

SERMON XXVIII

CHRIST IS OURS BEFORE WE HAVE GRACIOUS QUALIFICATIONS

Tobias Crisp

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid {or, made to meet,} on him the iniquity of us all." {Is.53:6}

You have heard before, beloved, many notable evangelical truths thrust together in a narrow room, in these few words; the chief mysteries of the gospel being set together, as thick as possibly they can stand in this compass.

I. It is iniquity that the Lord hath laid upon Christ. 2. Our iniquity. 3. It was the Lord himself that did it. 4. He hath done it already, as it is not now to be done. 5. It was laid upon Christ, and none other; it was the most marvelous work that ever the Lord did, that he should not only wound him for sin, but make him sin itself; and indeed, he could not compass his own great ends, except he had laid it on him; and all the world would have sunk under it, save Christ only. Had God laid the creature as a foundation to bear the weight of sin, it would have been dashed to pieces under it, and then the word of God must have fallen to the ground; he should but have built castles in the air, to lay the weight of sin upon the creature; therefore he must have a rock, a foundation of stone, that let the weight be what it will, it may be able to bear it; and that for all those nine ends which we have formerly insisted upon.

There remains one considerable and remarkable truth, and that which indeed those, whose spirits are any whit enlightened, thirst most to be resolved and satisfied in; and that is, whose iniquities they are, that the Lord hath laid upon Christ.

All this while, you will say, here is but a general discourse of the iniquities of men being laid upon Christ, what is that to me? Many men's iniquities may be laid upon him, and I never the better, if mine be not. When a reprieve comes to a jail, what is this to such or such a thief that hath no interest in it? He dies as if there were none at all; so people's spirits, who out of self-love, hearing of a gracious grant, look what share they have in it, are presently asking, as the disciples in another case, "Lord, is it I," or, "is it I?" Are mine iniquities laid upon Christ? Now this text will give us some hint, whereby men may know they have a share in this matter. I know this is commonly the greatest outcry in the world; I fear this is not my case, that mine iniquities are all laid upon Christ; therefore, beloved, I think it would be labour well worth the time, if it were possible, to clear to particular persons, how they might conclude to themselves from this text; for here may be gathered a strong conclusion of their own portion in this grant, or grace. Beloved, though it be the greatest query any heart {once made sensible of its own condition} can make, how they may know their own interest in this grace of God; yet, there is nothing wherein persons remain so unsettled, as in this question; how may I be assured my part lies here? The apostle speaks of the "full assurance of faith," and of "coming to the throne of grace with boldness." I am afraid that gross heart-clogging doctrine, that men cannot be assured of their own salvation, is too much to be found in the world; not one man among a thousand can say, all my iniquities are laid upon Christ; it will be therefore an admirable piece of work, most acceptable to the church and children of God, and a thing bringing most glory to God, and comfort to his people, to undeceive them, who by reason of mistaking the way of their own interest, after a long labour after it, are further to seek of the knowledge of it, than when they first began.

As I conceive, that whereat so many stumble, when they first enter into this great case, whether they have interest in this grace, or not, lieth in the trial of their estate; they lay down a ground work, supposing it to be undeniable, which indeed, is a deceiving of persons in their search;

namely, that there must be found in them, who have propriety in this grace by Christ, some previous dispositions and qualifications of spirit, as integrity, sound repentance, conversion, and other fruits of sanctification. Now they lay it down for a position with themselves, that till they can find themselves sanctified, and those graces of sanctification, by which they try themselves, in themselves, they conclude, none of this grace of Christ belongs to them; so that they fall upon some graces, such as they call out to themselves, and then they try whether they have them in them, and what proportion they find them in them; and if their hearts do not answer to these they have set before them, they presently conclude, that no grace of Christ belongs to them.

Now, beloved, my heart's desire is, that in this great business, wherein so great comfort of God's people consist, men may be built upon clear and proper grounds; that so they being undeceived, may find out the way which the Lord useth whenever he giveth satisfaction to his people, of their interest in Christ.

You may find it as the Lord hath chalked it out to you; and this, I am sure, a man may dare to lay hold upon his own proper portion in this grace and grant of the Lord, not only whenever the Lord is pleased to hold it out, but also upon those terms he holds it out, if you will call them so. Sure, I say, as the conditions are by which they may claim interest in Christ, those being granted and found, the soul may close with the grace of God. Now all the difficulty lieth in this, whether the Lord propounds to men, that there shall be no part in Christ, nor grace by him, till they find their spirits, souls, and bodies, sanctified throughout; or whether the Lord holds out the grant of pardon of sin, without such previous qualifications, or no; there lieth the greatest scruple in this particular.

I doubt not but to ingenuous spirits, I shall make it clear, that the grace of laying iniquity upon Christ, is applicable by forgiveness of sins, to persons before ever there be the least measure of sanctification in works at all; and being applied by the Lord's own grant, there may be safety and security in applying the same by faith, without regard or respect, to sanctification, in any measure whatsoever.

But you will say, peradventure, the text seems to make against it, rather than for it; for it saith, "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;" from whence you will argue thus; "us" doth take in the prophet himself, with the rest of whom he spake; and the prophet was renewed and sanctified when he spake thus, and so may all the rest be, of whom he spake, and that therefore, this grace of laying iniquity upon Christ, is applied unto persons when they are sanctified.

For answer to this, though the prophet speaks of himself as one interested in this; yet it will be clear, {whether he were sanctified, or no, it is not material,} that he had no reference to himself as a sanctified person; namely, that this grace was applied to him as such.

That this may be clear to you, note the foregoing words; for there you see, that he is so far from having regard to sanctification of spirit, before laying of iniquities upon Christ, that he takes into consideration no other condition but the most wretched, sinful, and forlorn estate, creatures can be brought into; mark the words well, "All we, {there he brings in himself,} like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." Now the question is, whose iniquities they are, that are laid upon Christ; the text saith, "the iniquities of us." Who are the us? It is us "that like sheep have gone astray, and turned every one to his own way." Now what is it for sheep to go astray? Sheep, you know, are then straggling, when they are from their shepherd; it is not being now in one pasture, and then in another, that argues a sheep's going astray; for if the shepherd be with them in this pasture now, and in another tomorrow, still they are not gone astray. Sheep are then astray, when they are from their shepherd, and those pastures that he hath appointed for them; so that for men to go astray, is to go from God their shepherd. "The Lord is my shepherd," saith David, Psalm 23:1. Mark now, the iniquities of these persons are laid upon Christ, who strayed in that they departed from the living God; now what renewed qualifications can be possibly imagined to be in a man, that is departed from God? "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." {Jer.2:13} There is a departing from God, a great evil it is indeed; and you shall see there is an impossibility of believing when there is such a departing from the living

God. "Take heed, {saith the apostle,} lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." {Heb.3:12} It is most certainly true that there is an evil heart of unbelief, while there is a departing from God. Faith, you know, is the first of all gifts God bestows upon a soul, and all other graces, as they call them, follow that faith that Christ gives to men; so that, if there be not a believing, there can be no graces of sanctification at all. But while men are departing from the living God, there remains in them an evil heart of unbelief; and yet though there be a departing from God, and straying like lost sheep, the iniquities of these persons, considered as departed from God, are laid upon Christ. "We turned every one to his own way." Here he sets out fully, the self-willedness and extravagancies of persons; what is it for a man to turn to his own way, but to proceed on, in his purpose alone, without regard to what God saith to him? The Israelites, when they lived without a king, "every man did that which seemed good in his own eyes." This then is the true meaning of the word, {turned to his own way,} that men do what is good in their own eyes; and yet it is the iniquities of these men, that have thus turned to their own ways, which the Lord hath laid upon Christ. From whence I lay down this conclusion, that this grace of the Lord's laying iniquity upon Christ, is certainly applied unto persons, even while they are departed from the living God, are lost sheep, are turned every one to their own ways, before they have amended them.

And because this is a truth that is so hardly received, seeming to give such way to looseness, as some most unjustly and wickedly calumniate the truth; seeing it finds so little favour, though it contains so many great and inestimable comforts; I shall endeavour, through the Spirit of Christ, to bring such manifest scriptures, and so undeniable, to clear the truth of it, that he must fight against his own knowledge that opposeth it; namely, that the laying of iniquity of any person upon Christ, is before they can find the least degree of gracious qualifications, or sanctification wrought in them; and therefore it is a most fearful injury unto a man's self, and a forsaking a man's own mercy to conclude, that there is no grace for me, because I cannot find such and such things in me, as universal obedience, sanctification, and the like.

You shall plainly see when grace is applied unto persons, and of what conditions, by that of the psalmist, "thou hast ascended on high, {it is spoken of Christ, for so the apostle explains it,} thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them." {Ps.68:18} Mark well, "even for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them." Who is that them? "The rebellious;" and how comes the Lord God to dwell amongst them? "Thou hast received gifts for them." But beloved, this you must know, that there is no evil dwells with God; he stands fully off, and separate from all iniquity. "Your iniquities, {saith the prophet,} separate between you and your God;" there must be a taking away of iniquity, before there can be a receiving graciously, as you have it. "O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips." {Hos.14:1,2} As long as there is iniquity to be charged upon any person, there is no receiving graciously; but the Lord stands afar off, there is no dwelling of God with wickedness; therefore, seeing he cannot dwell with men where iniquity is, Christ received gifts for men that he might dwell among the rebellious. Now this seems to be a paradox, and indeed all the doctrines of the gospel are paradoxes to carnal men. How can these words stand together, that the Lord dwells among rebellious persons, and yet cannot dwell with wickedness? Is there not wickedness in rebellion? I answer, beloved, there is wickedness in rebellion, in the nature of it; but, saith the text, "thou hast received gifts," that the Lord God may dwell among such rebellious ones; as much as to say; though this, or that person, actually rebel from time to time, yet for all this, Christ hath so received gifts of the Father, that the loathsomeness and hatefulness of this rebellion is laid upon the back of Christ; he bears the sin, as well as the blame and shame of that iniquity and rebellion; so that though this or that person do act it, yet all the hatefulness thereof is laid upon Christ, and God satisfied himself in him; and that is the only reason why it comes to pass that God can dwell with them that act the thing, because all the filthiness and

hatefulness of it is transacted from them upon Christ.¹ But for the person himself, you see plainly he is considered here in no other condition, but as an actor of rebellion itself; and the Lord is come to dwell with him, even while he is a rebellious person. Now I would fain know, what previous qualification, renovation and sanctification, can possibly be supposed, or imagined, in persons considered only as rebels; for here persons are considered under no other notion. The Holy Ghost doth not say, that the Lord takes rebellious persons, and fits, and prepares them by sanctification, and then, when they are fitted, he will come and dwell with them; but even then, without any intermission, even while they are rebellions, Christ hath received gifts for them, that the Lord God may dwell among them.

And if this be not clear enough, look into that golden passage, never enough to be repeated, and resorted unto, for the sweetness lying in it, namely, Ezek.16:3-10. Consider there, I pray you, of what case or condition the Lord speaks of that people; "thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all; none eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born." Mark what kind of filthiness the Lord expresses this to be; namely, such as no eye could pity the person that was defiled with it, to do any of these things to it; his filthiness was such that made all to abhor him, as not so much as to come near, and do any good to him. Here was his estate; now what did the Lord do in that condition? "When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee, live;" not when I saw thee washed from thy blood, cleansed and fitted for me by repentance, and newness of life, &c., then, I had pity on thee; no, but "when I saw thee polluted in thy blood, then I said unto thee, live." There was not the least distance of time between the pollution, and the life the Lord communicated.

But some will say, where the Lord gives sanctification, there he gives life, and then he gives Christ, and there fixes his love, doth he not?

No, saith the prophet, but "the time of thy blood was the time of my love." And what doth God do in this time? "I spread my skirt over thee;" even then in the time of blood; for what need were there of a skirt to cover, if there were no filthiness to be covered? So that you see the time of love was a time of blood. He doth not take away this blood by sanctification, and new qualifications and dispositions; but he takes it away from his own sight and charge first; and this he calls the spreading of a skirt over this person thus polluted. And is this all? No, he goeth further, "I spread my skirt over thee, and I swore unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee." Mark how completely a person is possessed of all the privileges of Christ, the very covenant itself established upon him, and God is become his own, and all this in the time of blood. And how doth it appear, that he is actually, and really become God's own, even at this time? From these words, "thy time was the time of love;" but it may be out of doubt, if you mark what follows, that there is no ground for men to think there should be sanctification, when God first enters into covenant; "I swore unto thee, and thou becamest mine; then washed I thee with water, and thoroughly washed away thy blood." What, when there was something going before of sanctification, some previous qualification? No, no; but there was first entering into covenant, and God's becoming their God, and then washing with water. With what

¹ That the filth of sin should be transferred from men, and laid on Christ, is by many objected to; but is no other than what has been affirmed by divines, ancient and modern. Gregory of Nyssa, speaking of Christ, says, Vol. 1. pg. 491, "having transferred to himself, the filth of my sins, he imparted to me his own purity." And on pg. 767, "the pure and harmless One took upon him, or received, the filth of human nature." And again, Vol. II. pg. 785, "purity was, in our filth, but the filth did not touch that purity." Calvin, on John 19:17, has these words, after having observed that Christ was made sin, and a curse for us, "that he was led without the city, that he might take with him out of the way, our filth which was laid upon him. - No otherwise could the guilt of all our sins be abolished, but by the Son of God being made filth for us; we see him forced into an execrable place, as if defiled with the whole mass of sins, that he might then appear accursed before God and men." Piscator, on Luke 2:21, remarks that the law of purification was observed by Mary, to teach us, "that Christ pure and undefiled in his own nature, took upon himself the filth of our sins, that he might wash them away in his own blood." So Joshua, the high-priest, a type of Christ, is represented as clothed with filthy garments; nor can sin and filth be separated. Zech.3:3. See my Truth Defended, pgs. 42-53. Gill.

water? The water of sanctification or justification? You will say, it may be, {as is generally conceived,} of sanctification; to me it seems, to be the washing of justification by the blood of Christ; for, saith the text, "I washed thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood." Now we know that the best sanctification in the world doth not perfectly cleanse a person, therefore it must be washing of justification; but suppose it be the washing of sanctification, it is most plain that this is a fruit of a person's interest in Christ, and follows his being actually in him, and doth not go before. "Then washed I thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood, and then I put ornaments upon thee," as it follows; this is, after I had sworn unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee.

To clear this further, look into Isaiah 42:6, and you plainly see, that a person hath not only part in Christ, but possession of him, and all his privileges, by imputation, before there be the least measure of sanctification. The words are these; "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, &c." Here is a deed of gift; here, you see, Christ is made over to be the covenant of persons, even the covenant of God's giving over himself. And what is that covenant? "I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more." This is the substance of the covenant; Christ is this covenant, and he himself is given over to men; as much as to say, in Christ I will become thy God; in him I will remember thy sins no more; this have I given in him to you. But when doth the Lord pass over this to men? When they are first renewed? When they first believe? Have they the knowledge of God, and of themselves, before he makes this deed of gift over to them? Mark what follows, and you shall see all the qualifications of sanctification must not only follow Christ given, but they are the very work of Christ himself, after he is given; "I will give thee for a covenant, to open the blind eyes;" see that the opening of the blind eyes of men, and the bringing of prisoners out of prison, is the main end for which Christ was given by God to be a covenant to men; and Christ himself is the means by which that end may be compassed.

Now, you know beloved, that though the end of things be first in intention, yet it is the last in execution; this being the end for which Christ was given to open blind eyes; and he, as the covenant, being the means by which they should be opened; it must follow, that the means must be existing, and present, to do the thing, before the things can be done by them. If a workman is to build a house, he must be prepared before the house can be built by him; you cannot build a house and the workman come afterwards; but he comes first, and then he builds the house. It is the Lord that sanctifies his people, opens their eyes, unshackles them, and brings them out of the bonds of sin, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint, in the way of God's commandments; but God doth not renew and sanctify men, and then give Christ to them, being sanctified; but he gives Christ, and he being given, and present first, then he sanctifies them.

What qualifications can you find in blind and shackled persons, bound up under the bonds of Satan, even dead in trespasses and sins; seeing the first work that the Lord works upon any person, is to open the eyes to see him, and themselves? Now Christ must be present, because he is given to do the thing, before it can be done; all the world cannot do it without him, whether it be the opening of the eye of faith, or knowledge. If it be the eye of faith, Christ is said to be "the author and finisher" of it; and he must come and open the eyes of men to believe, before they can believe. If it be the eye of knowledge, we "must all be taught of God," as we are in covenant with him, before ever we shall come to know God; for that is one part of his covenant, when he gives himself to be the God of people, and when he will remember their sins no more.

Our Saviour speaks as plainly himself as all the texts in scripture can, when he would point out to the Jews, for whom he died and became sin; "I came to save that which was lost." What qualifications, I pray you, can you find in a lost person? He may be lost, you will say, but he may be renewed and sanctified for all that? No, saith Christ, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" the meaning is, if a man will be holy, righteous, and sanctified, and will come to me afterwards; I came not to call such as are righteous already, but such as are not, even sinners. The apostle speaks the same in the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters to the Romans; namely, that the Lord

gives Christ, and a portion in him, without regard to anything that a man doth. In the latter end of the third chapter, he disputed, at large, against all manner of works added to, or present with, a person to be justified, and then draws to a peremptory conclusion; "therefore I conclude, that a person is justified without the deeds of the law;" whereby he doth not only exclude any righteousness of ours, from having any operative power to concur in the laying of iniquity upon Christ, but excludes all manner of works men can do, to be present, and existent in persons, when God justifies them. He doth not mean only that he is justified without the concurrence of them to justification, but even without the being of them, and presence, in the person so to be justified; there is nothing to be done by man as a preparation to his justification. This he makes more plain in the next verse; for he tells us there, that the circumcised and uncircumcised are both one with God in justifying them; it is no matter to him what they be, he justifieth the uncircumcision as well as the circumcision.

But you will say, what is it for a person to be considered as uncircumcised? Circumcision, you know, was the first act of God manifesting himself to the people of the Jews, by which he invited them into his church; and a person uncircumcised is considered as altogether in the estate in which he was born by nature. Now if circumcision itself be not a requisite to justification, then certainly, there is no foregoing work to come in; this being the first that is done; but the apostle makes it more plain in the beginning of the fourth chapter; for he tells us expressly, "if a man be justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God;" and again, "if it be of works, the reward is not of grace, but of debt." You, whoever you are, that require previous works sanctification, or anything else, to come and show itself in you, that so you may apply the justification of Christ to you; do you not now bring in works, as that which must give you rest? If you bring them in to have such efficacy in them, that they must be there, or you can have no justification; is not here justification by works, and must you not account it a debt? When I am thus and thus qualified, then Christ must be mine; is not there a bringing something to God, that you may have your interest sealed? Is not there a bringing of works to him, to commend you to him?

But observe the words following, "not to him that worketh, but to him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly." Mark, this is that which the apostle beats at namely, to show the dispositions and qualifications of men in their justification. God, saith he, justifieth men, not as they are working men, but as they are ungodly men; whoever thou art that wilt be a working person, and, as thou art one, wilt apply thy justification, know this, the apostle saith it is, "not to him that worketh." Whosoever it be that will apply this justification, interest in Christ, and pardon of sin aright, must look upon himself, not as a working, but as an ungodly person; then he shall apply to himself as God applies it. God applies it to the ungodly; and if thou wilt apply it as he applies it, and no otherwise, thou must apply it to a person considered as such, and no otherwise.

I will establish this truth somewhat further, for I know it is flung at, and will find great opposition. Look into Rom.5:6-10, for there you shall see it expressly delivered by the apostle, who strikes it stark dead; namely, that holding the contrary to this, that we are justified, considered as godly, is absolutely false; "for when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Where are your qualifications, while there is no strength? These stand in performances, in being able to do this and that; but men are considered here; as being without strength, and Christ died for them as such, and not only so, but as they were ungodly and sinners; "if while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;" Christ considered us as sinners, in the condition of sin, and in no other state, and in this consideration, laid down his life on our behalf. In verse 10, he speaks more to the purpose; in the former, but privatively, being only considered as ungodly, that is, persons void of godliness; but here, positively, as they were enemies; so saith he, "for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Mark this place, beloved, I dare be bold to say, this text shall be able to answer all the objections of thy heart, if thou hast but a heart given thee, so much as to look after Christ, to have him, if thou might; even all that thy heart can raise against thee, from the consideration of thy own vileness, or wickedness of heart and life. "While we were enemies &c." What qualifications can this person have, considered in no other condition but in a state of enmity, and of fighting against God? Whoever thou art, doth thy heart tell thee, that when the word of

God comes home to thee, and thou flieth in the face of the minister, yea, of God himself, thy heart, rising against him? Yet notwithstanding all this, here may be reconciliation for thee. Yea, you will say, when once tamed; no, saith the text, "while we were enemies, we were actually, reconciled;" not were reconcilable, or capable of reconciliation; or when amended, and had laid down our weapons, we should be reconciled; but in the state of enmity we were reconciled.

Now put all these together, and they amount to thus much, and that is enough. Wouldest thou know that thou art interested in this privilege and grace; of laying iniquity upon Christ? What hinders thee that thou canst not take thy share and portion in it? Oh; thou sayest, thou art a wicked wretch, thou hast no heart to any godliness in the world; suppose this to be true, I say, even while thou art going astray, and turnest to thy own ways, thy iniquities are laid on Christ; you will say, this cannot be surely. Beloved, I answer, I would fain know what it is that can make void the truth of it; there is no scripture can contradict what I have said, except it contradicts itself, which is impossible.

But all this while you will say, this doth not satisfy me, that I am one of them that have share in this grace of having my iniquities laid upon Christ; for there are many ungodly persons that yet never had any part in Christ, nor never shall.

Beloved, let me tell you, the secrets of the Lord are with himself; only the names of particular persons are written in the book of life; but they are not written in the word, and works of the law; but what hinders, but that thou mayest have as good a portion in him, as heart can wish, being considered in thyself merely ungodly? I will put this case; there comes forth an act of general pardon to all thieves and murderers; it is made to all that will come and take their share; now I ask this question, suppose a person be a thief, and a traitor, what need his name in particular be mentioned in this pardon? May he not assume as certainly his own particular interest in that general grant, as if he were specified by name? All thieves that will, may come in, as well as if their names were written particularly in the proclamation. Again, it is as sufficient for the satisfaction of a man, the general tender of free grace and pardon of sin to all sinners, as if his name in particular were set down in that tender. If all thieves without exception, have a pardon tendered, and I know I am a thief, this is enough for me; I may know, I may be sure, that I am therein pardoned, as well as any other. Beloved, the Lord's grant of laying iniquity upon Christ, is as much as a grant of a general pardon to all thieves and traitors, and as generally and freely exhibited as that can be; for it runs in this tenor, "and the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." {Rev.22:17} Now hath the Lord given thee a heart to come, that thou wouldest fain have Christ if thou durst, fain thou wouldest that all thy iniquities should be taken from thee to be laid upon him. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." {Psa.110:3} Beloved, the Lord saith expressly unto you, "every one that will, let him come;" have you but a mind to come and take him, your coming and taking is your security. Christ is a liar, {with all reverence be it spoken,} if he turn off any that come to him. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." {Jn.6:37} Doest thou come to Christ, and doth he cast thee off? He denies himself then; for he saith, "I will in no wise cast thee off." And thus much may be sufficient to assure thee, that notwithstanding any sinfulness which thou findest in thyself, thou mayest boldly come unto Christ, and commit thyself unto him, as to an all-sufficient Saviour.