

be God that in the matter of our pardon there is nothing left for man to do. Jesus does all, and man has only to hold out an empty hand and to receive.

Furthermore, it is a *free and unconditional* forgiveness. It is not burdened with an "if," like Solomon's pardon to Adonijah, "If he will show himself a worthy man." (1 Kings i. 52.) Nor yet are you obliged to carry a price in your hand, or bring a character with you to prove yourself deserving of mercy. Jesus requires but one character, and that is that you should feel yourself a sinful, bad man. He invites you to "buy wine and milk without money and without price," and declares "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." (Isaiah lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.) Like David in the cave of Adullam, He receives every one that feels in distress and a debtor, and rejects none. (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) Are you a sinner? Do you want a Saviour? Then come to Jesus just as you are, and your soul shall live.

Again, it is an *offered forgiveness*. I have read of earthly kings who knew not how to show mercy, of Henry the Eighth of England, who spared neither man or woman; of James the Fifth of Scotland, who would never show favour to a Douglas. The King of kings is not like them. He calls on man to come to Him, and be pardoned. "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." (Prov. viii. 4.) "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." (Isaiah lv. 1.) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John vii. 37. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Mat. xi. 28.) Oh! reader, it ought to be a great comfort to you and me to hear of any pardon at all; but to hear Jesus Himself inviting us, to see Jesus Himself holding out His hand to us,—the Saviour seeking the sinner before the sinner seeks the Saviour,—this is encouragement, this is strong consolation indeed.

Again, it is a *willing forgiveness*. I have heard of pardons granted in reply to long entreaty, and wrung out by much importunity. King Edward