

JOHN NEWTON'S PERSONAL
TESTIMONY TO FREE GRACE.

Great sinners often tremble lest the singular blackness of their sins should shut them out from finding mercy in Christ Jesus. Let the following testimony of one who, from the depths of sin was raised to an eminent height of holiness, and usefulness act as an encouragement:—"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto man." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." These and similar texts were all proved to the letter in the case of the African blasphemer, who became the mighty London preacher. Let us hear him speak for himself:—

"My case has been singular upon earth, and I think it will be almost so in heaven. If love is the essence of happiness, and if they to whom much has been forgiven shall love most, then, surely (astonishing thought!) I shall be found among the foremost, and, if I may so speak, the first-rate spirit before the throne.

"If great services and sufferings in the Lord's cause should be chiefly distinguished in the courts above, I may be thankful if I be admitted within the door; but if much forgiveness is the distinction, I shall have a claim above millions—I might venture to dispute precedence with Paul himself. I am the man who did many things against Jesus of Nazareth; *not because I thought I ought*, but because I was resolved I would. How often have I publicly and deliberately treated him as an impostor, compared him with Mahomet, and given preference to the latter! My mouth was an open sepulchre, and my life such, that I am persuaded the characters of many who died at the gallows would have been deemed amiable in comparison with mine. The Lord knows I do not exaggerate; yet I was spared, pardoned, and, what is more wonderful, reserved to preach the faith which I had despised, and laboured to destroy. Thus I was in the dark and dreadful days of ignorance. Since the Lord was pleased to call me by his grace, he has wonderfully restrained, and kept me in my outward path; so that I have not been suffered to make any considerable blot in the view of my fellow-creatures.—

Yet it is chiefly this latter period I shall refer to, for in that also much has been forgiven me. Sins after conversion have an higher aggravation, from the higher love and experience, against which they are committed, which cannot be found in the worst actions of natural men; and the heart, like the sea, has depths which no human plummet can fathom, and monsters which no eye but the eye of God can explore."

Sinner come as you now are to him who received John Newton, for he is ready to receive you.

THE WIDOW'S SON AND HIS BIBLE.

There was a pious widow, living in the northern part of England, on whom, in consequence of the loss she had sustained, devolved the sole care of a numerous family, consisting of seven daughters and one son. It was her chief anxiety to train up her children in those virtuous and religious habits which promote the present happiness and the immortal welfare of man. Her efforts were crowned with the best success, so far as the female branches of her family were concerned; but, alas! her boy proved ungrateful for her care, and became her scourge and her cross. He loved worldly company and pleasure, till, having impoverished his circumstances, it became necessary that he should go to sea. When his mother took her leave of him, she gave him a New Testament, inscribed with his name and her own, solemnly and tenderly entreating that he would keep the book and read it for her sake. He was borne far away upon the bosom of the trackless deep, and year after year elapsed without tidings of her boy. She occasionally visited parts of the island remote from her own residence, and particularly the metropolis; and, in whatever company she was cast, she made it a point to inquire for the ship in which her son sailed, if perchance she might hear any tidings of the beloved object who was always uppermost in her thought. On one occasion, she met, in a party in London, a sea captain, of whom she made her accustomed inquiries. He informed her that he knew the vessel, and that she had been wrecked; that he also knew a youth of the name of Charles—; and