

Who Shall Lay Anything to the Charge of God's Elect? It Is God That Justifieth.

by John Gill

The elect of God are secure in their salvation, justified by God and advocated for by Christ, and cannot be condemned.

Scripture: Romans 8:33

Topics: "Assurance of Salvation", "Justification"

Description

John Gill preaches on Romans 8:33-34, emphasizing that no one can bring a charge against God's elect because it is God who justifies them. He explains that the elect are chosen by God, loved, and secured from condemnation through the death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ. Gill reassures the congregation that despite their sins and the accusations they may face from the world or their own hearts, they are acquitted by God's grace and Christ's righteousness. He reflects on the life of Mrs. Ann Brine, highlighting her faith and comfort in Christ, which serves as a testament to the security found in God's justification. The sermon encourages believers to rely on Christ for their salvation and to find peace in His promises.

Transcript

Who Shall Lay Anything To The Charge of God's Elect

Occasioned By The Death Of Mrs. Ann Brine,

Late Wife Of The Reverend Mr. John Brine. Preached August 11, 1745.

ROMANS 8:33, 34

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The preceding chapter contains the believer's complaint of indwelling sin, and expresses the nature; prevalence and ill effects of it, and his grief of mind on that account; and this chapter declares his triumph of faith in a view of deliverance from it, and from an condemnation by it, through the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: which triumph is founded upon things the most solid and substantial, delivered in

the text and context; such as relate to the grace of the Father in predestination, in the mission of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, in not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; in the effectual vocation, justification, and glorification of his chosen ones; and which relate to the grace of Christ, in his assumption of human nature, in fulfilling the law both in its precept and penalty, in his sufferings and death, in his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession for his people; and which relate to the grace of the blessed Spirit, in quickening, and renewing carnal minds; in leading men out of themselves, to Christ; in witnessing to their Spirits that they are the children of God, and in helping their infirmities, and making intercession for them according to the will of God; and particularly this triumph, of faith is expressed in the fullest and strongest manner in the words before us, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? etc.

The words are put by way of interrogation, who shall lay any thing, to the charge of God's elect? or accuse them? or call them to an account? Or enter an action against them, in open court? It is a challenge, a bidding defiance to all and every one to do it; since it is God that justifieth, that is, his elect: he acquits and clears them from all charges exhibited against them; and therefore whatever are said against them are of no avail, and can never issue in their condemnation; who is he that condemneth the elect of God? that will censure or pass sentence upon them? and if any should, what will it signify, seeing it is Christ that died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and is at the right hand of God, as their advocate, and ever lives to make intercession for them.

Though these things are put by way of question, they may be reduced to absolute propositions: the sense of them is, that "there are none that can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect to any purpose, but what will easily be set aside; nor can any justly bring them under a sentence of condemnation, and much less execute such a sentence on them." The whole may be comprised in the two following propositions: I. That no charge shall be brought against, nor any condemnation brought upon the elect of God.

II. That the Father's justification of them, the Son's dying for them; his resurrection from the dead, session at the right hand of God, and intercession on their account, are a sufficient and full security to them from all charges and condemnation whatever. I. That no charge of any avail shall, or can be laid against, or any sentence of condemnation executed upon the elect of God. These are without spot and fault before the throne of God; they are unblameable and unproveable in his sight, and there is no condemnation to them.

For the further explanation, of this doctrine, I shall, First, Shew who the elect of God are. Secondly, In what sense no charge and condemnation can be upon them. First, Who are the elect of God. These are a select number of men, who are the objects of God's love, whom he has chosen in Christ, unto eternal life and salvation before the foundation of the world, of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, by certain ways of his own appointing, so that they are peculiarly his.

It will be proper to take this account into several parts, and briefly explain them. 1. The elect of God are a select number of men, of Adam's posterity; for elect angels are not here meant: they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; not whole nations, churches, bodies, and communities of men, but particular persons; they are such who are separated and set apart from the rest of mankind, and are alone, and are not reckoned among the nations: as they are redeemed and called, so they are chosen out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues; and though, considered by themselves, they are a great number, which no man can number; yet, comparatively, they are but few, many be called, but few chosen (Matthew 20:16). 2.

They are the objects of the love of God, of his everlasting and unchangeable love; and because they are the beloved of the Lord, therefore they are chosen by him unto salvation: so the people of Israel were chosen as a nation to outward privileges above all nations, not because they were more than others, for they were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved them (Deut. 7:7,8.) Electio praesupponit dilectionem, "Election presupposes love." Love is the source and origin of it: whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate, as in the context; hence they are styled elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Pet. 1:2), which is to be understood not of the bare prescience of God, which reaches to all the sons of men, for then, all would be the elect of God; but of such foreknowledge of them as includes in it the strongest love and affection for them; of which his choice of them to everlasting life, is a glaring instance and evidence. 3.

They are chosen in Christ, as is expressly asserted in Ephesians 1:4. Christ himself, as mediator, is God's elect; he is so by way of eminency; he was first chosen and then the elect in him; he is the first-born of the election of grace; he was first conceived in the womb of election, and brought forth, and then the many brethren among whom he is the first-born; he was chosen as the head, and they as members in him: hence all grace was given to them in him, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; yea, hence it is, that they being sanctified, or set apart by God the Father in election, were preserved in him, notwithstanding the fall of Adam, and their own actual transgressions, in order to be called by grace (Jude 1). 4.

The choice of them in Christ is unto eternal life and salvation; not unto external blessings and privileges, as the Israelites were, nor to any outward office, though ever so great, as that of apostleship, as Judas the son of perdition was; but to special grace here, and eternal glory hereafter: these are persons ordained to eternal life, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; they are appointed not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; which he has been appointed to work out for them, has effected, and will put them into the possession of. 5.

This choice of them was made before the foundation of the world, as is affirmed in Ephesians 1:4. The Thessalonians are said to be chosen from the beginning (2 Thess. 2:13), not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, nor from the beginning of their conversion, but from the beginning of time: or, in other words, from eternity; the phrase being the same with from everlasting, as appears from Proverbs 8:23. This is an act, that does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity; it paired before the men who are the objects of it, were born, and had done either good or evil (Rom. 9:11). 6.

It is owing to the sovereign good-will and pleasure of God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will: he predestinates to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will; he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and is gracious to whom he will be gracious; and his election of persons to everlasting life, is an election of grace, and is strongly denied to be of works (Rom. 11:5, 6). It is irrespective of faith, holiness, or good works, as causes, motives, and conditions of it; there all follow upon it, and are fruits, effects, and evidences of it. 7.

This choice of men to happiness is through certain ways and means of God's own appointing; such as sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth (2 Thess. 2:13), which, as they are fixed in the decree of the means, have their sure and certain accomplishment. God chooses men, not because they were, or because he knew they would be, but that they might be holy; and this he secures for them; for by virtue, and in consequence of their being chosen, he sends the Spirit down into their hearts to sanctify them; and though the work of sanctification is at present imperfect, in pursuance of the divine purposes it shall be

completed.

So likewise belief of the truth, or faith in Christ who is the truth, and in every doctrine of the word of truth, relating to, him, is another mean ascertained in the decree of election, and is sure by it: as many as are ordained unto eternal life, have believed, do believe, and shall believe, in all ages of time; and none truly believe, but such; and therefore true faith is called: the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1). It springs from electing grace; it is the fruit of it, it is the gift of God's grace, and is insured by it; and because of it, the work of faith is begun, it shall be performed with power, Hence, 8.

Persons thus chosen, are peculiarly his, the elect of God, yea, they are emphatically cared, his own elect (Luke 18:7). They are not only his by creation, as all mankind are, but they are the people of his choice, a peculiar one; they are elect according to his foreknowledge, they are set apart for himself, for his own use, service and glory; they are chosen by him for his peculiar treasure. But, Secondly, I am next to show you in what sense no charge can be laid against, nor condemnation come to these persons.

First, No charge, no accusation of them, no crime to be alleged against them: But, 1. Is there nothing they are chargeable with? Are they in every sense clear of all crimes? Can nothing be objected to them, and laid against them? yes, many things. They are, as the descendents of Adam, chargeable with his sin: they were in him seminally, as the root and parent of mankind; they were in him federally, as their covenant-head and representative; in which he was the figure of Christ that was to come; and so they sinned in him, and were made and constituted sinners, through his disobedience; the guilt of which is imputed to them, and they in themselves are liable to condemnation by it: they are chargeable with a corrupt nature they bring into the world with them, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; they are justly called transgressors from the womb; they are chargeable with the loss of original righteousness, and of the image of God, and with a want of conformity to the law of God; they are chargeable with a multitude of actual transgressions committed before conversion, and some with very grievous and notorious ones; not only as being foolish, and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; but, as living in malice, hateful, and hating one another: so Saul, afterwards Paul, was guilty of injury, persecution and blasphemy; and the Corinthians are laid to be fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, and every thing that is bad (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

And after conversion they are all chargeable, with many sins of thought, word, and deed; with sins of omission and commission; with daily infirmities and frequent backslidings; in many things they all offend; and their errors are so many, they cannot understand; and some of them are suffered to fall into very gross enormities, as Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and others. Wherefore, 2. Are there none that will rise, stand up and charge, these persons? yes, now: their own hearts rise up against them, and charge them; their conscience which is as a thousand witnesses, does often accuse them: there is in every man a conscience, which excuses or accuses for good or bad things done, unless where it is seared as with a red hot iron: but this is not the case of good men, their consciences are tender; and though they are sometimes tempted to extenuate their faults, yet, at ether times, they are ready to aggravate them, and put them in the worst light; and write dismal, desperate, and bitter things against themselves: likewise, they are very apt to charge one another; they are sometimes too forward this way, too inquisitive after each other's weaknesses; bear too hard upon one another for them; and are too severe and censorious, indeed, they are not to suffer sin upon one another; charges may be very lawfully brought, whether in a private, or in a public way, as the nature of the care requires, provided the rules of God's word are observed, and they are exhibited in a kind and tender manner, with a view to the glory of God, and the good of the person or persons charged: moreover, the men of the world are full of charges against the

people of God, and traduce them oftentimes very wrongfully, as the Jews did our Lord; and as Tertullus the orator, the apostle Paul; and it is the common lot of the saints to go through good report and bad report; but no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them shall be condemned: they have real faults enough in them; and there is no need of false ones to be imputed to them; to which may be added, Satan is the adversary of believers, antidikov, "a court adversary;" one that enters a suit at law, and brings in an action in open court against another, as the word signifies; he goes about the world, and observes the failures of the saints, takes all advantages, and every opportunity against them; picks up their faults, and aggravates them, and accuses them before the throne: whence he is called the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10).

To say no more, the law accuses of the breaches and violations of it; one commandment says, Thou hast sinned against me; and another, Thou hast sinned against me; and the law is able to make good, and support its charges, and give evidence of them; and it proceeds to pronounce the whole world guilty before God, and so the elect of God among the rest. But then, 3. What will these charges signify? Of what avail will they be? and to what purpose are they laid? since God justifies and discharges from them all, who is superior to all, and from whose judgment there can be no appeal.

Though the saints bring charges against themselves, and bring heavy ones against each other; and though the world, Satan, and the law, lay charges against them; yet none of the divine persons bring any, nor will they bring any against them. Not Jehovah the Father, as may be learnt from the text and context; he predestinates them to be conformed to the image of his Son; he calls, justifies, and glorifies them; he is on their side; he is for them, and it matters not who is against them; he has not spared his own Son, but has delivered him up for them all, and gives all things freely with him, verses 29-32. and therefore he will lay nothing to their charge: nor will the Son of God; he is the surety for them; he has died for their sins, and has made an end of them, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and is an advocate for them; wherefore, he will exhibit no charge against them: nor will the holy Spirit; for though he convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; yet he brings near the righteousness of Christ: unto them; works faith in them, to lay hold upon it, and pronounces them righteous on the account of it; he takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to them; he is the comforter of them, and the Spirit of adoption to them; and as Christ is an advocate for them, in the court of heaven, he is an intercessor for them in their own hearts. 2dly, No condemnation can befall them; for if no charges can be laid against them with success, no condemnation can follow.

Who is he that condemneth? that is, the elect of God: there are the persons that are understood, though not expressed. Others may be, and are condemned, even all mankind are in Adam; through his offense judgment came upon all men to condemnation (Rom. 5:18). And some being ungodly men, and such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, are righteously appointed unto eternal condemnation; yea, every one that believes not, and who lives and dies in impenitence and unbelief, is condemned already; and there is a world that will be condemned at the last day; but the elect of God, who shall condemn?

They are indeed, with the rest of mankind under the sentence of condemnation as considered in Adam, in whom they sinned; and so the sentence of death passed upon them in him. They are by nature children of wrath, and deferring of it, and in their own persons commit things worthy of death; and when they are thoroughly convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, they have the sentence of death within themselves, and say, as the Egyptians did, when their first-born were killed, we be all dead men (Ex. 12:33).

Whatever vain opinion they entertained of themselves before the commandment came with power into their consciences, as it did in the apostle Paul; sin then revives, as it did in him, and they die, as to all hopes of attaining happiness by their works; they see themselves dead in law, dead in sin: and after conversion, their hearts often smite and condemn them for sin, though God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things; his own covenant-transactions and agreement with his Son; what his Son has done, and what satisfaction he has made to his law and justice, and therefore will not condemn them.

They are too apt to condemn one another: hence that advice of our Lord's, condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned (Luke 6:37). The men of the world are very forward to condemn them as hypocrites, as the worst of men, and not fit to live upon the earth; but the Lord stands at the right hand of the poor to save him from those that condemn his soul (Ps.109:31). The God of this world, as he accuses them, and stands at their right hand to resist them; so he seeks, and calls for judgment against, and upon them, but in vain.

The law is a ministration of condemnation and death to them that are under it: indeed, the elect of God are redeemed from it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; Christ being made a curse for them; and be it so; that it should pass as many sentences of condemnation upon them, as there are sins committed by them; for every sin deserves a sentence, yet ouden katakrima, "there is not one condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," and redeemed by him; not one sentence can be executed upon them: and though these may all condemn, yet neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them: not the Father, for he justifies them; not the Son, for he died for them; and is the Lord their righteousness: he came not into the world to condemn the world, but that it might be saved by him; nor the blessed Spirit, for these are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

To which may be subjoined, that there persons are loved by God with an everlasting love, which God has sworn shall never depart from them: they are predestinated to eternal life, and shall be glorified; they are in Christ, and to such there is no condemnation; they are brought to believe in Christ, and such have passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation; they are justified by the blood of Christ, and shall be saved from wrath through him. I proceed to the other doctrinal proposition.

II. That the Father's justification of the elect, the Son's dying for them, his resurrection from the dead, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, are a sufficient and full security of them from all charges and condemnation. First, The Father's justification of them: it is God that justifieth; that is, his elect: which shews the eternity of this act; for if the elect of God, as such considered, are the objects of justification; and there were chosen in Christ before the world began, they must be justified as early; or otherwise it could not be always said with truth, God justifieth the elect: and also the speciality of this act of grace; it belonging only to the chosen of God, and precious: and likewise the continuance of it; it can never be made void; it is inseparable with glorification, and so is a security from all charges and condemnation; for, 1.

Let it be considered whose act this is: it is God's act; it is he that justifies; he against whom these persons have sinned, whose law they have broken, whose justice they have affronted, whose legislative power and authority they have trampled upon; who is the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy it is he that acquits; and if he discharges, who can lay any thing to their charge? Besides, he is just whilst he is the justifier of them: nor would he be just if he did not justify them; for his justice is entirely satisfied with the righteousness of his Son, on their account; and it would be unjust to take satisfaction of their surety for them, and yet bring charges against them: this the judge of all the earth will not do; he always does that which is right. 2.

The nature of this act of justification: it is not teaching men the way of righteousness, or how sinners may be just with God, or instructing men in the doctrine of justification, shewing the method God takes in justifying a sinner: this is what the ministers of the gospel do, who are therefore said to justify many (Dan. 12:3), or, as we render it, turn many to righteousness: nor is it an infusion of righteousness and holiness into the hearts of men, which is no other than sanctification, and is a quite different thing; a work of grace within, and which is imperfect, and is gradually carried on: but it is a forensic term; by this act a man is made *rectus in curia*: it is a pronouncing him righteous, as if he had never sinned; an acquitting him from all charges; and is opposed to condemnation (Rom. 5:18), and so is a security from all such things. 3.

That by which God justifies: which is not the obedience of man; nor any works of righteousness done by him: there are imperfect, and by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; these would not be a sufficient security from charges and condemnation; for they themselves are as filthy rags, and need washing in the blood of Jesus: but it is the obedience and righteousness of Christ, by which God justifies; which is complete and perfect; which is answerable to all the demands of law and justice; by which the law is magnified, and made honorable, and with which God is well pleased; and this he imputes to his people, without any consideration of their works; and this secures them from all the charges of law and justice. 4.

This act of justification is universal: it reaches to all things with which God's elect may be chargeable; and the righteousness of Christ justifies from all things, from which there can be no justification by the law of Moses: being clothed with this change of raiment, all their iniquities are caused to pass from them; sin is not imputed to them; their iniquities are forgiven, and their sin is covered; and when it is sought for, it shall not be found; they will never be charged with it, nor will it ever be brought against them to condemnation.

Secondly, The death of Christ for them: it is Christ that died. That Christ died is certain; and that he laid down his life for the sheep, for the elect of God, is as certain; and it is plain, from the scriptures, that he died for their sins, to make atonement and reconciliation for them; and this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead, by having their sins imputed to him and though his death was but once, it is of an eternal efficacy; and so a full security from all condemnation: for, 1.

Sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed by it. Sin was the cause of the condemnation of the angels, and of the old world, and of all mankind in Adam, This is that for which the saints condemn themselves, and one another; and for which the world, Satan, and the law condemn: but this is done away by the death of Christ; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day, even as far as the east is from the west; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he hath abolished it, he has taken away it, damning power from it; yea, he has finished, and made an utter end of it. 2.

By dying, Christ bore the condemnation due to sin: not only the sentence of condemnation passed upon him, as he was the surety of his people; but it was executed on him: and he was not only condemned unanimously by the Jewish Sanhedrim, and then by Pontius Pilate the Roman governor, but he was condemned by the justice of God: and God condemned sin in his flesh, finding it upon him, it being imputed to him: for as he was made sin by imputation that the elect might be made the righteousness of God in him; so he was made a curse for them, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law, which he has effectually done; and consequently there can be no condemnation to them, 3.

Through the death of Christ, the law and justice of God are fully satisfied. The law requires holiness of nature, this it has in the human nature of Christ, which is without sin; and also perfect obedience, which it finds in Christ, who always did the things that pleased his Father; and in case of disobedience, it requires

a penalty, and which Christ, as the surety of his people, has bore by his sufferings and death; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him for them; which is a full satisfaction to the justice of God; and therefore there is none that can condemn them. 4.

Hereby the pardon of sin is procured: without shedding of blood there is no remission; the blood of Christ has been shed for the remission of sins, and it is obtained by it: God, for Christ's sake, forgives all trespasses; and delivers from going down to the pit, having found a sufficient ransom-price in the blood of his Son: nay, since the blood of Christ has been shed for this purpose, it is a point of justice and faithfulness with God to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; and sin being pardoned, there can be no condemnation for it. 5.

The complete justification of God's people, is brought about by the death of Christ: justification is sometimes ascribed to the obedience of Christ; by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Rom. 5:19), and sometimes to the blood of Christ, being now justified by his blood, verse 9. And both are concerned in justification: the one is what is commonly called his active obedience; the other his passive obedience; and both together, with the holiness of his nature; are imputed for justification: his righteousness entitles to life; and his blood, his sufferings, and death, secure from wrath to come; and; therefore, it may well be said, with a view to Christ's dying for his people, who is he that condemneth?

Thirdly, The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is another part of the security of God's elect, from all charges and condemnation, yea, rather that is risen again. That Christ is risen, the angels asserted; the apostles were witnesses of it; and so was the holy Ghost, being plentifully poured forth on the disciples as an evidence of that, and of his ascension to heaven. This is a fundamental article, which he that heartily and experimentally knows the power of, shall be saved (Rom. 10:9), and shall never enter into condemnation.

For, 1. Christ rose as a conqueror over all his, and his people's enemies: by rising he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light; and shewed that he had took away the sting of death, which is sin; and had destroyed him that has the power of death, which is the devil; and had overcome the world, and now has in his hands the keys of hell and death; and therefore who shall condemn those for whom he died, and rose again? 2. He rose again as a surety, having satisfied justice: he engaged as a surety for his people from all eternity; God in strict justice, and according to his righteous law, dealt with him as such; he awoke the sword of justice against him; satisfaction was demanded of him, and it was given; and both law and justice being satisfied, Christ was set free: an angel is sent to roll away the stone from the sepulcher; he is discharged by a divine order; it was not possible he should be held by the cords of death, both because of the dignity of his person, and the performance of his suretyship engagements; and therefore being risen and discharged, as the surety of his people, law and justice, cannot condemn them, nor can any other. 3.

He rose again as a common head and representative, and for the justification of God's elect: he stood charged with all their sins; these being laid upon him by his Father, with his own consent, he was condemned, for them; and suffered death on account of them; and when he rose, he was justified in the Spirit; and acquitted from them all; and his people were all justified in him as their public head. Just as they were crucified with him, and buried with him; so they rose with him, and were justified together with him; he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification (Rom. 4:25). 4.

A rather is put upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, as though it was a greater security from condemnation than his death; and so indeed in some sense it is: Christ's death expiated sin, finished transgression, and made an end of it; but his resurrection has brought in the everlasting righteousness for his people: his dying shewed that he was arrested and condemned; and that the sentence of condemnation was executed on him; but his resurrection, that he is discharged, and they in him: notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not rose again, they would have been in their sins; under the power and guilt of them, and so liable to condemnation (1 Cor. 15:17).

But Christ being risen, re-appears without sin, even sin imputed; and so they are freed from sin, and from condemnation by it in him. Fourthly, The session of Christ at the right hand of God, adds to the security of the saints from charges and condemnation, who is even at the right hand God. 1. This includes his ascension into heaven, and his entrance there, both which serve to strengthen this point: when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, or he triumphed over those who had led his people captive, sin, Satan, the law, and every enemy of theirs; and therefore, since these are led captive, who shall condemn, them? yea, he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also; so that though they have been rebellious, they are graciously regarded, and shall not be condemned.

When he entered into heaven, he entered as their forerunner, in their name, to take possession of it, and prepare it for them, and has promised to come again and take them to himself, that they may enjoy it; wherefore, it is not possible that they should be condemned with the world. 2. Christ being at the right hand of God shews, that he has done his work he came about; that he has made atonement for sin, and obtained eternal redemption; and that he has done this to satisfaction; and therefore is highly exalted by, and at the right hand of, God, where he has all power in heaven and in earth; where he is above all; angels, principalities, and powers, being subject to him; and where he must sit until all enemies are put under his feet; it therefore cannot be in the power of any to condemn those for whom he died: to which may be added, that these are not only raised together with him, but they are made to sit together in heavenly places in him; and must be secure from condemnation (Eph. 2:6).

Fifthly, and lastly, The intercession of Christ for those whom the Father has chosen, and he has died for, is another branch of their security from charges and condemnation: if he rebukes those that bring charges against them, as he does, who dare bring them? and if he is an advocate with the Father for them, as he is, who can condemn them? this part of Christ's work which he performs in heaven, as a priest upon his throne, is done, not by making vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh, which does not seem necessary; nor by supplicating God, as an angry judge, which is not consistent with his state of exaltation, nor with his having made peace, by the blood of his cross; nor by litigating, or controverting a point, in the court of heaven, though he is a counselor, and an advocate: but by the appearance of his person, for his people; by the presentation of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for them, which speak for peace, pardon, and atonement; by offering up the prayers and praises of them unto God; by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them; and by applying the benefits of his death unto them; and which abundantly secure them from condemnation.

For, 1. It should be considered who he is that intercedes, and what an interest he has in him with whom he intercedes: he is the Son of God who makes intercession, who can engage his heart to approach unto him; and who from the relation he stands in to God, must have an interest in him, and so have the persons for whom he intercedes; for he is his God, and their God, his Father, and their Father; wherefore, his intercession cannot fail: and, whereas the consideration of Christ, the great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens, being the Son of God, is an argument to hold fast a profession of faith, and to come with

boldness to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:14, 16).

So it may be improved by faith, as a very strong one against all charges and condemnation taking place on those for whom Christ intercedes. 2. The intercession of Christ is constant; it always continues: though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore; and he lives not for himself only but for others; he ever lives to make intercession: and because he is constantly employed in this work, therefore, as fast as charges are brought against his people, he removes them; by pleading for them, and shewing the falsehood or injustice of such charges; or the reason why, though true, they are not to be received; and on any attempt to condemn them, he shews reason why there is, and should be, no condemnation to them. 3.

His intercession is always prevalent: he, who is the redeemer of his people, is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and he pleads their cause, and thoroughly pleads it; and always carries his point; for his pleas are founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice, which is of a sweet-smelling savor to God, and gives a full satisfaction to his justice; to that it has nothing to object to those on whole account it was offered up, and the virtue of it is pleaded. Christ was ever heard, when here on earth, and so he is now in heaven: whatever he asks for he has; yea, whatever is asked for in his name, is given. 4.

The application of salvation is owing to the intercession of Christ, though the impetration of it is by his death; and the apostle argues from the evidence of the one to the certainty of the other; for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10), that is, by his interceding life: yea, the proof of Christ being able to save, is taken from his perpetual intercession; wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb.7:25).

The influence therefore which the intercession of Christ must have on the security of the saints from condemnation, is very evident. Thus have I endeavored to improve this passage of scripture upon the mournful occasion of the death of Mrs ANN BRINE, late member of the church of Christ in this place, (near Cripplegate) and late wife of the pastor of it; at whose request I have preached from it to you; it having been of singular use to the deceased. It may now be expected I should say something concerning her, which will be chiefly about the gracious experience she was favored with.

She was a daughter of Mr. JOHN MOOR of Northampton; an eminent preacher of the gospel, a minister of the Baptist denomination, of considerable abilities and learning, whom I had the honor to have a personal knowledge of, and acquaintance with. But though she had a religious education, her conversion, her knowledge of Christ, and experimental acquaintance with divine things, were not owing to that, but to the efficacy of divine grace: by several papers of her own writing, put into my hands, it appears, how she came by the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and the great doctrines of the gospel; which were the support of her soul, and the foundation of her joy.

These express the sight and sense she had of sin; her abhorrence and detestation of it; the view she had of the loveliness of Christ; of the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; and how she was enabled to cast her soul on him; and truer in him for eternal life and happiness: but, among the rest, I find one paper, written little more than a year ago, when she took a review of her experience; led thereunto upon a supposition, that there were yet some very great troubles to come upon the churches and servants of Christ, she once thought had been over; which put her upon considering, how it would fare with her in such a time of trial; and what evidence she had of her being a child of God: for which purpose she observed how it had been with her of late; what was her present frame of mind and thoughts of things, and

how it had been with her heretofore, and whether her former experience was from nature, or from the Spirit of God.

As to the first of these, how it had been of late, and how it was with her then, her words are these: "I have often thought my spots are not the spots of God's children; I find so much sin bubbling up in my heart; so many sins of omission and commission, daily and hourly; I can say, that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing; and such an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God. Sure it is not with the saints as with me! At the same time I have some secret hope, which I would not part with for all the world: at some times I have earnest desires after a full conformity to Christ, and thirstings after him.

O! that I could love him more: O! that I could serve him better: O! that! I found more love in me to his ways, his ordinances, and his people: but, O! wretched creature that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of sin? At some times I think I can say with the apostle, thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, who hath given me the victory. Those three scriptures have of late, upon various occasions, been sweet under a sense of sin. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean (Matthew 8:2), To whom shall I go, but unto thee?

Thou hast the words of eternal life (John 6:68). The name of the Lord is a strong tower, whither the righteous run and are safe (Prov. 18:10). Though I am a vile, sinful, polluted creature, and, as I think, the most vile of all thy creatures; yet, (or such, for the very chief of sinners, thou didst suffer and die, and who knows but for me? I know this, that if thou wilt, thou canst make even me clean; and though I am thus sinful, to whom can I go, but to that God against whom I have sinned? there is no help any where else; no other name given, whereby any can be saved, but the name Christ Jesus."

She next proceeds to inquire, how it had been with her formerly, when God first begun to work upon her soul, and she set out in the way of religion; concerning which, she thus expresses herself: "Have I not experienced some things which natural men are strangers to? O! sure I hope I have: upon a recollection of several parts of my former experience, I was warmed, and assured myself this question; Did this or that flow from nature? No; nature is averse to it. Did education produce it?

No; for if that could have had such an effect, it might as well have produced it sooner, for it was not any particular care of my parents, at the time of my awakenings, that was a means thereof; for some time before their care had been abated to what was usual; and my heart more averse to God and good than ever. Did sabbaths seem before this time delightful? and was I before convicted, instructed, edified, or comforted, by the word preached? No; I too well remember the quite contrary of this; even when sabbaths were burdensome instead of delightful; when, if I was obliged to be present, I strove to keep from giving any attention to what was delivered.

Had I love for the people of God? No; I had an aversion to many of them; nor did I love any for the sake of their being saints. Had I a sight and sense of sin; of its evil nature? No; I thought myself as good as others that talk more: I did not know that I was poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked then: Did I taste a sweetness in the scriptures? No; I thought them to be only the inventions of some men, done with a design to keep others in awe. Did I ever see the absolute need of a Savior before?

No; I thought my own works were to save me, and reasoned thus sometimes: I have not been guilty of murder, stealing, etc. and so am in as fair a way for a better world, if any such there be, as others." Having put there questions, and resolved them in the above manner, she rightly draws the following conclusion. "Then sure what I have met with and experienced, must be from the Spirit of God; as conviction of sin, of its heinous, and aggravated nature; of original, as well as actual transgression; the curse demerited by it;

the sense of my own inability to perform the thing that is good; the discovery of my need of a Savior; my seeing Christ to be a fair, suitable, all-sufficient, and able Savior; my approving of him, and application to him for my Savior; my pressing desires towards him, as my alone and complete Savior; my admiration of the love of Father, Son and Spirit, manifested in the great concern of man's salvation; my discovering the harmony and agreement; the sublimity and sweetness of the holy scriptures; and the effects that many sweet and precious promises set home to my soul have had on me; my hungering and thirsting after Christ, his grace, and manifestation of his love and pardoning mercy; my abhorring myself for all that I have done; especially for those sins which I thought were committed against light and love; my love to young converts; my longing for the return of sabbaths, the comfort I have received under the preaching of the gospel, etc. These were things I was once an utter stranger to, and do believe the carnal mind is enmity against.

Why then it must be from above; and if so, then he that hath begun the good work, will carry it on to the day of Christ. If the Lord had a mind to have destroyed me, he sure would not have shewn me such things as these; and if I am the Lord's, then that promise stands firm, with the righteous it shall go well (Isa. 3:10), and what if troubles should arise? what if I should suffer, or even fall in the common calamity? if the Lord is pleased to support under, and give suffering grace, suffering faith, and suffering patience, with suffering trials, I can do all things, or can bear All sufferings, if my Lord be there; Sweet pleasure mingles with the pains, Whilst his left hand my head sustains.

"I leave myself, my all, in his hands, and desire cheerfully to submit to his will in all things; and not be anxious about this, or the other trying dispensation of providence; knowing that he can make hard things easy, and crooked things straight; hoping that these things he will do for me, and not forsake me." This was the comfortable result of her thoughts, occasioned by a melancholy scene of troubles she had in view: but, she is got safe to her father's house, and is secure from them.

How soon they may come to pass, namely, the "giving the outward court to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; the slaying of the witnesses; the leaving their dead bodies unburied for three days and a half, or three years and a half; and their enemies rejoicing over them;" things she was meditating upon, God only knows: may we be prepared for them, supported under them, and carried through them should they be in our day, which is very probable. She was a person attended with frequent disorders of body, and which often came upon her on Lord's days; whereby she was prevented waiting upon the Lord in his word and ordinances, which were delightful to her; and in which she received much spiritual advantage: this gave her a great concern of mind; and she would sometimes say, "she chose, if it was, the will of the Lord, that she might have two days affliction, instead of one, on other days, could she be free on the Lord's day, that she might have the opportunity of hearing the word which was so useful to her."

Her last illness was very short, and it was not expected it would have issued in death. Under it she was very comfortable, resigned to the will of God, and trusting in Christ, and so died in the Lord: wherefore, you, my Brother, and the rest of the surviving relations, have no reason to mourn as those without hope, since them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him, and her among the rest, when you will meet, and never part more, and be for ever with the Lord. Let what has been the subject of discourse on this sorrowful occasion, be regarded by each of us; which may serve as a direction to us, where to go for relief under all charges brought against us, either by ourselves or others; and under a sense of deserved condemnation, and especially when harassed with the accusations of Satan, and the condemnation of our own hearts: let us apply to Christ; let us take the shield of faith, that shield which faith lays hold on, and uses to good purposes when it wields it aright; namely, the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ;

his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: let us hold up, and hold forth these things, as a full answer to every charge, and as a sufficient reason, why no condemnation can come to us.

This may lead us on to observe, how much we are beholden to Christ; and of what use he is to us, as dying, rising again, ascending on high, sitting at the right hand of God, and there interceding for us: how valuable he is, and how precious he should be to us; and, particularly, what a regard we should have for his righteousness, which of itself clears from all charges, and secures from condemnation; and, therefore, it should be our chief desire, and real concern to be found in him, not having on our own righteousness, but his.

It becomes us, and is best for us, to look to him at all times; to place our confidence in him, and fetch all our comfort from him; for if there be any consolation, it is in him; and seeing we receive so much benefit by him, we are under obligation to glorify him, with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

Source:

<https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-gill/who-shall-lay-anything-to-the-charge-of-gods-elect-it-is-god-that-justifieth/>

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