

woe and all the misery of mankind, then we will be convinced and we will acknowledge that it is an evil and a bitter thing which God and all the good hate with a perfect hatred. But the death of Christ is the concentration of iniquity. In it we have the judgment of God concerning sin. In it God has collected the evil of sin and exposes it as an object of abhorrence to all intelligences. In it we behold the incompatibility of sin with the glory of God, with the salvation of men. From it proceeds our conviction of sin, our purification from it, and our resurrection to holiness and eternal life. We should look on him who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities and by whose stripes we are healed, and we should "mourn as one mourneth for an only son, and be in bitterness as one is in bitterness for a first-born."

2. It implies a knowledge of the character of God and our connection with him. "The fool hath said in his heart that there is no God," and therefore he makes no acknowledgment of God. He that cometh unto God with the acknowledgment of sin, must believe that God is. The existence of an eternal, intelligent and perfect being lies at the foundation of all morality, and should be powerfully present to our minds in all the exercises of religion. But we must not only know that there is a God, we must know also what God is; because our acknowledgments of sin will only correspond with the views we form of the being to whom we make the acknowledgment. All mankind transgress against the relations existing in society. But the acknowledgments which superiors make to their inferiors, parents to their children, princes to their subjects, are vastly different from the acknowledgements which inferiors make to their superiors, children to their parents and subjects to their princes. So it is with regard to God and sinners. If we form just conceptions of the divine character we will make an honest acknowledgement of sin; but if unjust, unworthy views, our acknowledgement will correspond. When sinners who love sin think that God is altogether such an one as themselves, then they think also that he will approve of their sin, and consequently that no acknowledgement of sin is necessary, or at any rate that merely a verbal acknowledgement would be sufficient, such an acknowledgment as would please their fellow-men. We must know and believe the holiness of God; that he cannot look upon sin. It is that abominable thing which he hateth. We must know and believe the justice of God. That he is the determined enemy of sin; that it is impossible for him to sin, that he will maintain an eternal opposition to it; that either sin or the sinner must be eternally destroyed; that Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the devil that he might save the sinner. These views of God will convince us of the intrinsic evil of sin, the necessity of acknowledging and forsaking it. We must know the wisdom of God. His understanding is infinite. He could never be mistaken. He could not have presented any duty but what was reasonable and beneficial. He could never have prohibited anything but what was abominable and pernicious. This will show us the propriety of acknowledging our sins. We must know the omniscience and omnipresence of God. That he searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men; is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. That he seeth in