

to God. None took his life from him on that scene of agony and ignominy—in that hour of darkness and oppression; he laid it down of himself, and he laid it down with eagerness and delight. Why was this? It was because he was the *Holy One*—because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity. His thus bearing our sins in his own body to the tree was because he would by no means clear the guilty—because he would “condemn sin in the flesh,” and would see its full curse exhausted. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, he was sore amazed and very heavy. We cannot conceive of the bitterness of that cup which was given him to drink; and as a partaker of our humanity he shrunk from drinking it. But behold how he loved righteousness! “The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?” I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” As he hangs suspended upon the tree, that we might understand something of that wrath of God that cometh upon the children of disobedience, and get us up and flee from it, there bursts from him the awful complaint, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? But mark how he closes it. “But thou art holy,” thou wilt by no means clear the guilty. Thy will is mine; awake, O sword, and smite the man that is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts—smite him until the accursed thing is eternally demonstrated to be most accursed—until the ransom for iniquity is complete, and they for whom it is paid may see God and live. “Father, glorify thy name; for for this cause came I unto this hour.”

8. We were to consider, lastly, how the blood of Christ who thus presented himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God, purges our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. It is through faith that it has this efficacy. It was only when the blood of the bulls and goats slain under the law—when the ashes of the heifer that had been burned—were applied to the person of the defiled Israelite by sprinkling that he was sanctified to the purifying of the flesh and so restored to the outward worship of God; and had he not made a personal application to these the appointed means of cleansing, but despised them, he would not have been sanctified to the outward service of God but would have been cut off from it as profane. And in like manner it is only when we who are placed under the new covenant make a personal application to the blood of Christ—when we have it sprinkled upon us by faith, that it will purge our conscience from the defilement of sin to serve the living God. When, however, we do make a personal application to the

blood of Christ, we are cleansed from our filthiness and can enter into the Holiest. But how is it that the blood of Christ, when believed in, should have this blessed efficacy? How should the faith of his spotless sacrifice sanctify to the service of God? This is seen on considering what we need to the serving of the living God, and how the faith of Christ's atoning blood meets this need. Before we can serve the living God, we must see the righteous sentence of condemnation, pronounced upon us by God for sin, taken away, and we must have a capacity to delight ourselves in God. We must see the righteous sentence of condemnation pronounced upon us by God for sin taken away, for without this we would have no liberty to approach God to serve him; and we must moreover have a capacity to delight in God, for otherwise we could not delight in him. Now both these things we have through our union by faith to him who, becoming man and receiving the anointing of the Spirit, presented his blood pure to God. On the formation of this union to Christ there is no more condemnation to us, but the handwriting that was against us is taken away—having been nailed to the cross, and we have boldness to come to God as children to a father. And we at the same time receive the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit through whom he offered himself to God, whom he gives to enable us to walk in the sin-consuming vision of the divine love and holiness as he walked in it, and so to follow his steps in presenting ourselves living sacrifices to God—putting his condemnation upon our sins, and having no fellowship with its unfruitful and deadly works. “The last Adam was made a quickening spirit,” that by his dwelling in us we might be conformed to his image, and so be one with him who is on with the Father, according to that prayer of his, “I pray for them which shall believe on me, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” And thus is our conscience purged to serve the living God, nor only purged once, but *kept pure*. Thus can we give it as the blessed description of our life, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Coming to the blood of sprinkling, we are brought into, and kept in, a condition of serving the Lord without fear, in righteousness and holiness before him, all the days of our life. “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.”

We see here how very awful must be the end