

and he would pay him all. And perhaps you, my young friend, think, that if God will have patience with you, and let you live a little longer in the world, you will begin to be very religious, and do all that he commands you, and you think that then surely he will not punish you. But even if you could do so, that would not make up for all your past sins ; besides, *how do you think you could keep yourself from sin in time to come, any more than you have already done?*

The king knew that the servant would never be able to pay so large a sum, but he freely forgave him ; that is, he promised never to seek payment of that money again. But the kindness that God has shown to sinners is even greater than this. He has sent his own dearly beloved Son into the world, on purpose to pay the debt which they owed ; or, in other words, to endure the punishment that they deserved. In all that Jesus Christ suffered, while he lived on earth, and when he died upon the cross, he was paying that debt which sinners could never have paid. And if you go to God, confessing that you can deserve nothing but everlasting misery, and trusting in Jesus Christ alone, as having suffered in your stead, God will forgive all your sins. He will take you for his own child, and treat you as if you had never offended him.

*But how did this king's servant behave, after meeting with such kindness from his master?* He had no sooner left the king's presence, than he saw a fellow-servant, who owed him a hundred pence. This was a very small sum compared with what his own debt had been. In a rude and angry manner, he took his fellow-servant by the throat, and ordered him to make immediate payment. His fellow-servant did not strike him, or speak angrily in return, but he humbly fell down at his feet, and said, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." These were the very same words which he had used himself, only a little while before ; but, instead