**÷The Beatitudes**

Thomas Watson, 1660

**CHOICE EXCERPTS**

**God has two fires**  
  
"I have *refined* you in the **furnace of affliction**."  
Isa 48:10   
  
"Away with you, you cursed ones, into the **eternal**  
**fire** prepared for the Devil and his demons! And they   
will go away into eternal *punishment!*" Mat 25:41, Mat 25:46  
  
**God has two fires**—  
one where He puts His *gold*,   
one where He puts His *dross*.   
  
The fire where He puts His ***gold***,is   
the fire of *affliction*—to purify them.   
  
The fire where He puts His ***dross***, is   
the fire of *damnation*—to punish them.   
  
  
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**There are *nails* in that cross!**  
  
"If anyone would come after Me, he must **deny   
himself** and take up his cross daily and follow Me."   
Luk 9:23  
  
Self-denial is the highest sign of a sincere Christian.   
Hypocrites may have great knowledge and make large   
profession—but it is only the true-hearted saint who   
can deny himself for Christ.  
  
Self-denial is the foundation of godliness, and if this   
foundation is not well-laid, the whole building will fall.   
If there is any lust in our souls which we cannot deny  
—it will turn at length, either to scandal or apostasy.   
Self-denial is the *thread* which must run along through   
the whole work of piety.   
  
A man must deny **self-esteem**. Every man by nature   
has a high opinion of himself. He is *drunk* with spiritual   
pride. A proud man disdains the cross. He thinks himself  
too good to suffer. Oh deny self-esteem! Let the *plumes   
of pride* fall off!  
  
A man must deny **carnal self**. This I take to be the   
chief sense of the text. He must deny carnal ease.   
The flesh cries out for ease. It is loath to put its neck   
under Christ's yoke or stretch itself upon the *cross*. The   
flesh cries out, "Oh! the cross of Christ is heavy! **There   
are *nails* in that cross** which will lacerate, and fetch   
blood!" We must deny our self-ease, and be as a deaf   
adder, stopping our ears to the charmings of the flesh!   
Those who lean on the *soft pillow of sloth*, will hardly   
take up the cross.   
  
This self-denying frame of heart is very hard. This is "to   
pluck out the right eye." It is easier to overcome men and   
devils, than to overcome self. "Stronger is he who conquers  
himself, than he who conquers the strongest walled city."   
  
SELF is the idol, andhow hard it is to sacrifice this idol   
and to turn self-seeking into self-denial! But though it is   
difficult—it is essential. A Christian must first lay down   
*self*—before he can take up the cross.  
  
Alas! how far are they then from self-denial, who cannot deny   
themselves in the least things; who in their diet or apparel,   
instead of *martyring* the flesh—*pamper* the flesh! Instead of   
taking up the cross—take up their cups! Is this self-denial,   
to let loose the reins to the flesh? Oh Christians, as ever you   
would be able to carry Christ's cross, begin to deny yourselves.   
  
"Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or  
father or mother or children or property, for My sake, will  
receive a hundred times as much in return and will have  
eternal life!" Mat 19:29. Here is a very choice bargain!

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**This perfume of free grace!**  
"**Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven." Mat 5:3  
  
Only those who are poor in spirit, are capable of   
receiving grace. He who is swollen with self-excellency   
and self-sufficiency—is not fit for Christ. He is full already.   
If the hand is full of pebbles—it cannot receive gold. The   
glass is first emptied, before you pour in wine. God first   
empties a man of himself, before He pours in the precious   
wine of His grace.  
  
He who is poor in spirit—is a Christ-admirer. He has high   
thoughts of Christ. He sees himself *naked*—and flies to   
Christ, to be clothed in the garments of His righteousness.   
He sees himself *wounded*—and as the wounded deer runs   
to the water—so he thirsts for Christ's blood, the water of   
life. "Lord!" says he, "give me Christ or I die!" His *conscience*   
has turned into a fiery serpent and has stung him; now he   
will give all the world—for a *brazen* serpent! He sees himself   
in a state of *death*; and how precious is one leaf of the tree   
of life, which is both for food and medicine! The poor in spirit   
sees that all his riches lie in Christ—"wisdom, righteousness,   
sanctification" In every need, he flies to this storehouse! He   
adores the all-fullness in Christ.  
  
He who is poor in spirit—is an exalter of free grace. None so   
magnify God's mercy—as the poor in spirit. The poor are very   
thankful. When Paul had tasted mercy—how thankfully does   
he adore free grace! "The grace of our Lord was exceeding   
abundant" (1Ti 1:14). It was super-exuberant grace!   
He sets the crown of his salvation—upon the head of free   
grace! As a man who is condemned and has a pardon sent to  
him—how greatly he proclaims the goodness and mercifulness   
of his prince! So Paul displays free grace in its magnificent   
colors. He interlines all his epistles with free grace! As a vessel   
which has been perfumed, makes the water taste of it—so Paul,   
who was a vessel perfumed with mercy, makes all his epistles   
to taste of **this perfume of free grace!** Those who are poor   
in spirit, bless God for the least crumb which falls from the table   
of free grace! Labor for poverty of spirit. Christ begins with this,  
and we must begin here if ever we are saved. Poverty of spirit   
is the foundation stone, on which God lays the superstructure   
of eternal glory!  
  
"**Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven." Mat 5:3

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**Worms should be made kings!**  
  
"Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father  
delights to give you the kingdom!" Luk 12:32   
  
See here the mercy and bounty of God, who has prepared   
a *kingdom* for His people. It is a favor that we poor worms  
should be allowed to *live*. But that **worms should be made   
kings**—this is *divine* bounty! It is mercy to *pardon* us—but it   
is rich mercy to *crown* us! 'Behold, what kind of love is this!'  
  
Earthly princes may bestow great gifts on their subjects—but   
they keep the *kingdom* to themselves. Though Pharaoh advanced   
Joseph to honor and gave him a ring from his finger—yet he kept   
the kingdom to himself. 'Only in the throne will I be greater than   
you' (Gen 41:40). But God gives a kingdom to His people—He   
sets them upon the throne!   
  
How David admires the goodness of God in bestowing upon him   
a *temporal* kingdom. 'Then king David went in, and sat before the   
Lord and said—Who am I, O Lord God—and what is my house, that   
You have brought me hitherto?' (2Sa 7:18). He wondered   
that God should take him from the sheepfold—and set him on the   
throne—that God should turn his shepherd's staff into a king's   
scepter! O then, how may the saints admire the riches of grace—  
that God should give them a glorious kingdom above all the   
princes of the earth—nay, far above all heavens!   
  
*God thinks nothing too good for His children.* We many times think   
much of a tear, a prayer, or to sacrifice a sin for Him—but He does   
not think a kingdom is too much to bestow upon us! How will the   
saints read over the lectures of *free grace* in heaven, and trumpet   
forth the praises of that God, who has crowned them with such  
astonishing loving-kindness!  
  
See here, that which may make the people of God long for *death*.   
Then, they shall enter upon their glorious kingdom! Indeed *the   
wicked* may fear death. It will not lead them to a kingdom—but to  
a horrid prison. Hell is the jail where they must lie rotting forever   
with the devil and his demons!

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**Only the blood of Christ can soften it!**   
  
"I will take away their **hearts of stone** and  
give them tender hearts!" Eze 11:19   
  
*Oh the misery of a hard heart!*   
  
A heart of stone is **insensible**. A *stone* is not   
sensible of anything. Lay a heavy weight upon   
it; or grind it to powder—it does not feel. So it   
is with a hard heart—it is insensible to both its   
own sin and God's wrath. The stone in the  *kidneys* is felt—but not the stone in the *heart*.   
"Having lost all sensitivity" (Eph 4:19).  
  
A heart of stone is **inflexible**. A *stone* will not   
bend. Just so, the hard heart will not *comply* with   
God's command. It will not *stoop* to Christ's scepter.   
A heart of stone will sooner *break*, than *bend* by   
repentance. It is so far from *yielding* to God, that   
like the anvil—it beats back the hammer. A heart   
of stone will "always resist the Holy Spirit." (Act 7:51)  
  
A hard heart is void of all grace. While the *wax* is   
hard—it will not take the impression of the seal.   
Just so, the *heart*, while it is hard—will not take the   
stamp of grace. It must first be made tender and   
melting. The *plough of the Word* will not penetrate   
a hard heart!  
  
A hard heart is good for nothing—but to make   
fuel for hellfire. "Because of your *hardness* and   
unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for   
yourself in the day of wrath!" (Rom 2:5).   
  
Hell is full of *hard* hearts—there is not one *soft* heart   
there! There is much *weeping* there—but no *softness*.   
We read of "vessels of wrath—prepared for destruction"   
(Rom 9:22). Hardness of heart, fits these vessels   
for hell, and makes them like withered wood, which   
is fit only to burn!  
  
Hardness of heart makes a man's condition worse   
than all his other sins besides. If one is guilty of   
great sins—yet if he can mourn, there is hope. But   
hardness of heart binds guilt fast upon the soul. It   
seals a man under wrath. It is not *heinousness of   
sin*—but *hardness of heart—*which damns!  
  
Oh the misery of a hard heart!   
  
A *stony* heart is the *worst* heart. If it were *bronze*,   
it might be melted in the furnace; or it might be   
bent with the hammer. But a stony heart is such,   
that only the *arm of God* can break it—and **only   
the *blood of Christ* can soften it!**   
  
"I will take out your *stony heart of sin* and give  
you a new, obedient heart." Eze 36:26

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**View sin in the red glass**  
  
**View sin in the red glass** of Christ's sufferings.  
The least sin cost His blood. Would you take a true   
view of sin? *Go to Golgotha!* Jesus Christ poured out   
His soul, as an offering for sin! *Read the greatness   
of your sin—in the deepness of Christ's wounds!* Let   
not Satan cast such a mist before your eyes—that   
you cannot see sin in its right colors! Remember,   
not only do great sins carry men to hell—but lesser   
sins as well. "The wages of sin is death!" Every sin   
is damnable. There is death and hell in every sin.   
The least sin without repentance—will be a lock   
and bolt to shut men out of heaven.

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**A tear dropping from the eye of faith**  
"Blessed are those who *mourn*." Mat 5:8  
  
It is a sign that the *Sun of Righteousness* has risen   
upon us, when our *frozen hearts* thaw and melt for sin.   
Weeping for sin is a sign of the new birth. As soon as   
the child is born—it weeps. Mourning shows a 'heart   
of flesh' (Eze 36:26). A stone will not melt. When   
the heart is in a melting frame—it is a sign the heart   
of stone is taken away.  
  
"Let your tears flow like a river. Give yourselves no  
rest from weeping day or night." Lam 2:18  
  
Tears for sin, are blessed tears.   
  
Tears poison our *corruptions*. Salt-water kills worms.   
Just so, the brinish water of repenting tears will help to   
kill that *worm of sin* which would gnaw the conscience.   
  
Mourning also fences us against the devil's *temptations*.   
Temptations are called 'fiery darts' (Eph 6:16),   
because indeed they set the soul on fire. Temptations   
enrage anger, and inflame lust. Now the waters of holy   
mourning, quench these fiery darts! Wet gunpowder will   
not easily catch fire. Just so, when the heart is wetted   
and moistened with sorrow—it will not so easily catch  
the fire of temptation.  
  
Penitential tears are *precious*. Tears dropping from a   
mournful, penitent eye, are like water dropping from   
the roses—very sweet and precious to God. A *fountain*   
in the garden makes it pleasant. That heart is most   
delightful to God—which has a *fountain of sorrow*  
running in it. 'Mary stood at Christ's feet weeping'   
(Luk 7:38). Her *tears* were more fragrant than her   
*ointment*. The incense, when it is broken, smells   
sweetest. When the heart is broken for sin, then   
our services give forth their sweetest perfume.   
  
Surely, God delights much in tears—else He would   
not keep a bottle for them. "You keep track of all   
my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in Your   
bottle. You have recorded each one in Your book."   
Psa 56:8. Tears are powerful orators for God's   
mercy. Tears melt the heart of God. When a man   
comes weeping in prayer and smites on his breast,   
saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"—this melts  
God's heart towards him. Tears, though they are   
silent—yet have a voice, "The Lord has heard *the   
voice of my weeping!"* (Psa 6:8). Tears in the   
child's eye sometimes move the angry father to   
spare the child. Penitential tears melt God's heart   
and bind His hand. Tears have a mighty influence   
upon God.   
  
Repentant tears are *sweet*. Mourning is the way to   
solid joy. A Christian thinks himself sometimes in the   
suburbs of heaven—when he can weep. Sugar when   
it *melts* is sweetest. When a Christian melts in tears,   
now he has the sweetest joy. When the daughter of  
Pharaoh descended into the river—she found a babe   
there among the reeds. Just so, when we descend into   
the river of repenting tears—we find the babe Jesus   
there, who shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.   
  
Tears water our *graces* and make them flourish. Where   
the springs of sorrow run—there the heart bears a fruitful   
crop. The tender-eyed Christian usually brings forth more   
of the fruit of the Spirit. A weeping eye is *the water-pot*   
to water our graces!  
  
If there is so much profit and benefit in gospel-sorrow,   
then let every Christian wash his face every morning in   
the laver of tears.  
  
Our mourning for sin here—will prevent mourning in hell.   
Hell is a place of weeping (Mat 8:12). The damned   
mingle their drink with weeping. God is said to have His  
bottle for our tears. Those who will not shed a bottle-full   
of tears—shall hereafter shed rivers of tears. "Woe to you   
who laugh now—for you shall mourn and weep!" (Luk 6:25)  
You have sometimes seen sugar lying in a damp   
place, dissolve into water. Just so, all the *sugared joys*   
of the wicked, dissolve at last into the water of tears!   
  
There is but one way to blessedness, and that is through   
the *valley of tears*. If you do not go this way, you will miss   
Paradise. "I tell you, unless you *repent*, you shall all likewise   
perish"' (Luk 13:3). There is only one way leading to heaven,   
and that is **a tear dropping from the eye of faith**. A man   
may have a disease in his body, which twenty medicines will   
heal. But only the *medicine of repentance*, will heal the   
mortal disease of sin.  
  
Think what a sinner you have been. You have filled God's   
book with your debts—and what need you have to fill His   
bottle with your tears!   
  
He who weeps here is a *blessed* mourner. He who weeps   
in hell is a *cursed* mourner. If God's *bottle* is not filled   
with tears—His *vial* will be filled with wrath!   
  
Repentant tears are but finite. It is but a short time that we   
shall weep. After a few showers fall from our eyes, we shall   
have a perpetual sunshine. "God shall wipe away all tears!"   
(Rev 7:17). When *sin* shall cease—*tears* shall cease!   
"Weeping may endure for a night—but joy comes in the   
morning!" (Psa 30:5)

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**The way to be like Jesus**  
  
To render evil for evil is *brutish;*   
to render evil for good is *devilish;*   
to render good for evil is *Christian.*   
  
"Blessed are the **meek**." Mat 5:5  
  
*Meekness* is a grace whereby we are enabled by   
the Spirit of God, to moderate our angry passions.   
Meekness has a divine beauty and sweetness in   
it. This meekness consists in three things:   
the bearing of injuries,   
the forgiving of injuries,   
the recompensing good for evil.   
  
Meekness is opposed to:  
anger,  
malice,  
revenge and  
evil-speaking.  
  
Meekness is a great ornament to a Christian. "The   
ornament of a meek spirit—which is so precious to   
God!" (1Pe 3:4). How lovely is a saint in God's   
eye, when **adorned with this jewel!** No garment   
is more befitting to a Christian, than meekness.   
Therefore we are bid to put on this garment, "Put   
on therefore as the elect of God—meekness."  
(Col 3:12)   
  
Meekness is a noble and excellent spirit. A meek man   
is a valorous man. He gets a victory over *himself!* Anger  
arises from weakness of character. The meek man is able   
to conquer his fury. "He who is slow to anger is better   
than the mighty; controlling one's temper is better than   
capturing a city." (Pro 16:32). To yield to one's   
anger is easy—it is *swimming along with the tide of   
corrupt nature*. But to turn against nature—to resist   
anger, to "overcome evil with good"—this is truly   
Christian.  
  
Meekness is the best way to conquer and melt the   
heart of an *enemy.* Meekness melts and thaws the   
heart of others. The greatest victory is to overcome   
an enemy—without striking a blow! Mildness prevails   
more than fierceness. Anger makes an enemy of a   
friend. Meekness makes a friend of an enemy.   
  
Meekness is **the way to be like Jesus**—"Learn of   
Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Mat 11:29.  
It is not *profession* which makes us like Jesus—but   
*imitation*. Where meekness is lacking—we are like   
brutes. Where it is present—we are like Jesus.

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**The hypocrite's desire**  
  
*"Let me die the death of the righteous!"*  
Num 23:10  
  
This was Balaam's desire. The hypocrite, when he   
is about to die and can keep his sins no longer—  
now he desires a passport to carry him to heaven!   
Such desires as these are found among the damned.   
  
Hypocrites have *desires*—but *no endeavors*.   
They would like to go to heaven—but they   
will take no pains. But true desire is always   
quickened into endeavor.  
  
The hypocrite would have . . .   
heaven—and his *sins* too,  
heaven—and his *pride* too,  
heaven—and his *covetousness* too.   
"They have gone astray and have followed  
the path of Balaam—who loved the wages  
of unrighteousness." 2Pe 2:15  
  
The true Christian says, "Give me Christ on *any*   
terms. Let God propound whatever articles He   
will—I will subscribe to them. Would He have me   
deny myself? Would He have me mortify sin? I   
am content to do anything—just so that I may   
have Christ!" Hypocrites would have Christ—but   
they will not part with their beloved lust for Him!  
  
The hypocrite does not desire *grace* for itself.   
He desires grace—only as a bridge to lead him   
over to heaven. He does not so much search   
after *grace*—as *glory*. He does not so much   
desire the *way* of righteousness—as the *crown*   
of righteousness. His desire is not to be made   
*like* Christ—but to reign *with* Christ. This is **the   
hypocrite's desire**.   
  
But a child of God desires *grace* for itself, and   
*Christ* for Himself. To a believer, not only is   
*heaven* precious—but *Christ* is precious, "Yes, He   
is very precious to you who believe!" 1Pe 2:7

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**Cruel mercy**  
  
"Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall obtain  
mercy." Mat 5:7  
  
When the sun shines—the ice melts. When the Sun of   
righteousness once shines with beams of grace upon   
the soul—then it melts in mercy and tenderness.   
  
*Mercifulness* is a melting disposition whereby we lay   
to heart the miseries of others, and are instrumental   
for their good. We must chiefly be merciful to the   
SOULS of others. Indeed *soul-mercy* is the chief of   
mercies. The soul is the most precious thing; it is a   
rich diamond set in a ring of clay. Had we seen that   
madman in the gospel cutting himself with stones—  
it would have moved our pity (Mar 5:5). To see a   
sinner stabbing himself and having his hands imbrued   
in his own blood, should cause us to sincerely pity him.   
  
That is a **cruel mercy**—when we see men go on in   
sin, and we let them alone. And that is a **merciful   
cruelty**—when we are sharp against men's sins and   
will not let them go to hell quietly. *Fond sentimentality* is no better than cruelty.   
  
The surgeon cuts and lances the flesh—but it is in   
order to a cure. They are *healing wounds*. So when   
we lance men's consciences and let out the blood of   
sin, we exercise *spiritual surgery*. This is showing   
mercy.   
  
"Rescue others by snatching them from the fire!"   
(Jude 23). If a man had fallen into the fire, though   
you hurt him a little in pulling him out—he would be   
thankful and take it as a kindness. Some men, when   
we tell them of sin say, 'O, you are unloving!' No! it   
is showing mercy. If a man's house were on fire, and   
another should see it and not tell him of it, for fear of   
waking him—would not this be cruelty? When we see   
others sleeping in their sin, and the fire of God's wrath   
ready to burn them up—and we are silent—is not this   
cruelty?  
  
They are **unmerciful ministers** who, instead of   
breaking the *bread of life*—fill their people's heads   
with airy speculations and notions! Some ministers   
endeavor only to be *admired*. They go into the pulpit   
only to *amuse* the people. Such ministers give poison   
to their people in a golden cup! They are the devil's   
ambassadors, who ride up and down, and with Satan   
compass the earth—to deceive and devour souls!

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**The children which faith bears**  
  
"Those who have **believed** God might be careful  
to devote themselves to **good works**." Tit 3:8  
  
*Grace* does not lie as a sleepy habit in the soul,  
but will put forth itself in vigorous and glorious   
actings. Grace can no more be concealed, than   
fire. Grace does not lie in the heart as a **stone**   
in the earth—but as **seed** in the earth. *It will   
spring up into good works!* "Our people must   
also learn to devote themselves to good works."   
Tit 3:14  
  
The *lamp of faith* must be filled with the *oil of   
charity.* Faith alone justifies—but justifying faith   
is never alone. You may as well separate weight  
from lead, or heat from fire—as works from faith.   
  
Good works, though they are not the *causes* of   
salvation—yet they are *evidences* of salvation.   
Though they are not the foundation—yet they   
are the superstructure. Faith must not be built   
upon works—but works must be built upon faith.   
"You are married to Christ—that we should bring  
forth fruit unto God." Rom 7:4. Faith is the   
grace which marries Christ, and good works   
are **the children which faith bears**.   
  
Works are distinct from faith—as the *sap* in the   
vine is different from the clusters of *fruit* which   
grow upon it.  
  
Works are the touchstone of faith. "*Show* me   
your faith by your works." Jas 2:18   
  
Works honor faith. These *fruits* adorn the 'trees   
of righteousness'. This *queen*—faith, has the  *handmaids of good works* waiting upon her.  
  
Good works are more visible and conspicuous than faith.   
Faith is a more hidden grace. It may lie hidden in the   
heart and not be seen—but when works are joined with   
it, now it shines forth in its native beauty! Though a   
garden is ever so decked with flowers—yet they are not   
seen until the *light* comes. So the heart of a Christian   
may be enriched with faith—but it is like *a flower in the   
night*. It is not seen until works come. When this light   
shines before men, then faith appears in its orient colors!  
  
  
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**Strewing flowers on a dead corpse!**  
  
"Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
**External morality** is not heart-purity. A person   
may be clothed with great moral virtues, such as   
justice, charity, prudence, and temperance—and   
yet go to hell.  
  
We must not rest in mere outward morality. A swine   
may be washed—yet be **a swine still**. *Morality* does   
but wash a man*—grace* changes him. Morality may   
shine in the eyes of the world—but it differs as much   
from purity, as a pebble differs from a diamond!   
  
Morality is but **strewing flowers on a dead corpse!**  
  
A man who is but highly moral—is but **a tame devil.**   
  
How many have made 'morality' their Savior!   
Morality will damn—as well as vice! A boat may  
be sunk with *gold*—as well as with *dung*.  
  
The moral person, though he will not commit *gross*   
sins—yet he is not sensible of *heart* sins. He is not  
troubled for unbelief, hardness of heart, vanity of   
thoughts. He abhors gross-sins, not gospel-sins.  
  
**The** **snake** has a fine appearance—but has a deadly   
sting! Just so, the moral man is fair to look on—but   
has a secret antipathy against the holy ways of God.   
  
Morality is not to be rested in. The *heart* must be pure.  
God would have Aaron wash the *inner parts* of the   
sacrifice (Lev 9:14). Morality does but wash the   
outside; the inside must be washed. "Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall see God." Mat 5:8

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**How befilthying a thing it is**  
  
"Unto Him who loved us, and *washed* us from  
our sins in His own blood!" Rev 1:5   
  
We are all *loathsome* to God, before we are   
washed pure in the blood of Christ!  
  
By nature, we are all in a *filthy* and *cursed* condition.   
We are a lump of *clay* and *sin* mingled together. Sin   
not only *blinds* us—but *defiles* us. It is called filthiness   
(Jas 1:21). And to show **how befilthying a thing   
it is**, it is compared . . .  
to a plague of the heart (1Ki 8:38),  
to corruption (Deu 32:5),  
to vomit (2Pe 2:22),  
to a menstrual cloth (Isa 30:22).   
  
If all the evils in the world were put together and their   
quintessence strained out—they could not make a thing   
so black and polluted as sin is! **A sinner is a devil in   
a man's shape!** When Moses' rod was turned into a   
serpent—he fled from it. If God would open men's eyes   
and show them their deformities and damnable spots  
—they would fly from themselves, as from serpents!   
  
When grace comes—it washes off this hellish filth!  
It turns *ravens* into *swans*. It makes those who are   
as black as hell—to become as white as snow!  
  
"Christ gave Himself for us to redeem us from all  
wickedness and to *purify* for Himself a people that  
are His very own." Christ shed His blood—to wash   
off our filth. The cross was both an altar and a laver.   
Jesus died not only to save us from **wrath** (1Th 1:10)  
—but to save us from **sin!** (Mat 1:21).   
Out of his side came *water* which signifies our   
cleansing—as well as *blood* which signifies our   
justifying (1Jn 5:6).

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**Caterers for their lusts!**  
"If I regard iniquity in my heart" Psa 66:18  
  
*What is it to regard iniquity in the heart?*  
  
When we INDULGE in sin. When sin not only lives   
in us—but when we live in sin. Some will leave all   
their sins, but one. Jacob would let all his sons go,  
but Benjamin. The fowler holds the bird fast enough   
by one claw. Just so, Satan can hold a man by one sin.   
  
Others HIDE their sins. Many deal with their sins   
as Moses' mother dealt with her son. She hid him   
in the basket, as if she had left him—but her eye   
was still upon him—and in the end, she became his   
nurse (Exo 2:9). Just so, many seem to leave   
their sins—but they only hide them from the eye   
of others. Their heart still goes after them, and at   
last they nurse and give breast to their sins.  
  
To regard iniquity is to DELIGHT in iniquity. Though   
a child of God sins—yet he does not take a *delight* in   
sin. "I do the very thing I *hate*" (Rom 7:15). But   
the wicked make a *recreation* of sin. They "delight in  
wickedness" (2Th 2:12). Never did one   
feed with more delight on a meal he loves—than a   
wicked man does upon the forbidden fruit!  
  
To regard iniquity is to make PROVISION for sin. "Make   
no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."   
(Rom 13:14). The wicked are **caterers for their lusts**.   
This is to make provision for the flesh—when one studies   
to satisfy the flesh and provide fuel for lust. Thus Amnon   
made provision for the flesh (2Sa 13:5). He pretends   
to be sick, and his sister Tamar, must be his nurse. She   
must serve his food to him—by which means he defiled   
her virginity. It is sad when men's concern is not to be   
holy—but to satisfy lust!

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**If death gives them a jog**

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and  
after that to face judgment." Heb 9:27   
  
The wicked tread upon the banks of the bottomless   
pit. **If death gives them a jog**—they tumble in!

"Prepare to meet your God!" Amo 4:12   
  
  
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**Run to this heavenly Father!**  
  
"The Father of mercies and the God of all comfort."  
2Co 1:3  
  
Christians should look upon God under this notion—the   
Father of all *mercy*, sitting upon a throne of *grace*. We   
should **run to this heavenly Father** in all conditions!  
  
We should run to our Father with our **sins**, as that sick   
child who, as soon as he found himself ill—he ran to his   
father to help him, "My head! My head!" 2Ki 4:19  
So in case of sin—run to God and say: "My heart! My   
heart! O this *dead* heart—Father, quicken it! This *hard*   
heart—Father, soften it! Father, my heart, my heart!"  
  
We should run to our Father with our **temptations**.   
A child, when another strikes him, runs to his father.   
So when the devil strikes us with his temptations, let   
us run to our Father: "Father, Satan assaults and hurls   
in his fiery darts at me! Father, it is Your child who is   
assaulted by this *red dragon!* Father, take off the   
tempter!"  
  
"Cast all your care upon Him, because He cares about   
you!" 1Pe 5:7. What a sweet privilege is this! When   
any burden lies upon our hearts—we may go to our   
Father and unload all our cares and griefs into His   
loving bosom! "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He   
will support you; He will never allow the righteous to   
be shaken!" Psa 55:22  
  
  
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**Sin first enslaves—and then damns!**  
  
"I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a  
**slave to sin**." Joh 8:34  
  
"You are of your father the Devil, and you want  
to carry out your father's desires!"Joh 8:44  
  
It is the sad misery of an unregenerate person,   
that he is in a state of *vassalage*. He is under the   
tyranny of sin. "It is the greatest slavery in the   
world for a man to be a slave to his own passions!"   
  
A wicked man is as much a slave—as he who works in   
the galley! Look into his heart—and there are legions   
of lusts ruling him! He must do what sin will have him   
to do. A slave is at the service of a usurping tyrant. If   
he bids him dig in the mine, or hew in the quarries, or   
tug at the oar—he must do it. Thus every wicked man   
must do what corrupt nature, inspired by the devil, bids   
him to do. If sin bids him to be drunk, or to be unchaste  
—he is at the command of sin, as the donkey is at the   
command of the driver.   
  
**Sin first enslaves—and then damns!**  
  
"But now that you have been set free from sin and have  
become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to  
holiness, and the result is eternal life." Rom 6:22  
  
  
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"**They wear themselves out with all their sinning!**"   
Jer 9:5  
  
Sin lays a heavy yoke upon men. The commands of   
sin are burdensome. Let a man be under the power   
and rage of any lust (whether it be covetousness or   
ambition), how he tires and excruciates himself! What   
hazards does he run, even to the endangering of his   
health and soul, that he may satisfy his lust!   
  
"Virtue is easier than vice." Temperance is easier than   
drunkenness. Doing justice is less burdensome than   
crime. There is more difficulty and perplexity in the   
contrivement and pursuit of wicked ends—than in   
obeying the sweet and gentle precepts of Christ.   
  
Hence it is, that a wicked man is said to 'pregnant with   
evil and conceives trouble' (Psa 7:14), to show what   
anxious pain and trouble he has in bringing about his   
wickedness! **Many have gone with more pain to   
hell—than others have to heaven!**  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  **God is still the same God**  
  
"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have  
called you by name; you are Mine. When you go  
through deep waters and great trouble, I will be  
with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty,  
you will not drown! When you walk through the fire  
of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames  
will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Isa 43:1-3  
  
**God is still the same God**.   
  
He has as much **love** in His heart to *pity* us,  
and as much **strength** in His arm to *help* us!  
  
  
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**He is precious**  
  
"To you who believe, **He is precious**." 1Pe 2:7  
  
See the preciousness in Christ.   
  
His *name* is precious; it is as ointment poured forth.   
His *blood* is precious; it is as balm poured forth.   
His *love* is precious; it is as wine poured forth.   
  
Jesus Christ is made up of all sweets and delights.   
He Himself is all that is desirable. He is . . .  
light to the eye,  
honey to the taste,  
joy to the heart.   
  
"Yes, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved,  
and this is my Friend!" Son 5:16  
  
*We truly love Christ*, when we love Him for His   
loveliness, namely—that infinite and superlative   
beauty which shines in Him.  
  
  
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**When we were bitten by the old serpent**  
"Christ loved the church and gave Himself  
up for her!" Eph 5:25  
  
Love made our dear Lord suffer for us. The *pelican*   
out of her love to her young ones, when they are   
bitten by serpents, feeds them with her own blood   
to recover them. Just so, **when we were bitten by   
the old serpent**, Christ fed us with His own blood,   
that He might recover us.   
  
"May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so  
great you will never fully understand it!" Eph 3:19  
  
  
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**Such a wonder-working grace**  
  
"In every situation take the **shield of faith**,  
and with it you will be able to extinguish the  
flaming arrows of the evil one!" Eph 6:16  
  
"Everyone born of God overcomes the world.  
This is the victory that has overcome the  
world—even our **faith**." 1Jn 5:4   
  
Why is faith **such a wonder-working grace?**  
  
Faith unites the soul to Christ, and that blessed   
Head sends forth grace into the members. "I can   
do all things through Christ, who give me strength!"  
Php 4:13. Faith goes to Christ—and fetches   
His strength into the soul.  
  
Faith works a *contempt of the world* into the heart.   
Faith gives a true *map* of the world, "When I *surveyed*   
all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to   
achieve—everything was meaningless, a chasing after   
the wind; nothing was gained under the sun!" Ecc 2:11  
  
Faith shows the world in its night-dress, having all its   
*jewels* pulled off. Faith makes the world appear in its   
true state. Faith shows the soul better things than the   
world. It gives a sight of *Christ* and *eternal glory*. It   
gives a prospect of *heaven*. Faith climbs up above sense   
and reason, into heaven and sees Christ—and the soul,   
having once viewed His superlative excellencies, becomes   
crucified to the world. Says the Christian, "Yes, everything   
else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of   
knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything   
else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ!"   
Php 3:8   
  
Faith gets strength from God's promises. Faith lives upon   
the promises. Take the fish out of the water—and it dies.   
Take faith out of a promise—and it cannot live. The promises   
are *breasts of consolation*. The child by sucking the breast,  
gets strength. Faith gets strength by sucking the breast of   
a promise. When faith begins to be weak and is ready to   
faint in the day of battle, then the *promises* muster their   
forces together, and all come in for faith's relief—and now   
it is able to hold out in the fiery trial.  
  
Faith gives the soul a right notion of suffering. Faith draws   
the true picture of sufferings. What is suffering? Faith says,   
"it is but the suffering of the *body*—which must shortly by   
the course of nature, drop into the dust." Thus faith gives  
the soul a *just measure* of sufferings—which enables a   
Christian to prostrate his life at the feet of Christ.  
  
Faith picks sweetness out of suffering. The bee gathers   
the sweetest honey from the bitterest herb. So faith   
gathers the sweetest comforts, from the sharpest trials.   
Faith looks upon suffering as *God's love-token!* "Afflictions   
are sharp arrows—but they are shot from the hand of a   
loving Father!" Faith can taste honey at the end of the   
afflicting rod. Faith fetches joy out of suffering, "Your   
sorrow will turn to joy!" Joh 16:20. Faith gets *honey*   
from the belly of the lion. Faith finds a *jewel* under the   
cross! "We know that all things work together for the   
good of those who love God: those who are called   
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28   
  
  
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**A lovely garment**  
  
"Be *clothed* with humility." 1Pe 5:5  
  
Humility is **a lovely garment**. Let a child of God   
look at his face every morning in the looking-glass   
of God's Word, and see his sinful spots. This will   
make him walk humbly all the day after. God   
cannot endure to see his children grow proud.   
He allows them to fall into sin, as he did Peter,   
that their plumes of pride may fall off, and that   
they may walk humbly.  
  
  
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**The scars and infirmities of God's children!**   
  
"I will spare them as a father spares an  
obedient and dutiful child." Mal 3:17  
  
God will bear with many infirmities in His children.   
A father bears much with a child he loves. We often   
grieve the Spirit, and abuse His kindness. God will   
pass by much disobedience in His children.   
  
"He has not seen iniquity in Jacob." Num 23:21  
God's love does not make Him blind. He sees sin in   
His people—but not with an eye of revenge. He see   
their sins with an eye of pity. He sees sin in His children   
as a physician sees a disease in his patient. He has not  
seen iniquity in Jacob, so as to *destroy* him. God may   
use the rod (2Sa 7:14), not the scorpion. O how   
much is God willing to pass by in His children—because   
they are His children!   
  
God takes notice of the good that is in His children—and   
passes by the infirmity. God does quite contrary to us.   
We often take notice of the evil that is in others and   
overlook the good. Our eye is upon the flaws of others.   
But God takes notice of the good that is in His children.   
God sees their *faith*—and winks at their *failings! "*Sarah   
obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord." The Holy Spirit does   
not mention her unbelief and laughing at the promise—  
but takes notice of the good in her. God puts his finger   
upon **the scars and infirmities of His children!**   
  
How much did God wink at, in Israel His firstborn!   
Israel often provoked Him with their murmurings—  
but God answered their *murmurings* with *mercies*.   
He spared them—as a father spares his son.  
  
  
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**The sacred ointment**  
  
They godly often spot themselves with sin.   
  
Though sin is in itself deadly—but being tempered with   
repentance and mixed with **the sacred ointment** of   
Christ's blood—the venomous damning nature of it is   
taken away!  
  
  
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**They are not *eagles*—but *earthworms!***   
  
Those who are God's children, are of a more noble   
and celestial spirit than men of the world. They "set   
their minds on things above, not on earthly things"  
(Col 3:2). 'Whoever is born of God, overcomes   
the world' (1Jn 5:4). The children of God live in a   
higher region. They are compared to *eagles* (Isa 40:31)  
in regard of their sublimeness and heavenly  
mindedness. Their souls are fled aloft. *Christ* is in their   
heart (Col 1:27) and the *world* is under their   
feet (Rev 12:1).  
  
Men of the world are ever tumbling in thick clay.   
They are 'sons of earth'. **They are not *eagles*—  
but *earthworms!*** The saints are of another spirit.   
They are born of God and walk with God as the   
child walks with the father. "Noah walked with God"   
(Gen 6:9). God's children show their high pedigree   
in their heavenly life (Php 3:20).  
  
  
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**Our father, which art in hell**  
  
"You have taken off your old self with its practices   
and have put on the new self, which is being renewed   
in knowledge in the image of its Creator." Col 3:9-10  
  
The child resembles the father. God's children are like   
their heavenly Father. They bear His very image and   
impress.   
  
Wicked men say they are the children of God—but there   
is too great an unlikeness. The Jews bragged that they   
were Abraham's children—but Christ disproves them by   
this argument, because they were not like Him. "You are   
determined to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth   
that

I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things!"  
(Joh 8:40). "You—Abraham's children, and go about to   
kill Me! You are more like Satan, than Abraham!" "You   
are of your father the devil!" (verse 44). Such as are   
proud, earthly, and malicious may truly say, "**Our father   
which art in hell**." It is blasphemy to call God our Father,   
and make the devil our pattern! God's children resemble   
Him in meekness and holiness. They are His walking   
pictures. As the seal stamps its print and likeness upon   
the wax—so does God stamp the print and image of  
His own beauty upon His children.  
  
  
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**God is either ignorant, or impotent**  
  
All mankind are divided into two ranks—either they   
are the children of God, or the children of the devil.  
  
The first sign of heavenly sonship, is tenderness of heart.   
"Because your heart was tender" (2Ch 34:27). A   
childlike heart is a tender heart. He who before had a *flinty*heart—has now a *fleshy* heart. A tender heart is like melting   
wax to God. He may set whatever seal He will upon it. This   
tenderness of heart shows itself three ways.  
  
**[1] A tender heart grieves for sin.** A child weeps for   
offending his father. Peter showed a tender heart when   
Christ looked upon him and he remembered his sin, and   
wept like a child. It is reported that Peter never heard a   
rooster crow, but he wept. The least hair makes the eye   
weep. The least sin makes the heart smite.   
  
**[2] A tender heart melts under mercy.** The heart is   
never so kindly dissolved, as under the sunbeams of God's   
mercy. See how David's heart was melted with God's   
kindness: "Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my   
family, that You have brought me this far?" (2Sa 7:18)   
There was a gracious thaw upon his heart. So says   
a child of God, "Lord, who am I—a piece of dust and sin   
kneaded together—that the orient beams of free grace   
should shine upon me? Who am I, that You should pity   
me when I lay in my blood—and spread the golden wings   
of mercy over me!" The soul is overcome with God's   
goodness—the tears drop, and the love flames. God's  
mercy has a melting influence upon the soul.  
  
**[3] A tender heart trembles under God's threatenings.   
"**My flesh trembles in fear of You!" (Psa 119:120). If the   
father is angry—the child trembles. When ministers denounce   
the threats of God against sin—tender souls sit in a trembling   
posture. This trembling frame of heart, God delights in. "To   
this man will I look, even to him who trembles at Your word!"  
(Isa 66:2). A wicked man, like the Leviathan, 'is made   
without fear' (Job 41:33). He neither believes God's *promises*  
—nor dreads God's *threatenings*. Let judgment be denounced   
against sin—he laughs. He thinks that **God is either ignorant**  
and does not see—**or impotent** and cannot punish. "The   
mountains quake before Him and the hills melt away. The   
earth trembles at His presence!" (Nah 1:5). But the hearts   
of the ungodly are more obdurate than the rocks! A hardened   
sinner like Nebuchadnezzar has "the heart of a beast given to   
him" (Dan 4:16). A childlike heart is a tender heart. The   
heart of stone is taken away.  
  
  
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**More odious to God than a serpent!**  
  
"You are of purer eyes than to behold evil."  
Hab 1:13  
  
God is holy. Purity is the chief robe with which God   
adorns Himself. Will this holy God endure to have   
an impure heart come near Him? **Will a man lay a   
viper in his bosom!** God's image consists in holiness.   
To those who do not have this image and superscription   
upon them, He will say "I never knew you!" God delights   
in no heart, but where He may see His own likeness. *Love*   
is founded upon *likeness*. God loves the pure in heart.  
  
The holy God and the unrepentant sinner—cannot   
dwell together. None can dwell together but friends  
—but there is no friendship between God and the   
sinner, both of them being of a contrary judgment   
and disposition. An impure heart is **more odious   
to God than a serpent!** God gave the serpent its   
venom—but Satan fills the heart with sin. 'Satan   
has filled your heart!' Act 5:3. The Lord abhors   
a sinner! He will not come near him—having his   
plague-sores running. 'My soul loathed them!'   
Zec 11:8  
  
Heaven is a pure place. It is an "*undefiled* inheritance"   
1Pe 1:4. **No unclean beasts shall come into  
the heavenly ark! "**Nothing evil will be allowed to   
enter!" Rev 21:27  
  
"Blessed are the***pure in heart***, for they shall see God."   
Mat 5:8. Purity of heart is the jewel which is hung   
only upon the elect! Chastity distinguishes a virtuous   
woman from a harlot. Just so, the true Christian is   
distinguished from the hypocrite—by his heart-purity.   
  
  
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**A dead wife cannot please her husband**  
  
"Everything is pure to those whose *hearts are pure*.  
But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and  
unbelieving, because their minds and consciences  
are defiled." Tit 1:15  
  
Until the heart is pure—all our *holy things* (that is—our   
religious duties) are polluted. They are but *splendid sins!*Under the law, whatever a **leper** touched was unclean.   
If he had touched the altar or sacrifice, the altar would   
not cleanse him—but he would defile the altar.   
  
A *filthy hand* defiles the purest water. Just so, an   
*impure heart* defiles all religious duties—he drops   
poison upon them all.   
  
A pure stream running through *muddy ground*, is polluted.   
Just so, the holiest duties, running through an *impure heart,*   
are polluted. A sinner's works are called "dead works" (Heb 6:1)  
And those works which are dead, cannot please God.  **A dead wife cannot please her husband**.  
  
  
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**There goes an idolater!**  
  
"Covetousness which is idolatry." Col 3:5  
  
Covetousness is the root of idolatry. The covetous   
person bows down to the image of gold. His money   
is his **god**—for he puts his trust in it.   
  
Money is his ***creator***. When he has abundance   
of wealth, then he thinks he is 'made'.   
  
Money is his ***redeemer***. If he is in any trouble,   
he flies to his money and that must redeem him.   
  
Money is his ***comforter***. When he is sad he counts   
over his money, and with this golden harp he drives   
away the evil spirit.   
  
When you see a covetous man, you may say,   
**"There goes an idolater!"**  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  **An evil heart of unbelief**  
  
"**An evil heart of unbelief**." Heb 3:12  
  
An unbelieving heart is evil in the highest degree.   
It is full of the poison of hell. Unbelief is the foul   
*medley* of all sins—the *root* and *receptacle* of sin.  
  
Unbelief is a God-affronting sin. It calls in question   
God's power, mercy and truth. "The one who does   
not believe God, is actually calling God a liar!" Can   
a greater affront be cast upon the God of glory!   
  
Unbelief hardens the heart. These two sins are linked   
together—"He upbraided them with their unbelief and   
hardness of heart" (Mar 16:14). Unbelief breeds the   
stone of the heart. He who does not believe God's   
threatenings—will never fear Him. He who does not   
believe God's promises—will never love Him. What is   
said of the Leviathan, is true of the unbeliever. "Its   
heart is as hard as rock, as hard as a millstone!"  
(Job 41:24). Unbelief first *pollutes* the heart—and   
then *hardens* it!  
  
  
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**Let that room be washed with holy tears!**  
  
Holiness is the angels' glory. They are pure virgin-spirits.   
Take away purity from an angel—and he is but a devil!   
  
"Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
The heart must especially be kept pure, because the   
heart is the chief seat or place of God's residence. God   
dwells in the heart. He takes up the heart for His own   
lodging, therefore it must be pure and holy.   
  
A king's palace must be kept from defilement, and   
especially his throne. How holy ought that to be! If   
the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the heart   
is the holy of holies! Oh take heed of defiling the   
room where God chiefly dwells! **Let that room be   
washed with holy tears!**The heart must especially be pure, because it is   
the heart which sanctifies all that we do. If the   
heart is holy, all is holy—our affections holy, our  
duties holy.  
  
Purity of heart is that which beautifies a soul in God's   
eye. You are but a spiritual leper—until you are pure   
in heart. God is in love with the pure heart, for He sees   
His own picture drawn there. The pure in heart, have   
the embroidery and workmanship of the Holy Spirit   
upon them.  
  
The pure heart is God's paradise where He delights   
to walk. It is God's lesser heaven. The *dove* delights   
in the purest air. The Holy Spirit who descended in   
the likeness of a dove, delights in the purest soul.   
God says of the pure in heart, as of Zion, "This is   
My rest forever, here will I dwell" (Psa 132:14).   
  
God loves the loveliest complexion. The pure in heart   
is Christ's bride, decked and bespangled with the   
jewels of holiness. "You have ravished My heart with   
one of your eyes!" (Son 4:9). Your eyes, that is,   
your graces; these as a chain of diamonds, have   
drawn My heart to you.   
  
Of all hearts, God loves the pure heart best. You   
who dress yourself by the looking-glass of the Word   
and adorn 'the hidden person of your heart', are most   
precious in God's eyes, though you may be as bleary  
eyed as Leah, or as lame as Barzillai. Yet being 'pure   
in heart', you are the mirror of beauty and may say   
"Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord!"   
(Isa 49:5). How may this raise the esteem of purity!   
  
  
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**Before conversion**   
 **Before conversion**, the sinner is compared . . .  
to a **stone** for his hardness of heart (Zec 7:12),  
to a **wolf** for his savageness (Mat 7:15)  
to a **lion** for his fierceness (Isa 11:6),  
to a **bee** for his sting (Psa 118:12),  
to an **adder** for his poison (Psa 140:3).  
  
  
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***Fading*, not *filling***  
  
"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for  
righteousness, for *they will be filled*." Mat 5:6  
  
Here is the excellency of *righteousness* above all   
other things. A man may hunger after the world   
and not be filled. The world is ***fading*, not *filling***.   
Cast three worlds into the heart—yet the heart is   
not full. But righteousness is a filling thing; nay,  
it so fills that it *satisfies!*   
  
A man may be filled and not satisfied. A sinner   
may take his fill of sin—but that is a sad filling.   
It is far from satisfaction. He shall have his belly   
full of sin; he shall have enough of it—but this is   
not a filling to satisfaction. This is such a filling   
that the damned in hell have! They shall be   
full of the fury of the Lord!  
  
  
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**Oh, take heed of this sweet poison!**  
  
The love of sin makes sin taste sweet, and this   
*sweetness in sin* bewitches the heart.   
  
It is worse to *love* sin than to *commit* it. A man   
may be overtaken with sin (Gal 6:1). He   
who has stumbled upon sin unawares will weep  
—but the love of sin hardens the heart and keeps  
the devil in possession. In true mourning there   
must be a grieving for sin. But how can a man   
grieve for that sin which his heart is in love with?   
**Oh, take heed of this sweet poison!** The love   
of sin freezes the soul in impenitence.  
  
  
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**Suck damnation out of the   
sweet flower of God's mercy!**  
"I will have peace even though I follow my  
own stubborn heart." Deu 29:19  
  
How many, spider-like, **suck damnation out of   
the sweet flower of God's mercy!** "Oh," says   
one, "Christ died for me!" Many a bold sinner plucks   
*death* from the *tree of life*, and through presumption,   
goes to hell by that ladder of Christ's blood—by which  
others go to heaven! It is sad when the goodness of   
God, which should 'lead to repentance' (Rom 2:4),   
leads to *presumption*.   
  
O sinner, do not *hope* yourself into hell. Take heed   
of being damned upon a presumption! You say   
"God is merciful"—and therefore you go on securely   
in sin. But who is mercy for—the *unrepentant* sinner   
or the *mourning* sinner? 'Let the wicked forsake his   
way, and return to the Lord, and He will have mercy   
upon him' (Isa 55:7). No mercy without forsaking sin!

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**288 opinions about the way to happiness**

*In what does happiness consist?*

Millions of people mistake both the *nature* of happiness, and the *way* there. Some of the learned have noted **288 opinions about the way to happiness**—and all have shot wide of the mark!  
  
How do men thirst after the *world*—as if the *pearl of happiness* hung upon an earthly crown! "Oh," says one, "if I had but such an *estate*—then I would be happy! Had I but such a *comfort*—then I would sit down satisfied!" Well, God gives him that comfort and lets him suck the very juice out of it—but, alas, it falls short of his expectation. It cannot fill the emptiness and longing of his soul!  
  
Happiness does not lie in the acquisition of worldly things. Happiness cannot by any chemistry—be extracted from the world. Christ does not say, 'Happy are the *rich,*' or 'Happy are the *noble.*' Yet too many idolize these things. How ready is man to terminate his happiness in external worldly things! If they have but worldly accommodations, they are ready to say with that *brutish fool* in the gospel, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years, take your ease—eat, drink and be merry!"   
  
But alas! The *tree of happiness* does not grow in an *earthly paradise.* Has not God 'cursed the ground' because of sin? Yet many are digging for happiness here—as if they would fetch a blessing out of a curse! A man may as well think to extract oil out of a stone, or fire out of water—as happiness out of earthly things!  
  
King Solomon had more worldly things than any man. His crown was hung full of jewels. He had treasuries of gold. He had the flower and quintessence of all delights—sumptuous fare, stately edifices, vineyards, lands, all sorts of music to enchant and ravish the senses with joy. If there were any rarity—it was present in king Solomon's court. Thus did he *bathe in the perfumed waters of pleasure.*

Never did the world cast a more smiling aspect upon any man! Yet when he comes to give his impartial verdict, he tells us that the world has 'vanity' written upon its frontispiece; and all those golden delights he enjoyed, were but a *painted felicity—a glorious misery!*"Behold! All was vanity!" Happiness is too noble and delicate a plant, to grow in this world's soil. Worldly joys are but *sugared lies—pleasant deceits*—which have not one grain of true happiness! Nothing on *earth* can satisfy the *soul's* desires!  
  
"The world passes away!" (1Jn 2:17). Worldly delights are winged. They may be compared to a flock of birds in the garden—which stay a little while—but when you come near to them—they take their flight and are gone! Just so, "riches make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven!" They are like a meteor which blazes—but soon burns out. They are like a castle made of snow—lying under the fiery beams of the sun. Worldly comforts are like tennis balls—which are bandied up and down from one to another. They are like a bouquet of flowers—which withers while you are smelling it. They are like ice—which melts away while it is in your hand.  
  
Those things which do more *vex* than comfort—cannot make a man truly happy. As riches are compared to *wind*—to show their vanity; so they are compared to *thorns*—to show their vexation. Thorns are not more apt to tear our garments—than riches to tear our hearts! They are thorns in the gathering—and they prick with anxious care. They pierce the *head* with care of getting, so they wound the *heart* with fear of losing. Happiness is not to be fetched out of the earth! Worldly comforts cannot make you happy. You might live rich—and die cursed! You might treasure up an estate—and God might treasure up wrath!

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**Most fish**  
  
**Most fish go to the Devil's net!** "Enter through   
the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad   
is the road that leads to destruction, and many   
enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow   
the road that leads to life, and only a few find it!"  
Mat 7:13-14

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**A godly man hates**  
  
A righteous person breathes after holiness (Psa 119:5).   
Though sin cleaves to his heart—yet his heart does not   
cleave to sin. "I do the very thing I hate!" (Rom 7:15).  **A godly man hates** the sin to which Satan most tempts,  
and his heart most inclines (Psa 119:128).

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**The depth of mercy, and the height of love!**  
  
"Behold! How great is the love the Father has lavished   
on us—that we should be called children of God!"   
1Jn 3:1  
  
God showed power in making us His *creatures*—but love   
in making us His *sons*. Plato gave God thanks that He had   
made him a man and not a beast—but what cause have   
they to adore God's love—who has made them His children!   
That we may the better behold God's love in making us   
His children, consider three things.  
  
1. We were deformed—so did not DESERVE to be made   
God's children. God did not adopt us when we were clothed   
with the robe of innocence in paradise, when we were hung   
with the jewels of holiness; but when we were in our blood   
and had our leprous spots upon us! The time of our loathing  
—was the time of God's loving!  
  
2. As we did not deserve to be made God's children, so   
neither did we DESIRE it. No rich man will force another to   
become his heir against his will. If a king should go to adopt   
a beggar and make him heir of the crown, if the beggar should   
refuse the king's favor and say, 'I had rather be a beggar still  
—I do not want your riches'; the king would take it in high   
contempt of his favor, and would not adopt him against his   
will. Thus it was with us. We had no willingness to be made   
God's children. We desired to be beggars still—but God out   
of his infinite mercy and indulgence, not only *offers* to make   
us children—but *makes* us willing to embrace the offer   
(Psa 110:3). What stupendous love was this!  
  
3. It is the wonder of love that God should adopt us for   
His children, when we were ENEMIES. No man would   
adopt an enemy to be his heir. But that God should make   
us Hs children—when we were His enemies; that He should   
make us heirs to the crown—when we were traitors to the   
crown—oh amazing, astonishing love!   
  
We had done God all the injury and spite we could, defaced   
His image, violated His law, trampled upon His mercies—but   
when we had angered Him, He adopted us! What stupendous   
love was this! Such love was never shown to the angels! When   
they fell, God did not make them children—but prisoners. They   
were heirs only to 'the treasures of wrath'! (Rom 2:5).  
  
Let us admire His wondrous love. When we were breathing   
forth enmity against God—He conquered our stubbornness   
with kindness, and not only pardoned—but adopted us! It is   
hard to say which is greater—the *mystery*, or the *mercy*.   
This is such amazing love as we shall be searching into and   
adoring to all eternity! The bottom of it cannot be fathomed   
by any angel in heaven. God's love in making us His children   
is a rich love. It is love in God to feed us—but it is rich love   
to adopt us! It is love to give us a *crumb*—but it is rich love   
to make us heirs to a *crown!*  
  
It is a distinguishing love, that when God has passed by so   
many millions, He should cast a favorable aspect upon you!   
Most are made vessels of wrath, and fuel for hell. And that   
God should say to you, 'You are My son!'—here is **the depth   
of mercy, and the height of love!** Who, O who, can tread   
upon these hot coals, and his heart not burn in love to God!

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***Pharisaic purity***  
  
"Blessed are the***pure in heart***, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
If the heart is not pure, we differ nothing from a   
***Pharisaic purity****.* The Pharisees' holiness consisted   
chiefly in externals. Theirs was an 'outside purity'.   
They never minded the inside of the heart. 'Woe   
unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You  
are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and   
the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed   
and self-indulgence! Hypocrites! You are like   
whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside   
but filled on the inside with dead people's bones   
and all sorts of impurity!' (Mat 23:25, Mat 23:27).   
The Pharisees were good only on the surface. They   
were like a rotten post, overlaid with fine paint.  
  
"For I tell you that unless your righteousness  
surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers  
of the law, you will certainly not enter the  
kingdom of heaven!" Mat 5:20

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**For every crumb of His patience**  
  
"When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried  
out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes  
to do wrong." (Ecc 8:11).   
  
God forbears *punishing*—therefore men forbear *repenting*.   
He does not smite upon their back by *correction*—therefore   
they do not smite upon their thigh by *humiliation* (Jer 31:19).   
The sinner thinks thus: "God has spared me all this while;   
surely He will not punish me." "He says to himself—God has   
forgotten; He covers His face and never sees!" (Psa 10:11).   
  
In infinite patience God sometimes adjourns His judgments a   
while longer. He is not willing to punish (2Pe 3:9). God is   
like the bee, which naturally gives *honey*—but *stings* only   
when it is provoked. But alas, how is His patience abused!   
God's patience hardens most. Because God stops the vial   
of His wrath—sinners stop the conduit of tears!   
  
To be hardened under God's patience, makes our condition far   
worse. *Incensed justice* will revenge *abused patience!* God was   
patient towards Sodom—but when they did not repent, He made   
the fire and brimstone flame about their ears! Sodom, which was   
once the wonder of God's patience—is now a standing monument   
of God's severity. Long *forbearance* is no *forgiveness*. God may   
keep off the stroke awhile—but His justice is not dead—but only   
sleeps. God has leaden feet but iron hands. The longer God is   
taking His blow—the sorer it will be when it comes. The longer   
a stone is falling—the heavier it will be at last. The longer God   
is whetting his sword—the sharper it cuts!  
  
How dreadful will their condition be—who sin because God is   
patient with them. **For every crumb of His patience**—God   
puts a drop of wrath into His vial. The longer God forbears   
with a sinner—the more interest he is sure to pay in hell.  
  
  
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**A watery eye and a whorish heart**  
  
"Blessed are those who mourn." Mat 5:4  
  
*Gospel-mourning* is joined with **self-loathing**. The   
sinner *admires* himself—the penitent *loathes* himself.   
"You shall *loath* yourselves in your own sight for all   
your evils." Eze 20:43 A true penitent is troubled   
not only for the *shameful consequence* of sin—but for   
the *loathsome nature* of sin; not only the sting of sin  
—but the deformed face of sin. The true mourner   
cries out, "O these impure eyes! O this heart which is   
a conclave of wickedness!" He not only leaves sin—  
but loathes sin.   
  
*Gospel-mourning* must be **purifying**. Our tears   
must make us more holy. We must so weep for sin,   
as to weep out sin. Our tears must drown our sins.   
We must not only mourn—but turn. "Turn to me   
with weeping" (Joe 2:12). What good is it, to   
have **a watery eye and a whorish heart?** True   
tears are cleansing. They are like a flood that carries   
away all the rubbish of our sins away with it. The   
waters of holy mourning are like the river Jordan,  
wherein Naaman washed and was cleansed of his   
leprosy. Though our sins be as scarlet—yet by   
washing in this river of repentance, they become   
white as snow.   
  
*Gospel-mourning* must be joined with **hatred of sin**.   
We must not only abstain from sin—but abhor sin.   
The dove hates the least feather of the hawk. A true   
mourner hates the least motion to sin. A true mourner   
is a *sin-hater*. He looks upon sin as the most deadly   
evil—as the essence of all evil. Sin looks more ghastly   
than death or hell. A true mourner is implacably incensed   
against sin. He will never admit of any terms of peace.   
*Anger* may be reconciled—*hatred* cannot. True mourning   
begins in the love of God—and ends in the hatred of sin.  
  
There is that in the best Christian, which is contrary to   
God. There is that in him, which deserves hell—and shall   
he not mourn? A ship that is always leaking must have   
the water continually pumped out. While the soul leaks by   
sin, we must be still pumping at the leak by repentance.  
The washing of our souls daily in the brinish waters of   
repentance, is the best way both to prevent and cure   
the falling into relapses.  
  
  
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**Set your affection on things above**  
  
"**Set your affection on things above**, not  
on things on the earth." Col 3:2  
  
He who has a heavenly spirit—shall go to the heavenly   
kingdom. Do you live above the world? The eagle does   
not catch flies—she soars aloft in the air. Do you pant   
after glory and immortality? Do you abhor that which is   
sordid and carnal? Can you trample upon all sublunary   
things? Is *heaven* in your eye—and *Christ* in your heart  
—and the *world* under your feet