

The Danger of Man Resulting from Sin

by

**George
Whitefield**

*The DANGER of Man resulting from
Sin, and
his REMEDY; by CHRIST considered.*

A

SERMON

PREACHED ON
KENNINGTON-COMMON.

BY

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MATTHEW xxii. 42.

What think you of Christ?

WHEN the Fulness of Time was come, Christ came and preach'd the Gospel to a lost World; he preach'd to High and Low, Rich and Poor, without any Distinction, without any Regard to the Persons he preached to; did not regard the great and mighty ones of the Earth; but preached and offered Salvation to them all: He went about to do his Father's Will, and was resolved to be continually engaged in his Work; he, therefore, my Brethren, went about doing Good; was delighted in doing his Father's Will; was not weary in well doing. Many poor People believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, tho' the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* despised and rejected him, because he preached up the Necessity of inward Holiness, and of the new Birth, and that Persons must be born again before they can enter into the Kingdom of God; must undergo the Pangs of the New-Birth, and feel the Spirit of God operating

B 3

upon

upon their Souls before they can be Christians. Indeed, must not only be baptized of Water,

but of the Spirit; and must be not only professing Christians, but, my dear Brethren, we must live up to our Profession; your Lives and Conversations must shew that you are Christians indeed: This, my Brethren, the Lord Jesus Christ did while he was in the Flesh; he did not do as our Letter-learned *Scribes* and *Pharisees* do, think if they do but preach once a Week, or, perhaps not so often, rest themselves contented, and think that they have done all that is incumbent upon them; but, my Brethren, they are much mistaken, for it is their Duty to visit from House to House, to catechise Children and Servants, to examine how it stands between God and their Peoples Souls; but they do none of this, it is out of Fashion among them; they are above it: And if any was to take this Method, they would be esteem'd as Enthusiasts and Madmen, as going about to: deceive the common People, to undermine the established Church, to turn Dissenters, Schismaticks, and the like, when they are the Schismaticks, they are the Bane of the Church of *England*, who starve the People out of their Communion, by feeding them only with the dry Husks of dead Morality, and not bring them the fatted

Calf

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Calf; I mean the Doctrines of the Operations of God's Spirit.

They do not preach up their own Articles; they subscribe to them only to get Preferment; and when they have obtained it, they preach contrary to those very Articles to which they have subscribed:—Far be it from me to charge all the Clergy with this hateful Practice; No, blessed be God, there are some left among us, who dare maintain the Doctrines

of the Reformation, and, preach the Truth as it is in Jesus: But I speak the Truth in Christ, I lie not, the Generality of the Clergy are fallen from their Articles, and do not speak agreeable to them; they have forsaken them, they have run from them, and despise and condemn those Ministers who preach up those very Doctrines which are agreeable to the Articles of our own Church, or to the Form of sound Words laid down in Scripture.

They do not, tis true, deny the Spirit of God, tho' they, in Effect do it, for they say, They must not feel it: They deny, my Brethren, all inward Feeling, and inward Holiness, tho' it is the very Doctrine of our own Church agreeable to Scripture, to the Experiences of all good Men; it is expressed in the Articles of our own Church, in her Collects and in her Homilies: And yet our learned Rabbis deny this feeling of the Spirit of

B 4

God;

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God; but, my Brethren, you must feel the Spirit of God, feel the workings of it upon your Souls, and feel it in its Sanctifying Instances before you are true real Christians: You may be nominal Christians; you may be professing ones; but my Brethren, if you have not the Spirit of God, you are none of his; you have only a Name to live while you are dead: Your Lamps will be of no Service to you, they will stand you in no Stead if you have not Oil therein: You must have Grace, in your Hearts, that, my Brethren, is the Oil that will be of Service; that will keep and support you in Life and in Death; the Lamp of an outward Profession will go out, unless Grace, inward Holiness, keeps them alive.

You may flatter yourselves, O ye *Pharisees*, that you are good enough, because you lead civil, moral, decent Lives, go to Church, and do no one any Harm; but if you have no more than this Morality, you will do no more than the *Pharisees* of old, who cleansed the Outside of the Cup, while they disregarded all inward Holiness, when all Manner of Sins and Iniquities were in their Hearts and remained there. O ye *Pharisees*, ye do outwardly appear righteous; but what are ye within? Full of Wrath, Malice, Revenge and all uncharitableness: But while you, are

thus

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thus Self-righteous, and think yourselves good enough, you shall not enter into the Rest prepared for those that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity and Truth: No; Harlots, Publicans, or Thieves, shall enter into Heaven before you: Christ came not, O ye *Pharisees*, to call you who are righteous enough, who are good enough; No, he came to seek and to save them which are lost: And you never will be found of Christ 'till you see how lost and undone you are by Nature; how defiled you are, my Brethren, by Sin, that you are half a Devil, and half a Beast; you must not only confess that you are Sinners, by saying of it in a formal customary Manner; but you must feel yourselves lost undone damned Sinners, as you are, by Nature, and are much more so, my Brethren, by your Practice.

'Tis true, it is a fashionable and polite Doctrine to deny that we are fallen in *Adam*; to deny original Sin; but this Doctrine is plain in Scripture; and if these polite Gentlemen would but examine their own Hearts, they

would have no Reason, my Brethren, to call in Question, the Truth of original Corruption. Besides) what is a greater Proof of it, than Sickness and Death in Infants? We see daily that little Children and Infants do die: Experience daily teacheth us the Truth hereof;

and

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and if the Sin of *Adam*, our first Parent, our fœderal Head, our Representative, was not laid to their Charge, my Brethren, they would be exempted from the Stroke of Death: Therefore this original Corruption has defiled us: Indeed, my dear Brethren, this Sin is enough to sink you into Hell; but the Blood of Christ cleanseth from all Sin: Therefore, what think ye of Christ? Jesus Christ, my Brethren, is the Way, the Truth and the Life: What, therefore, my Brethren, think ye of Christ? Is he not precious and desirable unto you? O you who are sick of Sin, who are weary of the Yoke of Iniquity; if this is your Case, my Brethren, come unto the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall find Comfort: Don't say you are poor and therefore cannot, come. Don't stay 'till you are dressed: Come in all your Filthiness, in all your Pollution; come, my Brethren, unto this Christ, for he is a God able and willing to save you that come unto him.

I don't ask you *Arians* and *Socinians* what you think of Christ; for I know you think very dishonourably of him. The *Arians*, my Brethren, make him no more than a created God, a titular Deity: They look upon Christ, my Brethren, not as a God co-equal and consubstantial with, the Father, but as a subordinate God, as not equal with the Fa-

ther;

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ther; but, my Brethren, Christ is really God, God co-equal with the Father; he is actually God, God blessed forever and ever.

The *Socinians* does not go, my Brethren, so far; they look only on Christ as a Prophet and a good Man, sent from God; and that his Death was not satisfactory for the Sins of Mankind, but only as a Proof of his Doctrine being true, or to give Mankind an Example of heroic Virtue.

But my dear Brethren, I hope better Things of you: I hope you have high and honourable Thoughts of the Lord Jesus; that you, my dear Brethren, esteem him as God of God, very God of very God. For my Part I would not be in the Condition of these fashionable Gentlemen, these *Arians* and *Socinians*, not for ten thousand Worlds.

Consider, I beseech you, the *Mercies* of God in Christ Jesus; consider what Jesus Christ has done for you; consider in what a State you are by Nature; and when, my dear Brethren, you consider the Love of the Lord Jesus to your Souls, sure it will win your Love to him. O my Brethren, you are by Nature all over Sin and Pollution, from the Crown of your Head, unto the Soles of your Feet, there was nothing but Wounds and Bruises and putrifying Sores. My dear Brethren, I shall at this Time take the Part of a

skilful

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skilful Surgeon, first, probe the Wound and search it before I heel it, otherwise it would be only skinning over a Wound which would break out again, and is not thorough healed: Therefore I beseech you to have Patience, for

I will shew you your Decrease by Sin, and then I will point out to you the Remedy.

I am first to shew you how obnoxious to the Wrath of God you are by your Sins: How you deserve nothing but Damnation; you all deserve to have been now along, with the Devils and damned Spirits; and if you live and die, my dear Brethren, in this State, you will be in the same Condition to all Eternity: I speak the Truth in Christ, I lie not; do not deceive, yourselves, you are running in a full Career to Destruction, and are going Post-haste to Hell. You are, my Brethren, as I said before, so I say it to you again, You are half Devils and half Beasts.

I know these Terms will stir the whole *Pharisee* in the Heart: But let not the Devil hurry thee away; stop a little and let us reason. Dost not thou find that by Nature thou art prone to Pride? Is there not, in thee, Seeds of Malice, Revenge, and all Uncharitableness? These are the very Tempers of the Devil.

Again; Do we not all, by Nature, follow and suffer ourselves to be led by our natural Appetites; always looking downwards, never

looking

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looking upwards to that God, by whom we live, move, and have our Being. This is the Temper and Nature of the Beasts. Thus we have Tempers in us all by Nature, which prove to a Demonstration, that we are altogether earthly, sensual, and devilish.

And if we have there Tempers it is evident that we must have these devilish brutual Tempers changed before we can be admitted among the Angels and Saints in Heaven. If we were to be admitted into Heaven with these present Tempers, you would be unhap-

py there; the Song of the heavenly Choir, the Hallelujahs of Angels, and the Adoration of the Saints, would be all madness and Enthusiasm to you. If, my Brethren, these was the Songs of the Drunkard, Plays, Balls, Assemblies, or polite Entertainments, you might endure it, it may he; but as there is nothing but the Song of the Lamb, blessing, praising of the Lord, you would be weary and tired of your Company, and wish to be gone from such Enthusiastick Doings: You could not relish them; they would be heavy and tedious to thee.

When, you read of the Prodigal's eating Husks with Swine who might have lived on the good Things of Life; and how *Nebuchadnezzar* was turned out to graze with Oxen. I am confident you pity their unhappy State:

And

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And when you hear how Jesus Christ will say at the last Day, to all that are not born again, who have not experienced the Work of Regeneration upon their Souls, who have not inward Holiness, who have denied the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Do not your Hearts shrink within you with a secret Horror? O my dear, Brethren, consider, I say again, how deserving you are of eternal Damnation. Flee, flee, unto the Lord Jesus: Come unto him and he will save you; he is your Remedy; he died to save all that seek unto him, if you do but feel yourselves lost and undone Sinners; if you are sensible how deserving you are of his Wrath: O my Brethren, seek unto him and he will have Mercy: Come unto him, and he will have Com-

passion. Say unto him as the poor Leper of old, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou, canst make me clean:* He will say unto thee immediately, *I will; be thou clean.*

For though you are sunk into the Temper of the Beast and Devil; yet if you truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you shall receive his Spirit. Come unto him in all your Unworthiness; bring nothing of your own with you: Tho' some are telling us of a Fitness in the Creatures; I for my Part, my Brethren,

know

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know of none but a Fitness for eternal Damnation: They tell us that we must have a Righteousness of our own before we can lay hold of the Righteousness of Christ; that God, seeing you a good Creature, gives you his Grace: But I say not so, I say my Brethren, and the Scripture says so too, That Salvation is the free Gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; and whosoever believeth on him, tho' his Soul be black and deformed as the Devil himself, he shall be pardoned, he shall, my clear Brethren, be received into the Favour of God, and adopted into his Family; the Holy Ghost dwell in him, he shall be in God, and God in him; he shall taste of God's Salvation; if you hunger and thirst after this Righteousness you shall be filled.

You will no more have low Thoughts of Christ; No, my Brethren, he will be altogether lovely; he will be the Chiefest of ten thousand to you that would see a Beauty, a Form and a Comeliness in him, and desire him, and him only. O my Friends, don't continue in your Sins any longer, for they will be your undoing: Come out from them, don't mind what your Companions and carnal Re-

lations say of you; they may point at you and jeer you; esteem you as going methodically mad and fit for *Bedlam*: They may ask you,

What

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What are you one of his Followers too? And tho' you may be looked on as a Parcel of Rabble, who are deluded by a Babblers, and a Deceiver of the People, one who leads the poor People into false and delusive Notions, don't regard them: When you are reviled do not revile again: Remember how your Lord and Master was reviled on your Accounts; remember how he was buffeted, despised, crucified for you; think of the Love of Jesus Christ, he, who was God as well as Man; yet he came into our world on your Accounts; he took our Nature upon him, was spit upon, scourged, was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, and all this for you; yet he suffered patiently; did not answer Reviling with Reviling, but with a Spirit of Meekness.

When you consider of this Love of Christ for your Souls; What, my Brethren, think ye of Christ then? Can you not love and value this Jesus, who left his Father's Bosom for you? Let *Devils*, *Arians* and *Socinians*, think never so low of Christ, do, you esteem him as a God, who has done great and mighty Things for you; you, who were dead in Trespasses and Sins, hath he quickened: Therefore, my dear Brethren, regard not the World; do not mind what Sights, or Reproaches the World may cast upon you for serving the Lord Jesus:

Let

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Let not that be a Means either of keeping you from closing with the Lord Jesus Christ, or frighten you a way from his Word, from his Ordinances, or from his Worship. O come unto the Lord Jesus Christ and he will have Mercy upon you; he will not turn you away empty, he longs to see you come unto him; it is Matter of rejoicing to Jesus Christ to see you come to him with all your Defilements, with all your Sins, and Unrighteousness.

Our modern learned Rabbis, my Brethren, tell us that we must be justified before we be sanctified, and that we must have good Works before we can be justified; but I say, Sanctification goes before, and then Justification, and then, my Brethren, good works will be the Fruits of your Justification; but when you are justified before God, it is without any Respect to your Works, either past, present, or to come; all your own Righteousness is but as filthy Rags; you must, my dear Brethren, have the Righteousness of Christ; you must have that white Robe on, without which you can never be in a State of Salvation.

Jesus Christ came into the World for the Salvation of Sinners, and if you will but leave your Sins and come to Christ, he will deliver you from all your Sins; he will bring out the fatted Calf of the Operations or his Spirit: If you live godly in the World, you will be

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slandered

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slandered; the Sons of *Belial*, my dear Brethren, will have your Name in Reproach; they will cast you out, and think they do God good Service to take away your Life.

As for my Part, let them say what they please of me, they may cast me out of their Synagogues, their Churches, they may write against me, I shall only desire I may have a Spirit of Meekness, a Spirit of Love to them; I would not shew that Spirit of Envy and Bitterness, not for the whole World.

How full of Malice is some of their late Writings? How angry and envious, false and scandalous are their Aspersions? Indeed our Clergy have given but a poor Proof of having the Temper of the blessed Jesus, by their late Actions, by their Books and Words: They may say what they please; and the malicious Mr. *Hooker* may assert what he will; if he can answer it to his own Conscience, let him go on, he only shews of what Spirit he is of; I shall, I hope, commit all to that Jesus who is my Lord and Master, and I am sure he is a gracious one, and will enable me to bear patiently whatsoever the Tongues of evil Men may be stirred up by the Devil and their own evil Hearts, to write or speak against me.

What I do is for your Souls, I speak, my dear Brethren, thus to you for the Sake of you; I do not seek your's, but you. If

my

my Brethren, our Letter-learned *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had preached up the Doctrines of the Reformation, those Doctrines to which they had subscribed; I had not come out into the Fields to preach to you: Many of you would not go into Church because you were ashamed; you would not dress yourselves, and therefore you were ashamed to worship God; and because you would not come to hear the Word of God, the Lord has sent his Gospel out unto you into the Fields,

Highways and Hedges, to compel poor Sinners to come in.

Come, therefore, my dear Brethren, unto the Lord Jesus; come and see what great Things the Lord has done for you; O do not delay, do not say you cannot come, for he has sent his Ministers to call and beseech you to come unto him: Be your Sins never so great, or many, if you have continued in your Iniquities never so long, do but leave them now and turn unto the Lord and he will have Mercy on you. Only Brethren, a little Reproach here will be soon over; don't regard it; but I beseech you come unto Jesus. Jesus loves to see Sinners coming unto him, to leave the World, and close with Jesus; stand not out against the Lord any longer, but come unto him. O that I did but know with what Words to win your Souls, I could

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speak

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speak 'till I could speak no more, if I could but bring you to Jesus, could make you see your Need of Jesus; to forsake all for Jesus; to see the Love of Jesus: O don't keep from Jesus any longer for he waits for you; he longs, to receive you in his Arms, they are open, they are ready to receive you: O come, come, don't delay from coming to Jesus; he is the only one who can pardon; his Blood has a cleansing Virtue.

Here is Salvation to everyone of you who do but believe on him; I offer to all of you, High and Low, Rich, and Poor, one with another; I offer Jesus Christ unto you: O do not, for your Soul's Sake, stand out against the Lord of Life any longer: My Brethren, your Damnation slumbers not; and will you not neglect your Sins and come unto Christ,

he is the way, the Truth, and the Life? Come to Christ as lost, undone, damned Sinners: come to him in this Manner and he will accept of you: Don't be rich in Spirit, proud, and exalted, for there is no Blessing attends them; but be ye poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God; you shall be made Members of his Body, you shall have the Life of God in your Souls.

Come to God, through Jesus Christ, come by Faith to Jesus; do not come to God *Pharisee* like, telling him what you have

done;

done; No, plead nothing before God but your own Unworthiness, your Nothingness: Methinks, my Brethren, I could speak 'till Midnight, so I could but bring you to Jesus Christ: O if you had but tasted, if you had but Experience of the Love of God to your Souls, you would never desire to return back to *Egypt*; you would never desire the Onions and the Garlick; the Pleasures of the World would not be desirable. No, then you would not esteem any of the poor unsatisfying Pleasures of this Life. What is all the false Delight of a neighbouring Place, to a Person who is awakened under a Sense of Sin, and has nothing but the Terrors of Death and Hell in his Soul?

O if you did but feel what it is to love and commune with God: Methinks I would, tho' it would be Hell for me to be in a natural State again, yet I would willingly change Conditions with there Men for a Time, that they may see how pleasant and delightful a Thing it is to have the Comfort of God's Spirit upon our Hearts, witnessing with our Spirit, that we are his People. Come, sure when

you are hearing, my Brethren, of there pleasant Truths, your Hearts must burn within you at this Love of Jesus.

Who dare say I preach up Damnation, when I offer Salvation to every Sinner, to

every

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every Scoffer, to all who will may come and taste of the Water of Life freely, they may come and buy Wine without Money, and without Price. I preach Despair to no one, nor I despair of no one when I consider what great Things the Lord hath done for my Soul: I would to God I could see you all despair; I mean despair of being saved by any other Righteousness, but that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

O my Brethren, I know not how to leave you till Christ be formed in your Souls. O how should I rejoice to hear you crying out, What must I do to be saved? I hope the Spirit of God is shining upon your Souls; is now striving to bring you over to the Lord of Life. Let me beseech you once more, to come unto Jesus while he may be found, before the Day of Grace is past, and before the Door of Hope is shut.

This very Sermon, my Brethren, tho' in a Field, you must give an Account of another Day: Remember that at such a Time and Place, Jesus Christ was offered to you; and if you do not accept of him your Blood will be required at your own Heads. I have gave you fair Warning; I have told you your Danger, and have shew'd you the Remedy. I cannot forbear to add a few Words more, to intreat you once again, to come to Jesus

Christ:

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Christ: And therefore consider, that the sooner you come unto the Lord Jesus, the more comfortable, the more safe your Condition will be.

The blessed Spirit will breathe upon your dry Bones, if you will believe on Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent. Indeed you cannot believe on, or serve a better Master, one that is more mighty, or more willing to save: The Lord is gracious, his Yoke is easy, and his Burden is exceeding light. After you have served him many Years, like the Servants under the Law, and he was willing to discharge you, you would say, We love our Master and will not go from him. Come then, my guilty Brethren, and believe on the Lord that bought you; look up by Faith on him whom you have pierced.—Behold him panting, bleeding, dying; behold him with arms stretched out ready to receive you. Cry unto him and he will have Mercy upon you: Cry unto him as the penitent Thief upon the Cross, and he shall say, *Shortly shall you be with me in Paradise.*—For those whom God justifies, them he also glorifies, even with that Glory which he himself enjoyed with his Father before the World began.

Do not come with Excuses; do not plead worldly Business: Do not fear becoming a Fool for Christ's Sake; believe in Christ and

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he shall be your Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

Come, my Brethren, unto this Lamb who died to take away the Sins of the World; and if you come unto him, by Faith, he will re-

move your Sins quite a way; they shall be buried in the Sea of Forgetfulness, they shall be sunk into eternal Oblivion, they shall be no more remembered against you; the Blood of Christ shall cleanse you from the Guilt of Sin; the Power of it shall no more annoy you.

Come, my dear Brethren, don't let me in-treat you in vain to come to Jesus, your eternal Welfare depends upon it; you are lost and undone without it; and all your Pretences to Salvation, by the Righteousness of the Law, or by your own Morality, will be found to be vain and of no Signification; nothing short of the Righteousness of Christ imputed to you, will stand you in any Stead, and Jesus Christ, my Brethren, will give it to all of you that seek unto him for it.

Come then, saith the Lord, let us reason together, tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as Wool: Tho' they be as Crimson, they shall be white as Snow. Here is Mercy and Grace indeed, that Jesus Christ shews unto all who are lost, who feel themselves in a State of Sin and Misery, in a lost undone perishing

State.

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State: You know not, my Brethren, how soon Death may seize you and harry you into an eternal State, and then it will be too late to prepare for your latter End; for as Death leaves you, Judgment will certainly find you. You may flatter yourself, O Sinner, to make your Peace with God when upon a sick Bed, but thou mayest not have an Opportunity for it, any more than the Person who died here so suddenly the other Night; he was to all Appearance as well as any of you; and how, my Brethren, do you

know but that you may be the next that is called to appear at the Bar of God? How can you tell but a Fit of the Appoplexy may hurry you away before you reach to your Habitations? Therefore prepare this Moment for Death, that whenever it comes it may be no surprise to you, but that it may find you ready to depart and to be with Christ.

I know not how to leave you, my dear Brethren, I know not how to give over this Discourse without having some Hopes of bringing you to Christ: I could not bear to see so many Souls in the Highway to Destruction and none to warn them of their Danger. I could not, I say, my dear Brethren, bare to see so many Souls upon the Brink of eternal Ruin, their Souls sinking into the Pit, so many Souls for whom Christ shed his

D

Blood

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Blood and not to shew them to what Evil they were exposed; my Bowels yearned with Compassion towards them; and I could willingly, God is my Judge, lay down my Life so I could be a Means of saving one of your Souls: Come all of ye, I offer Salvation to the greatest Drunkard, Thief, Harlot, Adulterer and Scoffer; if there are any such among you let them leave their Sins and cleave to the Lord Jesus: Turn from Sin and Christ will bestow his Grace upon you: It is rich Grace, and it is as free as it is rich. All that you receive from God is thro' free, rich and sovereign Grace. There is nothing in Man that can save him, but enough in the best Man to damn him.

My dear Brethren, it is not your fasting, praying, your giving Tithes of all you possess, will justify you before God any more than it

did the *Pharisee* of old, who went and exalted himself before God, and thought himself better than others; when the poor Publican who exalted God and abased himself, went down rather justified than the other: Man must be abased; that Freedom of Will, that fine noble Creature, which so many are crying up was lost in the Fall of *Adam*, and now nothing remains but Sin and Iniquity, Beast and Devil.

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We ought to admire the free Grace of God which preserves us from falling into those grosser Acts of Sin which the Devil draws too many in; he shews them the Bait but hides the Hook; he allures with the Pleasures and Profits, when he does not shew the Troubles and Vexation that attends it: He promises great Wages; but his Wages are Death here, and eternal Damnation hereafter: If you want to know more what Wages the Devil gives his Servants, you need not stir from the Place where you now are, but look† yonder, and there you'll see how he pays, them: And does any of you like the Wages? Would any of you who hear me be contented with such Pay? I am sure, my Brethren, you would not; and therefore keep from such Work, such Drudgery of the Devil: He seeks your Souls to destroy them; he goes, about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour; and if it was not that he was withheld by an Almighty Arm, he would destroy each of us, not one should escape; but, my Brethren, fear him not, for tho' he is your Enemy, he is yet a chained one, he can go no farther than he is permitted, he cannot hurt you; No, he could

not hurt a Herd of Swine 'till he had Leave
of Jesus Christ. And now, my Brethren,

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what

† Pointing to the Gallows were three Men hang in Chains.

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what think ye of Christ? What think ye of him who left his Father's Bosom, and to come down on Earth to take up our Nature; born of, a poor Virgin, in a poor Place, a Manger for his bed, and Oxen for Companions; he who was King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, that he should take the Form of a Servant, should be rejected and despised among Men, have no where to lay his Head, and all this for you. What think ye of Christ, who was tried and crucified for your Sins? What think ye of Christ, who, when your sins lay upon him, he cried out under the Weight thereof; and he suffered this for you, he died for you, and rose again and is ascended into Heaven, and is there interceding for you; and will you still have low and dishonourable Thoughts of this Jesus, who has done all this for you? Will you not, my Brethren, leave those Sins which crucify your Jesus afresh? Will you continue in them any longer? No, I hope better Things of many of you: Methinks I see you willing to take Jesus on his own Terms, to do and suffer whatever his Will and Pleasure may call you to.

If this is the Case; if my Brethren, this is your Desire, you will have high and honourable Thoughts of Jesus Christ: You will not, (as many of our wise Men after the Flesh) think him to be no more than a Prophet,

or

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or a good Man; No, he will be to you all that is comely and desireable.

Perhaps, many of you may dislike this Plainness of Speech; but I speak not with Words of Man's Wisdom, but with the Demonstration of the Spirit, and with Power; And tho' it is in a Field, Jesus Christ regards us as much, and is amongst us now, as well as if we was between Church Walls: we must not confine the Spirit of God to any particular Place, for wherever his People are he is in the Midst of them to bless them. Since they have turned me out of their Churches I have experienced more of the Love and Comfort of God upon my Soul: And if the Devil had but known that our preaching in the Fields. would have brought twenty or thirty thousand People together, he would have been contented you should have heard, and I have preached in a Church to this Time; but God, my Brethren, acts wisely and knows better what is for our Good than we do: Persecuting Time is God's gaining Time: And it is observable that the Blood of the Martyrs was the Seed of the Church.

You may say, What do I mean by Persecution in a Christian Country? Alas, my Brethren, the Cloud is now gathering apace; it is now no bigger than a Man's Hand; but the Time will shortly come when they shall

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cast you into Prison, make your Feet fast in the Stocks; yea, and go farther yet, think they do God good Service in taking a way your Lives; they would do it now if they had their Wills; it is not for the want of that,

but of Power: And as one of the leading and greatest Men among our Clergy said, *That he would send me to Prison, only he was afraid it would spread my interest.* Whenever the Cloud breaks I expect it to fall upon my Head first, and then it will be a Trial of my Steadfastness and Love to you, whether I would preach to you in Bonds and Imprisonment, whether I would thus call to you to come to Christ, if I went in Danger of my Life; now Praise of Men, or Popularity may make me more willing to spend and be spent for you; But should I be willing to go to *Smithfield* to be burnt for you? Or dare I preach thus in Spight of Fire, and Faggot? I trust in Jesus Christ's strengthening of me: I should therefore my dear Brethren, pray that suffering Strength, may be given against suffering Time. It will come, it is hastening on apace, therefore, prepare for it; and if they should take away my Life don't be discouraged. God will send other Ministers out into the Highways and Hedges to compel you to accept of Grace and Mercy, which he promised to give to all those that come unto him; therefore I be-

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seech you that you would pray for me, that I may, if called to a fiery Trial, stand fast in the Liberty of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not be afraid to go to Prison or to Death for the Doctrines which I have preached unto you, for they have been Words of Truth and Soundness, and agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus; and I dare venture the Welfare of my own Salvation upon the Words which I have spoke unto you: Let Prayers and Tears be the only Weapons you use in a suffering Time: and if they smite you on one Cheek turn to

them the other also: If they persecute, revile or curse you, do you bless and pray for them; if they speak malicious Words against you, do you answer with Meekness. *If they say all Manner of evil against you, for my Name's Sake,* says Christ, *your Reward shall be in Heaven;* therefore, my Brethren, give the World the Lie, and let them see there has been some Good done by Field-preaching.

They lay Things to our Charge now which we are entirely innocent of: And how then would they rejoice if they had some wherewith they might accuse you? How would they then triumph and rejoice: Therefore let your Walks in Life be in all Godliness and Soberness, order your Lives and Conversation aright. If you have any Love to God, to your own Souls, and if you have any Love to me do

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not give the World Room to blaspheme God on your Accounts. All the Faults, the little Slips you make, my Brethren) are all charged to and laid on me as the Cause thereof, therefore watch over your Words and Actions that the Enemies of our Lord, that, the Scoffers of our Day, may be convinced that there is a Change made in your Lives and Conversation by the Foolishness of preaching, and that, as I said before, of Field-preaching too.

They have made a great Noise about the Word Enthusiasm; and when our Letter-learned Clergy have studied never so much they can make no more of it than one in God; and if this is Enthusiasm, What Christian is there that is not thus an Enthusiast? And I would to God that you who now hear me, yea, that the whole World were thus Enthusiasts, that they were all in God and God in

them: And tho' the Generality of our Clergy look upon this as Blasphemy to say, that God is in us: If this is to blaspheme, I will blaspheme more and more. If this is to be an Enthusiast I will be more and more so: And I would to God that all my letter-learned, Pleasure-taking, Scoffing, Persecuting Brethren, were thus Enthusiasts too, I would not envy them, I would be glad to see them have ten thousand Times more Success than I have had; I would give them the right Hand of

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Fellowship, and we would go on Hand in Hand to pull down Satan's Kingdom, and to build up that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But this Time will never be, my Brethren, while our Clergy can take their Pleasure as they do; they can follow the Diversions of the polite Age all the Week, and step into their Pulpits on *Sunday* and give People a little Morality for about twenty or thirty Minutes, and perhaps have five or six hundred a Year for that, and then can rest contented 'till *Sunday* comes again without once visiting the flock committed to their Charge. Good God! I would not be guilty of this not for a thousand Worlds; and there are the Men who are charging others with being over-righteous, and of destroying themselves, when we may more justly say to them, *Be not wicked over much, why shouldst thou die before thy Time.* The Doctrine of the New-Birth, and of feeling the Pangs thereof, is to them Enthusiasm and Madness with a Witness; but it is the express Words of Christ himself, and therefore it must be true; for my dear Brethren, except you be born again you cannot see the Kingdom of God, nor have no Place in Hea-

ven and Glory: And though they tell us it is no more than leading civil decent lives, and having a good Conscience towards all Men: I hope, my Brethren, you believe a great deal

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more, by being born again, than this *Seneca*, *Cicero* and *Plato* for they are as good Christians as any of you; but there must be a Change of Heart and Life, all old things must become new, you must feel the Spirit of God in its sanctifying Influences upon your Souls; there must be a putting off the old Man with his Deeds, and a putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ: You may have gone to Church all your Lives long and said your Prayers, and at the same Time been only offering the Sacrifice of Fools.

Your saying the Lord's Prayer, and calling God Father has been only mocking of him, and deceiving your own Souls, therefore consider what you are doing of. The World counts you a Fool if you are religious, but they will be found the greatest Fools who do despise and scoff at all true Seriousness and Goodness; therefore let me once more beseech you to come to the Lord Jesus.

My dear Brethren it excites my Pity to see you senseless of how dangerous a Precipice you stand: you are like a Man that is asleep on the Top of a Mast; And will you not come from the Danger to which you are just fallen? leave your Sins and come to Christ and he will keep you in his Arms, present you faultless at the Throne of his Father.

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O my guilty Brethren come unto this Saviour, and he will immediately heal the Leprosy that Sin has spread over your Souls, will take you into the Mansions of eternal Rest, where all Trouble shall be done away, and you shall live forever with the Lord who died for you, and sing Hallelujahs, and the Song of the Lamb forever and ever.

Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.