

**No. 153.**

**THE TROUBLED CONSCIENCE,**

AND

**THE PEACE-SPEAKING BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

**PART II.**

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### Can so great a sinner as I be saved ?

The apostle declares, that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin." 1 John i. 7. It would seem as if this declaration were written on purpose to meet such cases as yours. This scripture says positively, the blood of Christ cleanseth from *all sin*. "No," you say, in flat and perverse contradiction, "it cannot cleanse from mine." Did Christ die to save sinners, and yet are there some sinners to be found, according to your view, whom he *cannot save*? Then his work of salvation is unfinished, and his character as a Saviour is incomplete. Has he not saved millions already by the merit of his death?—Well, suppose all the sins of those millions had been in you alone, could he not as easily have saved you in that case, as he has saved them? Certainly he could. Can you really make up your mind to go and say to Christ, "Lord, thou *canst* not, wilt *not*, save *me*; there is neither love enough in thy heart, nor power enough in thy Spirit, nor merit enough in thy great sacrifice, to save me. Look upon *me* and behold a sinner, whom even *thou* canst not save: behold in *me* a sinner, to whom thy uttermost ability cannot reach." No, you cannot say this; and yet you may say it, and innocently say it, if what you affirm is true, that your sins are too great to be forgiven. Let it be admitted for the sake of argument, that you are the chief of sinners, still Christ can save you; so at least the apostle thought, when he said, "*It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I AM CHIEF.*" And now read what follows, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy; that in me first (or as it signifies, in me the chief sinner) Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."—1 Tim. i. 15, 16. Think what Saul of Tarsus was; a bloody persecutor, and even murderer of the disciples of Christ; yet Christ not only pardoned him, but raised him to the dignity of the chief of the apostles. For what purpose? To be a pattern of God's mercy to the end of time. Yes, there he stands upon the pedestal of his own immortal writings, a monument of the riches, power, and sovereignty of divine grace.

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**No. 153.**

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AND  
THE PEACE-SPEAKING BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

[By Professor BARNAS SEARS, Newton Theological Institution.]

*"The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin."*

1 John, i. 7.

**PART II.**

WE propose first to give a practical outline of the doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ.

The experience of the human race teaches that there is within us a moral evil which no human power can subdue. Each one is conscious of having depraved inclinations which he cannot himself eradicate. Wherever man is to be found, he is found with this attendant.

Pagan priests, seizing upon this consciousness of guilt, and upon the religious necessities of man, have resorted to an almost infinite variety of means, and put the terrors of superstition in the most formidable array, in order to frighten men from their sins. But so far from having a cleansing power, their systems of religion have always indulged, and often fostered and consecrated, the impurities of our nature.

Legislators and rulers have attempted to overcome by civil authority, what could not be reached by a dread of invisible powers. By Draconian laws, great monarchs could line their public roads with the bodies of men which their own cruelty had mangled; but they could no more stay the evil itself, than they could the raging of the pestilence by similar means.

Philosophers have labored to strike out a better path. Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Confucius, and others, have done what the reflection of sages could effect, to bind up the sources of this moral deluge. But their speculations, which none but the enlightened few could understand, only made known the fact of an unconquerable tendency to self-destruction, and led them to lament what they could not remedy.

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It was fitting that Providence should allow the human mind, under the most favorable circumstances, to exhaust its resources here in vain, in order to demonstrate the necessity of an entirely different method, and to prepare the way for introducing it with the more effect. Viewed philosophically, *Redemption* is as necessary a principle in religion for a fallen race, as the law of gravitation is in physics. Without this element, human nature is a chaos, and each individual a planet let loose from its orbit. Without a new source of moral renovation, religion itself is powerless. There must be a vitalizing spirit—new principles of a transforming power must be introduced, and an infinite fountain must be opened to supply the streams of spiritual life.

This opens to our view the work of our exalted Redeemer. The Lord from heaven has become the second head of the human race. He is the spiritual stock, whose offspring, being spiritually born, and in his own likeness, are made partakers of the Divine nature. He is the Son of God by way of pre-eminence, by a union with whom, others become the sons of God and receive a filial spirit, crying, *Abba, Father*. He is the head of the church, the centre of life and activity to the body, which, by a mysterious incorporation with him, receives of his fulness, and grace for grace. Nothing in the history of the world can be compared with the redemption of Christ, either in regard to the magnitude of the undertaking, or its stupendous results. Before its agency shall cease, its mighty power shall pervade all the nations of the earth, human society shall assume a nobler aspect, and heaven shall be peopled with a new, divine race. Now what is it that gives to the blood of Christ its atoning efficacy? Not merely divine appointment. There must have been an intrinsic virtue—something, which in the nature of things was adapted to answer the demands of *absolute justice*, or it could never have received the divine approbation. God's will is to us the rule, because it is an exact representation of equity. He appoints a certain means of recovery, because his infinite wisdom recognises the appropriateness of that means, antecedent to all appointment. Instead, therefore, of tracing the power of Christ's blood in atoning for sin, to any thing like an arbitrary decision in the Divine will, we trace it to its own essential fitness to produce such results. The Divine character was to be consulted as well as our redemption, and no method could meet the case, ex-

cept that in which *God himself should be just* in justifying the believer.

Hence the necessity of the voluntary humiliation and sufferings of such a being as is found in the person of Christ; one whose name, as expressive of his true nature, should be called Wonderful; a being made up of a mysterious union of divinity and humanity; in one respect on an equality with God, in another with man; and so uniting these in himself, as to be able to unite the parties, with both of whom he possessed a common nature. The whole efficacy of the expiatory sacrifice depends upon his peculiar person. Without his humanity, he could neither demonstrate by a life of perfect human obedience, the entire reasonableness of the divine law, nor suffer, the just for the unjust. Without his divinity, the work of redemption could not have that high character which was necessary to satisfy infinite justice. The ineffable and incomprehensible *union* of divinity and humanity, was indispensable, in order that the act of either might be affirmed of his whole person. Thus we may in part perceive *why* it is, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

It is foreign to our purpose to discuss the question of a general or limited atonement. Neither of these views necessarily opposes the doctrine of the *sufficiency* of Christ's blood to atone for all sin. If in effect it does not actually atone for the sins of all, or if it was never the design of God to make sure such a result, the reason is to be sought elsewhere than in the want of its efficacy. Surely it cannot be, that the sins of one are forgiven because they come within the measure of Christ's adequate sufferings, and those of another not forgiven, because they transcend that measure. Viewing, therefore, the atoning blood of Christ abstractedly and distinct from all other considerations, it has in itself sufficient efficacy to cleanse from all sin. Now, if any sin cannot consistently with the divine government be forgiven, it must be for other reasons than the inadequacy of Christ's sufferings.

We remark here,

1. *The blood of Christ removes the sense of guilt*, or rather guilt itself, together with the consciousness of it—*cleanseth* us from all sin. While this declaration fills the penitent with transports of joy, it confounds the wise, and *raggers* the unbelieving. Who can bring a clean thing out

of an unclean—can make the guilty, innocent? To those who are learned merely in this world's wisdom, it seems impossible. Man is what he is. Moral character is the slow product of moral action, and its accumulation, whether of virtue or vice, is permanent—is a part of the man, and cannot be removed. So reasons the natural man; and but for divine aid, the reasoning would be correct. The very fact of a *real removal of guilt* asserts the divinity of the work. "Behold the Lamb of God, that *taketh away* the sin of the world," is a declaration which contains the fundamental article of Christianity. Even though the remembrance of it remain, it is not like the consciousness of present guilt, but it is the recollection of what we once were as contrasted with what we now are. "And such were ye, but ye are washed, ye are cleansed."

Now, to the sinner, oppressed with guilt, nothing but the effectual purging of the conscience can bring relief. He knows that there is *one grand cause* of all his sufferings. He has awful testimonies that this is working an inward ruin. There is no longer a harmony in his moral nature. He sees his sins and knows their dreadful import. Tell him of the beauty of virtue, and reason with him upon the principles of morals, and he will assent to all, but, like an exile from Paradise, will say, "what are these beauties to me? Innocence and virtue are not mine. I have a deeper stain than the leopard's spot, or the Ethiopian's skin. Guilt is diffused through all my soul." Until this *identical evil*, which absorbs all his thoughts and feelings, be removed, reflection only adds keenness to his anguish. To him it is a gospel, thrilling sound, which proclaims, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." This is what he had long sought, but never found; what all the wise men of the world could not teach; a work for which but one was worthy—a seal which but one could open.

2. *The blood of Christ destroys the power of sinful inclinations, and a new principle of life is imparted.*

Without this in addition to the forgiveness of sin, redemption would be very imperfect. If the thorns were only pruned off, and the root left behind,—if the well were merely drained and the springs left open, it would be but a temporary relief. Not that all sinful inclinations are at once completely destroyed; but, though it be a gradual work, the gospel directs its power to the foundation of the evil. It is an undermining process. the building falls piece by

piece, and, finally, the last pillar will fall, and then the ruin will be complete. As the corruptions of the heart are laid aside, a renewal, like that of nature in the vernal season, takes their place. Christianity is a living spirit, possessed of quickening powers. There is an inward principle of renovation. The decay of the old man indicates the vitality of the new. He that dieth with Christ, also liveth with him; for he is crucified for those who are crucified with him; and he is the life of those who live unto him. Every man that hath this hope purifieth himself even as he is pure, and has within himself a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

3. *It removes the penalty of sin.*

The removal of sin as actual transgression, and the destruction of its power as a principle, does indeed substantially annihilate the penalty. Consciousness of guilt is undoubtedly the poisoned barb around which the heart most festers. But beside this, there are the passions fostered by sin, the burning of an inward fever, the raging of a tempest, the ruin of the soul. These are at the same time the necessary consequences, and the penalty of sin. Besides, there is the abandonment of the sinner to himself, and to the influence of others more wicked than himself; the removal of all moral restraint, and of all that could once divert: the casting into outer darkness. Now, the blood of Christ extinguishes within the sinner's breast, the hell that is begun here, and quenches for him the eternal fires. It cleanses from all sin, removes its last stain—all its influences and consequences. The evil is destroyed both as cause and effect—it is destroyed for time and for eternity.

We proceed to apply these general principles to some specific cases. It is not uncommon to hear one say, "I am convinced that I am a sinner, and think I desire to be a Christian. But, though I *know* my guilt, I cannot *feel* it as I ought. What shall I do that I may feel more distressed for my sins." This common error arises from a misapprehension of the nature of the gospel, as though salvation were not wholly of grace. It is right, indeed, that one should fix his eye on his sins, and feel a godly sorrow for them. But mere distress of mind will never work out one's salvation. The sinner must not direct his attention *exclusively* to himself. That would leave no place for a Saviour. While we abhor and abandon ourselves and our

former lives, we must, by faith, lay hold of Christ for his cleansing blood. Whatever we do without looking unto Jesus, instead of preparing us to enter the right way, serves only to make us wander from it. To every inquiring soul, the language of Christ is, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, come unto me and be ye saved." Let him that is conscious of being a sinner, immediately seek a Saviour. Let him that desires to be a Christian come at once to Christ and his atoning blood. Let nothing be attempted without him. He claims the honor of being sole deliverer, and is dishonored and displeased with any effort of the sinner to take a single step without his aid.

There are undoubtedly cases where persons in early life are the subjects of a saving change, but from a misapprehension of the evidences of piety, or from a want of discrimination as to their religious exercises, are left to grope their way in darkness and sorrow. The following conversation may represent such an individual, appearing as an inquirer before his pastor. *Inquirer.* "I am unhappy, and know not what to do. I am a great sinner, and am yet almost entirely indifferent to it. I have not even the first indications of light upon the conscience; for I do not feel myself to be at enmity with God. I cannot say that I dislike to reflect upon his character; I have a kind of pleasure in hearing the gospel, and in the conversation of Christians: in short, I have no sense of my awful depravity." *Pastor.* "Did you never indulge the hope that your sins were forgiven?" *Inquirer.* "Oh no! I have had no conviction of sin, no change of heart, no religious experience—nothing at all that belongs to a Christian. I have heard many relate the circumstances of their conversion, and find my situation to be entirely different from theirs." *Pastor.* "You may differ from others in accidental circumstances, and yet have all that is essential to a scriptural evidence of piety." *Inquirer.* "Do not intimate it; I cannot endure the idea. I tremble even at the thought of deceiving myself in a matter of such moment as this."

In such a situation persons may, by their peculiar posture, stand directly in the way of the full tide of salvation, which would otherwise flow into their souls. They need to come directly and boldly to that blood that cleanseth from sin, but they are terrified with the apprehension of self-deception. Reader, if such be your case, listen to a safe proposal. Suspend your judgment for the present, lay aside your own



method of finding peace of conscience, forget past difficulties, and present yourself, as you are, at the fountain which is opened to wash from sin and uncleanness. Follow the directions of the Saviour, intrust yourself into his hands. Walk in the light as he is in the light, cry unto your Father, and if you are a child of God, he will own the kindred, and you shall have fellowship with the saints, and you shall have the witness in yourself, that the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. Suppose certain seeds were presented to a gardener, and he should be told that some of them were genuine, but that others were artificial imitations, and he should be asked whether he could distinguish them. Now, though it might be difficult to decide from their external appearance, yet, if he were to plant one, and it should grow, that would settle the question whether it was genuine or not. "By their fruits shall ye know them."

But we wish to remark more particularly on the condition of those who, after enjoying a Christian hope, sink into despondency. The great majority of such cases is owing to a departure from the path of Christian obedience. It is not the design of God, that an unfaithful servant should enjoy the reward of fidelity. While the devoted Christian enjoys unfailling support, and ever-brightening hopes, the disobedient finds his way terminating in darkness. It is a merciful arrangement, that a decline of piety shall be attended with a decline of hope. If any one yields to temptation and falls into sin, he cannot enjoy the light of God's countenance, can no longer come to him with confidence. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer." A sense of guilt seizes the heart, the promises fail, hope is gone, and the soul is in agony. This is the region of despair, because it is the region of sin. Here one's steps take hold on death, and the pains of hell get hold upon him. There is only one refuge, one way of hope. "Remember whence thou art fallen. Repent and do thy first works." A single thought of your Saviour will be enough now to make you weep bitterly. But go and pour out your soul unto God, like the king of Israel in the fifty-first Psalm. If famishing where you are, arise and go unto your Father with the prodigal son. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

There are some who, from other causes, fall into a state

of despair, and suffer far more than in the first anguish of their souls. We must now direct our attention to such. It is by no means strange that we meet with persons of this description. The wonder is that there are not more. With increasing years, there is an increasing knowledge of sin. The heart is a dark abode, where Satan has reigned, and is filled with monsters. It is but a faint ray of light that ordinarily shoots across this pit to show the penitent what he is. The full revelation, which the mind in its weakness could not bear, is mercifully withheld. But still the evil is there, and one gradually learns, by alarming experience, the dreadful extent of Satan's workings within him. In the mean time, he is accustomed to contemplate what is pure and holy, and is by degrees transformed into the image of his divine original. His moral sensibilities have become more delicate, the pure light of life has been illuminating his soul, and he now instinctively shrinks at the perception of his impurities. The finest mind is the most delicate in its structure, and the most sensitive in its feelings. The most pure and enlightened are most shocked at the unexpected discovery of iniquity in their hearts. And yet who knows his errors? Who but needs to pray, cleanse thou me from *secret* faults? We may have many dangerous propensities concealed within us, to which the outward temptation has never yet in all its power been applied. There may be a price for which, in spite of any strength of virtue which we possess, we might, Judas-like, be bought; and well has the warning been given, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Now, when a Christian of a delicately organized mind, bends all his thoughts to this theme, and lets his reflections settle down here, it is not strange, that he should cry out, "I am lost." The man who crosses the ocean may, when mid-way on his passage, think of the boundless waters around him, and of the remoteness of all human aid, and have the firmness of his soul fail him, till, by long effort, he reason himself into a sense of security. The traveller, that ascends the tower of the Strasburg Cathedral, and looks down from its giddy height upon the diminutive beings that creep through the streets on the pavement below, will instinctively feel that he is devoted to destruction; and, not till he has attentively considered the wall of security that is around him, will he be able to regain the balance of his mind. Let the

tender-hearted, conscientious Christian fix his contemplations solely on his sinful heart and on God's inviolable law, leaving the atoning blood of Christ out of view, and God will appear to him a consuming fire. Let him even give a subordinate and disproportionate degree of attention to the peace-speaking blood of the Lamb, and his mind may well be clouded with the gloom of despondency. All the parts of the gospel system must be viewed together, and in their proper relations, else they will not produce the right effect. The whole gospel must be seen at once. The man of a softened heart, that melts but to weep, that turns its quickened sensibilities upon its own deformities, and is thereby continually cast down, must learn the power of faith, and look away to the Rock that is higher than he. There is a brighter scene above. One upward look might descry the star of Bethlehem. Why cling to the probe that opens the wound and give no opportunity for the balm to be poured in? Why art thou cast down? and why art thou disquieted within thee? Hope thou in God. If there be a person on earth to whom the encouragements of the gospel are held out, it is to such an one as this. It is the broken heart which God does not despise; it is with these lowly ones, that he delights to dwell. A bruised reed will he not break, and a smoking flax will he not quench.

But there is still another class of individuals, once professed Christians, who admit all that we have said, but deny its applicability to them. Theirs is a peculiar case. They stand out as exceptions, and are like spots of sand in a fertile field, which neither sun nor showers can refresh. One important fact in regard to such, is that they are not, as they suppose, alone. Every pastor meets with many such cases. They are to be found in every portion of the Christian church; and, taken together, they constitute a great class. No minister is regarded as qualified for the pastoral office, who is not prepared to treat such cases. Though such persons regard themselves as necessarily excluded from the kingdom of God, and pass often months and years in expectation of certain perdition, they generally, in the end, by some new view of truth, some passage of Scripture, unnoticed before, or by some other means employed by the good Shepherd, come to enjoy a tranquil hope, and live and die in the faith of God's elect. If it were possible for all such persons to come together and relate to each other what was found re

corded in their heart's experience, how would they be astonished at the number of those who could perfectly sympathize with their feelings! And if the method of God's mercy in delivering many of them from their bewildered state were rehearsed, probably few of the rest but would exclaim with surprise, "the Lord hath indeed made for us a way of escape."

Still one may reply: "this reasoning does not satisfy me; you know what our Saviour (in Matt. xii. 31, 32,) has said. 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.' Here is my difficulty. You see there is no hope for me."

Let us, then, with reverence approach this awful subject, and inquire into the nature and character of the unpardonable sin. This will require us to present one of the practical views of the doctrine of the trinity. That there are grades of iniquity, proportioned to the degree of knowledge possessed by the individual committing it, is abundantly taught in the Scriptures. This gradation of knowledge, and consequently of sin committed against it, is strongly marked by the persons in the trinity to whom it more immediately relates. God is known more when manifested in the second person than in the first, and more in the third than in the second. These manifestations proceed from the peculiar mode of divine operation in the work of redemption. To some the Deity is manifested merely as God, or as the Creator and Governor of the world; to others he is more fully made known through Christ as the Redeemer of men, God manifest in the flesh; to others still, there are the additional manifestations of God through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The pagan, who sins against the light which nature affords him, is verily guilty. The inhabitants of a Christian land, where Christ is revealed as the Saviour of men, are in danger of committing a more grievous sin. But he who has had the special light which the Holy Spirit imparts to the conscience, and sins against this, is most guilty of all. The same sinful act, performed under these different degrees of knowledge, is necessarily attended with different degrees of responsibility and danger.

The fullest displays which God makes of himself is where he reveals himself in all these successive forms. The last includes both the others, and by surrounding the conscience with a blaze of light, raises the responsibility of the individual to the highest possible degree. Such manifestations, it would seem, were made by the Holy Spirit to the Pharisees. The noon-day light of a miracle, brought to pour its radiance directly upon their consciences—an unusual manifestation of God, made by the representations of the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to enlighten and convince, stared them in the face, and gave to blasphemy, always a revolting thought, its most terrific form. Blasphemy, under such circumstances, is the most impious outrage upon Deity. It is scoffing at divinity when clearly manifested as such. It is not only rejecting God and the compassionate Redeemer, but it is insulting the last beseeching Messenger, the celestial Dove, that tenders the last offer of mercy. Jehovah vindicates his divine majesty, by declaring that such blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Now all the terror of this awful passage falls, not upon the trembling sinner of a tender conscience, but *exclusively* upon the hardened blasphemer, upon the man of violence and outrage against the Holy Ghost, declaring its gracious operations to be the abominable work of the devil. "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils."

Does this passage distress you? *This very distress* proves that it is not applicable to your case. They who are implicated, are the farthest from feeling the least concern. They are already so hardened by infidelity as to be pouring out their imprecations against all that is holy. But to the *sensitive conscience*, it has manifestly no application. Most clearly the *distress* which multitudes feel from contemplating this passage as one that seals their doom, is ill-founded, and ought to be removed.

There is a kindred passage in the sixth of Hebrews, which we doubt not is to be understood in a similar way. The cases do not seem to be identical, but yet they appear to be only varieties of the same class. It is not necessary to settle the difficult question, *how much* of religious knowledge they must have, whom it should be impossible to renew. The defection itself would seem to be of the same

general character as the sin against the Holy Ghost. It is the guilt of *putting the Son of God to an open shame*; it is that of pouring contempt upon Christ *under circumstances of great and peculiar illumination*. The sin unto death for which not even prayer was to be offered, whatever might be its connexion with bodily disease or dissolution, was undoubtedly of the same general description. The case of Ananias and Sapphira goes far to illustrate it. The sin charged upon them, was that of lying to the *Holy Ghost*: of agreeing together to tempt the *Spirit of the Lord*.

The principal design of these remarks is answered if we have succeeded in showing that these passages of Scripture are not applicable to those who have an honest and serious regard for sacred things; but that for such distressed and desponding souls, the text at the head of this tract is the appropriate passage. Such it has ever been found to be, and such may it ever prove.

Let me not close without adding a word of warning to persons of an opposite character. You have seen what the blood of Christ can effect. We bid you, in God's name, beware of slighting this blood. Beware of scoffing at the Spirit's power—of sneering at God's work of grace. Remember the awful words of which we have been speaking. You live in a blaspheming age—an age that makes the Christian turn pale when he thinks of the sin against the Holy Ghost. You may not yet have grown bold in this sin, but you are thrown daily into society that tempts you to become so. You have had great light. Christ has been clearly and repeatedly set before you. You have witnessed the operations of the Spirit on others, and have had your own sins often set in order before you. Think of the consequences of taking a mis-step in regard to this subject. O set not thus inconsiderately the seal upon your own perdition! As we would restrain the murderer, and remind him of the law, the prison, and the scaffold, so, when blasphemers are plying their diabolical arts to make you a child of hell, we would persuade you to stop and consider the terrors of God's law, and the inviolable majesty of him who hath uttered it, and the certainty of destruction to the hardened transgressor. Lay not suicidal hands on that soul made in God's image. Once deliberately take your stand as a blasphemer in the midst of the bright illuminations of God's spirit upon your conscience, and your soul is lost for ever, and you will weep and groan when it is, alas! too late.

bearing this inscription: I, WHO WAS A BLASPHEMER, A PERSECUTOR AND INJURIOUS, OBTAINED MERCY. *Let no man ever despair; for if there arise a greater sinner than I was, let him look on me, and hope for pardon through the blood of Christ. I was forgiven to encourage the wickedest of men to repent, to believe in Jesus, and expect salvation.*

Consider well the other instances recorded in the Word of God, of pardon granted to some of the greatest sinners. There is scarcely one class of sinners, or one kind of crime, which is not specifically mentioned in scripture as having been pardoned. Think of Manassah, an apostate, an idolater, a wholesale murderer, a man whose example and authority as a king were employed to fill a nation with iniquity; of David, who was guilty of the united crimes of adultery and murder; of the dying malefactor, who was saved upon his cross; of the Jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost, and who though they had been the murderers of Christ, were forgiven; of the once polluted members of the Corinthian church,—1 Cor. vi. 9—11. What proofs are these that no sins will keep a man from salvation, that do not keep him from Christ. The fact is, that greatness and littleness, few and many, have nothing to do with this matter, in the way of making it more difficult, or more easy to obtain mercy. No man is pardoned because his sins are fewer than others; and none is rejected because his sins are more. Great sinners are as welcome as little ones; for as the skill of the physician is the more displayed in dangerous and difficult cases, than in slight ones, so is the grace of Christ the more illustriously manifested in the pardon and sanctification of notorious sinners than in the salvation of those who have not gone so far astray. If God's mercy be infinite, it must be as easy to him to pardon a million sins, as one. Desponding sinner, dry up your tears, and doubt no longer. The greatest sin you can commit, is to disbelieve God's promise to forgive your other sins. Unbelief is the most *heinous* of all sins. "*He that believeth not God, HATH MADE HIM A LIAR.*"—1 John v. 10. Yes, you are giving God the lie to his face, as often as you say your sins are too great to be forgiven. Do you not tremble at this? Is there not abominable pride in unbelief? Who and what are *you*, that you should suppose God has any object or interest in deceiving *you*, by a false promise? Are you so considerable a person, that he should think it worth his

while to falsify his word in order to draw you into false confidence? Believe then from this hour, that God is more willing to forgive you the greatest of your sins, than you imagine he is to blot out the least of them.

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HYMN.

*Praise for the Fountain opened.*

THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins ;  
And sinners, plung'd beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoic'd to see  
That fountain in his day ;  
O may I there, though vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away !

Dear dying Lamb ! thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its pow'r,  
Till all the ransom'd church of God  
Be sav'd, to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song  
I'll sing thy power to save,  
When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue  
Lies silent in the grave. COWPER.