all, all, I say, our heart, soul, power, might and strength; and that continually.

In the law it is a foul spot, not only to make to ourselves any graven image or similitude, to bow thereto, &c., but also not to frame ourselves wholly after the image (of God, Gen. 1:26, editor) whereto we are made, not to bow to it, to worship it.

In the law we see that it is a foul spot, not only to take God's name in vain, but also not earnestly, heartily, and even continually to call upon his name only; to give thanks unto him, to believe, to publish, and live according to his holy word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open profaner of the Sabbath-day, but also not to rest from our own words and works, that the Lord might both speak and work in us and by us. Also not to hear his holy word, not to communicate his sacraments, not to give occasion to others to holiness by our example in godly works, and reverent esteeming of the ministry of his word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open disobeyer of our parents and magistrates, masters, and such as are in any authority over us, but also not to honour such even in our hearts, not to give thanks to God for them, not to pray for them, to aid, to help, or relieve them, to bear with their infirmities, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot in our souls, not only to be a man-killer in hatred, malice, proud looks, brags, backbiting, railing, or bodily slaughter, but also not to love our neighbours, yea, our enemies, even in our hearts, and to declare the same in all our gestures, words, and works.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be a whoremonger in lusting in our hearts, in wanton looking, in unclean and wanton talking, in actual doing dishonestly with our neighbour's wife, daughter, servant, &c.; but also not to be chaste, sober, temperate in heart, looks, tongue, apparel, deeds, and to help others thereunto accordingly, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to covet in heart, to flatter in look or word, lie, colour, &c. in deed, and to take away anything which pertains to another, but also in heart, countenance, word, and deed, not to keep, save, and defend that which pertains to thy neighbour, as thou wouldst thine own.

In God's law we may see it is a foul spot, not only to lie or bear false witness against any man, but also not to have as great care over thy neighbour's name, as over thine own.

Sin in God's law we may see it is, and a foul spot, not only to consent to evil, lust, or carnal desires, but even the very natural or carnal lusts and desires themselves, (for so I may call them, nature itself being now so corrupted,) are sin; as self-love, and many such. By reason whereof I trow there is none that looks well herein; but though he is blameless to the world, and fair to the show, yet certainly inwardly his face is foul arrayed, and so shameful, proud, diseased, and loathsome, that he cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof, and that so much more, by how much he continues to look in this glass accordingly.

And thus much concerning the second mean to the stirring up of sorrow for sin, that next unto prayer we should look in God's law spiritually; the which looking, if we use with prayer, as I said, let us not doubt but at length God's Spirit will work as now, to such as believe; for to the unbelievers all is in vain, their eyes are stark blind, they can see nothing; to such as believe, (I say,) I trust something is done even already. But if neither by prayer, nor by looking in God's law spiritually, as yet thy hard unbelieving heart feels no sorrow nor lamenting for thy sins; thirdly, look upon the penalty attached to God's law: for as to man's law there is a penalty affixed, so is there to God's law a penalty, and that no small one, but such a great one as cannot but make us fear if we believe it, for all is in vain if we are faithless so as not to believe before we feel.

This penalty is God's malediction or curse: "Lo! accursed," says he, "is all," no exception, all, says God, "which continues not in all things, (for he that is guilty of one is guilty of the whole, says St. James,) in all things therefore (says the Holy Ghost) which are written in the book of the law to do them." He says not to

hear them, to talk of them, to dispute of them, but to do them.

Who is he now that does these? Rara avis (a rare bird, editor), few such birds, yea none at all. For all are gone out of the way, though not outwardly by word or deed, yet inwardly, at least by default and wanting of that which is required; so that a child of one night's age is not pure, but (by reason of birth-sin) in danger of God's malediction; much more then we, which, alas! have drunken in iniquity, as it were water, as Job says. (Chap. xv.) But yet, alas! we quake not.

Tell me now, good brother, why do you so lightly consider God's curse that for your past sins you are so careless, as though you had made a covenant with death and damnation, as the wicked did in Isaiah's time? What is God's curse? At the pope's curse with hook, belly and candle, oh! how we trembled which heard it, and though the same was not directed unto us, but unto others. For is God's curse, which is incomparably more fell and importable (severe and unbearable, editor) and is directed to us, yea, hanging over us all reason of our sins, alas! how careless are we! Oh! faithless hard hearts! oh! Jezebel's guests! rocked and laid in a sleep in her bed! (Rev. ii.) Oh! wicked wretches! which being come into the depth of sin, do entomb the same. Oh! sorrowless sinners, and shameless harlots!

Is not the anger of a king death? And is the anger of the King of all kings a matter to be so lightly regarded as we do regard it, who are so reckless for our sins that we slug and sleep it out? As wax melts away at the heat of the fire, (says David,) so do the wicked perish at the face or countenance of the Lord. If, dearly beloved, his face is so terrible and intolerable for sinners and the wicked, what think we his hand is? At the face or appearing of God's anger, the earth trembles, but we, earth, earth, yea, stones, iron, flints, tremble nothing at all. If we will not tremble in hearing, woe unto us, for then we shall be crushed in pieces, in feeling. If a lion roar, the casts quake; but we are worse than beasts, which quake not at the roaring of the lion; I mean the Lord of hosts. And why? because the curse of God, hardness of heart, is already fallen upon us, or else we could not but lament and tremble for our sins, if not for the shame and foulness hereof, yet at least for the malediction and curse of God, which hangs over us for our sins.

Lord, be merciful unto us, for thy Christ's sake, and spare us; in thine anger remember thy mercy towards us. Amen. And thus much for the third thing to the moving of us to sorrow for our sins, that is, for the penalty affixed to God's law, I mean, for the malediction and curse of God. But if our hearts are so hard, that we feel not yet hearty sorrow for our sins, let us, fourthly, set before us examples past and present, old and new, that thereby the Holy Spirit may be effectual to work in his time this work of sorrowing for our sin.

Look upon God's anger for sin in Adam and Eve, for eating a piece of an apple. Were not they, the dearest creatures of God, cast out of paradise? Were not they subject to mortality, travail, labour, &c.? Was not the earth accursed for their sins? Do not we all feel the same, men in labour, women in travailing with child, and all in death, mortality, and misery, even in this life? And was God so angry for their sin, and will he, being the same God, say nothing to us for ours, (alas!) much more horrible than the eating once of one piece of one apple?

In the time of Noah and Lot, God destroyed the whole world with water, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Zeboim and Admah, with fire and brimstone from heaven for their sins; namely, for their whoredoms, pride, idleness, unmercifulness to the poor, tyranny, &c. In which wrath of God even the very babes, birds, fowls, fishes, herds, trees, and grass perished; and think we that nothing will be spoken to us, who are much worse and more abominable than they? For all men may see, if they will, that the

whoredoms, pride, unmercifulness, tyranny, &c. of England in this age far passes any age that ever was before. Lot's wife looking back was turned into a salt stone; and will our looking back again, yea, our running back again to our wickedness, do us no hurt? If we were not already blind, we should blush. Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so that no miracle could convert him; if ours were any thing soft, we should begin to sob.

Of six hundred thousand men, only two entered into the land of promise, because they had ten times sinned against the Lord, as he himself says, (Numb. xiv. ;) and think we that God will not swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into his rest, which have sinned so many ten times as we have hairs of our heads and beards, (I tear,) and yet we repent not.

The man that swore, and he that gathered sticks on the sabbathday, were stoned to death; but we think our swearing is no sin, our bibbing (drinking, editor), rioting, yea, fornication on the sabbath-day, pleases God, or else we would something amend our manners.

Eli's negligence in correcting his sons, brake his neck in two; but ours, which pamper up our children like puppets, will put us to no plunge (difficulty, editor). Eli's sons, for disobeying their father's admonition, brought over them God's vengeance; and will our stubbornness do nothing?

Saul's malice to David, Ahab's displeasure against Naboth, brought their blood to the ground for dogs to eat; yea, their children were hanged up and slain for this; but we continue in malice, envy, and murders as though we were able to wage war with the Lord.

David's adultery with Bathsheba was visited on the child born; on David's daughter, defiled by her brother; and on his children, one slaying another; his wives defiled by his own son; on himself driven out of his realm in his old age, and otherwise also, although he most heartily repented his sin. But we think we are more dear unto God than David, which yet was a man after God's own heart, or else we could not but tremble, and begin to repent.

The rich glutton's gay paunch-filling, what did it? It brought him to hell; and have we a placard (a notice or declaration, editor) that God will do nothing to us?

Achan's subtle theft provoked God's anger against all Israel; and our subtilty, yea, open extortion, is it so fine and politic that God cannot espy it?

Gehazi's covetousness brought the leprosy upon him and on all his seed. Judas also hanged himself. But the covetousness of England is of another cloth and colour. Well, if it were so, the same tailor will cut it accordingly

Ananias and Sapphira, by lying, linked to themselves sudden death; but ours now prolongs our life, the longer to last in eternal death.

The false witnesses of the two judges against Susanne lighted on their own pates; and so will ours do at length.

But what go I about to avouch ancient examples, where daily experience teaches? The sweating sickness of the other year, the storms the winter following, call upon us to weigh them in the same balances. The hanging and killing of men themselves, which are (alas!) too rife (frequent, editor) in all places, require us to register them in the same rolls. At the least in children, infants, and such like, which cannot yet utter sin

by word or deed, we see God's anger against sin in punishing them by sickness, death, mishap, or otherwise, so plainly that we cannot but groan and lament again, in that we have gushed out this more abundantly in word and deed.

And here with me a little look on God's anger yet so fresh, that we cannot but smell it, although we stop our noses never so much; I pray God we smell it not more fresh hereafter; I mean it forsooth, for I know you look for it, in our dear late sovereign lord the king's majesty (King Edward VI, editor). You all know he was but a child in years; defiled he was not with notorious offences. Defiled, quoth I? nay, rather adorned with so many goodly gifts and wonderful qualities, as never prince was from the beginning of the world, should I speak of his wisdom, of his ripeness in judgment, of his learning, of his godly zeal, heroical heart, fatherly care for his commons, nurse-like solicitude for religion, &c. Nay, so many things are to be spoken in commendation of God's exceeding graces in this child, that, as Sallust writes of Carthage, I had rather speak nothing than too little, for too much is too little. This gift God gave unto us Englishmen before all nations under the sun, and that of his exceeding love towards us. But, alas, and well away, for our unthankfulness' sake, for our sin's sake, for our carnality, and profane living, God's anger has touched not only the body, but also the mind of our king by a long sickness, and at length has taken him away by death, death, cruel death, fearful death.

Oh! if God's judgment is begun in him which, as he was the chiefest, so I think he was the holiest and godliest in the realm of England, alas! what will it be on us, whose sins are overgrown to our heads, so that they are climbed up into heaven! I pray you, my good brethren, know that God's anger towards us for our sins cannot but be great; yea, we see it was so great, that our good king could not bear it. What followed to Jewry after the death of Josias? May God save England, and give us repentance! My heart will not suffer me to tarry longer herein. I think this will thrust out some tears of repentance.

If therefore prayer for God's fear, the looking in God's glass, and the penalty thereto, will not burst open thy blackish heart, yet I think the tossing to and fro of these examples, and especially of our late king, and this troublesome time, will tumble some tears out of your heart, if you still pray for God's Spirit accordingly. For who are you, (think always with yourself that God should spare you more than them whose examples thou hast heard? What friends have you? Were not these kings prophets, apostles, learned, and come of holy stocks? I deceive myself (think you with yourself) if I believe that God, being the same God that he was, will spare me, whose wickedness is no less, but much more than some of theirs. He hates sin now as much as ever he did. The longer he spares, the greater vengeance will fall; the deeper he draws his bow, the sorer will the shaft pierce.

But if yet your heart is so hardened that all this will not move you, surely you are in a very evil state, and remedy now know I none. What! said I, none? know I none? Yes; there is one which is sure to serve, if anything will serve. You look to know what this is; it is the passion and death of Jesus Christ. You know that the cause why Christ became man, and suffered as he suffered, was the sins of his people, that he might save them from the same. Consider the greatness of the sore, I mean sin, by the greatness of the Surgeon and of the remedy. Who was the Surgeon? No angel, no saint, no archangel, no power, no creature in heaven or in earth, but only He by whom all things were made, all things are ruled, also even God's own darling and only beloved Son becoming man.

Oh! what a great thing is this that could not be done by the angels, archangels, potentates, powers, or all the creatures of God, without his own Son, who yet must needs be thrust out of heaven, as a man would say, to take our nature, and become man. Here have you the Surgeon; great was the cure that this mighty

Lord took in hand.

Now what was the remedy? It was purchased dearly, and of many compositions; I cannot recite all, but rather must leave it to your hearty consideration. Three-and-thirty years was he curing our wounds: he sought it earnestly by fasting, watching, praying, &c. The same night that he was betrayed, I read how busy he was about a remedy in the garden, when he, lying flat on the ground, praying with tears, and that of blood, not a few, but so many as flowed down on the ground, crying in this sort: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup depart from me;" that is, if it be possible that the sin of mankind can be otherwise taken away, grant that it may be so. Thou heard Moses crying, for the idolaters; thou heard Lot for the Zoarites; Samuel, David, and many others, for the Israelites; and, dear Father, I only am thine own Son, as thou hast said, in whom thou art well pleased; wilt thou not hear me? I have by the space of three-and thirty years done always thy will; I have so humbled myself, that I would become an abject among men to obey thee; therefore, dear Father, if it be possible, grant my request, save mankind now without any further labour or remedy." But yet, (says he,) "not as I will, but as thou wilt."

But, sirs, what heard he? Though he sweat blood and water in making his remedy for our sore of sin, yet it framed (sufficed, editor) not. Twice he cried without comfort; yea, though God sent an angel to comfort him, we yet knot that this remedy was not allowed for sufficient, until Christ Jesus was betrayed, forsaken of all his disciples, forsworn of his dearly beloved, bound like a thief, belied, buffeted, whipped, scourged, crowned with thorns, derided, crucified, racked, wailed, hanged up between two thieves, cursed and railed upon, mocked in misery, and had given up the ghost. Then bowed down the head of Christ, that is, God the Father, which is the head of Christ; then he allowed the remedy to be sufficient and good for the healing of our sore, which is sin. Now God would abide us, because the damnation or guiltiness was taken away by this Lamb, thus offered once for all!

So that here, dearly beloved, we as in a glass may see God's great judgment and anger against sin for the bruising of our blackish hard hearts. The Lord of lords, the King of kings, the brightness of God's glory, the Son of God, the darling of his Father, in whom he is well pleased, hangs between two thieves, crying for thee and me, and for us all, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Oh! hard hearts that we have, which make light of sin. Look on this; look on the very heart of Christ, pierced with a spear, wherein you may see and read God's horrible anger for sin. Woe to thy hard heart that pierced it.

And thus much for the first part of repentance; I mean, for the means of working contrition: first, use prayer; then look on God's law; thirdly, see his curse; fourthly, set examples of his anger before you; and, last of all, set before you the death of Christ. From this and prayer cease not until you feel some hearty sorrow for your sin; which when you feel, then labour for the second part, that is, for faith, on this sort.

¶As first, in contrition, I willed you not to trust to your free will for the attaining of it, so do I will you in this. Faith is so far from the reach of man's free will, that to reason, it is plain foolishness; you must first go to God; whose gift it is; you must, I say, get you to the Father of mercy, whose work it is, that, as he has brought you down by contrition, and humbled you, so he would give you faith, raise you up, and exalt you.

On this manner therefore with the apostles, and the poor man in the gospel, that cried, "Lord, increase our faith; Lord, help my unbelief;" pray you and say, "O merciful God, and dear Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom as thou art well pleased, so hast thou commanded us to hear him; forasmuch as he often bids us to ask of thee, and thereto promises that thou wilt hear us, and grant us that which in his name we shall ask of thee: lo! gracious Father, I am bold to beg of thy mercy, through thy Son Jesus

Christ, one sparkle of true faith, and certain persuasion of thy goodness and love towards me in Christ, wherethrough I, being assured of the pardon of all my sins, by the mercies of Christ, thy Son, may be thankful to thee, love thee, and serve thee, in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life."

On this sort I say, or otherwise, as God shall move you, pray first of all, and look for your request at God's hand; and without any doubting, though forthwith you feel not the same; for oftentimes we have things of God given us long before we feel them as we would do. Now unto this prayer, use these means following:

After prayer for faith, which I would should be first; secondly, because the same springs out of the hearing, not of masses, matins, canons, councils, doctors, decrees, but out of the hearing of God's word; get God's word, but not that part which serves especially to contrition, that is the law, but the other part, which serves especially to consolation and certain persuasion of God's love towards thee, that is the gospel or publication of God's mercy in Christ; I mean the free promises.

But here you must know, that there are two kinds of promises; one, which is properly of the law, another, which is properly of the gospel. In the promises of the law we may indeed behold God's mercy, but so that it hangs upon the condition of our worthiness; as, if thou love the Lord with all thy heart, &c., thou shalt find mercy. This kind of promises, though it declare unto us God's love, which promises where he need not, yet unto him that feels not Christ, which is the end of the law, they are so far from comforting, that with the law they utterly bring man to deep despair, so greatly are we corrupted, for none loves God as he ought to do. From these therefore get thee to the other promises of the gospel, in which we may see such plenty and frank liberality of God's goodness, that we cannot but be much comforted, though we have very deeply sinned.

For these promises of the gospel do not hang on the condition of our worthiness, as the promises of the law do, but they depend and hang on God's truth; that as God is true, so they cannot but be performed to all them which lay hold on them by faith: had almost said, which cast them not away by unbelief.

Mark in them therefore two things, namely, that they are free promises without any condition of our worthiness, as also that they are universal, offered to all; all, I say, who are not so stubborn, as by unbelief, to keep their hands still, whereby they should receive this alms in their bosom. As concerning infants and children, you know I now speak not, but concerning such as are of years of discretion; and now you look that I should give you a taste of these promises, which are both free and universal, excepting none but such as except themselves. Well, you shall have one or two for a say (specimen, editor).

In the third of John, says our Saviour, "So God loved the world, that he would give his darling, his own only Son, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Lo! sir, he says not that some might have life; but all, says he. And what all? All that love him with all their hearts, all that have lived a godly life? Nay, all that believe in him; although thou hast lived a most wicked and horrible life, if now thou believe in him, thou shalt be saved. Is not this sweet?

Again, says Christ, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you." Let us a little look on this letter. "Come unto me." Who should come? Lords, priests, holy men, monks, friars; yea, cobblers, tinkers, harlots, thieves, murderers also, if they lament their sins." Come unto me (says he) all ye that labour and are laden," that is, which are afraid of your sins. And what wilt thou do, Lord? "And I will refresh you," says he. Oh! what a thing is this, "And I will refresh you." Wot (know, editor) you who spake this? He that never told a lie; he is the truth, there was never guile found in his mouth, and now will he be

untrue to you, good brother, who are sorry for your grievous sins? No, truly! Heaven and earth shall pass and perish, but his word shall never fail. Saint Paul says, "God would have all men saved." Lo! he exempts none. And to Titus, "The grace of God brings salvation to all men." As from Adam all have received sin to damnation, so by Christ all have grace offered to salvation, if they reject not the same. I speak not now of infants, I say, and I need not enter into the matter of predestination. In preaching of repentance, I would gather where I could with Christ. "As surely as I live, (says God,) I will not the death of a sinner." Art thou a sinner? Yea. Lo! God swears he desires not thy death. How can thou now perish? Consider with yourself what profit you should have to believe this to be true to others, if not to yourself also. Satan does so. Rather consider with Peter, that the promise of salvation pertains not only to them which are nigh, that is, to such as are fallen a little, but also to all whom the Lord has called, be they ever so far off

Lo! now by me the Lord calls thee, thou man, thou woman, that art very far off. The promise therefore pertains to thee: needs must thou be saved, except thou with Satan say God is false; and yet if thou do so, God is faithful, and cannot deny himself; as thou shalt feel by his plagues in hell, for so dishonouring God as to think that he is not true. Will he be found false now? The matter hangs not on your worthiness; but it hangs on God's truth. Take hold on it, and I warrant you Christ is the propitiation for our sins, yea, for the sins of the whole world; believe this, man, I know you believe it; say therefore in your heart, still, Lord, increase my faith; Lord, help my unbelief. Blessed are they which see not this by reason, but yet believe; óhope, man, past all hope, as Abraham did.

And thus much for a taste of these promises which are everywhere not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old. Read the latter end of Leviticus, xxvi., the prophet Isaiah, xxx. where he says, God tarries, looking for thee to show thee mercy; also the 40th, and so on to the 60th. Read also Psalms. xxxii., Joel, ii. &c.

Howbeit, if this will not serve, if yet thou feel no faith, no certain persuasion of God's love, then unto prayer add diligent considering of the free and universal promises of the gospel. Thirdly set before thee those benefits which God has heretofore given thee, and at present gives thee. Consider how he has made you a man or a woman, who might have made you a toad, a dog. And why did he this? Verily, because he loved you. And do you think, that if he loved thee when you were not, to make thee such a one as he most graciously has made thee, will he not now love thee, being his handiwork? Does he hate anything that he has made? Is there unableness with him? Does he love for a day and so farewell? No, indeed, he loves to the end, his mercy endures for ever. Say therefore with Job, "To the work of thy hands put thy helping hand." Again, has he not made you a Christian man or woman, whereas if he would, he might have made you a Turk or pagan? This you know he did of love. And do you think his love if lessened, if you lament your sin? Is his hand shortened for helping you? Can a woman forget the child of her womb? And though she should do it, yet will not I forget thee, says the Lord. He has given you limbs to see, hear, go, &c.; he has given you wit, reason, discretion, &c.; he has long spared you, and borne with you, when you never purposed to repent; and now you repent, will he not give you mercy? Wherefore does he suffer you to live at this present to hear me speak this and suffer me to speak this, but of love to us all? Oh! therefore let us pray him, that he would add to this, that we might believe these love-tokens that he loves us, and indeed he will do it. Lord, open our eyes, in thy gifts to see thy gracious goodness. Amen.

But tarry in this I will not. Let every man consider God's benefits past and present, public and private, spiritual and corporeal, to confirm his faith concerning the promises of the gospel, for the pardon of his sins. I will now endeavour to show you a fourth means to confirm your faith in this, even by examples. Of these there are in the scriptures very many, as also daily experience diversely teaches the same, if we

were diligent to observe things accordingly; wherefore I will be more brief herein, having respect to time, which steals fast away.

Adam in paradise transgressed grievously, as the painful punishment, which we all as yet do feel, proves, if nothing else did. Though by reason of his sin he displeased God sorely, and ran away from God, for he would have hid himself, yea, he would have made God the causer of his sin, because he gave him such a mate, so far was he from asking mercy; yet notwithstanding all this, God turned his fierce wrath neither upon him nor Eve who also required not mercy, but upon the serpent, Satan promising unto them a seed, Jesus Christ, by whom they at length should be delivered. In token whereof, though they were cast out of paradise for their nurture (instruction or correction, editor), to serve in sorrow since they would not serve in joy; yet he made them apparel to cover their bodies, a visible sacrament and token of his invisible love and grace concerning their souls. If God was so merciful to Adam, who so brake his commandment, and rather blamed God than asked mercy; thinkest thou, O man, that he will not be merciful to thee, which blamest thyself, and desirest pardon?

To Cain he offered mercy, if he would have asked it. "What hast thou done? (says God:) the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me out of the earth." O merciful Lord, Cain should have said, I confess it! But, alas! he did not so, and therefore said God, "Now," that is, in that thou desirest not mercy, now, "I say, be thou accursed," &c. Lo, to the reprobate he offered mercy, and will he deny it to thee, which art his child?

Noah, did not he sin, and was dumb? Good Lot also both in Sodom dissembled a little with the angels, prolonging the time, and out of Sodom he fell very foully (Gen. xix.) as did Judah and the patriarchs against Joseph; but yet I ween (doubt not, editor) they found mercy. Moses, Miriam, Aaron, though they stumbled a little, yet they received mercy; yea, the people in the wilderness often sinned and displeased God, so that he was purposed to have destroyed them. Let me alone, says he to Moses, that I may destroy them; but Moses did not let him alone, for he prayed still for them, and therefore God spared them. If the people were spared through Moses' prayer, they not praying with him, but rather worshipping their golden calf, eating, drinking, and making good cheer, why should thou doubt whether God will be merciful to thee, having, as indeed thou hast, One much better than Moses to pray for thee (Numb. xiv.) and with thee, even Jesus Christ, who sits on the right hand of his Father, and prays for us, being no less faithful in his Father's house, the church, than Moses was in the synagogue? David the good king had a foul foil (fall, editor) with Bathsheba. whereunto he added also a mischievous murder, causing her husband, his most faithful soldier, Uriah, to be slain with an honest company of his most valiant men of war, and that with the sword of the uncircumcised.

In this his sin, though he lay asleep a great while, (as many do now-a-days, God give them good waking!) thinking, that by the sacrifices he offered, all was well, and that God was content; yet at length, when the prophet by a parable had opened the poke, and brought him in remembrance of his own sin in such sort, that he gave judgment against himself, then he quaked. Eli's sacrifices had no more taken away his sins, than our

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