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SIN THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW—CHRIST MANIFESTED TO TAKE AWAY SIN.

JOHN 8RD. 4TH :—“ *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law. 5. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*”

The simple account of sin is, that it is the transgression of the law. We may endeavour to palliate sin, to excuse our individual sin, but it still remains what it is here described, the transgression of the law. How apt are we to think lightly of sin! But palliate it as we may, think lightly of it as we may, it is a greater evil, it involves greater disasters, it entails more fearful consequences, than if the universe were destroyed. If this universe were destroyed, it would involve no evil, it could be replaced. But God's law once broken, nothing could repair that: at least, it required the death of the Son of God to repair it. A moral disorder; the line once crossed from good to evil; an event has taken place which eternity will not efface, and nothing will rectify. What can repair moral evil? Suppose the death of the Son of God a fable, what can rectify the moral disorder that is in the universe? We say, then, that the transgression of the law is no slight, no common evil.—Is it not the greatest proof of the depravity of our natures that we are so insensible to the evil that a single transgression of the law must be? Had we that law purely in our hearts, unviolated, as it was inscribed there by the finger of God, or as it must be there in the very constitution of our nature, we would see how evil a thing the transgression of

it must necessarily be. Evil! *the only evil that can exist.* Let the law of God be preserved entire, and there would be no evil. No evil could deface this fair creation. All would be as God made it: all would be holy, good, lovely, happy. It is the transgression of the law which is the cause of all evil, the beginning of all disorder—the source of all misery.—*Sin is the transgression of the law.* We regard this as perhaps the profoundest statement of God's word. Remember when you commit sin, *that it is the transgression of the law.* Ponder that, and the more you think of it, you will hate sin more, you will see its evil more, you will fear it more, and you would rather do anything than sin, you would rather be free from sin than from any calamity. Hence Scripture says: “*fools make a mock at sin.*” If we knew what sin is, we would repent of it with our whole hearts: we would shun it with all our might; instead of making a mock of it. Nothing would tempt us to commit it: no, however inviting the temptation, however urgent the solicitation, however alluring the bait held out to us: we would spurn it away; we would break its bonds like the withes which encircled Samson: our language would always be,—and we speak of the least sin as well as the greatest,—shall I do this and *sin* against God? We believe the great difference between a renewed man, and another man, is, that the former has a proper sight of sin: he sees it to be the transgression of the law; while the other has no such view of it.—It is on this account that the one sees the least sin to be exceeding sinful, and is disturbed by what would never cost another a single thought. We perceive accordingly what view the Psalmist took of