

THE
SINFULNESS OF SIN AND THE FULNESS
OF CHRIST.

SERMON I.

THE SINFULNESS OF SIN.

“ But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.”—ROM. VII. 13.

MY purpose is now to speak something concerning the evil and sinfulness of sin, and therefore have made choice of these words. In this chapter the apostle Paul doth give us some account of the way and manner of his conversion. Before I was converted, says he, “ I was alive without the law,” verse 9; but “ when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;” for without the law, sin was dead, and “ I was alive without the law once.” I thought myself a jolly man, I was very brisk and jolly, had good thoughts of my condition: “ I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came;” when the word of the Lord came in power unto my soul—for I had the law and the commandment always with me, “ concerning the law I was blameless,” Phil. iii. 6; the letter of the law was not absent from me—but when it pleased God to set on the word of the Lord in power upon my soul, then, whereas I was alive before, now sin revived; sin that lay dead before, and was hid, now revived, and did appear to be sin; for that in the 9th verse, and this in verse 13, are the same: verse 9, “ Sin revived, and I died;” “ But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me;” in this 13th verse. But how did sin revive and appear? By the coming of the law, by the coming of the commandment, thereby it broke out the more, and so was discovered; as by the coming and shining of the sunbeams upon the dunghill, the filth stinks the more, not that the sunbeams are the cause, but the occa-

sion thereof. And sin revived by the coming of the commandment, and appeared to be sin, appeared more to me in its own shape, and struck me dead with the apparition thereof; whereas before, sin was dead and I alive, now sin alive and I dead.

From whence then I take up this observation :

That there is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin which doth not appear to a man until he doth convert and turn unto God. Look when a man doth convert and turn unto God, then sin appears to be sin indeed, and not before.

For the clearing and prosecution whereof I shall labour to shew,

First, That there is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin.

Secondly, That this evil and sinfulness of sin doth not appear to a man until conversion work pass upon his soul.

Thirdly, Look when a man doth convert and turn to the Lord in truth, then sin appears in the sinfulness thereof unto him.

There is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin.

To make it out in the general, and then more particularly :

In the general. This may appear by the names of sin, for sin hath taken up all the names of evil, of all evils. The Scripture doth not nickname sin; and yet what evil is there incident unto man, but sin is invested with the name thereof in Scripture?

Is it an evil thing for a man to be unclean and filthy? Sin is called filthiness: "I will wash you from all your filthiness," Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

Is it an evil thing for a man to be naked? Sin is called nakedness: "That your nakedness may not appear," Rev. iii. 18.

Is it an evil thing for a man to be blind? Sin is called blindness: "The blind shall lead the blind," Matt. xv. 14.

Is it an evil thing for a man to be foolish? Sin is called folly: "That you may no more return unto folly," Psalm lxxxv. 8.

Is it an evil thing for a man to be mad? The prodigal returned unto himself, Luke xv. 17; and, "I was mad," says Paul, Acts xxvi. 11.

Is it an evil thing for a man to be dead? Sin is called death: "Dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1.

It is called an abomination, Prov. viii. 7; and because there is no word that can express the evil and sinfulness of sin, the apostle in this place says, "That sin might become exceeding sinful." Why? Because there is no word of evil that can reach the evil of sin. Now look what that is that doth engross and take up all the names of all evils, that must needs be exceeding evil; so it is with sin.

Look what that is that doth separate betwixt us and God, who is the chiefest and universal good, that must needs be the greatest evil. Now says the prophet, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God," Isa. lix. 2.

Look what that is that doth unite us to Satan, and make us the children of the devil, that must needs be very evil. Says our Saviour, "You are of your father the devil:" why? "for his works you do," John viii. 44. Sin makes us the children of the devil.

Look what that is that did put Christ to death, that was the cause of his death, that must needs be exceeding evil. So sin did: "He was made sin for us," 2 Cor. v. 21. "He bare our sins upon the cross," 1 Pet. ii. 24. "And the Lord made the iniquity of us all to meet on him," Isa. liii. 6.

Look what that is that doth bring a general curse upon the whole creation, that must needs be evil. So sin hath done: "Cursed be the ground and the earth for thy sake," Gen. iii. 17.

Look what that is that doth soil and stain all our glory, and the image of God in us, that must needs be great evil. Sin hath stained the beauty of the image of God that was stamped upon us, and by sin, saith the apostle, Rom. iii. 23, we come short of the glory of God, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Look what that is that doth bring such horror of conscience, that a soul is not able to bear, and cannot be allayed but by the blood of Jesus, that must needs be a very great evil: sin, and the eating of the forbidden fruit, hath bred this worm that never dies.

Look what that evil is that is the fuel of hell, that feeds hell-fire to all eternity; that must needs be great evil: take sin away, and hell-fire dies; sin is that brimstone that hell-fire feeds upon to all eternity.

Look what that evil is that is worse than the worst of

afflictions, that must needs be very evil: the least sin is worse than the greatest affliction. For,

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, it doth not defile the man; "for that which is from without doth not defile the man, but that which is from within," Mark vii. 15. Sin is from within. Affliction is not from within, but from without; but sin is from within. Therefore if I give a reproachful word to another, it more defiles me than a hundred reproachful words from another, because my word comes from within me, his words from without me. Now affliction is from without, and doth not defile; but sin is from within, and doth defile. Therefore the least sin is worse than the greatest affliction.

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, yet notwithstanding, God is the author of it. "Is there evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Amos iii. 6. God bade Shimei curse David: "Let him alone, God hath bidden him," 2 Sam. xvi. 11. I send famine, and I send pestilence, and I send mildew, says God. God is the author of affliction, but God is not the author of any sin. Indeed it is said God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and others, but that is, *non infundendo maliciam sed subtrahendo gratiam*: not by infusing malice into their hearts, but by withdrawing his grace. God is not the author of sin, but God is the author of all affliction.

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, yet it is not contrary to God; but sin, though never so small, is contrary to God.

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, yet notwithstanding it is but the fruit and the claws of sin. What are the claws to the lion? If the lion be dead, the claws can do us no hurt, but if the lion be alive, his life puts strength into his claws. Afflictions are but the claws of sin, "The sting of death is sin," 1 Cor. xv. 56, and the sting of affliction is sin; but as for afflictions, they are but the bare claws, and it is sin that puts life and strength into these claws.

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, yet God doth not hate affliction, neither doth affliction make a man hate God; but God hates sin, and sin makes a man hate God.

Take an affliction, and though it be never so great, a man may be a blessed man in the worst affliction. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered," Ps. xxxii. 1; but he cannot be a blessed man that lies in sin. "Cursed is every man that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10. Thus you see the least sin is worse than the greatest affliction; therefore certainly the evil of sin is very great.

Look what that evil is that God doth punish with the greatest severity, both in his own and others, though it be but small in our eyes, that must needs be exceeding evil. Now he doth severely punish that which we look upon as a small sin, both in his own and others. In his own: you think it was no great matter for Adam to eat the forbidden fruit; you think Moses was but a little in passion with the children of Israel, for which he was kept out of Canaan; and you think it was no great matter for Uzzah to stay the ark when it was falling; yet God punished these small sins, small in our eyes, he punished them severely in his own people. And, as for others: because there is an infinite evil in sin, and God doth justly punish, he punisheth them to all eternity for the least sin; for amongst men, it is just to punish until a man repenteth, but in hell men never repent, therefore God punisheth them to all eternity. So that God doth punish sin with the greatest severity, both in his own and others; therefore surely it is very evil.

Look what that is that is a worse evil than hell or the devil, that must needs be a very great and exceeding evil. Sin is worse than the devil; for the devil is a creature that God made, but sin is none of God's creature. And it is worse than hell; for hell is of God's making too, but sin is not. It is worse to be given up to sin than to the devil; if a man be given up to the devil, it is that his soul may be saved; but if a man be given up to sin, it is that his soul may be destroyed and not saved. So that sin is worse than hell or the devil.

Look what that evil is that is a punishment in itself, that must needs be exceeding evil, Sin in itself is a punishment, though there were no other punishment to follow. "In keeping thy commandments there is great reward," Ps. xix. 11. So in breaking God's commandments there is great

punishment. Therefore sometimes when God would punish men for their sins, he punisheth them by giving them up to great sins: "God gave them up to vile affections, to uncleanness," &c. Rom. i. 26. Now I say, look what that is which is in itself a punishment, that must needs be exceeding evil: and thus it is with sin; this therefore must needs be a very great evil. Thus in the general, you see, there is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin.

But now, more particularly, I shall shew it you in the sin of our nature, the sin of our hearts and thoughts, and the sin of our lives and practices; especially living under the gospel, the evil of these sins.

As for the sin of our nature; the more universal and over-spreading any leprosy or contagion is, the worse and the greater it is: now the sin of our nature spreads over all our faculties; our understanding, reason, will, affections; it spreads over all our faculties.

Look what that contagion or leprosy is, that is so great that nothing will help against it, but the pulling down the house; that must needs be very great: truly the sin of our nature is such, nothing will cure it but the pulling down the house.

Look what that sin is that is most unwearied, and whereby a man is unwearied in sin, that must needs be very great. The sin of our nature is unwearied, as the fountain is unwearied in sending up water, bubbling up water. A man may be wearied in drawing up water out of the fountain, and so a man may be wearied in sinful actions: but sinful nature is never weary, and that sin that is unwearied is exceeding great.

Look what that sin is that is the ground of all our relapses and returns to sin; that must needs be very great. Now what is the ground of all our returns to evil, after all our repentance and reformation, but our nature? Suppose water be heated; after it is warmed and heated, it cools again. Heat it again, and it cools again; why? Because coldness is its nature. And so what is the reason that men return again and again to their sin, after all their repentance and reformation, but the sin of their nature?

Look what that evil is which is the least lamented, and that whereby our sin is most excused; that is a great and

dreadful evil. Now of all sins the sin of our nature is least lamented, and thereby men's sins are most excused. Bear with me, it is my nature; I am passionate, but it is my nature; I am froward, but it is my nature; men excuse themselves thereby. Now, I say, look what that evil is which is least lamented, and that whereby our sin is most excused; that is a dreadful evil. Thus it is with the sin of our nature.

Again, But as for the sin of our hearts and thoughts, the evil thereof:

Look what that sin is that is the most incurable; that is worst: a secret hidden wound within the body, or a disease within the body, is the most incurable. Such are the sins of our hearts and thoughts, secret sins, and so the most incurable.

Look what that sin is that is a friend, a parent to other sins; that must needs be very evil. Now what are the parents of all our sinful actions but sinful thoughts? What puts life into evil actions but sinful thoughts? So with the godly, and so with the ungodly: with the godly, for saith Abraham, "I thought the fear of God was not in this place," Gen. x. 11. and therefore I said she is my sister; she was indeed his sister, and he lied not in saying so; but he dissembled, and hid the truth, using an unworthy shift for his own preservation; and where began this evil but in a sinful thought? "I thought the fear of God was not in this place." So with the ungodly, Ps. l. 21, "Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself:" the wicked steal, and commit adultery, and deceive, and slander others, and how are they led into all this, but by thoughts? "Thou thoughtest I was such an one as thyself:" and you know what the Psalmist saith, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults, then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression," Ps. xix. 12, 13. Sins of our hearts and thoughts do principiate, and give a being unto sinful actions, and therefore are very evil.

Thereby also, by the sins of our hearts and thoughts, our former sin committed, that was dead, is revived again, and hath a resurrection by our musing on it, contemplating on it with delight. As the witch at Endor called up Samuel that was dead, so a delightful thought calls up a sinful ac-

tion that was dead before. Thereby our sins that were dead before are revived, and have a resurrection.

Thereby also a man may possibly sin that sin in effect, which he never did commit in act, and so the Lord may punish him for it: as the Lord said to David, because it was in thine heart to build me an house, I will build thy house: so says God to a man in a way of punishment, because it was in thy heart to do this evil, though thou didst it not, I will punish thee for it. Possibly, I say, by the sin of our hearts and thoughts, a man may sin that sin in effect, which he never did commit in act, and that is evil.

Thereby a man may or doth repent of his very repentance: a man sins and afterwards is sorrowful, and repents thereof, and then after his repentance he thinks on his sin with delight; what is this but to repent of his very repentance? As by my repentance I am sorrowful for my sin, so by musing on my sin with delight, I repent of my repentance. Now is it not a very great evil for a man to repent of his repentance? Lo, this may a man do, and this men ordinarily do; they repent of their repentance by musing on their sin, and delighting in it in a way of sinful thoughts.

But again, As for the sin of our lives and practice, especially living under the gospel, the evil thereof, that is very great, for,

Sin under the gospel is sinning against the remedy; and of all sins, sinning against the remedy is the greatest; and therefore it is worse for a man to commit adultery that is married, than for an unmarried man to commit fornication; for he sins against the remedy. Now the great remedy against sin is the gospel; therefore for a man to sin under the gospel, he sins against the remedy.

The greater obligations a man sinneth against, the worse and the greater is his sin. By the gospel we are brought under great obligations, and by our sinning under the gospel, what do we? We engage the very mercy of God to become our adversary: by our sinning under the gospel, we sin against mercy and grace, and thereby engage the very mercy of God, our greatest friend, to become our greatest adversary.

Peccatum majus, ubi specialis repugnantia inter peccantem et peccatum; the more repugnancy there is betwixt the sin and the sinner, the greater is the sin; and therefore it is

worse for a judge to be unjust, than for another, because there is a special repugnancy betwixt the sin and the sinner. Now there is a special repugnancy betwixt the gospel, and a man that sins under the gospel; for he professes the contrary, and therefore sin there is the greater.

Peccatum majus, ubi majus nocumentum; the more hurtful or mischievous any sin is, the greater is that sin: sinning under the gospel is very hurtful, to ourselves, and to others. To ourselves; as poison taken in sack, or something that is warm, is the most venomous, so sin under the gospel is the deadliest poison. Why? Because it is warmed with gospel heat; and it is hurtful to others, because they are hardened; for when men sin under the gospel, others are hardened thereby.

The more able that any sin is to defend itself by knowledge, shifts and distinctions, the worse and greater it is. Now a man that lives under the gospel hath knowledge, and by his knowledge is able to defend his sin by many distinctions; and sins bred under the gospel are able to defend themselves by knowledge fetched from the gospel, therefore the worse.

The more deceitful that any sin is, and the better ends and pretences it hath, the worse it is, and holds the longer. Now sins bred under the gospel are most deceitful, and have the best ends and pretences, and therefore the worse.

The more that a man doth cast contempt upon the great things of God by his sin, the greater and the worse is his sin. Sins under the gospel cast contempt upon the great things of God, the glory of God, the glorious offer of the grace of God. To sin under the gospel, is to cast contempt upon the glory of God and the great things of God, and therefore sin there is the greater.

The more costly and chargeable that any sin is, the greater and the worse it is. Now a man that sins under the gospel cannot sin at so cheap a rate as another, though he sins the very same sin that another commits. Why? "He that knows his Master's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes," Luke xii. 47. What an evil and dreadful thing is it for men to sin under the gospel, says the apostle, "he shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel," 2 Thess. i. 8. Flaming fire; not painted fire, but real fire; but there

may be real fire in a spark, therefore he doth not say real fire neither, but, "He shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel." Oh, what an evil and dreadful thing is it for a man to sin living under the gospel. Now if there be so much evil in the sins of our lives and practices, living under the gospel; if there be so much evil in the sin of our hearts and thoughts; if there be so much evil in the sin of our nature; if sin hath taken up all the names of all evils; if sin doth separate between God and us; if sin doth unite us to Satan, and make us the children of the devil; if sin did put Christ to death; if sin doth bring a general curse upon the whole creation; if sin doth stain all our glory; if sin doth awaken conscience to that horror that nothing but the blood of Christ can quiet it; if sin doth feed the fire of hell; if the least sin be worse than the greatest affliction; if God doth punish the least sin both in his own and others with the greatest severity; if sin be worse than hell or the devil; and, if sin itself be a punishment, certainly there is abundance of evil and sinfulness in sin. So I have done with the first thing, namely, that there is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin.

Secondly, Though there be thus much evil and sinfulness in sin, this doth not appear to a man until he doth convert and turn unto God: till then his sin is dead, but then it is revived; till then the sinfulness of sin doth not appear, for,

Till then a man is in the dark; and who can see the greatness of an evil in the dark?

Till then, grace, the contrary, is not placed in the soul; one contrary doth shew the other: white is best seen by black, grace is best seen by sin, and sin is best seen by grace: till then a man hath no grace, no contrary to illustrate it, to make it appear.

And till then sin is in its own place. *Elementum non gravitat suo loco*; water is not heavy in its own place, it is not heavy in the river; a man may lay at the bottom of the river with all the water upon his back, and yet not feel the weight of it, because it is in its place; but take but a pail-ful of water out of the river, and you feel the weight of it, because then it is out of its place. Now till a man convert and turn unto God, sin is in its own place, and therefore the sinfulness of it doth not appear.

But you will say, How comes this to pass, that sin should not appear in the sinfulness of it, until a man convert and turn unto God?

I answer, Sin is a spiritual thing; I mean a moral, not a natural thing: sin is a spiritual thing, and a man that liveth by sense cannot see what is spiritual.

A man is blind unto what he loves; till a man convert and turn unto God, he loves his sin; he loves it above all the world; and therefore the evil and sinfulness of sin doth not yet appear to him.

The more blinds a man hath that cover his sin, the less he sees it, and the less sin appears to be sinful: now before a man convert and turn unto God, all his duties are but blinds to cover his sin, all his morality is but a blind, all his natural uprightness is but a blind: True, says he, I am a sinner; but I pray, and perform duty, therefore am not so great a sinner; I have such and such moralities, and my heart is as good as any one's, therefore I am not so great a sinner. What are all his duties before he convert and turn unto God, but so many blinds to cover and hide his sin? No wonder therefore that sin doth not appear as it is, until a man doth convert and turn unto God.

The more a man looks upon sin as going into it, the less it appears to be; and the more a man looks upon sin as coming out of it, coming from it, the greater it appears to be; there is a going into sin by commission, and there is a coming from it by repentance. Now when a man is going into his sin, there he sees profit, pleasure, and his own concernments, and this makes his sin appear little; but when he comes out of it, there he sees sorrow, and repentance, and that makes his sin appear great.

Sometimes by the providence of God, sin meets with good events; and holiness meets with bad events in the world: and so the evil and sinfulness of sin is hidden from men.

The less a man is at the work of private examination, the less sin appears to be sin, and the less he sees sin as it is: before a man convert and turn unto God, he is little in the work of examining his own soul in private: no wonder therefore sin doth not appear to him to be sinful, because he is little in the work of private examination. Thus ye see sin

doth not appear in the sinfulness of it until a man doth convert, and turn unto God. That is the second.

Thirdly, Look when a man doth convert and turn unto the Lord, then sin appears in the sinfulness thereof unto his soul. For then,

He is weary and heavy-laden under the burden of his sin ; the more a man is weary and heavy-laden under the burden of his sin, the more sin appears evil and sinful to him : now look when a man doth convert and turn unto God, then he is weary, and heavy-laden under the burden of his sin : "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy-laden," Matt. xi. 28.

Then he sees God, and not till then ; the more a man sees God, the glory of God, the goodness of God, the wisdom of God, the holiness of God, the sovereignty of God : the more sin appears in its sinfulness to him : "Woe is me, I am undone, for I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts," Is. vi. 5. And says Job, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." What then ? "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," Job xlii. 5, 6. Look when I see God, the glory of God, the goodness of God, the holiness of God, the wisdom and the sovereignty of God, then sin appears in its sinfulness to me.

Then also a man comes to see Christ crucified, and not till then ; there is nothing can give us such a sight of sin as Christ crucified : "By the law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. iii. 20, but by the sight of Christ crucified, I see the hatred that God hath against sin ; I do not see by the law so much the hatred that God hath against sin as in Christ crucified ; the more I see God's hatred against sin, the more I see the sinfulness of it. Now look when a man doth convert and turn unto God, then he sees Christ crucified.

Look when a man hath gotten the true prospect of hell, and of the wrath of God, then sin appears sinful to him : now look when a man convert and turn unto God in truth, then he sees the wrath of God, and hath the true prospect of hell, from which he is delivered.

The more a man is tired out, and wearied with the dogging and haunting of his sin, that he can rest no where for it, the more the sinfulness of sin appears to him. Now when a man doth convert and turn unto God, what says he ? Ah,

I am never at rest, I am dogged and haunted, and tired out continually with my sin; oh, now it appears very sinful to me.

Look when a man's heart is filled with the love of God, and possessed with the Holy Ghost, then sin appears to him to be very sinful; for what comes the Holy Ghost for? "To convince the world of sin," John xvi. 8. Now look when a man doth convert and turn to God, then comes this convincing work of the Holy Ghost; then his heart is filled with the love of God, and possessed with the Holy Ghost; therefore then sin appears in the sinfulness thereof unto his soul. And thus I have done with the doctrine, namely, that there is a great deal of evil and sinfulness in sin, which doth not appear to a man until he doth convert and turn unto God.

By way of application,

If there be so much evil and sinfulness in sin; behold the power of the grace of God, the grace of God without you, the grace of God within you. If a spark of fire should be preserved alive in an ocean of water, you would think it is some strong hand that did it; if a candle should be kept light in a great wind and storm, you will say, it was a strong hand that kept it light: there is an ocean of sin in our hearts, and that a little spark, or candle of grace should be preserved in us, in the midst of this ocean of sin; oh, the power of the grace of God.

If this be true, behold the riches and the freeness of the grace of God, that you should be delivered from all this evil; sin sinful, and so sinful, and evil, and you delivered from all this evil; oh, the riches, and the freeness of the grace of God.

But if the sinfulness of sin doth not appear until a man convert and turn unto God. Then,

Here we may see some reason, why some men are not sensible of their sins though very great, it is because they are not converted; the commandment never came, the commandment is not yet come: such a poor soul goes on in his sin, and is not yet convinced of the evil of it, for the commandment never yet came.

If this be true, what a sad condition are all those in that are not converted and brought home to God; they are in

their sins, and their sin is in them; "The whole world lies in wickedness," 1 John v. 19. They lie in their sin, and are full thereof; they are full of this evil; this evil is full of evil, and they are full of this evil: they are full of it. For,

They are always filling and never emptying: a vessel that is always filling, and never emptying, must needs be full. Thus it is with a man not converted, not turned to God, he is always filling with sin, and never emptying; yea, when he thinks he is emptying, when he thinks he is repenting and reforming, then he is filling with sin; always filling, and never emptying, therefore must needs be full.

They are full of it, because they sin beyond their temptation: if a beggar begs of me, and I give him more than he begs for; if he begs for sixpence, and I give him a shilling, he will say, I am full, for I give him more than he begged for: so when temptation begs, and a man sins beyond his temptation, what doth this argue but that he is full of sin? Thus it is with men unconverted, they sin beyond their temptation, and what doth this argue, but that they are full of sin.

And full they are, because they are dropping their sin wheresoever they go: you will say a beggar is full of vermin, that drops his vermin wheresoever he goes; so men, not converted, not turned unto God, they are dropping their vermin wheresoever they go: if they come in good company they are dropping their vermin there; if they come in bad company they are dropping their vermin there; why? because they are full of vermin, full of sin.

But again, As men not converted, not turned to God are full of sin, so they are under the power of it. Why, how doth that appear? Because their sin commands them off from their duty. Suppose a company of men sitting at table at meat together, and another comes into the room, and says to one of them, Take your cloak and follow me, and he presently rises from his meat and follows him; you will say, Certainly this man is his master, because he arises from his meat at his command and follows him. So when sin shall command a man off from his duty, from reading the word, from private prayer; what doth this argue, but that he is under the power of sin? As when a man is sinning, and grace comes and calls him off from his sin, it

argues he is under the power of grace ; so when a man is at his duty, and his sin comes and calls him off from his duty, it argues he is under the power of sin ; so it is with men unconverted, they are under the power of their sin.

As a man unconverted is full of sin, and under the power of it, so he knows it not ; for sin doth not appear to a man to be sin until he convert and turn unto God ; it doth not yet appear, as the apostle says in another case, 1 John iii. 2, " It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but it shall appear ;" so say I in regard of sin, It doth not yet appear, but it shall appear to a man's self, and others ; before a man convert and turn to God, it doth not appear ; but to such a one it shall appear : when a man comes to die, and all his hoops be knocked off, then it will appear how full of sin he is : as a vessel that is full of liquor, and the liquor issue through the hoops, you see there is liquor in it, but you do not know how full it is till the hoops are knocked off. But then you will say, Oh, how full was this vessel. Ah, now our hoops are on, and it doth not yet appear how full of sin men are ; only it comes issuing through the hoops, through their duties, but a day is coming when all our hoops shall be knocked off, and then it will appear how full of sin men are.

But again, If this be true, that when a man doth convert and turn unto God, then his sin doth appear in the sinfulness thereof unto him ; then why should we not all labour to get the true sight of sin, to be sensible of sin ? It is the property of a man converted to be sensible of sin ; " then sin revived." As therefore you desire to have upon you the character of a man converted, labour to be sensible of your sin, that it may appear in the sinfulness thereof.

It is the mind of God, that all his converted ones should think much on, and be very sensible of the sins they committed before their conversion. " Such and such were some of you, but ye are cleansed, but ye are washed." 1 Cor. vi. 11. I say it is the mind and will of God, that those that are converted should be very sensible of their sins which they committed before conversion. For,

Thereby they pity others that are in their sins.

Thereby they are kept from future sins : what is the reason that men are not kept from future sins, but because they are not sensible of their former sins.

Thereby also they are kept in the sense of free grace towards them, and so they magnify the free grace of God; I was a blasphemer, a persecutor; such and such a one I was; but I am washed, but I am cleansed, and through grace justified; oh, the freeness of the grace of God. Thus they magnify free grace. Therefore I say it is the mind of God, that those that are converted should be still very sensible of their sins committed before their conversion: and this is a character of a man converted, sin appears to him to be sinful. Now therefore as you desire to have the character of a man converted, labour more and more to see sin in the sinfulness of it.

Well, but then the question is, What shall we do, whether converted or not; what shall we do, that we may be able to see sin in the sinfulness thereof?

Be sure of this, that you look much upon Christ crucified. Christ on the cross is a glass wherein you may see the sinfulness of sin. Study Christ crucified much.

Labour more and more to walk in the presence of God, the shines of God's countenance; for as when the sun shines into the room, you see little motes, so when God shines into your heart, you see little sins: the beams of God's countenance do discover sin in the sinfulness of it; therefore labour to walk more in the presence of God, and in the shines of his countenance.

Labour more and more to examine your own souls; be much in private examination: hardly an ungrowing christian that is much in private examination; hardly a proud man that is much in private examination. Do you desire to see sin in the sinfulness of it? Go alone, call yourself often to account, be much in private examination.

Take as much pains to keep the sense of sin upon your heart as ever you did to get it: some take pains to get themselves into a good frame, but take no pains to keep themselves in it when they have gotten it. As the apostle speaks, they view themselves in the glass of royal liberty, and go away and forget what manner of men they were.

In case you find any particular sin, go round about it; consider the circumstances thereof, aggravate it upon your own soul.

Improve your afflictions this way. God sends afflictions

sometimes to give you the sight of some sin that lay hid before; and sometimes your afflictions have your sin written on their forehead. Improve then your affliction for the discovery of the sinfulness of sin.

Be sure you judge of sin as the scripture judgeth of it, and not as men judge of it: the Scripture judgeth of sin by the consequence thereof, as our Saviour Christ says, "I was an hungred, and ye fed me not; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not." How so? "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these, ye did it not to me," Matt. xxv. 42—45. Christ judgeth of sin by the consequence of it; therefore if you would see sin in the sinfulness of it, judge of it as Christ judgeth of it, and as the Scripture judgeth of it, and not as men judge of it.

If you desire to see sin in its own colours, in the sinfulness of it; then look upon the commandments of God as great things; the more the commandment of God is greatened to you, the greater will sin be in your eye; if the commandment of God be great in your eye, the sin, contrary to the commandment, will be great in your eye too.

Never think any thing small betwixt God and you; there is nothing small betwixt God and us, for God is an infinite God.

Never look upon sin in the time of temptation; for then you are in the dark, and not fit to see the greatness of sin: labour to know the difference betwixt temptation and corruption, and betwixt the sins of God's people, and others; but never look upon sin in the time of temptation, for then you are in the dark, and cannot see the sinfulness of it.

If you would see sin in the sinfulness of it; then go unto God for the coming of the commandment, that God would set on the commandment upon you, as Paul here; says he, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Some, it may be here, never yet had the commandment set on upon their hearts; Oh then go to God, and pray for the setting on of the commandment upon you; then shall you see sin in the sinfulness thereof.

Now let me add two or three cautions to this, and so conclude.

Take heed that you do not so think on sin as to forget Christ: if you think on sin without Christ you will despair,

if you think on Christ without sin you will presume ; never think on sin without Christ : labour to get the sight of your sin, but never think on sin without Christ ; but look on your sin in the wounds of Christ, and read your sins written out in Christ's blood.

Humble yourselves for sin, though it be never so small ; but do not question your condition for sin though it be never so great ; I do not speak this to those that are unconverted, for they have cause to question their condition for every sin, though never so small ; but being converted and turned unto God, I say, humble thyself for every sin, though never so small ; but never question thy condition for any sin, though never so great.

The more sense you have of sin, and the sinfulness thereof, the more labour to maintain your assurance of the pardon of it : and the more assurance you have of the pardon of your sin, the more labour for a sight and sense of it : let not your sense of sin quench your joy of pardon ; let not your joy of pardon hinder your sight of sin : if both these be true and genuine, the one is an help unto the other.

And, to conclude, the more sense you have of sin, the more do you come to Christ : for in Scripture you shall find, that every good work is not for itself, but some good works are in order to others ; as for example, to instance in the keeping of the Sabbath, you are to rest on the Sabbath, and it is a good work, but not for itself, but in order to prayer, hearing, sanctification, and other duties. So here, sense of sin is a good work ; but it is not for itself, but in order to going to Christ ; therefore now go to Christ, and say, Lord, now I see the sinfulness of sin, let me also see the graciousness of grace, and the fulness of Christ ; yea, now I do come to thee for righteousness, because I see my sin is out of measure sinful.

SERMON II.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.

“ Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and