

induce you to *fear* him; and to *love* him as much as you possibly can, with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength; it will lead you to *worship* him, to *give him thanks*, to *put your whole trust in him*, and to *call upon him*; it will induce you to *honour his holy name and his word*, and to *serve him truly all the days of your life*.

That we may thus believe in God the Father Almighty, and that our belief may produce these salutary effects, may God of his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ.

## SERMON III.

### BELIEF IN GOD THE SON.

COL. i. 14.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

**N**EXT in importance to belief in God the Father, who made us and all the world, is belief in "God the Son, who hath redeemed us and all mankind." It is from our profession of this article of faith that we have the name of *Christians*; and it is of the utmost consequence to us seriously to consider, what we really mean when we make this profession, and to reflect, whether our lives in this instance are answerable to the belief which we pretend to hold. You say, then, that you believe "in God the Son, who redeemed you;" and often in the Church Service, and probably at other times also, speak of Christ by the appellation of the Redeemer. What do you understand by the expression? The proper meaning of the word to *redeem* is to buy back. It is particularly used for setting free a prisoner or captive, by paying a price for his release. Let us consider now in what sense Christ is said to have redeemed us.

The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament constantly represent the natural state of man as a state of sin and death. It is necessary to dwell

a little upon this point. As "they that are whole need not a physician,"<sup>a</sup> and they that think themselves well, will not have recourse to one; so we, unless we are sensible of our spiritual danger, shall not be induced to seek the means of safety; we shall not have recourse to the Redeemer, unless we feel that we stand in need of being redeemed.

The necessity of *redemption* arises from our being guilty of sin, and consequently exposed to the punishment of sin. If you ask what sin is, St. John tells you, that "sin is the transgression of the law,"<sup>b</sup> the transgression of the holy and pure law of God. God having given us our being, has a just right to prescribe such laws as he sees fit, for the regulation of our actions, words, and thoughts. Such laws he has given us in the Holy Scriptures, and the more we study and understand these laws, the more we shall be convinced, that the observance of them is most conducive to our own well-being and happiness. Whenever we transgress any of these laws, either in thought, word, or deed, either by doing what we ought not to do, or by leaving undone what we ought to do, we are guilty of sin. The very inclination or desire to act contrary to the law of God, even when we do not give way to it, has, as the article of our Church expresses it, "the nature of sin."<sup>c</sup> The word *sin*, consequently, means something more than what in common language is termed crime, or vice. These two words relate chiefly to actions or habits, which are hurtful to society, or to ourselves as members of society; but *sin* includes whatever is contrary to the laws of God. A man may be in common repute free, not only from all crimes, but from all vices, and yet, in a religious point of view, be a great

<sup>a</sup> Matt. ix. 12.<sup>b</sup> 1 John iii. 4.<sup>c</sup> Art. ix.

sinner; may in fact have to answer for sins more in number than the hairs of his head.<sup>d</sup>

In order to come to the knowledge and proper sense of our sins, we must compare our lives with the rule of God's commandments delivered from mount Sinai, and explained and spiritualized by our Lord in the sermon on the mount; or with those other practical precepts which abound in every part of the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament. I do not mean to enter into a full account of these laws; I will, however, mention a few instances, which may assist in making us sensible, how far we fall short of the obedience which we ought to pay.

Our Saviour tells us, then, that "the first and great commandment" is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind:"<sup>e</sup> that we must love him better than any thing else: and our own reason must acknowledge, that he deserves this love, and that we ought to feel it. Which of us now shall say that he has thoroughly kept this first, this great commandment? One of the most important duties to God is prayer: but how apt are we to neglect prayer? and, when we attempt to pray, how apt are our thoughts to wander to the world and the flesh, thus exposing us to the charge of drawing near to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him!<sup>f</sup> It would not be too much to assert, that there is not one of the duties which we peculiarly owe to God, which we perfectly fulfil.

Many of those, who cannot but acknowledge that they are wanting in love to God, pride themselves upon their observance of their duty towards their neighbour. With how little reason they thus flatter themselves, a moment's reflection will convince

<sup>d</sup> Psalm xl. 15.<sup>e</sup> Matt. xxii. 37, 38.<sup>f</sup> Matt. xv. 8.

them. The foundation of the duties which relate to man is this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This is styled by our Lord the second great commandment of the law; and the Apostle tells us, that "he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law."<sup>5</sup> By the word neighbour, we understand every man, to whom we have the means of doing good or harm; indeed every man without exception. But which of us can truly say, that he feels, if not the same *degree*, yet the same *kind* of love for his neighbour that he does for himself? that he is in the same manner desirous of promoting his welfare, in the same manner attentive to his interest, and to the preservation of his character? But if sin is the transgression of the law, are we not *sinner*s if we transgress both the first and the second great commandment of that law?

One of the ways in which we are to show that we love our neighbour as ourself, is by doing as we would be done by. All men, both Christian and heathen, agree in admiring and extolling the excellence of this golden rule. But which of us perfectly acts up to it?

If from the foundation of the laws of the second table, we proceed to consider some of the particular commandments which it contains, we shall perhaps find equal reason for acknowledging our sinfulness. We have not, I trust, any of us, committed direct murder: but you know from St. John, that he that "hateth his brother is a murderer;"<sup>h</sup> and our Lord assures us, that the sixth commandment is broken, by causeless or excessive anger, or by bearing malice in our bosoms.<sup>i</sup> With respect to the seventh commandment, we know that the sins of adultery and fornication will shut out those who are guilty of them from the kingdom of hea-

<sup>5</sup> Rom. xiii. 8.

<sup>h</sup> 1 John iii. 15.

<sup>i</sup> Matt. v. 22.

ven. But supposing that we are not chargeable with these deadly sins; yet, are we pure from what our Saviour terms the adultery of the heart?<sup>k</sup> Are our actions, our looks, our dress, our words, and thoughts, governed by the laws of holy chastity? So again we have not been guilty it may be of *stealing*; we have never taken any thing belonging to another. But have we been strictly true and just in all our dealings? Have we never put a neighbour to loss or inconvenience by incurring debts, which we were unable to pay? Have we never, in any bargain, or other transaction, lent unfairly to our own interest? If we have not actually borne false witness against our neighbour in a court of justice, yet, have we never been guilty of slander or evil speaking? Or have we never given utterance to evil surmises and insinuations to his disadvantage? So again, have we never coveted or desired any thing belonging to another; and have we, on the contrary, been always contented, always patient and resigned in that station of life, and in those circumstances, in which the providence of God has placed us? If in this manner we examine ourselves by the holy and spiritual law of God, if we thus search and try our ways fairly and impartially, we shall find too much reason to confess, that in "many things we offend all;"<sup>l</sup> that "there is no man that sinneth not;"<sup>m</sup> that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."<sup>n</sup> We accordingly *do* confess this in the Church Service. We all acknowledge, that we have offended against God's holy laws; that we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; that we have done those things which we ought not to have

<sup>k</sup> Matt. v. 28.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Kings viii. 46.

<sup>m</sup> James iii. 2.

<sup>n</sup> 1 John i. 8.

done; that there is no health in us; that we are miserable offenders. Similar acknowledgments are made in other parts of the Liturgy: and the Scripture hath concluded all men under sin, and represents all the world as guilty before God.<sup>o</sup>

But God has a right to, and his law enjoins, perfect unerring obedience. Every transgression of that law is disobedience to the authority of the Law-giver, and exposes us to the penalty of disobedience. The "wages of sin is death;"<sup>p</sup> "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."<sup>q</sup> "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."<sup>r</sup> "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."<sup>s</sup> How shall we escape this wrath of God, this curse of the law?—By repentance and amendment of life?—But why should we think that repentance alone will be sufficient? A man does not pay off the debts which he has contracted in time past, by resolving not to incur fresh debts for the time to come. A person who has been guilty of murder, or some other heinous crime, is not cleared by the goodness of his life afterwards; but, by the laws of the land, is at any time liable to be punished for his offence. And each of our manifold transgressions of the divine law renders us guilty in the sight of God, and consequently liable to punishment. How then shall we be delivered from this state of guilt and liability to punishment? shall we look round for help to any fellow mortal? Alas! "no man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him. It cost more, (much more,) to redeem *their* souls."<sup>t</sup> Neither could any of the angels effect our deliverance, for

<sup>o</sup> Rom. iii. 19.<sup>r</sup> Gal. iii. 10.<sup>p</sup> Rom. vi. 23.<sup>s</sup> Rom. i. 18.<sup>q</sup> Ezek xviii. 4.<sup>t</sup> Psalm xlix. 7, 8.

even they are not pure in the sight of God, but are charged by him with folly.<sup>u</sup>

But, when we could do nothing for ourselves, and were without hope from any other quarter, "in due time Christ died for the ungodly." It pleased the eternal Son of God himself to redeem us, and for this purpose to take our nature upon him, to endure a life of distress and suffering, and at length, since "without shedding of blood is no remission,"<sup>x</sup> to undergo a shameful and agonizing death upon the cross. Inasmuch as he was man, he made expiation for the sins of men in the very nature that sinned; and inasmuch as he was God, the sacrifice, the expiation which he offered, was infinite in value, and sufficient for the guilt of the whole world.

This sacrifice of the death of Christ is the leading subject of the Holy Scriptures, from one end of them to the other. It was in effect promised to Adam immediately after the fall; was represented by the animal sacrifices of the patriarchal ages, and of the Mosaic dispensation; and was foretold, still with increasing distinctness as the time of its accomplishment drew near, by the holy Prophets. The prophecy of Isaiah, in his 53d chapter, is particularly remarkable. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But, he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.—He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter—for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Our

<sup>u</sup> Job iv. 18.<sup>x</sup> Heb. ix. 22.

blessed Lord himself tells us, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."<sup>y</sup> He speaks of his own blood as being "shed for many, for the remission of sins,"<sup>z</sup> and of his flesh being given "for the life of the world."<sup>a</sup> The discourses and writings of his chosen followers are full of passages to the same purport. "Christ hath loved us," says St. Paul, "and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour."<sup>b</sup> Again, "Christ our passover"<sup>c</sup>—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world,"<sup>d</sup> is sacrificed for us. He who knew no sin, was made sin, or a sin-offering, for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."<sup>e</sup> "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;"<sup>f</sup> that he might reconcile us to God by the cross. He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."<sup>g</sup> He "gave himself a ransom for all."<sup>h</sup> "He hath redeemed us to God by his blood:"<sup>k</sup> for we "were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold—but with the precious blood of Christ—who was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world."<sup>i</sup> Both in the Epistle to the Ephesians, and in that to the Colossians, St. Paul says, in nearly the same words, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."<sup>m</sup>

In the latter of these Epistles the Apostle reminds us, that he who shed his blood to procure

<sup>y</sup> John iii. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Ephes. v. 2.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21.

<sup>h</sup> Rev. i. 5.

1 et. i. 18, 19, 20.

<sup>z</sup> Matt. xxvi. 28.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>f</sup> Gal. iii. 13.

<sup>i</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 6.

<sup>m</sup> Col. i. 14.

<sup>a</sup> John vi. 51.

<sup>d</sup> John i. 29.

<sup>g</sup> Ephes. ii. 16.

<sup>k</sup> Rev. v. 9.

the forgiveness of our sins, was he who "is the image of the invisible God; he" by whom "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible;" that "all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."<sup>n</sup>

This is the great and glorious Being, who for us men and for our salvation—for the forgiveness of our sins—submitted to be buffeted, and scourged, and spit upon, to be treated as the lowest malefactor, and at length to undergo death, even the death of the cross; who submitted to be fixed to the accursed tree, by nails driven through his hands and feet, and thus to expire in torment.

And now let us seriously and honestly ask ourselves, my friends, whether we really believe these things? Whether we are thoroughly persuaded in our hearts, that when we were in a lost and ruined state, the eternal Son of God died upon the cross to save us? Do we, I say, really believe this? If we do *not* believe it, we are yet in our sins, are yet in a state of condemnation. It is generally true, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;"<sup>o</sup> and with respect to this great doctrine in particular, it is most certainly true, that the death of Christ will not profit those who refuse to believe in it when it is preached to them. Christ, by the shedding of his blood, has purchased salvation; but the mean by which it is applied to our own souls, as we are taught by the Scriptures, and from the authority of the Scriptures, by our Church,<sup>p</sup> is *faith*. In other words, it is by faith, by a firm belief in these truths—a belief which disposes us to keep God's commandments, that our souls reap the

<sup>n</sup> Col. i. 15, 16, 17.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>p</sup> See Art. xi, and the Homily.

benefit of Christ's death upon the cross. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."<sup>a</sup> And toward the conclusion of his Gospel, St. John says, these things "are written, that ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that *believing* ye might have life through his name."<sup>r</sup> St. Paul teaches us, "that with the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness;"<sup>s</sup> and when asked by the jailer at Philippi, what he must do to be saved, his reply was, "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."<sup>t</sup>

But though faith in the death of Christ is thus necessary, we must bear in mind that a faith which does not produce good works is dead and worthless.<sup>u</sup> Let us return, then, to the question before asked; do we indeed and really believe that the glorious Son of God died upon the cross for our sins? If we do believe it, surely we must be sensible that sin is something awfully serious, since it required so tremendous a sacrifice. And shall we continue any longer in sin? Certainly, if Christ died *for* sin, we are bound by every consideration of interest and duty to do all that we can to die *to* sin, and if so, "how shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" When tempted by the world, or by the desires of the flesh, to do any thing contrary to the will of God, endeavour to figure to yourselves, to represent to your imaginations, the holy Jesus expiring upon the cross with the nails driven through his hands and feet, and think that it was for *you*, for your sins, that he endured such agony. And can our hearts be so hard, as after this *wilfully* to persist in sin? If we do, we (to adopt

<sup>a</sup> John iii. 16.  
<sup>r</sup> Acts xvi. 31.

<sup>s</sup> John xx. 31.  
<sup>t</sup> James ii. 17.

<sup>u</sup> Rom. x. 10.

the strong language of the Apostle) in some sort "crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame."<sup>x</sup> No, my friends, if you wilfully continue in any known sin; if you do not lament your transgressions, and really try and pray to get the better of them, do not any more pretend to acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord—do not any more pretend to believe that HE SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED; do not any more pretend to hope for the FORGIVENESS OF SINS through his blood.

But you say, that you do believe in these things. Consider, then, if I may adopt the language of a late prelate<sup>y</sup> of our Church, "that as the malignity of sin is so great, the danger of a life of wilful sin must be much more formidable than imagination is apt to paint it. The weight of punishment naturally due to sin must bear some proportion to its intrinsic malignity, and to the extent of the mischiefs which arise from it. The punishment must also bear some just proportion to the price, which has been paid for our redemption. Terrible must have been the punishment, which was bought off at so great a price as the blood of the Son of God; and terrible must be the punishment which still awaits us, if we account the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and forfeit the benefit of that atonement."

Consider, my friends, that you are not your own masters. Being redeemed, being bought with the precious blood of Christ, you belong to, you are the property of, him who has thus wonderfully bought you. "Ye are not your own," says the Apostle, "for ye are bought with a price;"<sup>z</sup> do not then dishonestly deprive Christ of what he has so dearly purchased. Do not live—you have no

<sup>x</sup> Heb. vi. 6.

<sup>y</sup> Bishop Horsley.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

right to live—according to your own corrupt wills and appetites, but according to the will of him who has bought you. Strive in all things to “glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”<sup>a</sup> “Remember that Christ hath once “suffered for sins, the just for the unjust;” and why? “that he might bring us to God.”<sup>b</sup> Remember, “that he died for all, that they which live “should not henceforth live unto themselves, but “unto him that died for them.”<sup>c</sup>

Allow me yet once again to ask you, do you really believe the great truths which have formed the subject of this discourse? Are you really and thoroughly persuaded, that the eternal Son of God died upon the cross to save you from everlasting death? And do you not feel thankful to him? But if you feel thankful, deeply and heartily thankful, as I hope you do, endeavour to show your thankfulness not with your lips only, but in your lives, by giving up yourselves to God’s service, and by walking before him in holiness and righteousness all your days. Pray earnestly to God so to impress these things upon your heart, that they may induce you to lead a holy and religious life, that they may be the means of making you, what Christ’s death was intended to make you, “a peculiar people, ‘zealous of good works.’”

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 20.<sup>b</sup> 1 Peter iii. 18.<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. v. 15.

## SERMON IV.

### ON A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

2 Cor. v. 10.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

**OUR** blessed Lord, having finished on earth the work which his Father gave him to do; having by his death made atonement for our sins, and opened unto us the gates of everlasting life by his glorious resurrection; in the sight of many of his chosen followers ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, and there SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. He will not, however, always continue there. The Scriptures repeatedly assure us that he will come again from heaven, and that the object of his coming will be to judge the world. “God hath appointed a day “in which he will judge the world in righteousness “by that man, whom he hath ordained, whereof “he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he “hath raised him from the dead.”<sup>a</sup> Accordingly in the Creed, after professing our belief that our Lord ON THE THIRD DAY ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD, AND ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, we say, FROM

<sup>a</sup> Acts xvii. 31.