

CHOICE EXCERPTS

Mirror and fountain

The Scripture is a mirror to show us our sins; Christ's blood is a fountain to wash them away.

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A lamp for my feet "Teach me Your ways, O Lord, that I may live according to Your truth!" Psalm 86:11

Let us lead Scripture lives. Oh that the Bible might be seen printed in our lives! Obedience is an excellent way of commenting upon the Bible. Let the Word be the sundial by which you set your life. What are we the better for having the Scripture, if we do not direct all our speech and actions according to it? What is a carpenter the better for his rule about him, if he sticks it at his back, and never makes use of it for measuring and squaring his work? So, what are we the better for the rule of the Word, if we do not make use of it, and regulate our lives by it? How many swerve and deviate from the rule! "Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105.

It is not only a light to our eyes to mend our sight--but to our feet to mend our walk. Oh, let us lead Bible lives!

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Why is salvation by faith?

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

"Jesus said to the woman--Your faith has saved you; go in peace." Luke 7:50

Why is salvation by faith?

To exclude all glorying in the creature. Faith is a humble grace. If salvation were by repentance or works, a man would say, "It is my righteousness which has saved me!" But if it is of faith, where is boasting? Faith fetches all from Christ--and gives all the glory to Christ!

God's believing people are a humble people. "Be clothed with humility." God's people shrink into nothing in their own thoughts. David cries out, "I am a worm, and not a man!" Though a saint, though a king--yet a worm! When Moses' face shined, he covered it with a veil. When God's people shine most in grace--they are covered with the veil of humility. Abraham the father of the faithful, confesses, "I am nothing but dust and ashes." "God resists the proud." Surely, God will not take to be with Himself in glory, such as whom He resists.

God's believing people are a willing people. Though they cannot serve God perfectly--they serve Him willingly. They do not grudge God a little time spent in His worship. They do not murmur at sufferings. They will go through a sea and a wilderness--if God calls. "Your people shall be a willing people." This spontaneity and willingness is from the attractive power of God's Spirit. The Spirit does not force--but sweetly draws the will. This willingness makes all our services acceptable. God sometimes accepts of willingness without the work--but never the work without willingness.

God's believing people are a consecrated people. They have "holiness to the Lord" written upon them. "You are a holy people to the Lord your God." God's people are separated from the world--and sanctified by the Spirit. The priests under the law were not only to wash in the laver--but were arrayed with glorious apparel. This was typical, to show that God's people are not only washed from gross sins--but adorned with holiness of life. They bear not only God's name --but His image! Holiness is God's stamp; if He does not see this stamp upon us, He will not own us for His believing people.

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Worse than a dog!

Sin cleaves to us, as blackness to the skin of the Ethiopian, so that we cannot get rid of it. Paul shook off the viper on his hand--but we cannot shake off this inbred corruption! Sin comes not, as a lodger, for a night--but as an indweller. "Sin which dwells in me." Romans 7:17. Sin is an evil spirit, which haunts us wherever we go. Sin, though latent in the soul, and as a spring which runs underground--often breaks forth unexpectedly. Christian, you cannot believe that evil which is in your heart, and which will break forth suddenly--if God should leave you! "Is your servant a dog that he should do this monstrous thing?" 2 Kings 8:13.

Hazael could not believe he had such a root of evil in his heart, that he would rip up pregnant women. "Is your servant a dog?" Yes, and worse than a dog--when that corruption within is stirred up! If one had come to Peter and said, "Peter, within a few hours you will deny Christ;" he would have said, "Is your servant a dog?" But alas! Peter did not know his own heart, nor how far that corruption within would prevail upon him.

The sea may be calm and look clear; but when the wind blows--how it rages and foams! So though now your heart seems good--yet, when temptation blows--how may sin reveal itself, making you foam with lust and passion! Who would have thought to have found adultery in David, and drunkenness in Noah, and cursing in Job? If God leaves a man to himself--how suddenly and scandalously may sin break forth in the holiest men on the earth!

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### **See its ugly face!**

What a heinous and execrable thing is sin! Sin is the distillation of all evil. The Scripture calls it the "accursed thing." It is compared to the venom of serpents, and the stench of sepulchers. The devil would paint sin with the pleasing colors of pleasure and profit--that he may make it look fair; but I shall pull off the paint, that you may see its ugly face! We are apt to have slight thoughts of sin, and say to it, as Lot of Zoar, "Is it not a little one?" But sin is a great evil.

*Sin fetches its pedigree from hell;* sin is from the devil. "He who commits sin is of the devil." Satan was the first actor of sin, and the first tempter to sin. Sin is the devil's first-born!

*Sin is a defiling thing*--a polluting thing. It is to the soul--as rust is to gold, as a stain to beauty. It makes the soul red with guilt, and black with filth! Sin in Scripture is compared to a "menstruous cloth," and to a "plague-sore."

*Sin has blotted out God's image* and stained the orient brightness of the soul.

*Sin makes God loathe a sinner;* and when a sinner sees his sin--he loathes himself!

*Sin stamps the devil's image on a man.* Malice is the devil's eye, hypocrisy his cloven foot. Sin turns a man into a devil. "One of you is a devil!" John 6:70 Sin is an act of rebellion against God. A sinner tramples upon God's law, crosses His will, and does all he can to affront, yes, to spite God!

*Sin strikes at the very Deity.* Sin is God's would-be murderer. Sin would not only unthrone God--but un-God Him. If the sinner could help it, God would no longer be God.

*Sin is an act of ingratitude and unkindness.* God feeds the sinner, keeps off evils from him, be-miracles him with mercy; but the sinner not only forgets God's mercies--but abuses them! He is the worse for mercy; like Absalom, who, as soon as David had kissed him, and taken him into favor, plotted treason against him! Like the mule, who kicks the mother after she has given it milk. God may upbraid the sinner, "I have given you your health, strength, and estate; but you requite Me evil for good; you wound Me with My own mercies! Did I give you life--to sin against Me? Did I give you wages-- to serve the devil? Is this your kindness to your Friend?"

*Sin is a disease.* "The whole head is sick!" Some are sick with pride, others with lust, others with envy. Sin has distempered the intellectual part--it is a leprosy in the head; it has poisoned the vitals. It is with a sinner as with a sick patient--his palate is distempered--the sweetest things taste bitter to him. The Word, which is "sweeter than the honey-comb," tastes bitter to him. Nothing can cure this disease, but the blood of the Physician!

*Sin is an irrational thing.* It makes a man act not only wickedly--but foolishly. It is absurd and irrational to prefer the less, before the greater. The sinner prefers the passing pleasures of sin, before eternal rivers of pleasures. Is it rational to lose heaven--for the indulging of a lust? Is it rational to gratify an enemy? When sin burns in the soul, Satan warms himself at this fire. Men's sins feast the devil.

*Sin is a painful thing.* It costs men much labor to pursue their sins. How do they tire themselves in doing the devil's drudgery! "They weary themselves to commit iniquity." What pains did Judas take to bring about his damnation! Many a man goes to hell, in the sweat of his brow. Sin is the only thing God has

antipathy against. God does not hate a man because he is poor or despised in the world. The only thing which draws forth the keenness of God's hatred, is sin. "Oh, do not do this abominable thing, which I hate!" And surely, if the sinner dies under God's hatred, he cannot be admitted into the celestial mansions. Will God let that man live with Him--whom He hates? God will never lay such a viper in His bosom!