

SIN CONDEMNED AND EXECUTED BY CHRIST JESUS

NO. 699

A SERMON
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*“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,
God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,
and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”
Romans 8:3*

ONE of the sweetest and most attractive titles of our Lord Jesus Christ, is, “the Friend of sinners.” He was in His manners so gentle towards offenders, so graciously did He seek out the lost, and so tenderly did He invite the erring to pardon and reconciliation, that it was slanderously said of Him, that He was the Friend of sin as well as of sinners. This was the old heathen slander of the days of Celsus.

Philosophy and Phariseeism sneeringly asserted that Jesus treated iniquity so lightly, and made it so easy a matter to escape from its consequences, that He was rather the aider and abettor of sin than its destroyer, and they blasphemously declared that His apostles had preached the doctrine of “let us do evil that good may come.”

My brethren, you know that this charge was utterly and entirely false, and those who uttered the libel knew it to be so too, if they were at all conversant with our Lord’s history. In His example evil meets with no encouragement, and in His teaching it finds no excuse. If they possessed the slightest acquaintance with the objects of His life, they must have known that though the Friend of sinners He was emphatically beyond all other public teachers the Enemy of sin. His hatred towards sin was not a mere passion, it was a principle, it did not flash forth now and then, it was a constant flame.

He hated sin, if I may so say, implacably, never making a moment’s truce with it. He pursued it by day in His ministry, and by night in His prayers. He lived to smite it, and he died to destroy it. And now in His risen glory it is upon sin as well as upon Satan that He sets His heel. He was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and He has erected a battering engine which will not leave of Satan’s strongholds so much as one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down.

In the life of our Lord His tenderness for sinners was but the natural form in which His hatred for sin displayed itself. Just as a physician, from the very fact that he is the antagonist of disease displays a deep interest in those afflicted thereby. Our Lord’s keeping company with sinners by no means proved that He was the friend of sin any more than the physician’s attendance at the hospital would at all lead to the suspicion that he was the friend of disease.

The skillful physician is the friend of the diseased, but to the disease itself what enemy shall be found more determined and inveterate? Because the whole have no need of a physician, Jesus seeks them not. But since the sick need Him He seeks them, not out of love to their sin, but out of love to them, that they may be delivered from the cruel bondage under which their sin has held them.

You will have noticed too that even when the Savior is most tender towards a certain class of sinners, it is that He may display His wrath against sin itself. He will not execrate one sin and exonerate another, but all sin shall see in Him its deadly foe.

It is true He said to the woman taken in adultery, “Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more.” By this He by no means excused her adultery, but He declined to assume the functions of an earthly judge. And more especially He refused to pronounce sentence upon one case alone when so many were before Him who were not accused, but were known to Him to be equally guilty. His leniency to one could do no mischief when His justice to all was so conspicuous.

Those who brought the woman desired Him simply to show His hatred of her, and to manifest abhorrence of that one offense which had happened to be found out, but that flash of His eye when He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," was a far more terrible deliverance against sin than if He had said, "Yes, take her away, and bind her hand and foot, and let her die, but as for you, ye hypocrites, you who are practicing, perhaps, the same sin in private, inasmuch as you have not been discovered by your fellow men, I allow you to escape with impunity."

If He judged one He must judge all, and therefore He dismissed them all to the appointed time for judgment. Manifesting, it seems to me, quite as much His hatred of sin as His tenderness towards the sinner.

So everywhere connected with the gentleness of the Savior, in which He does not "break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax," there is a most determinate wrath, a lion-like fierceness against sin, especially in its hypocritical forms, for He who bids the open and acknowledged sinner come to Him cries in the same breath, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," and calls them whitewashed sepulchers filled with dead men's bones.

There is not then the slightest foundation for the accusation that Jesus is in the least degree the friend of sin, though He is the friend of sinners. On the contrary, we can easily prove the assertion which is made in the text, that Jesus Christ came into the world to condemn sin, and has condemned it, that sin never was condemned before as it was in the sacrifice of His person, and that the law of Moses itself could not through the weakness of the flesh condemn sin as Jesus Christ has done. For He has not only passed sentence upon it, but has executed it, carrying the sentence into effect.

God had condemned sin before, but never so efficiently as in the person of His Son. God's very nature condemns sin. The existence of the thrice holy JEHOVAH is a constant protest against all unholiness. God condemned sin in that day when He drove out Adam and Eve from the garden, when He suffered the trail of the serpent to ruin paradise, and condemned our first parents, all naked and ashamed, to till the ground from which they were taken, and in the sweat of their face to eat bread. God condemned sin, constantly condemned it in the death which became common to the entire race.

Every funeral is God's repetition of His anathema against sin. When our friends are carried to the silent sepulcher the Lord of all does in fact say to us, "See what a bitter thing sin is, it takes the light from the eye and the music from the ear. It silences the voice of song, and palsies the hand of skill. It quenches the fire of love upon the heart's altar, and removes the light of understanding from the brain's judgment seat, and gives over the creature once so lovely and beloved to become a putrid mass, a horror and a loathing, so that affection itself cries out, 'Bury my dead out of my sight.'"

Thus every gravestone and every green hillock in the cemetery may be regarded as the still small voice of God solemnly condemning sin.

The Lord of old judged and condemned sin in that great and terrible calamity which swept the whole race away with a mighty deluge. When "sea monsters whelped and stabled in the palaces of kings," when over the mountains' loftiest brow the raging billows prevailed, and not even the shriek of a "strong swimmer in his agony" could be heard, for death rode triumphant on the crested billow over a sea without a shore.

Then it was that God declared sin to be so dreadful that it repented Him that He had made men upon the face of the earth, and He drew up the floodgates of His wrath until He had swept the earth clean of the rebellious race, except the elect eight who floated in the ark.

In after years the Lord opened all the batteries of heaven against sin in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Terrible was that hail of fire, and sleet of brimstone which descended upon the cities of the plain, because the reeking foulness of their sin had come up into the nostrils of the Most High, and He could endure it no longer.

But all these judgments which I have mentioned were comparatively inoperative upon the conscience of man. Man sinned though he was expelled from the garden, he did not fall down on his knees and hate the sin which had withered Eden. Man grew up to mourn, but his mourning did not heal

him of sinning, the medicine was very bitter, but it did not cure. Notwithstanding that the tradition of Eden, and the expulsion must have been fresh in the memories of mankind, and they must have known that sin, and sin only was the cause of every mother's pang, and the cause of every man's toil, when in the sweat of his brow he ate his bread. Yet man followed sin as though it were his chief good.

Even the constant occurrence of death has not taught man the evil of the root which produced so dire a fruit. Man sins although he stands upon the brink of the grave. It is not enough that the halter is about the traitor's neck, he commits fresh treasons while standing beneath the gallows. He knows that his doom is recorded, and that his life is only a reprieve, and yet he insults the judge.

Man knows that it is only a matter of time when his body should return to the dust from whence it came, and yet dying man is sinful man. And though he knows that he shall soon appear before his Maker's bar, how slight the check of this upon any man! In fact, where is a more thoughtless race of men than those who have most acquaintance with the grave, and where shall you find men who laugh at death more than those who are constantly engaged at the tomb?

Moreover the great judgments of the deluge, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, made but a slight impression upon mankind, for man began to build his Babel tower in defiance of God almost as soon as the flood was assuaged and men began to multiply. And as for Sodom and Gomorrah, there were doubtless men who looked on at that fearful blaze, and saw the smoke thereof blacken the heavens, who then returned to their lusts, and were still as aforesaid given up to their idols. All the judgments were weak, because man's flesh is so stubbornly set on sin.

It is never to be forgotten that the Lord judged sin and condemned it upon Sinai. The law of God of the ten commands, with the penal sentence attached thereto, was intended to be God's great conviction, trial, and judgment of sin. Truly, when we consider that law, so high, so broad, so all-encompassing, so reaching to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and when we recollect how it was given with sound of trumpet and blaze of lightning, with a bound set around the mount, with fearful curses upon the man who should violate its commands, and with wondrous blessings to those who should keep its precepts, it must appear to be a singularly glorious and commanding judgment of sin.

"The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them." "His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the LORD of the whole earth."

Sinai itself was altogether on a smoke, so that the man, the mediator Moses, said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." That law, given by angels in the hand of a mediator, was steadfast and terrible, and was a most wondrous judging and condemning of sin, yet you know what a very little effect it had upon those who had first received it. Ere the forty days were over, before Moses could get down from the mount, they were dancing around the golden calf, and shouting, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of Egypt."

From that day till now, what has God's law been to the carnal mind? A form printed upon tables in their churches, but not written on the tablets of their hearts. A rule read in their hearing, but forgotten in their lives, admired in theory, but neglected in practice. The scene at Sinai was a solemn judgment of sin, just as were the other judgments which I have mentioned, but in effect it was inoperative, it was weak, not in itself, but through the flesh, weak, because man is so strong in sin, weak, because for unrenewed man to know God's will is for him to know how to fly in the teeth of it.

Human nature has learned how to rebel rather than how to obey by studying the law. The commandment which was ordained for life has been made our death. The law has been made by our rebellious wills a negative rather than a positive rule, and man has learned by it how to live so as to insult his great benefactor and friend.

Thus it is clear that though the Lord oftentimes condemned sin, yet sin still reigned in man's heart, therefore, He sent His own Son into the world to do what His judgments and His law had not done,

namely, to condemn sin in the flesh, that once for all we might know in our inmost souls that sin is a hateful thing, and knowing might feel it and avoid it.

This brings me to the text itself. The text may be understood in two ways, these two senses shall constitute the two heads. Sin was *condemned* by our Lord's suffering for sin, notice the margin, "By a sacrifice for sin" He condemned sin in the flesh. The first head then is, *sin was condemned by Christ's sacrifice of Himself*. And secondly, as some translators give to the word "condemned" the force of *destroyed*, we shall read it thus, *sin was executed in the sufferings of the Savior*.

These two points, if God the Holy Ghost shall lead us into them, may afford us a good morning's meditation. And then the practical conclusions from them will, I hope, be not restricted to this morning, but accompany us all our days.

I. Our first point is this, that albeit all the former condemnations of sin which God gave to the world were weak through the flesh, yet THERE HAS NOW BEEN GIVEN A MOST EFFECTIVE AND POTENT CONDEMNATION OF SIN IN THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Of course, the potency must be judged of by its effect upon those who received that sacrifice, and in such persons sin is most effectually condemned.

1. The Savior condemned sin by His sufferings, *by allowing it to work itself out to its legitimate result*. Sin is exceedingly sinful, but we could never have known how sinful sin was if it had not slain Christ. A certain preacher who delighted in a very flowery style, once ventured in a very splendid passage of his oration to depict the loveliness of virtue. "O virtue, thou fair angel," and so on, "if thou shouldst come down to earth in all thy radiance," etc., etc., "all men would love thee." This wonderful flight of wordiness receives its fall in the history of Calvary.

We could never have known how detestable sin was if this had not been put to the test. Virtue did come down among men, not in its severer aspect as a stoical moralist, but it descended in its gentlest form in the person of the most loving and tender man that ever lived, even Jesus Christ. But sin so hates and loathes that which is good that instead of receiving this incarnate virtue with honor, sin was never satisfied till after hunting the Man through life it at last nailed Him to the gibbet of a malefactor, and put Him to a death too cruel even for the most loathsome and detestable of beings.

It is with sin according to the parable of our Lord. Sin had entered the vineyard of the Lord, and robbed Him of the fruit thereof. He sent His servants to His vineyard, and they cried unto it, "Thus and thus saith the Lord," but sin being angry took the servants, one by one, knowing them to be the servants of God, and it smote one, and threw another into prison, and slew another, till the servants of God came only to be persecuted and to be slain.

At last He said, "I will send my Son; they will surely reverence my Son," it was surely impossible that if the Son of God should come armed with a commission from the Most High, sin would venture to smite Him. But behold the hardihood of sin, it said, "This is the heir, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours," and it slew Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard.

Sin was then seen to be the cruel, horrible, detestable, traitorous thing which God had declared it to be, and now man knows it to be such, he cannot deny it, for the murdered body of the Savior shows the deadly mischief that lurks in sin.

It is as though there were a certain poisoned river, and a parent had often said to his children, "Drink it not, my children, it is sweet at first, but soon it will bring on you pains most fearful, and death will shortly follow. Do not drink it." But these children were very willful and would not believe it. And albeit that sometimes a dog or an ox would drink of it and be sore pained and die, they did not believe in all its injurious effects to them. But by and by One made like unto themselves drank of it, and when they saw Him die in anguish most terrible, then they understood how deadly must be the effects of this poisoned stream.

When the Savior Himself was made sin for us and then died in griefs unutterable, then we saw what sin could do, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin was displayed. To use another illustration, you have a tame leopard in your house, and you are often warned that it is a dangerous creature to trifle with, but its

coat is so sleek and beautiful, and its gambols are so gentle that you let it play with the children as though it were the well-domesticated cat. You cannot have it in your heart to put it away. You tolerate it, nay, you indulge it still. Alas, one black and terrible day it tastes of blood, and rends in pieces your favorite child, then you know its nature and need no further warning. It has condemned itself by displaying the full ferocity of its nature.

So with sin, we thought it such a fair thing, we could not be persuaded that anything so pleasant, so fair spoken, could really be so deadly an enemy as God said it was. But when sin leaped upon our altogether lovely Jesus, and like a ravaging wolf delighted itself in His slaughter, then it condemned itself most effectually. Every Christian feels this: what he could not feel through contemplating the expulsion from Eden, what he might not feel through thinking of the curse of the law, he does feel and must feel when he sees sin thus prostrating the Lord of life and glory, and making Him suffer even to the death.

Christian, you know now what sin would do to you, how it would scourge and crucify you, make you cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and cast you into a bloody sweat, and destroy you utterly. You see now that sin has such a weight in it that only eternal God can bear it, and you will henceforth hate and dread it, you will no longer favor it. God has condemned it by allowing it to show itself in its true colors. You hear the condemnation, and you say amen to it, do you not? What the law could not do, God has done.

2. But the text wears a fuller meaning when we recollect that Christ did not only condemn sin by allowing it to carry itself out to the full, but *He condemned it by actually bearing its penalty as our substitute*. This is the great doctrine of Holy Scripture, and it becomes us to speak very plainly about it. The punishment which was due to man for sin was suffered by our Lord—if not the exact punishment yet that which was equivalent to it was suffered by the Savior on the tree, and this constituted the most weighty and effectual condemnation of sin.

Observe carefully, dear friends, that the condemnation of sin in the sacrifice of Christ derives much of its weight from *the dignity of His person*. Sin was laid this time not on an angel, not on some chosen cherub or seraph, but sin was laid upon one who is none other than God over all, blessed forever. The mighty God Himself wrapped His glory in a veil of our inferior clay, and then sin was laid on Him.

Now if sin be such a terrible thing, if it deserve the condemnation that is pronounced upon it, we shall see what it will do with Him. Will sin bring Him down? Will sin make Him smart? Will sin make Him cry? He is God’s only begotten Son. Sin must be a bitter thing indeed if it be necessary for God to smite His own Son!

Will not the Great Ruler of the universe make an exception in this case? Sin may be very gross, but can He not, when it is laid upon one so heavenly, so pure, so divine, may not He deal gently with it? He may use His rod, but surely He will not unsheathe His sword.

Listen! “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD.” There is no sparing here. See the Savior ground between the upper and nether millstone of divine vengeance, hear His cries and mark His falling tears, perceive His heart surrounded with divine wrath and filled with sorrow, till like a boiling caldron it flows over in groans and cries. Look at that spectacle of woe till you dare not look any longer, for the grief is too amazing for the eye to see or for the soul to think upon.

Now, sin, you are condemned indeed! Hunted out from place to place at last you leap upon the palace of God, you touch that human tabernacle wherein the Second Person of the Divine Trinity rested. But the tabernacle must come down, Death must invade even the body of the Christ of God because sin was laid upon Him. This is all the more wonderful and more remarkable condemnation of sin because it was not His own sin. In Him was no sin, and yet the sins of His people when laid upon the Savior made Him exceedingly sorrowful even unto death.

Sin was condemned again by *the excellence of the motive which led the Savior to take sin upon Himself*. He took the sins of His enemies upon Himself, sins of those who could not reward Him for His

pains, but who, on the contrary, had hitherto despised Him and esteemed Him not. When He was found with sin laid upon Him, He was not taken as a thief nor seized as a malefactor by our God. Justice knew that Christ was in the sinner's place for no motive but one of unselfish love. He had nothing to gain, but everything to lose.

Those for whom He came, as we have already said, but we need to remind you of it again, had no claims upon Him, they had no love for Him, and even after He had given Himself to die for them they lived in hardness of heart, rejecting Him till His own superior grace overcame them.

Now one would think that a man having sin upon Him from such a motive, so heavenly, so divine, might have been spared. But He was not spared: of the cup He drank every drop, of the lash He felt every blow. The penalty which Christ endured was not a mitigated penalty for sin, but the whole weight of JEHOVAH's wrath fell on Him. He was treated as a thing accursed, for He was made a curse for us. Made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

In what a manner was sin thus condemned! I shall not, however, treat this as a matter of doctrine, I shall come to you, Christian, and ask you if it is not so in your inmost heart. Is not sin condemned in you? When you see the Lord of glory die for your iniquities, do you not hate the sin which brought Him down to such a depth? And when you remember that He died, that though He was guiltless He died simply out of love for you, do you not vow a full revenge against your sin, and feel that the thing which once might be pleasurable is now detestable, and that which you could toy with and think nothing of is now loathsome to the very last degree?

Once again, did not the Savior condemn sin most emphatically in *the terror of the pains which He endured*? The severity of God to sin was marked in the Savior's bitter griefs. No, I will not tell you over again that old story, that precious story, of the passion in the garden, of the betrayal by His friend, of the accusations of treason and of blasphemy, of the scourging, the thorn crown, the spittle, the mockery, the bearing of the cross, the piercing of the hands and feet, the stripping, the scorn, the thirst, the fever, the death—I will only just remind you of His desertion by His God, of the soul-griefs that He endured.

Oh that I had power to depict them, and that your minds could view them aright! We are never duly impressed, I am afraid, with the griefs of the Son of God. We weep over some silly story, or when we hear of the little griefs of our friends we mourn with them, but the griefs of our best Friend do not affect us, and the sorrows of our best Beloved do not move us as they ought.

Yet at times, at favored intervals, when you and I are permitted to sit and view the flowing of His precious blood, when we gaze into His wounds, when we hear his death-cries and mark His pangs and sorrows, then we have felt that sin was condemned. We never hate sin so much as when we get a realizing thought of the griefs of Immanuel.

Human philosophy cannot make you hate sin, the study of the law of God cannot make you hate it, but if you have ever with tearful glance beheld the Son of God expiring and groaning out His life for you in consequence of your sins, then God has done in you, despite the weakness of your flesh, what the law could not do, and what all other things beside could never accomplish.

I must press this matter home with you, Christians, that you may give your own verdict whether it is not so. Have you not felt that you have not half a word to say for sin now? That you could not defend it, nay, that you could not bear it? It is now as if a man should come to you and say, "I have slain a man, hide me from justice," you might possibly consider whether you should conceal him. But if you discovered that he had assassinated your child and that his hands were blood-red with its innocent blood, you would say, "Hide you! how can I hide you? It is my own child whom you have slain."

When sin comes to me I know its mischievous effect, and I dare not for that reason tolerate it. But when I hear that it slew my dear Redeemer, slew Him who loved me eternally and without change, loved me without a motive for loving me, but only because He would love me—when I hear that sin slew Him, I cry, "Away with you! Sin, away with you! Away with you! It is not fit that you should live. Away with you! Down to the depths of hell descend, and even there there is no darkness so dark as you are! no terror so terrible as you are! You hell of hells, you blackness of darkness! you accursed thing!

You have slain my Lord.” This is what the text means when it tells us that the sacrifice of Jesus condemns sin.

II. JESUS EXECUTES AND DESTROYS SIN.

When we have a great offender to deal with, it is something to get him condemned. But our customs in this country do not always necessitate that a person condemned to die should die, for there are some cases now fresh in your memory where the sentence of death has been pronounced, and probably very justly too, and yet mercy (God forbid that I should say a word against it!) has come in, and the sentence has not been carried out.

Now our Lord Jesus not only came into the world to pronounce the sentence of death upon sin, but He crucified it, He fought with it and overthrew it there and then. He was not merely judge, but executioner, “for sin he condemned sin in the flesh.” At the present moment sin is crucified in those souls wherein Christ reigns. We will show you in what way Christ has executed sin.

In the first place, our Lord has destroyed it as to its *penal power*. There is no power in sin to condemn the believer now. “What,” saith one, “does not sin condemn every man at whose door it lies?” Certainly it does—sin condemns every man with whom it is found, but in the case of the believer sin is not imputed, not laid at his door, for David saith, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

The sin of the believer was laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ, “for the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” And from that day forward the penalty of sin has been discharged and removed by the Redeemer’s having endured it Himself.

The black cloud of my sin has no rain in it. It has emptied out its rain upon Christ. Nay, the black cloud itself has ceased to be. The Red Sea of my sin cannot drown me. It is dried up by Christ. I have a safe passage through it. My sin is in itself most deadly and destructive, as I see it to have been in the person of my Lord Jesus. But it shall neither destroy nor condemn me, for it has destroyed and condemned Christ, and He has destroyed and condemned it.

Good old Christmas Evans, he describes death as a dragon wearing a sting called sin, and being so determined to destroy the Savior that it darted its sting right through His body into the cross, “and then,” says he, “he could never draw it out again.” That old dragon death is a dragon still, but it has lost its sting, for it left its sting in the cross of the dead Redeemer. Sin is gone and gone forever. “He hath finished transgression, and made an end of sin.” The jaw teeth of sin are broken, it may howl at me and worry me, but it cannot rend me or destroy me.

As for original sin, Christ has put that away. As for actual sin, however great or however numerous actual sins may be, Christ has destroyed the penal power of sin in the case of every believer. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.” “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” Once get you into Christ, O believer, and you may see your sin laid on the scapegoat’s head of old, and carried right away into the wilderness of oblivion, where it shall never have an accusation to raise against you any more forever.

Sin, in the next place, was executed by Christ as to its *depressing power upon the conscience*. When an ungodly man is aroused to see sin, it weighs on his heart like a nightmare. “I cannot,” says he, “I cannot be saved, my sin is so evil. No longer may I hope, it is in vain to pray, in vain to trust, in vain to do anything. My sin fills me with despair. It makes me drunken with wormwood, and breaks my teeth with gravel-stones.”

But sin has no such depressing power upon the Christian as to drive him to despair. He sees sin, but he beholds an atonement made. He perceives how black a thing sin is, but he sees the fountain filled with blood. He weeps over his sin, but he does not despair about it. He understands that sin by itself would put him into a helpless plight, but he comprehends that the eternal love of God in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ has made his case not only hopeful, but one in which he is safe and sure of

everlasting life because the penalty for sin has been discharged by the Redeemer on his behalf. Sin is dead to the Christian in those two senses.

I look sin in the face and I say to it, “You foul, you loathsome, you detestable thing, yet you cannot drag me down to hell. I know you cannot, and you cannot even make me fear. I am bold, I can sing, I can rejoice, sinner as I am! You cannot stop me of my glory, for I am in Christ, absolved in Christ and secure.” In these two senses sin is put away forever by our Savior’s death.

Moreover, sin is destroyed in the Christian as to its *power over his heart*. No soul that has come to trust in Jesus Christ loves sin. You do sin, my brethren and sisters, but if you could have your own way you would not. If your new nature could follow out its bent and desire, what would you be? Would you not desire to be perfect, even as God is perfect? To cease from every sin and run in every Christian duty?

I can say honestly that if I might now have my choice, it should not be to possess wealth, or even health, nor fame, nor any of those things which dazzle human eyes, but to be perfectly holy. Even if I must be in consequence very poor, and very despised, or even die, to be perfectly holy were the climax of one’s wishes. This shows that sin is destroyed in our heart.

As Master Bunyan tells us, Diabolus could not enter the citadel any more after the Prince Immanuel had driven him out of the town of Mansoul. He did enter the city through Ear-gate and Eye-gate, and his troops swarmed in every street, but he could never reconquer the castle. The heart is kept for God, the heart of the Christian is inviolate and chaste for the soul’s true husband, the Lord Jesus. Sin is slain in the heart by Jesus. We cannot love sin since Christ has died.

The Lord Jesus Christ, by His death has also crucified sin *in its active energy over our lives*. Alas! not over the lives of some professors, but they are not the true Israel. There are some professors of religion who, when the Lord comes, will certainly meet with a very fearful end—I mean such of you as profess to be the Lord’s people, and yet can secretly indulge in the sins of the flesh, can trade dishonestly, can privately serve the devil, neglect prayer, and act as sinners do, and yet all the while pretend to be among the living family of the living God.

It were better for you that you had never been born. It were better for you that a millstone were round about your neck, and that you were cast into the depth of the sea, than to unite yourself with a Christian church, and make a profession of being in Christ while you are the slave of your detestable lusts.

Oh, may God undeceive many of you who may be in such a plight! May He pull your vizards and your masks from your faces, wash the paint from your cheeks, and make you to be in your own sight what you are in His sight. If I must be lost I would rather be lost knowing my condition than be lost a self-deceived man, and go from the cup of the Lord to drink the cup of wrath forever, and be chased away from the communion of saints down into the pandemonium of hell.

However, in the genuine Christian sin has lost its power in his life, he cannot do as others do. If he is ever tempted to it like Joseph he says, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” The believer is in the body and therefore his flesh is weak, but his spirit liveth, and he therefore cannot let the body have dominion over him. Those lusts in which some indulge he abhors, and he will not even mention them, as becomes saints. Those words which glide so glibly from other men’s lips he hates, and will not utter them, they are foreign words to him.

The swine rolls in the mire with delight, but the sheep abhors it. When before his conversion the man was a raven, how he gloated over his carrion! but now he is a dove he frequents the rivers of pure water, and loves clean feeding while his clipping wings often bear him above the clouds, ay, and above the stars too, into the serene atmosphere where the dove-like Spirit dwells. He is a new creature in Christ Jesus, and sin is destroyed in its energetic influence over his life.

The day is coming—blessed be God, the day is coming—when *sin in its very being will be utterly destroyed in every believer*. Sin within us lies like a condemned criminal with his neck under the guillotine. Oh that the axe would drop! Oh that the knife would take away the life of sin forever! Oh

blessed hour, oh sweet discharge, to be rid of every temptation and propensity to sin! Sentence of death is recorded, and the culprit is crucified, his hands are fast nailed, he cannot act as he would. His feet are fast nailed, he cannot run as he would, and he will die ere long. Oh blessed day when he shall be wholly dead, and the soul shall be free from sin, holy even as God is holy, to dwell with Him forever!

Now, beloved, you clearly see that the law could not in any of these senses destroy sin, and that the judgments of God do not make men give up the love of sin. They are hardened rather than softened by the terrors of God. Instead of sin losing its power over the conscience by hearing of the law of God, it is strangely true that the man just sets himself more determinately against his Maker, the more he understands the hatred of his Maker against sin. The wounds of Jesus can do what nothing else can do. When I am pardoned, I hate sin. When I see the love of God in Christ Jesus, sin becomes a condemned and destroyed thing.

I must now close with the lessons to be learned from this. It gave me great consolation when studying this text to notice that Christ had condemned sin *in the flesh*, for the flesh is sin's stronghold, it is sin's quadrilateral, out of which it can scarcely be driven. Our Lord has condemned it in the flesh, then, blessed be God, our very flesh shall one day be rid of this condemned, executed thing, and my very bones shall rejoice, see Jesus in the day of the resurrection, and sing because sin hath no more dominion over it.

Christian, this is the lesson I long for you to learn. First. *Hate sin in every shape*. Christ condemns it, do not you approve it. Christ executes it, do not you harbor it. It slew the Savior, slay *it*. Hate sin! *Have good heart as to its destruction*. Do not think that sin is mightier than you are when Christ is with you. Up at your sins and slay them. Do not tamely yield to your besetting sin.

Let this resolution this day be strong, that the victory shall be yours in every part of the battle, and that no sin shall remain in dominion over you. This day record your thanksgiving to Him who fought the battle for you and won it. He has condemned sin on your behalf, and slain it too. Ascribe unto Him glory and honor, and this day let your song go up to the place where He dwells.

And to thee, sinner, this lesson: *See how sin is punished*. If it be punished in Christ it will surely be avenged in you. If JEHOVAH spared not His own Son, He will never spare His enemy. Take heed, sinner, of your sin. It will be your everlasting ruin if you are not rid of it. *See how you can be delivered*. Even you, flesh as you are, and the slave of flesh, Christ can save from your sin.

Trust your soul with Him! Come as you are, all sinful and defiled, and cast yourself at the foot of His cross by a simple act of trust. He will cast out your sin, for He has condemned it in the flesh. Oh may He condemn it in your flesh, condemn it in you now, and save you from it by destroying *it* and saving *you!* God grant it may be so with us, and His be the glory. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ROMANS 8

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