

And should you at any time fall into darkness and despondency, say not, that your sins are too many and grievous to be forgiven, and that the Pestilence will find you naked and without hope. For though repentance deferred to the last gasp be a most discouraging thing, and a sick bed or the time of God's visitation not a fit hour for making our peace with our Redeemer—yet even then, blessed be our Father in heaven, the door is not absolutely shut, nor is repentance forbidden—nay it is not even at such a time unlawful, nor does this late period make it insincere, although our sin has been grievously aggravated by delay, and it may seem to others as well as to ourselves, not a little suspicious. The Prodigal never thought of returning to his Father till he was ready to perish. And Christ seems to relate the parable to meet among others, such cases as must frequently happen in times of pestilence, that He may touch with hope the hearts of the greatest sinners, and make them aware that He will receive them, however late, and by whatever necessity or distress they are driven to Him, and that if they come with faithfulness of



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