

The Willingness of Christ to Receive Sinners

by Thomas Reade

The sermon emphasizes the willingness of Christ to receive sinners and the importance of coming to Him for salvation.

Scripture: Psalm 42:5, Psalm 68:20, John 6:37, John 15:5, Acts 4:12, Romans 3:23, Romans 8:9, Ephesians 2:8, Revelation 22:17

Topics: "Salvation By Grace", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches about the willingness of Christ to receive sinners, emphasizing the importance of coming to Jesus with a contrite heart, acknowledging our sinfulness, and relying on His grace for salvation. He urges believers to seek a greater conformity to Christ, desiring more of His Spirit and a transformation into His image. Reade highlights the necessity of being born again of the Spirit, having the Spirit of Christ dwell within, and being separated from the world's wickedness. He encourages sincere faith, love, and piety, leading to continual growth in grace until it culminates in glory.

Transcript

11. THE WILLINGNESS OF CHRIST TO RECEIVE SINNERS

"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." John 6:37

Jesus is the great Teacher of heavenly wisdom, and simple-hearted believers are his disciples. Renouncing their own wisdom, they sit, like Mary, at his feet, to hear the words of eternal life. Like her they have chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from them. Blessed Savior, impress my heart with this great truth, "One thing is needful." May the salvation of my soul be the great object of my desire. Make me a simple-hearted believer. Let me not distract myself with things which are too high for me, but make me desirous for the sincere milk of the word, that I may grow thereby.

Your word declares, that "all have sinned." O, give me grace with unfeigned contrition to acknowledge myself a sinner, deserving of everlasting banishment from your presence. Your word declares, that there is no other name given among men, whereby they can be saved, but yours alone. May this precious name be ever my plea before the throne of Justice; my strong tower and castle of defense against the accusations of Satan, and the just demands of your most righteous Law. You have yourself declared-"Without me, you can do nothing." Do not allow me to rely a single moment upon my own strength, which

is perfect weakness, but to lean wholly on your almighty arm, which can alone uphold me amid the dangers of the way, and conduct me in safety to the heavenly city.

Your word, with a solemn distinctness speaks to my heart; "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Heavenly Father! impart unto me the Spirit of your dear Son, that I may be born again of the Spirit; have your Spirit dwelling in me, as the Spirit of adoption; and be made the temple of the Holy Spirit. Then will your work of grace appear, by the transformation of my soul into your image; by my separation from a world that lies in wickedness; by my being turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

Preserve me from all inward impurity, and outward impiety. O, what a world of wickedness may be in my heart, while no glaring irregularity is visible in the life. Lord make me sincere. Let my love be without hypocrisy; that so the internal purity of my heart may be evidenced by the external piety of my daily walk. Thus shall I be continually growing in faith, and love, and every grace, until grace is ripened into glory.

O my soul, pour out your grateful praises to the God of your salvation for this assurance of your acceptance. "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away." Blessed Jesus! I come unto you, drawn by the cords of redeeming love. I feel a void, an aching void within, which nothing but You Yourself can fill. To you do I now come for pardon and peace; for a new nature, spiritual affections, heavenly desires. You have commanded me to come, and oh! how sweet, how endearing is your call: "Come unto me all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Lo, I come! Through the gracious drawings of your Spirit I approach your bleeding Cross. Accept, blessed Lord, a vile, polluted sinner, whose soul is bowed down with sorrow under the load of sin, whose heart is panting, after you, as the deer pants after the water brook. Lo, I come! and oh blessed assurance, you will never cast me out. You are faithful who has promised; your word is truth, that gracious word on which you have caused me to hope, "whoever comes to me I will never drive away."

I desire, Almighty Savior, a greater conformity to you; to have more of your Spirit; more of the temper and disposition of a new-born soul. When I read of that power of faith, that fervency of love, that assurance of hope, that purity of heart, that gentleness of manners, that simplicity of life, which distinguished many of the primitive Christians from the world around them, I long for a portion of that spirit which dwelt in them, which caused them to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things. Oh that I may be a follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Your arm is not shortened; the fountain of your love is not dried up. Like yourself, it is eternal- ever flowing, ever overflowing to bless a ruined world! Your mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, upon those who fear you. Your grace is, in every age, sufficient for every coming sinner. Sufficient to convert the soul; sufficient to carry on the work of evangelical obedience; sufficient to complete and crown the whole with heavenly glory. Oh with what joy will the top-stone be raised, with shoutings, "Grace, grace unto it."

"Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."

God is the Lord by whom we escape death. Conversion is his work. Of myself I can do nothing -nothing that is pleasing in his sight, or profitable to my own soul. But, this moral inability forms no excuse for sin. My inability to glorify God arises from the corruption of my fallen nature; from the darkness of my understanding, the perverseness of my will, the depraved state of my affections; and therefore is justly deserving of eternal condemnation. All mankind come into the world in this helpless state. "The condition

of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God: wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ assisting us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will" (Article 10).

How gracious, then, are these words of Christ: "whoever comes to me I will never drive away." As if he had said Come unto me, you trembling sinners, do not be afraid; I will give you all that you need; Come unto me, I will supply all your need out of my fullness; Come unto me, I will bless you with all spiritual blessings; I will strengthen you by my Spirit, I will comfort you with my promises; yes, I will never leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken to you of- for, "where I am, there shall also my servant be."

O, Eternal God, I would praise you for your unspeakable mercy, for your saving power, in applying the precious balm of the Covenant to my wounded conscience; I would bless you for taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto me; for revealing Christ, as my all-sufficient Savior; for drawing me to his Cross; for uniting me to him by faith as a branch in the true Vine; for making me a member of his mystical body; for working in my heart a holy longing after you. Oh! how can I find words to speak all your praise. But alas, in the midst of these mercies, I feel deeply humbled in your sight. That law in my members which wars against the law of my mind is continually opposing your work of grace. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I am daily taught by painful experience that my heart is deceitful above all things: that I cannot stand a moment except you sustain me; that I cannot take a single step towards heaven, but as you guide me. The whole work of my salvation is all your own; and to You be ascribed the everlasting glory! Under this feeling of impotency, how encouraging are your words, O divine Redeemer, that "whoever comes to me I will never drive away." Make me as willing to be saved, as you are willing to save me.

The enmity of the carnal mind is ever directed against the work of Christ. The moralist, the formalist, the worldling, and the sensualist, are alike opposed to the humbling, purifying doctrines of the Cross. Holiness is offensive to the unrenewed mind. The more spiritual any religious exercise or book is, the more it is disliked. Give some truly scriptural volume to a lover of the world, and how will he receive it? After glancing his eyes over a few of its pages, he will lay it down with a contemptuous smile. He will pity the enthusiast who wrote it, and the enthusiast who admires it. Give him some newly launched novel, some work replete with wit and humor, and he will devour its contents, even though it requires the midnight oil to finish it. Here, all his heart is engaged, all his passions are excited, imagination adds wings to his flight, and, soaring into the realms of fancy, into the fairy land of unreal life, he sinks into his slumbers, regardless whether he awake in time or in eternity!

O how awful is the state of every unconverted soul! "Death is the detector of the heart." When he knocks at the door, when he shakes his dart over the dismayed worldling, what terror seizes upon his mind! Some, indeed, have no worries in their death. Sin has so seared the conscience and hardened the heart. They go as the ox to the slaughter, insensible of the blow which awaits them. But, the moment the stroke is given, the moment eternity is opened before them, O who can tell the horrors of the disembodied spirit, while hurrying down into the dreadful abyss of everlasting woe? O you perishing sinner, before it be too late, while the door of mercy is open, while the voice of love is heard- listen to the Savior's words- pray for grace to obey his call: "whoever comes to me I will never drive away." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

With joyful steps, approach the Gospel sound,
Jesus the Lord invites you from his throne;
Salvation is proclaimed to all around,
The heavenly Shepherd claims you for his own.
Fear not you trembling souls, whom sins oppress,
The Savior's grace is boundless, rich, and free,
His affections yearn over all your deep distress,
In tender love he cries- Believe on me.
To seek and save our wretched guilty souls,
Down from the Father's bosom quick he flew
See, at the Cross, his dying love controls
The powers of hell- and opens heaven for you.
Come, trembling sinner, let not fell despair
Detain your footsteps from the bleeding Cross;
Come as you are- His blood can make you fair,
His endless love repay your every loss.
Filled with the hope of everlasting joy,
A pilgrim journeying to the realms of bliss;
My Savior's arm shall every foe destroy,
And kindly seal your ransomed soul as His.

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