

Monergism

# Worship GOSPEL



JEREMIAH BURROUGHS

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**GOSPEL**



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# **Gospel Worship**

## **by Jeremiah Burroughs**

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## **To the Reader**

OUR purpose in this Preface is not to speak either of the eminent worth of the author, whose memory is blessed in the hearts of all the godly in this Nation, or of this piece itself here published, but only to assure you that it is his. And although it does not rise to that exactness and perfection that might have been in them had he published them himself, yet with that different allowance which is to be given, notes taken from his mouth in ordinary and frequent preaching, we doubt not that in their use and benefit they may be as profitable to the Saints as other of his writings, being as full of weighty and Divine materials, having also the impression of the Spirit and language of this holy man (one of the greatest Preachers of this age) stamped all along upon them.

We (to whom this our brother was most dear and precious) being entrusted with the publishing of his Sermons, have thought good first to usher abroad these few, which if they receive that welcome they deserve, many other excellent pieces of his may soon after have encouragement to appear in public view. The points treated of in these are of great concernment, and therefore we conceive the Author thought, in handling of them, he had room enough for the discussing many of the controversies of the times, yet he purposely waved it, and bent himself to the single delivery of that which tended most to edification, and best suited with such a popular auditory as that was to whom he spoke. The Lord of heaven bless them to your

spiritual advantage, and enable you by such means as these to sanctify His name in the use of all His ordinances, which is the desire of

Thomas Goodwin.  
William Greenhill.  
William Bridge.

## **Sermon I**

### **The Introduction**

Gospel-worship: or, The Right Manner of Drawing Nigh to God, in General: And particularly in these Three Great ORDINANCES: Viz.

- 1. Hearing of the WORD.
- 2. Receiving the Lord's SUPPER.
- 3. PRAYER.

Leviticus 10:3, Then Moses said unto Aaron, "This is it that the Lord spoke, saying, 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" And Aaron held his peace.

These words are the speech of Moses to Aaron his brother, endeavoring to quiet and comfort his heart, which was (no question) exceedingly troubled upon that great and sore affliction that was upon him, in the strange death of his two sons, Nadab and Abihu. The story is this:

After Aaron's sons were consecrated to the priestly office, they coming to attend this their office the very first day after their consecration to offer incense unto God, they ventured to offer incense with strange fire, with other fire than God had appointed.

Upon that the fire of God's wrath broke out upon them and slew them both presently in the very sanctuary before all the people, for it was a solemn time, being the beginning of the solemn consecration of the priesthood. Upon this, the spirit of Aaron could not but be exceedingly troubled to see his two sons thus struck. Now Moses comes to him and saith, "This is that which the Lord spoke, 'I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" And upon this, Aaron held his peace.

We read that once fire came down from Heaven in a way of mercy to consume the sacrifices, but now fire comes down from Heaven in a way of judgment to consume the sacrificers, even Nadab and Abihu. They were Aaron's sons, the sons of a godly man, the sons of the high priest, they were his eldest sons, for Aaron had other sons besides Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, but these were his two eldest sons. They were two young men, they were struck in the very prime of their age, they were two that were newly consecrated in the priests' office, for so you find it in Leviticus, in the 8th Chapter. And they were two men of renown in the country, and before all the people of Israel two men that God had much honored heretofore as you shall find in Exod. Chap. 24, and the beginning, this Nadab and Abihu were men of great repute, and great renown, that God did much honor in former times, for when God called Moses and Aaron with the Elders to come to Him, He singles out Nadab and Abihu among the rest, and names them. And He said unto Moses, "Come up unto the Lord, thou and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and 70 of the Elders of Israel." Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu are only named, and then 70 of the Elders in general, but Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, as if these were the four eminent men of renown among all the people of Israel, He names none of the 70 Elders but these two, besides Moses and Aaron. Therefore, these two that were consumed by strange fire were renowned men, and newly consecrated into their office.

What was their sin?

Their sin it was offering of strange fire, so the text saith, that they offered strange fire, which God commanded them not, in the beginning of the chapter.

But had God ever forbidden it? Where do we find that God had ever forbidden them to offer strange fire, or appointed that they should offer only one kind of fire? There is no text of Scripture that you can find from the beginning of Genesis to this place where God hath said in terminis, in so many words expressly, "You shall offer no fire but one kind of fire." And yet here they are consumed by fire from God for offering strange fire. I find in Exodus 30:9 that there they were forbidden offering strange incense, but I do not find that they were forbidden offering strange fire. In Leviticus 6:13 and divers verses in that chapter, we find that God had appointed that they should keep constantly the fire on the altar burning, and never to let it go out. Now that was (it seems) God's intention that therefore they should make use of that fire, and that fire only. God would have them to pick out His meaning: God sent fire down from heaven upon the altar, so in the latter end of Leviticus the 9th chapter, God sent down fire from heaven and gave them a charge to keep that fire on the altar constantly and never to let it go out, so that it seems God would have them pick out His meaning that because He had sent down fire from heaven upon the altar, and gave them power to keep that constantly, God would have them therefore to understand that what incense or sacrifice He would have the use of fire in, it should be only that fire and no other, though God did never say to them directly in these words, "You shall make use of this fire and no other," but God would have them to understand this. That's their sin therefore in offering of strange fire.

Now fire comes from the Lord and doth consume them. Some think this fire came from the altar, but surely it could not be any ordinary fire that did consume Nadab and Abihu at this time, for you shall find in the next verse to my text that the bodies of Nadab and Abihu were not consumed by the fire, no, not their clothes; they were killed by the fire and yet their clothes were whole. Therefore, it was not an

ordinary fire, it was some celestial fire struck into them to slay them, for so saith the text in Leviticus 10, in the 4th verse, "Come near, carry away your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp," and so they went and carried them in their crates out of the camp, so that their clothes and bodies were not consumed, only they were killed by the fire, they were struck with a sudden death, and that in the presence of the Lord, such a death as God had never threatened in the Word before. God had never threatened the priests and said, "If you offer strange fire, you shall be consumed by fire," yet God smites them with death by fire; they had not time to seek God, no, not so much as to say, "Lord have mercy upon me"; they had no time to promise amendment at all. Now upon this heavy judgment, the heart of Aaron could not possibly but be very much troubled, yea, and the spirit of Moses too, for Moses was their uncle, and Aaron their father, they could not but be exceedingly much grieved. But Moses being the brother of Aaron, seeing his spirit (no question) exceedingly troubled, being under such a sad affliction, and that such a godly man even as Aaron was, should have such a sad judgment befall his children; Moses comes and speaks comfortably to him, and labors to support his spirit; and how doth he do it? He comes not as ordinarily you use to visit your brethren, Oh! you must be content with this; no, but he comes and applies the Word of God, and shows how God must be sanctified, and by that he comes to quiet the heart of his brother Aaron, "This is that which the Lord hath spoke," saith Moses: he seeks to stay the heart of his brother with that which God spoke.

But where do we find that God spoke this?

It's hard to find in any Scripture these very words in terminis before this time: and therefore Augustine thinks it was only the Word God spoke, but not written, and so they had it from hand to hand by tradition as many other things, as the Prophecy of Enoch that the Apostle Jude speaks of, you do not find it written in the Book of God, and yet the Apostle speaks of it, so that indeed it was from hand to hand. Yea, and we find in the New Testament when Paul speaks of a

thing that Christ should say, how that our Lord saith, “It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive,” you find it not recorded in the Gospels that Christ said so. So, this is that which the Lord said, though it was not written from the beginning of Genesis to this very place, or otherwise though it be not recorded in express terms, yet something is recorded to the same purpose and effect; and so it may seem to have reference to that Scripture, Exod. 29:43. There we have a Scripture comes as near to it as any I know: “And there will I meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory”, that is as much in effect as, “I will be sanctified in those that come nigh Me, in those that come to worship Me in My tabernacle, I will be sanctified in all things that concern My worship, I will be sure to be sanctified there.”

I will be sanctified, I will be hallowed, for it is the very same that you have in the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be Thy Name”, only that is the Greek word, and this is the Hebrew. But if you would translate this word into Greek, you must translate it by the same word that Christ spoke when He taught His Disciples to pray, “Hallowed be Thy Name” hallowed and sanctified is all one, Lord, let Thy Name appear to be holy. So, I will be sanctified, that is, I will have My Name appear to be holy, I will be made known unto My people, and to all the world that I am a Holy God; that's the meaning of, “I will be sanctified.” I will be known to all the world that I am a Holy God.

And before all the people I will be glorified, so it is in the latter part of the verse, as if God should say, “I account it to be My glory that I should be manifested to be holy before all the world.”

I will be sanctified, that is, I will have My people to demean and carry themselves so, as to hold forth their acknowledgment of My holiness so, as by their carriage I may appear to be a holy God. I will be sanctified by them, or otherwise if they shall not in an active way sanctify My Name, that is, if they shall not demean themselves so as to hold forth the glory of My holiness, then I will be sanctified upon them. I will demean and carry Myself towards them so, as by My

actions upon them I will make it appear what a holy God I am. So, God is sanctified two ways, either by the holiness of His people, in their carriage towards Him holding forth the glory of God's holiness; and so, in that 1 Peter 3: 15, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts," the saints do sanctify God in their hearts when they fear God as a holy God, and reverence Him, and love Him as a holy God, and so sanctify Him in their lives; when their lives do hold forth the glory of God's holiness, then God is sanctified.

But then if we do not do so, then God sanctifies Himself, that is in ways of judgment upon those that do not in ways of holiness sanctify His Name. And thus, you have it, Ezekiel 28:22 And say, "Thus saith the Lord God, "Behold I am against thee O Zidon, and I will be glorified in the midst of thee, and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgment in her, and shall be sanctified in her." And this is all one with "I will be glorified in the midst of them." And in Ezekiel 38: 16, 23, you have to the same purpose, "And thou shalt come up against My people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days and I will bring thee against My land that the heathen may know Me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." And in verse 23, "Thus will I magnify Myself, and sanctify Myself, and will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord," in the way of the execution of judgment. Thus, I will sanctify Myself, so I will be sanctified in those that draw nigh Me.

"In those that are nigh Me," nigh ones, so it may be read. That is, especially the priests that did approach to God. Ezekiel 42:13, they approach to God especially. But it is meant generally of all those that shall have to deal in My worship, whosoever shall come to worship Me, let them look to it; they must sanctify My Name, they must so demean themselves in My worship as to hold forth My Name to be holy, or otherwise I will manifest Myself against them in the ways of judgment, for I will appear to be a holy God. I will have the glory of my holiness one way or other (saith God) in those that come near Me; as if God should say, "Though it's otherwise with men, they

indeed will be ready to favor those that are near them, but I will not do so. Men will sooner pass by the offences of those that are near them, than those that are not. As suppose that a stranger commits an offence, you would be severe towards him; but suppose it were one of your own children, or kinsmen, what would you do then? Do not we see that men will rather favor their own kindred than strangers, though the offence be the same? “But I will not do so,” saith God. “Suppose it be one of your own family, will not you be ready to excuse them? Suppose it were your own child that should commit such an offence, oh what friends would you make to take him off from punishment? Though men would do so towards their own, yet be bitter and severe towards strangers, yet I will not be so,” saith God. “Let those that are near Me look to it; I will be sanctified by them. I will be sanctified in those that draw near Me.”

Now upon this, when Moses said thus, that God would be sanctified in those that draw near Him, this was Moses' scope to Aaron, as if Moses should say, “Aaron, though I confess the hand of God is heavy upon you this day, yet it is fit for you to submit to God, 'tis fit that God should be glorified whatever becomes of you; you are dear to God, but God's Name is dearer to Him than you are. Whatever the lives of your sons were, yet it is fit that God should be honored, and His Name sanctified whatever become of your sons, or of your comforts; and therefore, let your heart be quieted; you have had a great loss and affliction upon you; but God hath had glory; God hath glorified Himself. How hath God glorified Himself? Very much by this way, for God by this way hath done an act to make all the people of the land fear before Him; to cause them to worship Him with all reverence. All the people of the land seeing such a judgment as this, and hearing of it, they will learn forever to fear and reverence this God; they will say, how shall we appear before this holy God? We had need take heed how we appear in His presence, and worship Him according to the way that He Himself would be worshiped; as if Moses should say, this honor that God hath by this means in the hearts of His people, it is that that you should account a greater good

than the lives of your children, whatever they are. This is the scope of Moses' speech to Aaron.

Now upon this the text saith, "Aaron held his peace." He was silenced. It may be before he was expressing himself in grief, and sorrowed exceedingly much in words; but now he was quiet and had nothing to say. He did by his silence acknowledge his children were dear to him, but it is fit that God should be glorified whatever becomes of his children, and therefore Aaron holds his peace.

But the word that is here translated, "holds his peace," it hath more in it than mere silence, for the Hebrews have another word to signify mere silence of speech; but this signifies a staying of the heart, that it doth not further proceed in any trouble of spirit; a silence in the very heart and staying of it; a staying of the motions of the heart. I find the same word to be used in Scripture when Joshua said to the Sun, "Stand still, stay thyself on Gibeon," Joshua 10:12. It is the same word that is here translated, and "Aaron held his peace," that is, he was stayed from further vexing or troubling of himself, or being disquieted, whereas his heart was in a strong violent motion. Now Moses' speech did stop him and gave a stop to his heart to make it stand still in a wonderful manner, as the Sun, when Joshua spoke to it to stand still, as if the Lord should have spoken to his heart, "Aaron, thy heart is in a mighty strong motion, but consider that I must be sanctified in those that draw nigh Me; and let all those motions of thy heart be stopped and quiet." Thus, now you see the meaning of the Scripture, and the scope of it. Now in this Scripture you have these three special and notable points:

1. That in worshiping of God, there is a drawing nigh unto Him.
2. That when we do draw nigh to God, we should take heed to ourselves that we sanctify God's Name.
3. If we do not sanctify God's Name in our drawings nigh to Him, then certainly God will sanctify His own Name upon us.

These are the three points that I intend to handle, and especially the second to handle largely among you. I confess upon another occasion in one sermon I have spoken out of these words, but now I intend not only in general to show you how you should sanctify God's Name in worship, but likewise in the particular acts of worship, as sanctifying His Name in prayer, in receiving the sacrament, in hearing the Word; in the several chief parts of the worship of God, how His Name should be sanctified. For in all these you do draw nigh to God. And for that end I have pitched my thoughts upon this Scripture. But before I come to these three great points that are the principal points in the words read to you, I shall take up divers other notes of observation that lie up and down, as it were, scattered, that are of great use, and will help us further to make use of this Scripture in the other points that I shall come to afterward and handle more largely.

The first note is this, that in God's worship there must be nothing tendered up to God but what He hath commanded; whatsoever we meddle with in the worship of God, it must be what we have a warrant for out of the Word of God.

For this speech of Moses is upon occasion of the judgment of God upon Aaron's sons for offering strange fire; they offered fire that God had not commanded. Hence, I say that all things in God's worship must have a warrant out of God's Word, must be commanded. It's not enough that it is not forbidden. I beseech you observe it; it is not enough that a thing is not forbidden, and what hurt is there in it? But it must be commanded. I confess in matters that are civil and natural, there this may be enough. If it be but according to the rules of prudence, and not forbidden in the Word, we may make use of this in civil and natural things. But now when we come to matters of religion and the worship of God, we must either have a command or somewhat out of God's Word by some consequence drawn from some command wherein God manifests His will, either a direct command, or by comparing one thing with another, or drawing consequences plainly from the words; we must have a warrant of the worship of God. One would have thought that these priests offering

incense to the true God, what hurt was there in taking other fire? But there was no command for it, and therefore it was not accepted.

It's true, there are some things in the worship of God that are natural and civil helps, and there we need not have any command. As for instance, when we come to worship God, the congregation meets, they must have a convenient place to keep the air and weather from them; now this is but a natural help, and so far, as I use the place of worship as a natural help, I need have no command. But if I will put anything in a place beyond what it hath in its own nature, there I must look for a command. For if I account one place more holy than another, or to think that God should accept of worship in one place rather than in another, this is to raise it above what it is in its own nature, so that when any creature is raised in a religious way above what it has in it by nature, if I have not Scripture to warrant me, I am therein superstitious. It's a very useful rule for to help you: if any creature that you make any use of in a way of religion beyond what it hath in its own nature, if you have not some warrant from the Word of God (whatsoever specious show there may be in it) it is superstition. As now for the place, there was a place that was holy, but then it had an institution from God. And so, for garments, to use those that are decent, the light of reason is enough, but if I will put anything upon them beyond what there is in them in their own nature, as heretofore in a surplus, what, had that any more decency in its own nature, but only man's institution? Now when man shall put a religious respect upon a thing by virtue of his own institution when he hath not a warrant from God, here's superstition!

We must all be willing worshipers, but not Will-worshippers. We must come freely to worship God, but we must not worship God according to our own wills, and therefore whatever we do in the worship of God, if we have not a warrant for it, when this is said, "Who requires this at your hands?" it will stop our mouths another day. In Matthew 15:9, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." In vain, it is a vain thing to worship God when there is nothing but a commandment of man for

this worship. If you would worship God, you must have a commandment of God for the worship. And in Isa. 29:13 there is a place to the same purpose that shows how the Lord is offended with any man that shall teach His fear by their own precepts, “Wherefore the Lord said, ‘Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear towards Me taught by the precepts of men.’” Mark it, now if this be so, the Lord have mercy upon us in this thing. You have cause to be humbled every one of you, I believe, in some degree or other, this congregation very much, and most congregations that have had the fear of God taught them by the precepts of men. How many things have there been in the worship of God that you can show no warrant in the Word for? A great many things merely men's inventions, however they are now cast out, because authority came in and cast them out, and so you submit to it. But that is not enough for you to submit to it because authority would have it so; but you ought to be humbled before God for all your will-worship, for all your yieldings to anything in the worship of God that was taught by the precepts of men. You see how severe God was to Nadab and Abihu for but taking other fire than that which God had appointed to offer up incense, though there was no direct commandment against it. If the Lord hath spared you, and not manifested any displeasure upon you, you have cause to acknowledge God's mercy, and to be humbled for all your false worship; certainly, God doth expect it from this land to be humbled for their will-worship, or otherwise they sow among thorns. All the reformation that is among us, if there be not a humiliation before for all our false worship, 'tis not enough that we set up now the true worship of God, but we must be humbled for our false worship. And that's the First Note: that in the worship of God there must be nothing but what God commands.

The second note is this, that in the matters of worship God stands upon little things; such things as seem to be very small and little to us, yet God stands much upon them in the matter of worship. For there is nothing wherein the prerogative of God doth more appear

than in worship. As Princes, they stand much upon their prerogatives. Now God hath written the law of natural worship in our hearts as that we should love God, fear God, trust in God, and pray to God; this God hath written in our hearts. But there are other things in the worship of God that are not written in our hearts that only depend upon the will of God revealed in His Word, which were no duties except they were revealed in His Word. And these are of such a nature as we can see no reason for but only this, because God will have them. As now, there are many kinds of ceremonies to manifest honor to Princes that there is no reason for them at all, but merely because it is a civil institution so appointed. So, God would have some ways for the honoring of Him that the creature should not see into the reason of them, but merely the will of God to have them so. Now God stands much upon little things; though men would think it a little matter whether this fire, or that fire, and will not this burn as well as that? But God stands upon it. And so, for the Ark, when Uzzah did but touch the Ark when it was ready to fall, we would think it no great matter, but one touch of the Ark cost him his life. There is not any one minimum in the worship of God, but God stands mightily upon it. In the matter of the Sabbath, that's His worship, for a poor man to gather a few sticks, what great matter is it? But God stands upon it. And so, when the men of Bethshemesh did but look into the Ark, it cost the lives of fifty thousand threescore and ten men. If it be a matter of a holy thing that concerns His worship, He would not have it abused in anything. Let us learn to make conscience of little things in the worship of God, and not to think, O how nice such are, and how precise and nice in such small things! Thou doest not understand the nature of Divine worship, if so be thou not precise and careful about it. God is precise and careful and stands upon little things in the matter of His worship.

Another note is this: That there are no privileges or dignities of man that can secure them from God's stroke.

First, Moses the man of God, he was their uncle; Aaron that great instrument of God's glory, he was their father. They were men that

were newly consecrated to the priest's office, they were renowned men that God put much glory upon, yet if they will venture but to offend God in this little thing, God's wrath breaks out upon them and kills them presently. Let us take heed then of venturing and do not think that any services that we have done heretofore can bear us out; if the greatest cannot bear with all their privileges, how dare we poor worms venture upon the displeasure of God? Thou that art a worthless creature of no use at all in the world, darest thou provoke this God, when as the Lord is so angry against men that are of great use and service to let out His wrath upon them suddenly? If you should see a Prince not spare his favorite or his nobles that are about him, but upon one offence that we think is but a little offence that the Prince's anger should be so much against them as to cost them their lives, what cause is there for poor people to tremble then when they have done that which may incur the anger of the Prince? You see all outward privileges and greatness will not excuse from the stroke of God's justice; it should not excuse from the stroke of man's justice. It's true among men, poor people they go to it if they offend, but if great men offend, they escape; but it is not so with God, for Nadab and Abihu were great and renowned men.

The fourth note is, that the more the dignity of men is, the more is their danger if they look not to it. And this note I gather from hence, that Nadab and Abihu were the two eldest sons of Aaron, and we find in the Scripture that Eleazer and Ithamer that were the two other sons of Aaron, they escaped and were not thus consumed. Why? Because the two elder sons had the dignity and privilege to come and offer the incense, and having greater dignity than the younger, and not being careful to behave themselves as they ought to do, the Lord smote them, and the younger they escaped. And so many times they that are in a meaner condition they escape, when those that are in a higher condition they are struck. Let men that are in higher conditions than others look to themselves, for their danger is greater. And you that are in a meaner condition, envy not those that are higher, for you may be more safe in that mean condition which you are in than they in theirs.

The fifth note is that the beginnings of things of high concernment do meet sometimes with great difficulties and interruptions. This note I gather from hence: that Nadab and Abihu were struck at the very beginning of their priesthood. As now, suppose there were a new office erected in a commonwealth that concerned the public good of the Kingdom, and in the very first erecting of the office there falls out some hideous accident that rings throughout the whole Kingdom, as if God from heaven had done something against them in that office. As now, suppose that the first time the judges should come at the bench, that God should strike them from heaven dead at the very bench; it would be a mighty matter to darken the glory and honor of that office. So, one would think that it should have been a mighty matter to have darkened the glory and the honor of the priesthood always, but God stands not upon that. Many times, the beginnings of great things are darkened by sad accidents, and therefore let us not be offended though we see some sad accidents to fall out at the beginning of great things, for though accidents fall out sadly at first, yet God may prosper it afterwards, as He did the priesthood.

The sixth note is that those that enter into public places, and especially such places as concern the worship of God, they had need to have the fear of God much upon them when they first enter into those places. Now this were a very good point if I were to preach to an auditory of ministers. You see Nadab and Abihu upon their first consecration; the Lord smote them for this little miscarriage, as we would think. And that's a sixth note which especially concerns ministers, and therefore I pass it over.

The seventh note that we have, and that's very useful for us all, God would have us all to pick out His mind from dark expressions in His Word. Though He doth not express His will fully and in express terms, yet if there be any thing in His Word whereby we may come to gather the mind of God, God expects that we should gather His mind out of His Word, and if we do not it's at our own peril. The mind of God about this strange fire that these offered, you will say, they were

to pick it out; how could they have known that it was God's mind that they should not offer any fire but that on the Altar? They should have reasoned thus with themselves, what fire hath God let come down from heaven upon the Altar, and hath He commanded that that should be preserved on the Altar for His service? Surely this must be God's mind then, that we should make use of this fire rather than any other fire. God expects that they should have reasoned thus, but because they did not pick out God's mind by reasoning after this manner, therefore the hand of God came out upon them. They offended, and it may be it was through ignorance, but it was at their peril. If they were ignorant of the mind of God when it might be known though it were but darkly revealed and were to be picked out from several places compared together, it was at their peril.

It is a point that we have a great deal of need of, for this is the vain heart of man, that if there be any thing that God would have that is not suitable to his own ends, he will stand wrangling against it, and caviling at it; how doth it appear, (will he say); can you bring express Scripture for it? Bring me express Scripture in words to prove it, and then I will believe it; and so stands out till you bring so many words of Scripture that forbids such a thing, or commands such a duty. Now my brethren, if you be of this temper that you will forbear nothing, nor set up anything but what you have directly express words of Scripture for, you may run at your own peril into woeful dangers, into woeful sins. Know that God hath so revealed a great part of His mind as it is only to be known by gathering one thing from another, and by comparing one thing with another. And God expects this from you, that if upon examination of Scripture that one thing appears more likely to be His mind and will than another, you are bound to go that way that is more likely. I told you before, that in matters of worship we must have warrant from the Word; but it doth not follow that we must have a direct express warrant in everything. As it is many times in some kind of picture, the great art, it is in the cast of the looks; you cannot say, it's in the drawing of this line, or the other line, but altogether, it is the cast of the looks that causes the beauty of the picture. So in the Scripture, you cannot say that this

one line or the other line taken as a single line that proves it, but let them be laid all together and there will be a kind of aspect of God's mind, that we may see that this is the mind of God rather than the other, and we are bound to go that way.

Now so far Nadab and Abihu might have seen that they should rather have taken fire off the altar than any other fire. But they presumed because they had not express Word, and you see it was at their peril. Oh, take heed of standing out, and wrangling against what is required because you have not express words; the Lord hath laid things so, and especially in the New Testament, for the ordering of the Church in the New Testament, as you have not express command for abundance of things, but sometimes an example in some things, and sometimes not a clear example neither. But compare one thing with another, and that which seems to be nearest the mind of God that should be bond enough to us: to tie us to go according to what the mind of God seems most probable to be in the Scripture; and a humble, teachable heart will soon be convinced, when another man will not.

We find it clearly, that such things that are most suitable to men's own ends, a little matter will serve the turn to persuade men to it, though one might argue against it. I could easily show it, but that I think it not so convenient in pulpits to meddle with such things as those are. Those things I say which are suitable to men's own ends and ways, them they will close withal. But other things that do cross the flesh that are most opposite to looseness and would bring men most under the government of Christ, those things men stand out against, and they must have clear and express words; express and clear warrant out of the Word in so many terms, or otherwise by no means they will not so much as yield to it. That's a point that if God would but settle it upon our hearts, might be of very great use. A gracious heart will see the truth through a very little crevice. But it is marvelous to consider what must be done to convince a man, before he is humbled, of some part of God's will; and how easy is it to convince a man after he is humbled.

The eighth note is this, that sinners may meet with some judgments of God that were never threatened in His Word. God did never threaten beforehand, and say, whosoever offers strange fire, I will consume them with fire from heaven; but they meet with a judgment that was not threatened. Consider of this, it may be when we come to speak out of the Word and show you plainly how God doth threaten such and such sins, you are afraid then; but know, if thou venture upon ways of sin, thou may meet with dreadful judgments executed that never yet were threatened. Besides all those judgments that are threatened in the Book of God, thou may meet with judgments unheard of, unexpected. As God hath mercies beyond what He hath expressly revealed in His Word, for never was it heard since the beginning of the world what God hath laid up for them that love Him, so God hath judgments beyond what is in His Word.

Sometimes when the ministers of God do open the threatenings that are in God's Word, you think that they are terrible. But know that God in the treasury of His judgments hath more dreadful things than ever yet hath been revealed in His Word; and therefore, learn to tremble not only at what is revealed in God's Word against thy sin, but tremble at what there is in that infinite justice, power, and wisdom of God to find out and execute upon sinners. For thou art a sinner, and especially if thou be a bold and presumptuous sinner, thou mayest, I say, expect to meet with whatsoever evil an infinite wisdom is able to devise, and that an infinite power is able to bring upon thee that thou art capable of. Thou committed such and such a sin. Perhaps thou do not know of any particular judgment that is threatened against it; but think thus, I that do provoke God by my sins, what may I look for? 'Tis more than I know to the contrary, but that whatsoever the infinite wisdom of God is able to find out, and what misery soever I am capable of, that the Lord may bring upon me. Consider of this and take heed of sin.

The ninth observation is this, that God is very quick with some in the ways of His judgments. It may be He may spare others for a long time, but concerning thee He may say, thou shalt not offend twice. If

thou wilt venture the first act, God may strike thee with death; He did so here with Nadab and Abihu, for they were but newly consecrated. So I find it by interpreters, that they were to be in consecration for seven days, and this was the first day that they came to their place, and in the very first act that they did, God did smite them. Let us tremble: the Lord is quick towards some; He is patient towards others. But do not presume because He is patient to others, He may take thee in the very first act of thy sin and be quick with thee.

The tenth note is this, that the holiness of a duty will never bear a man out in the miscarriage of it. This was a holy duty: they were the true priests of God, they came to offer incense to the true God, it was right incense that they offered, there was but this one miscarriage, they had not the same fire that God would have; now this miscarriage God comes upon them for, and all the good there was in the duty it would not bear them out.

Consider this, you that perform many holy duties: take heed of giving way to yourselves in any miscarriage, for do not think that because your duties are very good and holy, that by doing thereof you may venture upon mixture; take heed of mixing any evil, any miscarriage in any holy thing, though you have performed a thousand holy duties, yet it will not bear you out in the miscarriage of them.

The eleventh note is this, that the Lord is very terrible out of His holy places. The note is the same that you have in Psalm 68:35. The Lord is terrible out of his holy places. When we have to deal with God, who can stand before this holy God? Our God is a consuming fire. The Lord manifests Himself here most dreadfully to strike with fire these two priests, as in Ezek. 9:6, "Begin at My Sanctuary," saith God. God is terrible, terrible towards those that shall dare to approach unto Him, and yet are wicked and ungodly in their approaching; He is terrible to those that are near unto Him. God would have us all to tremble at His presence.

In the twelfth place, God's judgments are often very suitable to men's sins. Here they sinned by fire, and they are consumed by fire. They offended by strange fire, and God strikes them by a strange fire. The judgments of God are very suitable to the sins of men oftentimes. As here by fire, so another time we find it by water: Pharaoh he sins by drowning the infants of the people of Israel in the waters, and God drowns him in the sea. If you will be drowning by water, you shall have water enough, saith God. And so here, if you will be meddling with strange fire, you shall have strange fire, saith God. God doth many times proportion judgments to sinners that His righteousness might the more appear. Those very creatures in which we sin, many times God makes them, or others of the same kind, to be the executioners of His wrath. So it was with the Jews: they would sell Christ for 30 pieces of silver, and they were sold 30 of them for a penny afterwards. And so the story of Adoni-bezek in the first of Judges, that was so cruel in such a way to cut off thumbs and toes of Kings, even so he was served in the like kind. And it's ordinary for men that are of cruel fiery spirits to meet with cruel fiery spirits likewise.

And I would apply it in this particular: you that are stout children to your parents, if God lets you live, you many times meet with the very same in your children; and when you that are parents meet with stubborn children, you should reflect, doth not God come righteously upon me? And so you that are servants, you are stout to your masters, and afterwards when you come to have servants they will be so to you; and perhaps you were unfaithful to your governors, afterwards when you come to have servants, it's a thousand to one but they will be so to you. Now you should strike your hand upon your heart and say, it's just with God that it should be so, and that He should come upon me in my own kind.

Another note is this, they offered strange fire. Let's take heed all of us, how we bring strange fire into God's service. Bring strange fire into God's service, what's that? I find divers writers speaking upon this, saith Ambrose, lusts, and covetousness are this strange fire.

That which I would have you consider of is this, above all strange fire, take heed of the strange fire of passion and anger, and especially in the worship of God; and at any time when you find your hearts heated and fired with anger, when you are about to worship God, remember this Scripture, "Nadab and Abihu were consumed by God, with fire from God, for coming into God's presence with strange fire."

Now, O Lord, how often have we come into Thy presence with strange fire! Perhaps your hearts have been burning hot with passion when you have been coming into God's presence. You are to pray with fervency, for so the Scripture saith; we are indeed to be heat in prayer, by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, but certainly not to come with the fire of passion and anger. Lift up your hands without wrath and doubting. If you have been passionate, and your hearts have been heat that way, be sure you get your hearts cold before you go to prayer. And so, when you come to hear the Word, if your hearts have been heat with passion, be sure you get them cold before you come to hear the Word. Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word that may save your souls.

And so, when you come to the Lord's Supper, take heed of coming with wrath and malice, for then you come but to offer strange fire. It is a special consideration for ministers that come to preach, they should take heed of bringing strange fire into their pulpits, that is, of venting their own passions. That hath been ever a rule that I have been convinced of since I knew anything of preaching: that man that is appointed to reveal God's wrath had need to conceal his own wrath. That's certainly a rule for all preachers, for the Lord sends His preachers to make known His wrath against men's sins. But now, the more they make known His wrath, the more they should conceal their own. And so, by that means when they come in the most open way to manifest God's wrath, the more their preaching would be accepted.

Now it's true, a carnal heart would be ready to think that when a preacher speaks out of true zeal to God, he will be ready to say that

he hath aiming at himself. Take heed of that, I believe you have had but little occasion of such a temptation in this place. But, however this I know, it is the duty of the Ministers of God to be sure to bring nothing but the fire of the Spirit of God, the fire that they have from the Altar, their tongues being touched with one of these coals, and not that they should come with their own passions to further the righteousness of God, no, “the wrath of man doth not accomplish the righteousness of God.” There are some other particulars which being laid down we shall come to the three main points.

## **Sermon II**

### **God Will be Sanctified in Those Who Draw Near to Him**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be Sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We began these words the last day, and showed the scope of them, and opened the meaning of them, and spoke of divers notes of observation that we gathered from this story of Nadab and Abihu, and of God's dealing with them. From the general story of it, there were many points of notable observation that were drawn from thence. I'll add some more now, and so come to the main doctrinal point in the Text.

A further note of observation is this: that many times even the dear Saints of God do meet with very sore and grievous afflictions in their children. That the most eminent saints of God are not freed from very grievous afflictions even in their children, it was one of the sorest afflictions that almost ever any saint of God met with all in his children. This affliction of Aaron at this time that two of his sons,

and (as I told you the last day) renowned men in Israel, newly consecrated to the office of priesthood, that the very first day they came to offer in their office, they were struck before all the people with fire from heaven and consumed. Oh, what a sad affliction was it to Aaron, their father, when he saw his sons in such a manner destroyed by God himself!

Consider of this you that have children and are ready to murmur and complain of every little affliction that is upon you in respect of your children. If so be that your children be but a little sick, or there be any miscarriage of them, you think it is a heavy hand of God; but especially if God take away your children by death, then you mourn and will not be comforted. Yea, but though God have taken away your children by death, yea perhaps it may be by a violent death, as being drowned, etc., yet they have not been struck with fire from heaven by God and they have not been of such public use.

These here were renowned men and taken away in their very sin too; your children which have gone upon their lawful employments, and God hath taken away their lives, there's no such cause of murmuring here; but when God takes away children in their sins, and in such a way as by fire from heaven; thus, God took away Aaron's children, and he was as dear to God as you are. And yet thus God deals with His saints; with Aaron in regard of his children, and with his elder children and with two of them together. This example may be enough to still and quiet the hearts of men and women that are afflicted in respect of any calamity befalls their children. You see what a hand of God is against the very children of Aaron.

A further note is this, that God's judgements we see sometimes, though the effect of them be visible, yet they come in an invisible way. For you shall find if you read on in this story, that they were smote with fire from heaven, but it did not appear what fire, for it did not so much as consume their clothes, nor their bodies, but went through and struck them dead, and nobody could tell how. God's judgements do come in a way that is invisible. If it had been in a

visible flame of fire all would have seen it, and it would have burnt their clothes, or their bodies; but you shall find in verse 5 that they were carried away from the sanctuary in their clothes, they were not burnt.

Another note is this, that though the lives of men be dear and precious to God, yet they are not so precious as His glory. The glory of His Name is a thousand thousand times more dear unto God than the lives of thousand thousands of people; the lives of Nadab and Abihu must go that God may be sanctified. If it comes so in the way (as I may so say) the lives of men and the sanctifying of God's Name, the glory of God must pass on, and must have its course; let the lives of men go which way they will.

We think much to have the lives of men taken away; but if we know what the glory of God meant, and what infinite reason there is that God should be gloried in, we would not think it much that the lives of never so many men should go for the glory of God. 'Tis mercy that our lives have not gone many times for God's glory. How often might God have glorified Himself in taking away our lives? We have cause to bless Him, that our lives have been preserved so long as they have.

Again, note that the nearer any men are to God, the more they had need take heed that they glorify Him, for they must expect to be spared the less if they sin against Him. Nadab and Abihu, the priests of God, and they came near to God, yet by their transgression. Though I told you we do not find in any place of Scripture directly in words that this fire is forbidden, but they should have gathered God's mind by consequence, and therefore by the way I only note that we must not think to urge upon men in all things strict commands in very words, but if it be commanded so as we may draw it by any consequence, it's a command; as now here for the negative, they had not a negative prohibition in words, yet they had it by consequence. So, for the affirmative, though we have not the affirmative in express words, yet if we may have it by consequence, it is an affirmative as well as the negative when we have it by consequence.

But now the note of observation is that the nearer any comes to God, if they sin against Him, they must not expect to be spared. Do not think that God will spare you the more because you are professors of religion, or because you do often worship Him. I suppose you that are acquainted with Scripture know that place in Amos 3:2, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

Another note is this, that when a judgement is exemplary, then we should have recourse to the Word of God, to see how God doth make His Word good in that judgement. So Moses doth, “This is that which the Lord hath said.” Do you see any remarkable hand of God in the execution of a judgement upon one, have recourse to God's Word, and presently begin to think this, what is there in God's Word against that sin that this man hath been guilty of? If you see a judgement of God upon a drunkard, remember the threats in the Word of God against drunkenness, and so the judgements of God upon unclean persons, swearers, Sabbath breakers, liars, or any profane and ungodly persons, have recourse to the judgements of God threatened in the Word against such; and so likewise concerning scorers and opposers of religion, remember what is said in the Word of God against such, and so learn to sanctify God's Name. We might have mentioned some particular threats of God against particular sinners for the helping of you, that when you see exemplary judgements to have recourse to the Word of God. But we let that pass.

A further note from this story is this, that the great honor that God intends to His Name, it is the making of His Name holy. I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.

As if Moses should say in God's Name, I must and will have glory from the people, and how? By making My Name appear to be holy, this is the glory that I stand upon above all other things, that My Name may appear to be holy, that I may appear to be a holy God. I beseech you brethren consider of this, God stands upon nothing

more than to appear to all the world to be a holy God, there's the glory of God's Name in an eminent way, God doth not so much stand upon this, to appear to be a strong God, to appear to be a powerful God, to be a God of patience, long-suffering, God doth not so much stand to be an omniscient God, though these attributes are dear to God, but that He may appear to be a holy God, that He stands upon. Whatever glory of the Name of God, that God shall be content to have eclipsed in the world for a while, yet He is resolved He will have the glory of His holiness above all things. And therefore, the Angels when they are celebrating the glory of God, they do not say, Lord Almighty, Almighty, Almighty or Lord Omniscient, Omniscient, Omniscient, but Holy, Holy, Holy. Those three together, the holiness of God, therein appears the glory of God above all. God stands upon it that He will appear to be a holy God.

Oh, that those who profess themselves to be the servants of God, that they would especially endeavor to hold forth God's holiness; you that are near to God, you that hope you are God's children, and make profession of His Name, labor you to hold forth the glory of His holiness above all things, in your holy lives and conversations. For God stands upon this, to have His Name to be sanctified. "I will be sanctified," says God, "and I will be glorified," so He doth interpret the glory of His Name by being sanctified. As if God should say, that's the glory that I look for, that My Name may be extolled as holy. And therefore, the very first petition that Christ teaches us to pray in the Lord's prayer, it is, "Hallowed be Thy Name," which is all one with this, sanctified be Thy Name. Oh, let the Name of God appear to be holy in the world. That's another note, that these two are joined together, I'll be sanctified in those that draw nigh Me, and I will be glorified before the people.

Again observe, that it is the part of true friendship, to help friends in their distresses, and seek to comfort them from the Word.

Though we ourselves be in afflictions, yet we should seek to comfort our friends that are in greater afflictions, and to comfort them by the

Word, for so did Moses. Moses comes to comfort Aaron and applies the Word, “This is that which the Lord hath said, ‘I will be sanctified.’” Now mark, no question Moses was afflicted upon this heavy hand of God, for he was their uncle; but though it was heavy upon the uncle, yet it was heavier upon the father, and therefore though Moses was troubled, yet he knew that Aaron was more troubled, and therefore he goes to Aaron and seeks to comfort him, and he makes use of the Word in his comforting of him.

Learn this then, to go and comfort your brethren, for Aaron was Moses’ brother; go and comfort them in their afflictions and think not because that you have some afflictions upon you that therefore you should not be a comfort to your brethren. Their affliction is greater than yours, and when you come to comfort them, come not in a mere carnal way and say, brother you must be content; but you must come and apply somewhat of the Word of God to comfort them and say, this is that which the Lord hath spoke. And to that end you should labor to be exercised in the Word of God, that so you may be able to go to your brethren and comfort them in any affliction for there is no particular affliction but there is some Word of God that is suitable to that particular affliction, and those who are well exercised in the Word of God, they can apply some Word to every affliction. And indeed, this is an excellent friend, and such a friend is worth his weight in gold, that can come to another friend in any affliction and ever more hath somewhat of the Word of God to apply to that affliction.

The last observation is this, that Aaron held his peace. From whence we may note that there is no such way to quiet a gracious heart under any afflictions in the world as that God will fetch out His honor by it. It is grievous to me, but God fetches out His glory and honor by it. The applying of the Word, and the consideration that God hath His way to fetch out His glory in our afflictions is the only way to quiet a gracious heart. All these points might take up a great deal of time, but I will let them pass and come to the main point of all, “I will be

sanctified in all those that come nigh Me.” There are these three points in these words:

1 First, that in the worship of God, men and women draw nigh to God.

2 Secondly, that we ought to sanctify God's Name in drawing nigh to Him.

3 Thirdly, that if we do not sanctify it, God will sanctify His own Name upon us.

First, that in worshipping of God, there is a drawing nigh to God.

Quest. Why, is not God in every place?

Answ. Yes certainly, we can never be in any place, but we are nigh to God, God stands by us and looks upon us. It is not only when you are worshipping of God that you are nigh Him, but when you sin against Him, when thou art swearing, profaning His Name, His Day, God stands and looks upon thee, thou art nigh Him. And it may be said or written upon every place what was said of the City in the last words of the prophecy of Ezek. 48:35, “The name of the city was Jehovah-Shammah,” that is, “The Lord is There,” the Lord Jehovah He is there, He is present in this place. Oh, that you would remember when you are in any place, that the name of that place is Jehovah-Shammah, The Lord is There. “In Him we live, we move and have our being.” Therefore, we are always nigh Him, yea, but though we are always nigh God in regard of that essential presence of His, yet there is a more peculiar and special drawing nigh to God in the duties of His worship, and that the Scripture seems to hold forth unto you. First, I'll show you how the Scripture holds it forth, and then in what respects the creature may be said to draw nigh to God in holy duties of worship; for so it was here they were coming to offer incense.

1 That we do draw nigh to God in holy duties, see James 4:8, “Draw nigh to God” (so that you may be nearer God than you were) that is, by holy services, and holy duties, and hence it is in Psalm 95:2, “Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving”, so that there is a more peculiar coming before God's presence when we come to worship Him than at other times. And verse 6, “O Come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker.” So, in Psalm 100:2, “Let us come before His presence with singing” for that's one part of the worship of God. But the Scripture is plain, that there is a special coming before God when we are coming to worship Him, and in this respect the servants of God in Psalm 148:14 are said to be “a people near unto Him.” It is a very remarkable expression and sets forth much the honor of the saints of God. There's the commendation of the excellent estate of the saints. “He also exalteth the horn of His people, the praise of all His saints, even the children of Israel, a people near unto Him.” The saints of God, the children of Israel, the Church of God are said to be a people near to God. Why near him? Because that they worship God, they are much exercised in the worship of God. This is one respect though there may be divers others mentioned, yet in respect of their coming so much before God in His worship, therefore they are near God.

Quest. Near Him! Why, in what respects may a man be said to draw nigh to God when he worships Him?

Answ. To that I answer, there are three respects in which a man when he is worshipping of God may be said to draw nigh to God:

1 First, because when we come to worship God, we come to tender up that homage and service unto Him, that is due from us as creatures to the infinite Creator; that's the very end of worship. If you would know what it is to worship God, it is this.

You come to tender up that homage and respect that is due from the creature to the Creator. Now when a subject comes to tender up his homage to his Prince, he comes towards him, when he doth it

immediately. So, we have none to tender it up by but Jesus Christ, and when we tender it up, we must come ourselves too, for Christ doth not take our service and tender it up to God and we be absent. But we must come with Christ, and Christ takes us by the hand and so tenders it up to the Father while we are in presence, so that we are said to come nigh to God in that respect, because of the immediate tendering up of that worship of ours to God; I call it immediate in respect of any creature. But in respect of Christ, indeed He is a Mediator to do it, but yet He doth it in a spiritual way, and we have to do with none but God through Jesus Christ in the tendering up of our worship to Him.

We may make use of an institution that God hath appointed, but we do not tender up our worship to God through that creature, but in the use of that creature we do come to God, and our souls are to tender up that respect we owe to God immediately. Therefore, in Levit. 21:21 it is said of the priests in their sacrifices, when they were to come to worship God, “no man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire.” So that when any come to offer any offerings of the Lord made by fire, it appears he came nigh to God. He came to bring a present to God, therefore he comes nigh. So, when we come to offer our spiritual sacrifices unto God, we come nigh to God to offer; it's the offering of a sacrifice to God. And that's the first thing, because the creature comes to bring a present to God, therefore he is said to draw nigh.

And secondly, the soul is said to draw nigh to God in holy duties, because it doth present itself before God in those ways through which God doth use to communicate His choice, precious, most excellent and glorious mercies to His people. I say, when we come to worship God, we come to set ourselves before God in those ways that God doth use to communicate the choice, most excellent and glorious rich mercies that He hath to communicate to His creature.

When we have to deal with creatures, as meat and drink and our outward businesses, we have to do with God in them; but when we come to worship God, we come to present ourselves before Him in those things that He doth use to let out Himself though in a more special and glorious manner to the souls of His people. What's the reason why heaven is said to be the presence of God, and why those that are in heaven are said to live with God? There they behold the face of God and are before Him in a special manner. Therefore, when Christ teaches us to pray, He teaches us to look up to heaven and to say, "Our Father which art in heaven," etc. Now certainly the essential presence of God is on earth as truly and really as in heaven, and God is not so as to have one part in one place, and another in another, but all God is in every place. But the reason why God is said to be in heaven, it is because the Lord makes known Himself there in a more glorious manner than in any other place, and therefore heaven is the presence of God in a more special way.

Now then if the communication of God unto a creature be enough to make the presence of God more special, if this be enough to make a creature to live with God, and to be before His face, because they are there where God doth most communicate Himself, then certainly when we come to worship God we come to be near God, and be with God because the duties of His worship are those means that the Lord hath appointed for the letting out of Himself in the glory of His goodness and mercy to His people. You may expect other manner of communication of God's goodness through the duties of His worship than in any other way. And that's the second respect wherein you may be said to draw nigh to God in holy duties.

Thirdly, you may be said to draw nigh to God because then we should (and if we worship God as we ought, we do) act our faith and humility, and all the graces of the Spirit. We do act them, as it were, upon God when we come to worship Him. That's required in every duty of worship, that you should stir up the faculties of your souls, and all the graces of the Spirit of God, and you should act them upon God when you are worshipping of Him. Tis not enough to come with

grace when you come to worship God, but there must be an acting of that grace upon God.

And so we find in Scripture that the acting of grace upon God, it is a drawing near to Him, therefore in Isaiah 29:13 the Lord complains there, "This people draws near to Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me," as if God should say, Indeed they come and speak to Me, and therefore they think they draw nigh to Me, but I expect that their hearts should be acting upon Me; that's the meaning. And in Zeph. 3:2, God complains there of His people that they did not draw near to Him as they should; and it appears plainly, it was from hence that their graces did not act so upon God as they ought, "She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God." So that acting faith upon God is a drawing nigh to God, and so acting any grace upon God is a drawing nigh to God.

Now when is there a time for the acting of our graces upon God so as when we come to worship God? And therefore in Isa. 64:7, the Lord complains there that no man did stir up himself to take hold on Him. When we come to worship God, we should stir up ourselves to take hold of God. And thus, you see in what respects the soul may be said to draw nigh to God when it comes to worship him.

Now for the application of this point, and it is in divers particulars. The first is this: Hence learn what you do when you come to worship God and consider of it every time you come to perform any act of worship. Truly this one thing would be of marvelous use, and it would help forward to the next point of sanctifying of God's Name. This you are all convinced of, that it is your duty to worship God. When you pray you come to worship God; when you come to hear His Word, you come to worship Him; and when you receive the sacrament you worship Him. Now if I should come from one end of the congregation to the other and ask every one of you this question, it is your duty to worship God, is it not? Yes, that you will all be ready to answer. And what do you do when you worship God? I fear that

this second question would gravel many. You will say, we must pray to God, and serve Him, and hear His word, and go to the communion. Yea, but what do your souls do in this work of worshipping of God? This should be the answer, and so you should think with yourselves, and charge this upon your own hearts: I am now going to worship God, either in prayer, word, or sacraments. I am now going to tender up that homage that is due from a creature to the infinite Creator, so that I must so pray, as I must manifest that high respect that I owe to God as my Creator. But that I shall speak to more afterward. Only now remember this, that you do profess every time you go to prayer, that you go to tender up that homage that you owe unto God and so every time you come to hear the Word, there is a profession that you come to tender up that respect and homage that you owe to the infinite God, and so likewise when you come to receive the sacrament. Now when we come to offer a present to men, we know how we prepare, and with what suitable presence we desire to offer, but of that afterward when we come to speak of sanctifying God's Name.

2 Secondly, remember, when I come to worship God, I come to set myself before the Lord in those ways that God doth let out the choice of His mercies to His people in. I have many mercies from God in the enjoyment of the creature, but when I come to worship Him, I expect the communication of His mercy in another way than through any creature in the world. The duties of His worship are the chief channels that God doth let out the choicest of His mercies to the hearts of His people through, and now I am going to worship Him, I am going to present myself before God. Indeed, there is a little glimmering of the light of God through other creatures to me, but the glorious beams of the light of God is through the duties of His worship.

3 And then thirdly, I am now going to act my soul upon God, so that if I have any abilities to close with God, to act my soul upon Him, it must be put forth now at this time. I am indeed at all times to labor to enjoy communion with God, when I see the creatures, the Sun and

Moon and stars to labor to lift up my heart to God, and when I see the glory of God in the sea, and for my meat and drink I am to bless God, and to acknowledge God in all; but now when I come to worship God, then all the strength of my soul is to be acted upon God in a more special manner; I must then above all labor to stir up whatsoever I have in my soul to act upon God. This is now to worship God.

Secondly, if to worship God, be to draw nigh to God, hence we see the reasons why guilty consciences have little mind to the duties of God's worship. When a man or woman hath given liberty to any licentious way and sinned against their consciences, if they have any light in their consciences, it is one of the most tedious things in the world to come to the duties of God's worship; they had rather do anything than to come to holy duties, as to prayer and especially to secret prayer. A man or woman that hath an enlightened conscience and is under the guilt of sin, the coming to God in holy duties is a very grievous burden to them. Why? Here's the reason, because to worship God is to draw nigh to God, and the guilt that is upon them hath made the presence of God terrible to them, and therefore they had rather go into their company and be merry, eat, drink, sport, or anything rather than to come into God's presence.

We know how it was with Adam, when God appeared in the Garden and called to him, he ran to hide himself. Why? Because he had guiltiness upon him. Oh, the evil that the guilt of sin brings upon the soul, it makes the presence of God terrible! The presence of God it should be more comfortable to us than our lives, but our sin makes God's presence grievous and terrible. A child sometimes, when it hath offended the father and is conscious to itself of the offence that it hath given the father, it had rather be in the kitchen among the servants than to come into the hall or parlor where the father is, because it hath offended him. And so it is with a guilty conscience, when it is conscious to itself of some haunt of evil that it hath given itself unto; it hath no mind at all of coming into the presence of the Father but hangs off.

My brethren, the very presence of God in the communion of His saints is terrible to a guilty conscience, the very looking upon a godly man is terrible to a guilty conscience. When as thou hast been abroad, etc., been loose, etc., wicked in thy ways, I appeal to thy conscience; when thou comest into the presence of some holy gracious man or woman that lives close with God, doth it not daunt thee? Now is the presence of God in the very faces of His saints terrible to a guilty conscience? How terrible is the presence of God in His ordinances then? Indeed, those men and women whose consciences are not enlightened, but are ignorant and sottish, they can sin against God and go into His presence without any trouble; you shall have men swear and be drunken overnight and come to the sacrament the next day, what's the reason? Because there is no light in their consciences; their consciences are in darkness, they are besotted in their sin; but I speak now of one who hath an enlightened conscience, the presence of God is terrible to such a one.

A third use is this; here is the reason why hypocrites do meet with such vengeance from God as they do. I confess we shall meet with this more especially afterwards, only by the way take notice of it; hypocrites above all men may expect the severest judgements of God upon them because they come so nigh God, for they come often to the duties of God's worship. Now they that will come so nigh God's presence and come with base and ungodly hearts to cloak their villainy, of all in the world they must expect to have the severe vengeance of God let out upon them; they that stand highest the bullet must expect to have the strength of it to be the more upon them. So, when the wrath of God proceeds out upon sinners, wicked men that stand nighest Him, they have the greatest stroke of God's wrath. But of that more when I come to the third point that God will be sanctified in those that draw nigh Him.

The fourth use is this, if to worship God, be to draw nigh Him, then to neglect God's worship is to depart from Him; that must needs follow. And this is a dreadful thing, it is the sentence that shall be at the last day of judgement, "Depart from Me." Thou now art willing to

depart from God. Oh, consider of this you that neglect worship, the worship of God in your families, and in your closets, and in the congregation, in the communion of the saints; thou hast little minded or regarded the worship of God it may be all thy days, what hast thou been doing all this while? Thou hast been departing from God all this while, and when thy conscience shall be but enlightened and awakened to see how far thou art from God, how terrible will it be to thee? Remember this, you that have no mind to the duties of the worship of God but love the commission of sin, you neglect God's worship, you were wont to worship him in a constant way in your closets and families, but now you grow more loose, and so you grow more dead every day than other, you go off from God more and more. Surely there can be no good to neglect God's worship. And those that are loath to worship God because they cannot worship Him as they ought, from this point it appears plainly, that there can be no good gotten by neglecting God's worship, for it is departing from God. Whatsoever plea there may be by any temptation to neglect God's worship, certainly there is danger in it, and therefore never listen to any such temptation as shall draw your hearts from the duties of God's worship.

There are a generation of wantons in these times that make little matter of continuing the duties of God's worship; they were wont constantly to worship God, and to attend upon the Word, but now it is nothing to them, and they are even ready to thank God for it that they make not such conscience as they were wont to do in the duties of the worship of God. It may be they will say that heretofore some slavish terror did carry them on in the duties of God's worship more than the understanding of the freeness of the grace of God would admit of. But shall the understanding of the freedom of the grace of God carry thee on less than thy slavish terror did? Oh, blind and wanton spirit that knows not the ways of God, nor the freeness of the grace of God, nor the riches of it! Oh, what a dishonor art thou to Jesus Christ and to the freeness of His grace, that now canst go up and down from day to day and never worship God! Did Jesus Christ come into the world to that end for to cause thee to depart more from

God? 'Tis plain out of the Word, that the duties of God's worship are those duties whereby the soul comes to draw nigh to God. And I beseech you brethren, observe these men, whither there be that holiness in their lives, that spiritualness as there was wont to be? No, you shall find them by degrees to grow loose, yea, run sometimes into gross sins, grow many times to lying and deceiving, and to drunkenness and company keeping, yea, to worse things by degrees. Perhaps they are at first ready to say, is thy servant a dead dog that I should do this? But by departing from God, they grow dead to holy duties.

We find it by experience, that the professors of religion have not that holiness, heavenliness, spiritualness, as they were wont to have in former times. And no marvel, for now they keep not so nigh to God as they were wont. You that are seamen and travelers, sometimes you are near the sun, and then you are hot but the further off the sun you go, you grow to be colder and colder. And so those that neglect the worship of God, they go from the warm sun, they go from the light of God's countenance and from the presence of God and so they grow cold and chill, and by degrees they grow to profaneness, and it is to be feared that many of them will grow to mere Atheism.

Another use is this, a use of exhortation, that we would be encouraged to worship God, and to be much in the worship of God. In Heb. 10:22, "Let us draw near" (saith the Text). Who would not draw near to God? Oh, what a good thing is it to be in the presence of God! Is not the Lord the fountain of thy life? Is it not a sweet thing to be in His presence? We think it a sweet thing to be in the presence of godly men; Oh 'that we might always live with such men and be nigh them! That martyr Doctor Taylor rejoiced in this, that ever he came into prison to be acquainted with that angel of God, holy Master Bradford, and as I remember some among the heathens that professed, they would rather be in prison with Cato then be in the greatest glory with some other. It is a blessed thing to be in the presence of God, to be with Him that is the God of our lives, and the fountain of all good; let us draw nigh to God often, let us know that it

is a mercy that we may draw nigh to God; we might have been banished from the presence of the Lord long before this time.

This is that that the happiness of the glorious Church is set out by in Rev. 22:4, "They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads." This is the privilege of the Church. And that it is such a blessing to draw nigh to God, you may see it by that in Eph. 2:18, "For through Him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father."

Through Him, through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father, and now (saith he) "Ye that were strangers and foreigners, are made fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." And verse 13, "But now by Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ", and you have access through Christ. So, our coming nigh to God is such a privilege as cost the blood of Christ; and will not you improve it? You were far off in your natural condition, but now you are nigh through His blood. Lay but this text warm to your hearts this morning, that I that was far off am made nigh by the blood of Christ, made nigh to God. It will be a means for ever to draw your hearts to all those ways whereby you may draw nearest to God.

And by drawing nigh to God often, you will come to increase your graces abundantly. Your graces, how will they act? The presence of God will draw forth the acts of grace, as the presence of the fire draws forth our heat, so the presence of God will draw forth our graces. And by this means we come to live most holy lives. We read of Moses, he was upon the mountain forty days with God, and when he came down his face did so shine, that the people were not able to bear it: what's the reason? It was from hence, because he was so nigh to God: would you have your faces to shine in a holy conversation before men? Converse much with God, be often with God, be nigh to Him, and that will make you shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We find it so with some that converse much with God, there is a shine upon their very countenances.

And further it is a special sign of our adoption to love to be nigh to God. What should a child love most but to be in the presence of his father? Would you know whither you have received the Spirit of adoption yea, or no? I can hardly give you any one sign so clear as this, for to love to go into God's presence, as David said, I was glad when they said, Come and let us go up unto the House of the Lord. You shall have many that love to be in God's presence, so as they think on it overnight and long for the time while it comes; I never am better than when I am with God; me thinks when I get into God's presence, either in prayer or any duty of God's worship, I find my heart warmed and quickened, etc. They are ready to say with Peter, Master, it is good being here.

And that's another thing, it is that which will put us in mind of the life of heaven, it is the only thing in heaven to be in the presence of God. Why, the more thou art nigh God in the duties of worship, the more thou art in heaven, and doest not thou pray that the will of God may be done in earth as in heaven? Now the saints and angels are always before God worshipping of Him; then be as much as thou canst in the presence of God; if thou wouldest be in heaven, be there.

Many of the saints they find it so. It is not so with carnal hearts, they are weary presently when they are in prayer, or hearing the Word, it is not so to them. Yea, that's because thou hast not the presence of God, as in Malachi 1, what weariness is there? Thou canst be a gaming till one or two o'clock at night, and though thou shouldest lose thy supper, or the work of thy family, it is not tedious to thee to be exercised in those things that pleaseth the flesh. But when thou comest to worship God, how quickly art thou tired? Now what wilt thou do in heaven where there is nothing else done to all eternity but worshipping of God?

And then it must needs be delightful to God that thou shouldest come nigh Him. There is nothing in the world more pleasant to God then to have His saints come into His presence. What doth a father more delight in than to have his children about him? Never did any father or mother love to have their children by them, so as God loves

to have His children come nigh Him and be often with Him. And the truth is, one great reason that God suffers you to fall into afflictions so much is that you may come running to Him. How doth the child come running to the father or mother when it is afraid? Why, the Lord is willing to permit men to do you wrong that you may run to Him, that He might have more of your presence. Thou that art such a poor creature, yet thou hearest this day that there is nothing in the world that God takes more pleasure in (next to the presence of His own Son, Jesus Christ, and His saints and angels that He hath with Him in heaven) than to have His saints come nigh Him, to have them always to be under His wing.

And then by coming often into God's presence in His worship there will grow a sweet and blessed familiarity between God and thy soul, for thou wilt be speaking to God, and God will be speaking to thee too.

We know many times that dear friends who are very nearly linked together, yet if they be long absent one from another there grows a strangeness, and so by degrees their friendship is deadened. But now when they are together every day, and there is an intercourse of love and friendship, then their friendship is kept active and quick. But now if they be absent long, indeed if they be absent in another country when they cannot come together, that they are sure it is not through any neglect, then it will not damp their friendship; but when they are near and come not one to another, then they think it is out of neglect and so they grow strange. So it is with the soul, if there were no possibility of a coming into God's presence, then it would not hinder the sweetness of the love of God to us. But now when we have those duties of worship wherein, we may draw nigh to God, if we neglect them, our familiarity with God will quickly be lost. Acquaint thyself with God and be at peace. God is willing to be acquainted with His servants; the Lord loves to be familiar with the poorest of His saints, and wilt not thou maintain that sweet familiarity with God? These two benefits will follow upon thy familiarity with God.

First, those that are most familiar with God they are most potent with God. As now a stranger cannot prevail in any petition so as a familiar friend can. Thus, my brethren, when strangers come into God's presence, God doth not so much regard them; but when His familiars come into His presence, the saints of God that keep close with Him in constant communion and converse in the duties of His worship, God doth take them as His familiar friends, and they will prevail much with God.

Secondly, by this means the terror of death will be taken away, there is no such way to take off the terror of the thoughts of death as by keeping familiarity with God; death then is joyful to those that converse with Him. That Reverend Divine that is now with God (Doctor Preston) when he was to die he had this speech, I shall but change my place, I shall not change my company," whereas it's otherwise if thou growest estranged from God, when death comes it will look with a terrible face for then thou hast to deal with God, thou art then to go into the presence of the infinite dreadful God, into whose presence thou never had any mind to go before, but saith death, I must now carry thee into the presence of God. As thy body returns to the dust so thy soul must return to God that gave it; that is, to receive its eternal doom, etc. But now saith a saint, "What, must my body return to dust and my soul to God that gave it?" It is He which I have been with every day, and can say as He said, my soul go forth, go forth, why art thou unwilling to go forth to Him that thou hast conversed with all thy days?

And then what safety is there in being near to God, especially in these dangerous times? In the time wherein we live it is safe to be near God; in Psalm 22:11, "Be not far from Me, for trouble is near," saith David. Lord, trouble is near me, be not Thou far from me. It's a blessed thing to have God near us when trouble is near us; trouble is near many of you, perhaps there's not a spans breadth between death and us. What a blessed thing is it then to have God to be near us?

When the poor chick sees the kite come near it to seize upon it, and is likely to be surprised, if the hen be near, it runs to the hen, and the hen covers it and keeps it safe; so it should be with us, for so Christ saith of Jerusalem, “How often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chicks?” There are a company of kites abroad in the world, and we are poor shiftless creatures; now how happy are we then if we can run under the shadow of God's wing? There is a kind of shadow in the presence of God in the enjoyment of the creature; but the shadow of God that we have in His worship, that is as the shadow of His wing. There is the shadow of a tree, and that may help from some kind of troubles but there's another manner of shadow under the shadow of the wing of the hen, because that nourishes the chick. The men of the world they have the shadow of the tree, as it were, God's general providence which is over all creatures; but the saints of God that draw nigh to God they have the shadow of God's wing, like the shadow of the hens wing to the chick, which doth comfort it and safeguard it; let us by the duties of worship thus draw nigh to God, and keep nigh unto Him.

## **Sermon III**

### **The Importance of Preparing for worship**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

I will only add one particular more to what we said the last day and then proceed.

If in the duties of worship, we are nigh to God, then hence appears the great honor that God puts upon His servants that do worship Him. Certainly, the worshippers of God have great honor put upon them because the Lord vouchsafes them to draw nigh unto Him, they are such as are precious and honorable in His eyes. I will not enlarge myself in this, only give you three Scriptures that show the great honor and respect that God puts upon those that He doth admit to come and worship Him.

The first Scripture is in Deut. 4:7, 8, there Moses speaking of the people of Israel and the great respect that God showed to them more than others, for saith he, "What nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? What nation is there so great as you are?" (So great!) How doth it appear that the nation of Israel is a greater nation than other nations are? How? That hath God so nigh unto them in all things that they call upon Him for; herein any man or woman, or nation may be said to be great, that is, greatly honored by the Lord God, in that they have the Lord nigh to them and they are nigh to Him, here's the greatness of a nation. You would think that if one would describe the greatness of a nation, it should be in their great wealth, their great trading and traffic that they have and the fertile place that they live in; no, this is not the greatness of a nation, but what nation is there so great that hath the Lord God so nigh to them? There's the greatness of a nation, and so a spiritual heart would account greatness to consist in having God to be nigh unto it.

The Second Scripture is in Num. 16:9, there we have Moses speaking unto the sons of Korah rebuking them for their sin, and he brings this aggravation to them of the greatness of their sin, saith he, "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself?" That is, that you should come to worship Him, is this a small thing to you? Is not this honors enough? As if Moses should have said, why do you contend for any more honor; the Lord hath separated you to bring you near to Himself?

Object. This you will say was spoken to the priests?

Answ. But it may be said of every gracious soul, for every believer Christ hath made a king, priest, and prophet unto Himself; now there is no believer but Jesus Christ hath separated him or her from the rest of the world to be near unto God. This is the dignity that God hath put upon thee that thou art separated by His grace to be one near to Him, whereas others of the world they depart from Him, continually depart more and more from Him. But I say the Lord by His grace hath set thee a part for Himself, as He saith in Psalm 4:3, "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." Thou art separated from the world to what end? It is that thou mightest be near to Him, this is thy privilege, and thou shouldest account it thy great honor. Thou hast not that honor and respect in the world as others have, but thou art one of God's separated ones that thou art near to Him.

A third Scripture is in Psalm 73:28. There you may see how the Prophet David did highly esteem of that great honor that the Lord did put upon him in this, in being near to God. "But it is good for me to draw near to God." Mark how he speaks, but it is good for me. Why? For lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish. Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee. As if he should say, there are some that did seem to be near unto Thee heretofore, that were as the wife to the husband, but they are gone a whoring from Thee; base hypocrites, base apostates, they are gone a whoring from Thee, their hearts being carnal, they did not find that contentment and satisfaction in Thy worship as Thy saints do, and therefore they are gone a whoring from Thee, but it is good for me to draw near to Thee.

It is an excellent Scripture. Do you see any young ones, or others that were very forward not many years ago, and would speak of good things, and seem to rejoice in the Word, but now they are gone a whoring, they are departed from God and His ways, and the pleasures of the flesh hath taken their hearts? Thou wilt destroy

them (saith David) that go a whoring from Thee. So, thou shouldest think with thyself; Oh miserable is the condition of those who once were forward in the profession of religion and now are gone a whoring from God, but it's good for me to draw near to God. They are gone from Thee, and thou wilt destroy them, but it is good for me to draw near to Thee; I bless myself in drawing near to Thee, the Lord, and bless the time that ever I did draw near to Thee, and that ever I knew those ways wherein my soul hath drawn near to God. Such as worship God aright and do delight in the worship of God, they are such as have a great honor put upon them, they do draw nigh to God. And thus, we have finished the first point.

The second point is that will hold us some time, and that is, the sanctifying God's Name in our drawing near to God. When we worship God we draw nigh to Him, but let us take heed how we draw nigh, Hebrews 10:22, "Let us draw near with a true heart." "Look to thy feet when thou comest into the house of God," Eccles. 5:1. Now for the sanctifying of God's Name in drawing nigh to Him we shall endeavor to open it.

1 In showing you wherein the sanctification of God's Name consists, or what we should do that we might sanctify the Name of God in drawing nigh to Him.

2 The reason why God will have His Name to be sanctified in those that do draw nigh to Him.

How we should sanctify the Name of God in drawing nigh to Him, it is under these two heads.

First, there must be a due preparation unto the worship of God that we exercise ourselves in at any time.

Secondly, a right behavior of our souls in it.

In these two things consists the sanctifying of God's Name in His worship. Now under these two heads all that I shall speak about the

opening of the sanctifying of God's Name will be contained. At this time, I shall only speak of the First.

The due preparation of the soul unto the duties of God's worship. Therein consists a special part of the sanctifying of God's Name in drawing nigh to Him. And that it is so, we find it in Scripture that preparation for worship it is called the sanctifying of ourselves; and by finding this in Scripture, it hinted me upon this head to speak of the preparation unto worship in our sanctifying God's Name, because I find in Scripture that the sanctifying ourselves for worship, and the preparation of ourselves for worship, are all one.

I'll give you these two texts: In 1 Sam. 16:5, you shall find there that Samuel, when he was sent by God to anoint David in Bethlehem, the text saith, "I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord, sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." "Do you come peaceably?" say they. "Yes." What then?

Sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. That's all one, as if he should have said, prepare yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. And so in Job 1:5, there you shall find that the holy man Job, when his sons had been feasting, he was somewhat afraid lest there should be some miscarriage, and that they had sinned against God in their feasting, as it is very hard to give liberty to please the flesh and not to sin, not to transgress bounds. Therefore Job, though he did not hear of any notorious abuse of their feasting, yet he was afraid lest they should sin; he knew how dangerous it was to have so much satisfaction to the flesh and not to transgress bounds, therefore it is said he sent to his sons and sanctified them. "It was so (saith the text) when the days of the feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them." That Job sent unto them to prepare them to offer sacrifice, to prepare them for the worship of God. So that the Scripture holds forth this then, that to prepare for worship it is to sanctify for worship, and so it is one special thing that is required in our sanctifying of God, in our drawing nigh to God, to make a due preparation for His holy worship.

Now for the orderly handling of things:

1 First, I shall show you, that we must prepare for the worship of God.

2 Secondly, I shall show you, wherein this preparation for the worship of God doth consist.

3 Thirdly, the excellency that there is in this, or what great good there is in preparation for God's worship.

4 Fourthly, I shall Answer a case of conscience or two.

5 Fifthly, I will show you what is the behavior of the soul in sanctifying God's Name.

6 Sixthly, the reasons why God will be sanctified in the duties of His worship.

First, that there must be preparation to the worship of God. For first, that God that we come to worship is a great and glorious God, and we having to deal with such an infinite, glorious, dreadful majesty, it is fit that we should make preparation when we come nigh unto Him. Therefore, in Exod. 19:10, when God came among the people to give them His Law, He did require that “they should be sanctified today and tomorrow, and that they should wash their clothes and be ready against the third day, for the third day the Lord would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.” God did not so much stand upon their clothes, but it was to signify an inward washing.

Now my brethren, if when God came to give the Law, they were so to prepare, then certainly when we are to come to worship God in the way of the Gospel, we are to prepare as well as they, because God is coming. For that that is observable is why they were for two days together to make such preparation; the argument is because of the presence of God. The Lord said to Moses, “Go and sanctify the people today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes and be ready

against the third day.” Why? “For the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.” The Lord will come down the third day and therefore let them be sanctified. So, when thou goest to worship God, thou expectest or shouldst expect that God will come to thee, and that thy heart shall be drawn to God, and therefore thou shouldst make some preparation. (For the time of preparation, we shall speak to afterward when we come to the cases of conscience about preparation for worship.) And so, in 1 Chr. 22:5-14, David makes preparation for the house of God because it was the house of God that he had to build, though he could not do it himself in his own time, yet being the house of God, what great preparation was made by David? The moral of which is this, that the house of God being a type of the Church and the worship of God, as well as of Christ, it shows that there should be much preparation when we have to deal with God in His ordinances.

Secondly, As God is great that we draw nigh to, so the duties of God's worship are great duties. They are the greatest things that doth concern us in this world, and it is a sign of a very carnal heart to slight the duties of God's worship, to make account of them as little matters. Carnal hearts ordinarily the things that concern their businesses in the world they think great matters. Oh, I may not neglect that, I may not neglect that, I may not neglect such a business, or I may not neglect to visit or gratify such a friend but now for the worship of God it is good indeed. But whether it be done or not it is no great matter, therefore they can put off prayer; if they have any business the time of prayer must pay for it; they can put off that upon any slight occasion, they do not account the duties of God's worship great matters.

My brethren, I beseech you learn this lesson this morning, to account the duties of God's worship great matters. They are the greatest things that do concern you here in this world, for they are the homage that you tender up to the high God, as you heard, and those things wherein God communicates Himself in His choice mercies, now being such great matters there is cause that we should prepare.

For that one thing of prayer, saith Luther, it is a great work, and a difficult work, and therefore there had need be preparation for it. Business of great consequence we make preparation for, indeed if a business be a slight business, we can fall upon it on a sudden. You make not preparation to go in a boat in the Thames, but to go a voyage you make great preparation. Now if men and women would but understand the duties of God's worship to be great, they would see a necessity to make a preparation. Many men, for want of preparation to duties, lose a great part of the time when they come to perform a duty of worship in prayer. They spend half the time that is convenient to be spent in prayer before they begin to pray; and so in hearing the Word, they are a long time before they can settle themselves to attend to the Word, or in any other kind of worship; I say a great deal of time in the worship is spent ordinarily before we can get our hearts to close with the worship. Now that is a sore and a great evil to lose any part of the time of worship.

Christians, I beseech you, account highly of the time of your worship. You have been so long time at prayer, yea, but how much of it hath been lost because you have not prepared beforehand for it? Perhaps you kneeled upon your knees, but you were a long time before you could get your hearts warm at your work, why you should have been warm before you had come. It is so oftentimes with many men when they meet together and there is no preparation for their business, they come together and they are a long time before they can buckle to the business that they came about because there was no preparation. But if there be preparation made, that every man knows beforehand what his work is, they can fall to it, and they can dispatch as much in one hour as others do in two or three; but of that we shall speak more afterwards.

Thirdly, there must be preparation because our hearts are naturally, exceedingly unprepared for every good work; we are all naturally even reprobate to every good work. The duties of God's worship are high and spiritual and holy things, but by nature our hearts grovel in the dirt and we are carnal, sensual, drowsy, dead, slight, sottish, and

vain, altogether unfit to come into the presence of God. Oh, that we were but apprehensive and sensible of the unfitness of our hearts to come into God's presence! Perhaps because thou knowest not God thou canst rush into His presence without any more ado, but if thou knowest thyself and God, thou couldest not but see thyself altogether unfit for His presence, and so as to wonder that the Lord should not spurn thee out of His presence every time thou comest unto Him, there had need then be preparation because we are so unfit to come into His presence.

Fourthly, there had need be preparation because of the great hindrances of the worship of God. This business and the other business would hinder; the entanglements, they would hinder; the temptations of the Devil, they would hinder; sometimes the indisposition of our bodies doth mightily hinder; and the stirrings of the passions of our minds they hinder. If there be any business fallouts in the family, and anything go but cross, how are we put off the hinges and made unfit for holy duties! There had need be preparation therefore because there are so many hindrances in the way. Many of you will complain that you are much hindered, but do you do what you can to make preparation beforehand? Do the hindrances that you complain of put you on to be so much the more careful to make do preparation for holy duties?

Fifthly, we find that the heathens themselves by the light of nature when they did but worship their idol gods, they would make some preparation such as was suitable to those gods that they worshipped, therefore they would wash their flesh and purge themselves, but though their preparation was but very poor, yet they taught us thus much, that they were convinced in their consciences that when God was to be worshipped, people should be prepared.

The Sixth and last reason hath a great deal in it, which I beseech you consider of. We find that the Scripture doth make the uprightness of the heart much to consist in preparation for worship, and doth make the falseness of the heart to consist in this, that men do not prepare.

Perhaps you have not so much thought of this, but yet it is of excellent use unto you. We shall find the Scripture doth make the very uprightness of the heart to consist in the preparation for duty, and the falseness of a man's heart to consist in this, that he makes not conscience to prepare his heart for God and His worship. And this I will show unto you very plainly and clearly, take these two examples, the first of Rehoboam, and the second of Jehoshaphat, one a wicked man whose heart was false, and the other a godly man whose heart was right with God.

The falseness of the heart of the one is in 2 Chron 12:14. There you have what God's thoughts of Rehoboam were in the verses before, but now He brings the reason of His sentence upon him, and saith the text, "he did evil because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." There were many good things that Rehoboam did. I might show you some things as how he did obey the Prophet of God when he was seeking to avenge himself upon those that did rend themselves from his obedience; the Lord did but send His Prophet; and though he had an army ready to revenge himself upon those that in a way of rebellion did rend themselves from under his government, and he obeyed the Word of the Lord, but for all that, he did evil in the sight of the Lord; God looked upon him as a man that had no uprightness in him, why? For he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord. Saith God, I look upon all Rehoboam did as nothing; I look upon his ways as evil and himself as a wicked man, why? Because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord; if his heart had been upright with Me, he would have prepared his heart to seek Me. I beseech you now lay this text to your hearts; do you prepare your hearts to seek God? When you go to prayer can you say that you take pains in preparing your hearts for it, and in hearing the Word, and so likewise for receiving the sacrament?

Now for Jehoshaphat, a godly man, in 2 Chron 19:3, there you may see what the Lord saith of Jehoshaphat that was godly, "Nevertheless, there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart

to seek God.” Jehoshaphat was found guilty in joining himself to wicked men too much, the Prophet comes and saith to him, “Wouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore, is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.” Jehoshaphat here we see was very faulty in joining with those that were wicked, and is rebuked by the Prophet from the Lord, what wilt thou join with the wicked? The wrath of God is upon thee. Well, but for all that, (I beseech you observe it) that at that time when the Lord is most displeased against Jehoshaphat and sends His Prophet in His name to pronounce this, that the wrath of God is out against him, yet for all this, God cannot but take notice of this, that he had an upright heart; though he failed in that particular, yet there is some good found in thee, in that thou hast prepared thy heart to seek God.

Indeed, through some sudden temptations thou art drawn aside in this particular act; yea, but it hath been thy care to prepare thy heart to seek Me, and in that regard, I do look upon thee as having an upright heart. And thus, you see how much the Scripture puts upon the preparation of the heart to seek God.

And so, in 1 Sam 7:3, you shall find that the Scripture makes the uprightness of the heart to consist in this, “And Samuel spoke unto all the house of Israel saying, if ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts,” what then? Why then, “put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only.” As if Samuel should say, if you will return indeed to the Lord, if indeed your hearts be upright according to what you seem to profess in turning to God, why then prepare your hearts to seek the Lord. You do not in truth turn to God except you make conscience to prepare your hearts. Therefore, you that yet never knew what it was to make conscience to prepare your hearts for holy duties, know that you have not turned with all your heart unto the Lord, there hath not been the true turning of your hearts unto the Lord. Thus, now you see there is much that lies upon preparation to the duties of God's worship. Well, you will say, seeing there lies so much in it, I pray open it wherein it doth consist. To that

I answer, it consists in these five things, which I shall but briefly name.

First, in the possessing the heart with the right apprehension of that God before whom we come to tender our duties; then do we make conscience to prepare our hearts, when we labor upon our going to worship God, to get our hearts beforehand possessed with right apprehensions of the majesty of that God that we are going to worship, and of the greatness, and weight of the duty that we are setting about the nature of it, the manner how it is to be performed, the rule by which we are to be guided, the end that we are to aim at. Meditation is a good preparation to holy duties. And these are the general heads of our meditation for our preparation to duty. *Viz.*

1 What God He is we have to deal with. Meditate of God in His attributes and then meditate of the weight of our duties, and the nature of them and the rule of them, and the end of them; get your hearts possessed with meditations of this nature, and in this as a special thing doth consist your preparation to holy duty, and that's the first thing.

2 The second thing wherein the preparation to a duty consists, it is in this, in the taking off of the heart from every sinful way, the endeavor at least, if there be iniquity in thine hand or heart labor to put it out. When thou art come into God's presence, do not bring into the presence of God the love of any sin in thine heart, but labor to put it from thy heart. In 2 Chron 29:5, we find there what is required to preparation, the text saith, "Hezekiah said unto them, hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place." That is sanctifying a thing, to carry forth the filthiness out of that thing that we would sanctify. So, the sanctifying of our hearts it is, by carrying forth the filthiness out of our hearts, so as to be fit for a duty. And in Job 11:13, 14, "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hand towards him;" What then? "If iniquity be in thine

hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles." These two must be together.

3 A third thing is this, the preparation of the heart it is the disentangling of the heart from the world, and from all occasions and businesses in the world. I am to worship God, but how is my heart ensnared and entangled in this and the other business? Now when I come to worship God, I must lay aside all, for there's the preparation of the heart, the separating of it for such a work, for that's the nature of sanctification, the separating of a thing from a common use; I am to worship God, now I must labor to separate my heart from a common use. At other times God gives me liberty to let out my heart to common uses; but now when I come to worship Him, I must separate my heart from all common uses, that my heart may be wholly for God. I remember it is said in the story of Cicil which was Lord Treasurer, that when he went to read, he would lay his gown off and say, lie there Lord Cicil. So, when we go to duty we should say, lie by world (and by laying aside the world I mean, laying aside of all household affairs, or affairs in trading, etc.) I must be as one that hath nothing to do in the world for that time. It is true, the time cannot be said to be holy for this, as the time of the Sabbath day is holy.

You will say, why may not any time be said to be holy that I spend in holy duties? No, that is not enough to make time holy, for the time that God makes holy, it is not holy because of the duties that I perform in it, but the duties that I perform then are more acceptable because they are done in such a time. And so that makes a place holy, not because it is appointed for holy duties and uses, but because it is so appointed by God, and the performing a duty in that place is more acceptable to God then in another place. But now, though we cannot make our time holy in that second sense, yet in the first, it is time set apart for a holy use, and in that regard it is holy. And so, we should look upon it as not to have our outward business to devour that time that is holy in that regard, as Nehemiah when Tobiah and Sanballat sent to him to come and confer with them. No, saith he, I cannot go,

for the work is great that I have to do. So, we must not entangle ourselves to meddle with other things when we are to come to worship God, for our work is great.

4 The fourth thing for preparation is to watch and to pray; we should watch over our hearts lest they be made unfit for duties. So, we should prepare for prayer all day long in this sense, that is, we should watch over our hearts that they be not let out so far as to hinder us in prayer when we come to do. I remember that Tertullian saith, that the Christians did so sup as if that they were to pray, so when thou art in company thou shouldst watch unto prayer. Oh, that you did so! You cannot but be conscious to yourselves that oftentimes when you have been in company, your hearts have been put out of tune and frame, that you have been no way fit for prayer. When you come home your house and family finds it so; you that take such delight in company and sitting up late, I appeal to your consciences whither you can come home and find yourselves fit either in your family or closet to go and open your hearts to God.

This is one note by the way whereby you may come to know whether you have been immoderate in company at any time; God gives not men liberty to be busy in any outward occasions in the world so as to unfit them for His service. Preparation consists in that, in watching over your hearts, that you may not be unfitted for any holy duty when God calls you to it, but that you may be ready even to every good work.

5 The fifth is this, preparation consists in the readiness of the faculties of the soul and the graces of the Spirit of God, presently to act upon the setting upon a holy duty. When a man or woman shall find the faculties of their soul and the graces that are in them to be ready to act as soon as ever they fall upon duty, just as you see a company of ringers when they have made all preparation for the raising of the bells, then in an instant when they begin to pull, all the bells go in that tune that according to their skill they set them in. And so it should be with our hearts, the faculties of our souls and graces,

though now we are not upon duty, yet we should be so ready that as it were upon a pull, all the faculties of our souls and graces of God's Spirit should work in a melodious way. There are those that keep their hearts so prepared as at the very first moment that they set about the duty of worship, all faculties and graces begin to act and to stir and are working towards God, as a fire, when all the matter is ready laid, presently it comes to be kindled and flame out; and thus it should be with our hearts, so that now you see wherein preparation of our hearts to duty consist.

The next thing is the excellency of the preparation; and that may be in way of application to you to make you to be in love with preparation for holy duties. There is abundance of good in it.

First, by this means we come to make every duty of worship easy to us; things are difficult when we come upon them unprepared. If you have a friend come to dinner or supper to you, and should come suddenly and you have nothing prepared, there would be a great deal of stir in the house, but if you have everything prepared, it would be carried on in an easy way. And the reason why people complain so much of difficulty in duty it is because their hearts are not prepared. Indeed, we have naturally many things to keep us off from God but now when the heart is prepared for a holy duty, it goes off as easy to God even into the infinite ocean of all mercy and goodness, as a ship goes off to be launched when you have made preparation for it, and the heart can go with a holy boldness to God when you have made preparation for holy duties. In Job 11, the place which I quoted before for the work of preparation, do but consider a verse or two further and you shall find what abundance of good there comes upon the keeping of the heart prepared in things that are good. Job 11:13, "If thou prepare thine heart," etc. and then verse 15, "Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, yea, thou shalt be steadfast and shalt not fear." When the heart is prepared for that that is good, when it comes into the presence of God, it is able to lift up itself without fear in a steadfast comfortable way, and this will quit the cost of any labor.

2 Secondly, if the heart be prepared, it will do a great deal in a little time. In 2 Chron 29:36 it is said, “Then Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people for the thing was done suddenly.” The thing came off freely and suddenly when as that they were prepared. Hezekiah rejoiced and blessed God for such a mercy as this was; it is a great mercy to have the hearts of people prepared unto a good work. And so, in 2 Chron 27:6, the text saith, “Jotham became mighty because he prepared his way before the Lord his God.” Jotham, he grew mighty by this, and so certainly the way to grow to be very strong and mighty, to be able to do a great deal in a little time, it is to make preparation; there may be as much work done in one hour so as in ten times so much time when the heart is not prepared for it. In Ezra 7:10, you shall find that the reason is given why Ezra had such good success in his journey, it was because he had prepared his heart. Make preparation for holy duties and you shall have success in holy duties. There is a notable Scripture for that in Psalm 10:17 where the Holy Ghost saith that God prepares the heart, and what then? When God doth prepare the heart, He doth then cause His ear to hear. There was never a prayer made wherein the heart was prepared for it, but that prayer was heard, they go both together, “Lord, Thou wilt prepare their heart, and Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear.” If God hath once prepared thy heart, thou wilt be sure to be heard then. Is it not worth a world for to know oneself to be accepted of God in every duty of worship that we tender up to Him? This one Scripture Psalm 10:17 will show it. Oh, the excellency that there is in preparation to duty!

There is one thing more that is very observable, and that is this, where the heart is prepared to duties, there the Lord will pass by weaknesses and imperfections in duties. When thou comest to perform holy duties thou art troubled; will the Lord have regard to such a duty as this is? Thou mayest have certain assurance that the Lord will have regard if thou canst make this point good to thine own soul, that it was thy care to make preparation for this duty. Canst thou say, “Lord, I have endeavored and done what I could to fit my heart for duty, but O Lord, I find when I am at it, wonderful

distractions, much deadness and vanity; what shall I do?" Why canst thou make good the former and appeal to God that indeed it was thy care to make preparation?

I'll give thee one Scripture then for the quieting of thy heart in this: that the weakness of the duty shall be pardoned and passed by where there is care to prepare beforehand. The Scripture is in 2 Chron. 30:18, 19, "But Hezekiah prayed for them saying, "The good Lord pardon every one," What, every one? "Every one that prepareth the heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." As if he should say, "Oh Lord, there are many things amiss in this people, they are not in many regards purified according to the order that Thou hast set, but Lord, if Thou doest but see any heart prepared to seek Thee, though they fail in such particulars, Lord heal them and pardon them." And did God hearken to his prayer? Mark the following words, verse 20, "And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah and healed the people."

Nay, saith God, I will not stand so much upon the purification of the sanctuary if they have prepared their hearts to seek Me. Take this Scripture, know it's written for thine instruction, and thou mayest make use of it to thine own soul this day, if thou canst appeal to God that thou art careful to prepare thy heart, though thou shouldest not have that pureness of thy heart as thou doest desire, the Lord will pardon thee and hear thee, make conscience of preparation to holy duties.

Again further, by being careful to make preparation for duties, within some little time thou wilt bring thy heart to such a frame as it will always be ready for duty without much ado; indeed, at first it is somewhat hard.

You will say, are we bound to spend some time every time we go to prayer beforehand, or every time we come to the Word? That should have been one of the cases of conscience, but I cannot come to answer that. But this we may say, be careful to prepare for duties,

you that are young beginners, or you that have made profession a longer time, but yet have not had the weight of this duty upon your spirits. Now be careful for a while to prepare for every duty of God's worship that God calls you to, and I say within a little time thou mayest bring thy heart into such a temper as thou mayest be ready at all times to perform holy duties, because you shall be able to come to that temper and frame that the Apostle exhorts, to pray continually, for indeed so it should be with us, we should be always prepared either for prayer; hearing the Word, or receiving sacraments.

Now because sacraments are so rare, those that have any enlightened conscience they think they dare not but prepare for sacraments, but you should be always in a preparation for the receiving of the sacraments, as the primitive Christians did. And those that have been acquainted with this point that I am upon, of preparing for duties, they have come to such a frame of Spirit as that there is not so much time required of them as of others, for they are in a constant fitness, so that there is no instant of time in the whole day but if God calls them to prayer they could presently fall down upon their knees and pray so as to sanctify God's Name in prayer. That were an excellent temper indeed, if you could find it so, that you walk so spiritually and holy before God as there could be never a quarter of an hour from morning to night, nor from the beginning of the week to the end, but if you were called to pray, or to receive the sacrament, you had your heart fitted, that you could come into God's presence with a prepared heart, and were able to sanctify God's Name in the duty. Acquaint yourselves with this work of preparation, and so you may have hearts fitted to come into God's presence at any time.

## **Sermon IV**

## Two Cases of conscience

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We proceed now to what remains. There are only for the perfecting of this point two cases of conscience to be resolved, and then we are to proceed to other things.

The first is, whither we ought at all times to set apart some time for preparation to every duty of God's worship?

Secondly, suppose we do not find our hearts prepared as we do desire; whither it were better to leave off the duty than perform it?

For the first of these, Viz. Whether we are always bound to set some time apart for preparation to the duty that we are to perform.

The answer to that is this: we must distinguish of persons. There are some that are exercised in the way of godliness and do keep their hearts close with God in the ways of holiness. Now for them it may be supposed that through their exercise in the ways of godliness, and keeping of their hearts constant with God in communion with Him, walking with God closely, that they are at all times prepared to every good work, and fulfill that command of the Apostle, pray continually, that is, in the disposition of their hearts, they are fit to pray at any time, there is no day in the week, nor no hour in the day but they (if God call them to it) could fall down to solemn prayer. And indeed, this is an excellent condition and a good evidence of the hearts walking close with God that there is no time but they are fit to pray, and fit for any ordinance, yea, to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

It is possible to keep the heart so close to God as to be fit for prayer, and for the hearing of the Word, and for receiving of the sacrament

every day, or any hour in the day, but this needs a very close walking with God and communion with God and the truth is this is very rare; most men let out their hearts so much to other things, as their consciences cannot but tell them, that if God call them to prayer at such a time in the day, they are altogether unfit for it. If they were called to receive the sacrament, their consciences would fly in their faces and tell them they are unfit for it, but it is not so with those that walk close with God, though they be in the world.

You will say, if a man has business in the world, how can this be? Yes, though they have business in the world, yet they carry the heavenliness of their hearts along with them; our conversation is in Heaven, saith the Apostle, Phil. 3. Now the word that is translated, "our conversation", it is a word that signifies our City converse; our trading is in Heaven when we go to the City or the Exchange, or about any business; yet our trading is always in Heaven. But now there are other sorts of people that had need at all times to look to their hearts in way of preparation. As first, those that first set upon the duties of religion, young beginners that begin at first to set their faces towards Heaven, to worship God they had need look to their hearts. They should spend some time in preparation when they come to holy duties, and the truth is, when the conscience of a man or woman is at first enlightened and awakened, they will be very careful in preparing to holy duties. The fear of God, it is mighty upon their spirits at first, and it should not afterwards lessen the constancy of God's fear; should bring their hearts to such a holy temper as to make them fit for holy duties always.

Secondly, those men and women that at any time shall sin against conscience, shall commit such sins as shall in a kind even lay waste conscience, shall break their peace between God and their souls. They had need spend some time in preparation for holy duties, they cannot come into the presence of God to enjoy communion with God, but they had need beforehand be very serious in the examination of their hearts, and to endeavor the working of their hearts into mourning for their sin, and to labor to possess their souls with the

presence of God even before they come. These two sorts of people, such as have not been acquainted with the ways of godliness, or such as have broken their peace with God by some evil carriage of theirs towards God in some vile way, I say it is required of them to be more solemn in the work of preparation.

2 But now for the second case which indeed is the main: suppose when we come to duties, and begin to examine our hearts, and begin to bethink ourselves whether we be prepared yea or no to holy duties, and we do not find our hearts prepared according to that that we do desire, whether then we may let the duty go for that time, and forbear the performance of it, as suppose prayer, or receiving the sacrament, or coming to the word or any other holy duty?

And the reason of this doubt is, because when any man or woman is conscientious, they think with themselves that they must sanctify God's Name in holy duties. Now if they cannot find their hearts in a fit disposition to sanctify the Name of God in holy duties, they are ready to think thus, "Were it not better to neglect this duty and lay it aside for the present? Will God accept of a duty when I perform it, and am not fit for it?"

Therefore, for the answer to this because it is a temptation that sometimes carnal hearts have, and they are ready to take this temptation, and willing to neglect the duty upon such a thought as this, that they are not prepared. And the truth is, they are more glad to let the duty fall than they are sorry for want of the preparation of their hearts for the duty. I beseech you consider of this, whether you have not found it so, that sometimes when you have not been fit to perform a holy duty, there hath not been a more secret willingness of the heart to let the duty go than a sorrow of the heart because you are not fit for the duty. This is a very evil sign that the heart is very much distempered. Those that are godly indeed when they find not their hearts prepared for the duty, it is the trouble of their souls, it is that that goes near to their hearts, when they think with themselves that they are now likely to lose a duty of the worship of God. They are now

likely to lose their communion with God in a holy duty, they even look upon themselves in an evil case in regard of this; and it makes them watchful for time to come to take heed of those things that have put them in such an unpreparedness as they find their hearts to be in at this time. Now if it be so with thee, it is a good sign that thy heart may be upright with God though through infirmity it comes at such a time to be unprepared for the duty.

But yet suppose I find I am not prepared; I am grieved and troubled at it, (for that must be premised) whether were I better to leave the duty for this time than to fall upon it in such an unprepared state as this is?

Now for the answer to this question:

1 First, that which I would answer to it is this: the omission of a duty, or the laying of a duty aside, will never fit the soul for a duty afterwards; it is no way to make thy soul more fit afterwards because thou hast laid it aside now for the present. Do but observe your own hearts that way, and you will find this by experience, such a time you have been busy in the world, and occasions have hindered you so as your heart is out of temper and frame for a duty, you lay it aside; now are you more fit the next day?

If you do neglect duty in the morning upon any business, are you fitter to perform duty at night because of it? You will not find it to be so. The forbearing a duty now will not make the soul fitter for a duty afterwards. Therefore, is no wisdom to forbear a duty for want of preparation, because the forbearance will never help to further preparation, but will make the soul more unfit for duty. It is an excellent speech that I read that Luther hath concerning himself, "I have learned this by experience, that the oftener I do omit duty, the oftener do I make myself the more unfit for duty, and cause I have to abhor myself." It is not the deferring that makes thee the more fit.

2 Therefore consider that this is but a temptation, and that is the second thing that I would propound to those that shall omit a duty because they are not prepared, that this is but a temptation to keep thee from it, to tell thee that thou art not prepared. And if thou shalt forbear it because thou art not prepared, in this thing thou doest gratify the Devil, and the Devil hath what he would have, and so would be encouraged to tempt thee another time because he hath now what he would have in causing thee to forbear the duty.

First, he laboureth to unfit thee for it, and then he tempts thee to forbear it because thou art unfit; this is the subtlety of the Devil. From whence is it that thou art unfit but from the temptation of the Devil? And I and Luther again, that was a man that had as much converse with God as any in his days, and a man that had as much to draw his heart away, as many temptations, and as many businesses as any, for indeed the great cause of Christ in all the Christian world in a great measure under God lay upon his shoulders, and yet saith he, "If anyone think that prayer must be deferred till the soul be purified from impure cogitations, he doth no other than help the Devil who is powerful enough; he thinks to be wise in deferring the duty because he is not fit, and he hath many ill thoughts and troubles in his spirit. He doth nothing else, saith Luther, but gratify the Devil that is strong enough without this. Oh, let us take heed of gratifying the Devil in his temptations, therefore remember it is a temptation for thee to omit a duty merely because thou art not prepared for the duty.

3 In the third place, that which I would answer to this question is this: if anyone perform a duty of worship in that sincerity and strength that he is able to do it, though he be not prepared as he ought, yet it is better to do it than to neglect it. It is true, some do perform a duty in a mere formal way, and to satisfy their consciences, or to cloak and cover their sins and the like. Perhaps they may so perform it as it might be better to be unperformed than to perform it as they do, but if you do endeavor to the uttermost of your strength to do it, though you be not prepared as you do desire,

yet it is better to do it than to omit the doing of it, and you will find it so, for one duty doth prepare for another. Though it be not done as I desire it should be done, yet the doing of it as well as I can at this time will help me to do it better at another time. That is certain as one sin doth prepare the heart for another sin, so one duty prepares the heart for another.

As now, suppose a man commits a sin, and he hath a conscience that is enlightened that doth hinder him from committing his sin with that full strength that he would do it. Many a man hath a mind to sin but through the enlightening of his conscience he cannot sin with that delight as he would because his conscience flies in his face and doth interrupt him, but yet for all this, through the strength of his corruption he will break through to that sin. Now though at first they cannot commit that sin with that delight and freedom as they do at other times, yet if their corruptions be so strong as to break through the light of their consciences, the next time they come to the committing of that sin they will commit it with more freedom and ease a great deal. This is evident by experience.

There is none of you but if you well observe your hearts, you will find this, a temptation comes to a sin; now you cannot do it with so much freedom as you would, but yet you break through it; you will find that the next time you will commit it with more freedom. And so, one sin will prepare for another, and it may be you have some trouble of conscience at first, but the next time you will have less trouble, till at length you can commit it freely without any trouble of conscience at all. As it is in sin, so it is in godliness. Many times, in some degree at the first, you have a motion to a holy duty, but through the stirrings of your corruptions you are not fit for it; now do you but break through that difficulty, and the next time you will be more fit, and the next time after that you will be more fit, and so still more and more fit as it is in sin. If a man when he hath some trouble of conscience would but listen to his conscience and would not commit that sin, his conscience would grow stronger upon him, and strengthen him against that sin, so if any man or woman listens to

the temptation to defer duty and put it off because they are not prepared, why after that the corruption will grow more strong. Therefore, set upon the duty, and the performance of one duty will prepare for another.

4 In the fourth place, while men and women are struggling with their souls and the corruption of their hearts and do not fall upon seeking God, they by their very struggling to prepare themselves many times do ensnare themselves. It may be thou hast thoughts of atheism or other wickedness, the very struggling with those thoughts may ensnare thy heart; now the better way were to fall upon prayer, and to cry to God to help thee against them, for while thou art struggling and striving with those thoughts, thou art striving with the corruption of thy heart and with the Devil all alone. But now when thou fall to the duty, thou callest in the help of God and of Jesus Christ, and that is a great deal better. While thou art musing, plodding, and troubling thy heart that way, I say thou art struggling alone. But now when thou fallest upon the duty, then thou callest in help from God and so thou art more able to the performance of the duty than thou wert before. And therefore, it is the best way to fall upon a duty, though thou canst not find thy heart prepared as thou doest desire; the very falling upon it will fit thee for it. And thus, much for the answer unto those two cases of conscience.

Now then, we are to proceed further in the opening of the sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties. Thus, much for the preparation of the heart. But when the heart comes to it, in what manner should the duty be performed so as the Name of God may be sanctified in the duty? Or what is the behavior of the soul in the sanctifying of God's Name when it is in the very act of the duty?

To that I answer, first in general, thus when the soul labors to perform duties so as God may have such glory from the duty as is fit for a God to have in some measure, then do I sanctify God's Name. You will say, this is a very hard thing to perform a duty so as that we should give God the glory that is fit for a God to have. Certainly, this

is not done by every manner of performance of a duty of worship. Yet you shall hear this opened to you, and I hope you shall have it made very plain before you.

First therefore, I shall show you that when we are to perform a duty of worship, we should set ourselves to glorify God as a God, that is, to do it in that manner that God may have that glory that is fit for a God to have. As now in the duty of praise, Psalm 66:2, “Make His praise glorious”, that is, do it so as you may lift up His Name in it, and that God may be glorious in your praise. And Rom. 1:21, there the Apostle speaking of the heathens, he doth rebuke them. For what? It was for this, because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. Now this is spoken especially of the worship of God; for he saith afterwards, verse 23, that they “changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man”, etc. So that it's spoken of the worship of God, that they glorified not God as God. That is then to sanctify God's Name, to glorify God as God. And therefore, our Savior in Chapter 4 of John, when He spoke to the woman of Samaria, He tells her that God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and truth, that is, we must labor to suit our worship to what there is in God; that our worship may be proportionable in some measure even to the nature of God Himself. And therefore, God being a Spirit, His worship must be a Divine worship.

I have read of some of the heathens that did worship the sun for a god, and they would offer to the sun somewhat suitable; therefore, because they did so admire at the swiftness of the motion of the sun they would not offer a snail to the sun but a flying horse, a horse with wings. Now a horse is one of the swiftest creatures, and the strongest creature to continue in motion for a long time together; and they added wings to the horse, and they thought that suitable to be a sacrifice for the sun. So, when we come to worship God, that is, to sanctify His Name, we must behave ourselves so as to give Him the glory that is fit for a God to have.

As now in those three particulars which I opened to you when I showed you wherein we draw nigh to God, this was one. I told you that when we come to worship God, we come to tender up some present to God; now then we must tender up such a present as is suitable to God's excellency. If a man should come to a poor man to give a present, if it were not worth twelve pence, yet it may be taken well. But if you were to tender up a present to a Prince, a Monarch, an Emperor, then you must tender a present that is fit for the quality of the person. Therefore, Malachi 1:8, when the Lord rebukes them for their sacrifices that they were such poor things, "Go," saith God, "and tender up this to your governor, and see whether he will accept of it or no." So certainly, that which may be accepted of by a mean man would be accounted a scorn if you should tender it up to a Prince or an Emperor. Now when we are to worship God, we must consider that we are to tender up our service to God, who is the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. But you will say, is it possible for any creature when it comes to tender up its worship to God, to tender up that which is fit for a God to have? This may rather be a discouragement unto prayer or any other duty of worship, than an encouragement. To that I answer thus, though we be very poor and mean, yet it doth not hinder but we may tender up that to God which God will acknowledge to be suitable to His infinite excellency.

1 As first, if we tender up to God all that we have, though we be never so poor and mean, yet if God hath the strength of our souls, God accepts it. For we are to know that God doth not stand in need of what we have, or of what we do; but that we might show our respect to Him. Therefore, if we give all that we have, God accepts it. As a child, if it puts forth all its strength that it hath to do a business which the father bids him, whether the business be done or no, the father looks upon it and accepts it as suitable to the child's strength; and it shows the respect that the child hath to his father. And as it is storied of an Emperor that when a poor man had nothing to offer him but a little water that he had taken up with his hand, he having nothing else, the Emperor accepts of it. So that's that which God looks for, that the creature should lift Him above all. If therefore

when thou comest to worship God, God hath more of thy heart than ever any creature in the world had, God accepts of that, and that you must look unto. Can you say so, when you go to worship God, “Lord it is true there is much weakness in my spirit, but Thou that knowest all things knowest that Thou hast more of my heart than ever any creature in the world had.” This is suitable to God. God will account this (in the Covenant of Grace) to be a present suitable to Himself. As in the Law, when they offered to the building of the Temple, everyone could not offer gold and silver and precious stones, but some came and offered badgers-skins, and some women did spin and offered goatshair to the building of the Temple, and so God accepted of that being the most they could do.

2 In the second place, when we do not only offer unto God the most we can, but when we add to this the grief of our souls that we can do no more, when the soul shall strive to the uttermost it can, and when it hath done all, saith, I am an unprofitable Servant, oh that I could do more! This is suitable to God.

3 Thirdly, the people of God though they be weak, yet the weakest Servant of God is able to offer up to God somewhat that is suitable to the infinite Majesty of God, upon this third ground, because that there is a kind of impression of God's infiniteness in those services that a gracious heart doth tender unto God, and therefore suitable unto God.

You will say, God is an Infinite Glorious God? Be it so; He is Infinite, that's certain, but the duty of worship that a gracious heart tenders unto God, it hath an impression of God's infiniteness upon it. How is that? If that can be made out, then indeed we may be encouraged to worship God. Thus that that a gracious heart tenders up to God, hath an impression of His Infiniteness in this regard, because as God hath no limits of His Being, so a gracious heart, when it comes to worship God, will not propound any limits or bounds, but in the desires of it would fain be enlarged infinitely if it could. If it were possible for a creature to be enlarged to God infinitely, it would be.

Here lies, I conceive, the main difference between the most glorious hypocrite in the world and one that hath true Grace, yea, that hath but the least degree of Grace. The most glorious hypocrite in the world, who it may be for the outward act, doth more than one that hath true Grace, yet such a one doth limit himself. He doth great things, but he doth it so as he limits himself, that is, so much as may serve for such and such ends of his, so much as may serve his turn, either to satisfy his conscience, or to get credit and esteem, to be accounted eminent in such a way, so much he doth do. But his duty is always limited within such bounds and if he could conceive that he might go to heaven, and that he might have as much credit and honor, and as much peace of conscience with doing less, he would do less. But now one that hath Grace, though but little, though but the least dram of Grace, he goes farther. Indeed, saith he, though through the little Grace that I have, I cannot do what another can do, yet this doth so enlarge my heart that I would have no bounds set in what I do for God, but I would have it enlarged to the uttermost latitude, if it were possible beyond what ever yet was done for God in the world; and the more I do, the more I do desire to do. That's now a kind of infiniteness that there is in the heart where Grace comes. I say, Grace enlarges the heart to a kind of infiniteness that the more it doth, the more it would do. There is no hypocrite but will have his periods, he will rise thus, and thus, and thus high; ordinarily you shall find that if he lives in some company, there he is high; but if he lives in other company, there he is lower.

Now there is nothing doth limit a gracious heart, but to all Eternity it would work and work more and more for God. Here now is a worship that is some way suitable to the infinite excellency that there is in God. Here's a kind of proportion (as I may so speak) even between the creature and God Himself in this thing, but it is the Grace of God in the creature; here is the Image of God indeed, because grace doth so enlarge the heart even to an infiniteness as it were for God. And thus, you see in the general what it is to sanctify God's Name, to tender up to God that which is some way suitable to the glory of the infinite God.

2 You know there was a second thing, viz. That then I do sanctify God's Name when I come so to worship God as my heart works, and follows after God as a God, so as it doth beseem the soul of a creature to follow the infinite Creator, and to work after the infinite Creator. So, David in Psalm 63:8, "My soul followeth hard after Thee, O God, and (mark it's a very sweet Scripture) Thy right hand upholdeth me," those whose hearts follow hard after the Lord, they have the right hand of God upholding of them. It is a mighty encouragement to put forth the heart to the uttermost, because when thou doest so, the right hand of God upholds thee; so that thy heart must follow after God more than it followed after any creature.

3 When I come to draw nigh to God, I come to present myself for the communication of the choicest of His mercies. So, then I sanctify God's Name when I labor to prepare and open my heart for God as for the choicest mercies that God hath to bestow upon His creature. When there is such a temper of heart that my conscience tells me it is suitable to that that is fit for a soul to have, that expects to receive the choicest mercies from God. But that we spoke to more in the opening of our drawing nigh to God. Now we are to come more particularly to this, to open the sanctifying of God's Name.

1 First, in what particulars the behavior of the heart may be discovered to be suitable to God in respect of God's greatness and glory.

2 Secondly, What the behavior of the heart should be as suitable to the several attributes of God.

It will cost us some time to open the particular things in the behavior of the heart as in reference to the Greatness and Majesty of God, considered more generally as in Psalm 48:1, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised." And so in Malachi 1:14, "Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing." Why? "For I am a great King," saith the Lord, and therefore cursed is he that doth not offer a sacrifice

suitable to My Greatness. And in 2 Chron 2:5, we find that Solomon when he was preparing for the Temple, he would build a great Temple, why? Because God was a great God that He would build it to, so that the worship of God must be some great thing because the Lord is a great God, and it must be suitable to His greatness. Now if you ask me in what particulars doth the behavior of the soul consist that is very suitable to the greatness of God in the general? There are many things in this:

1 The first is, you must be careful to bring a sanctified heart. You cannot tender up a worship suitable to His greatness except you bring a sanctified heart with you; there must be holiness in the heart. Under the Law you know, if anyone came to offer a sacrifice in his uncleanness, he must be cut off. And so it must be here, we must look to it that we offer not to God in our uncleanness. “Wash you, and make you clean,” in Isaiah 1, and then, “come let us reason together.” There is no coming to God without washing and making clean. In Psalm 93:5, “Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever.” Holiness becometh the presence of God forever; we must look to get a sanctified heart.

Sanctification consists in those two parts: Mortification, and Vivification. There must be a mortifying of the lusts of the heart. We read in the Law that every Sacrifice was to be salted with salt. That did signify the mortification of our hearts when we come to offer up ourselves as a sacrifice to God; the salt did eat out the raw humors and kept the flesh from putrefying; so doth the Grace of God in mortifying our lusts. In Heb 9:14, you have a notable Scripture for the cleansing of our hearts when we come to offer any service to God, “How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?” So that you cannot serve the living God until your consciences be purged from dead works. And how comes your consciences to be purged from dead works? It is through the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, He must purge your consciences.

So that here's the way of sanctifying God's Name by applying of Jesus Christ who was offered to God without spot that our consciences might be purged from dead works, that we might be purged from that natural filthiness and uncleanness in which we all were; for the whole world doth lie in filth, as a carrion doth lie in his slime. Now if we would worship God so as to sanctify Him, we must apply Christ to our souls, and get our consciences purged from dead works, and to have the Spirit of Christ in us to quicken up our hearts in the ways of holiness; to have the image of Jesus Christ in us, whereby we may be holy according to our proportion even as He Himself is holy, this is the sanctifying of the heart. There must be an habitual sanctification and an actual sanctification of the heart. An habitual, that is, that the heart must be changed through the work of Regeneration; there must be a Regeneration in the heart, there must be Divine principles of the Graces of the Spirit of God in the heart.

But you will say, may not an unregenerate man pray? To that I answer.

It is true, it is his duty to pray, "Pour forth thy wrath upon the Heathen, and upon the families that call not upon Thy Name". But it's as true that they cannot sanctify God's Name in doing of it. But if we would sanctify God's Name in it, there must be an habitual holiness in the heart, for everything doth act according to its principles, in nature it is so; and so doth the heart when it comes to worship God, it doth act according to the principles that it hath.

And then there must not only be habitual sanctification, but actual sanctification likewise; as in Exodus 19:10, 11, there you see what a-do there was to fit them for the hearing of the Law because God was to come among them. God is to come among us, and we are to come to God when we are to perform holy duties. Therefore, it is not enough to have Grace, but there must be an improving of Grace, there must be an acting of Grace, not only when you come to receive the sacrament, to think that then there must be an acting of Grace, but every time you pray and hear there must be an acting of Grace, a

purging out of your corruptions and acting of Grace, so that one cannot sanctify God's Name in holy duties unless he come thus far, to be able to say, "Lord, Thou that knowest all things, knowest there is nothing that Thou doest reveal to be contrary to Thy will, but my heart is against it," that's the least. Thou canst not have any peace of conscience in drawing nigh to God until thou come thus far, to have thy heart to work thus against sin, and to be set upon every good that God reveals to be His mind. You know when a man of quality comes to your house what a deal of stir there is not only in sweeping, but in making all things as clean and tidy and shining as possibly can be. Thus, it should be when thou comest to God.

And the reason why there must be this sanctifying of the heart:

1 First, because the Lord doth first accept of the person before He doth accept of the action. Men indeed do accept of the persons of men because they do good actions, but God accepts of the actions of men because their persons are good. If indeed we see a man do good, then we love him and accept of the person of the man, but God first will accept of the person before the action, as the Lord accepted of Abel first, and then He accepted his offering. So you must look to that, to have your persons first accepted of God before any duty can be accepted. You think though you be wicked and sinful, yet if you amend your life God will accept of you, you go that way to work; but certainly that is the wrong way; you must first look after means of acceptation of your persons which is through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and through the Sanctification of His Spirit, whereby you come to have His image and life and so are accepted, and then all that proceeds from you comes to be accepted. There is not any action which comes from you that comes to be accepted to eternal life, until your persons be accepted before God. And therefore there must be a sanctifying of the heart before there can be a sanctifying the Name of God in the duties of His worship. Therefore, when you come to perform any duties of God's worship you should consider this, is my heart sanctified? I must sanctify God's Name, and how can I do that, except my heart be sanctified?

2 Secondly, our hearts must be sanctified because the Lord doth look more to the principle from whence a thing comes, than at the thing itself. As indeed were our hearts right as they should, then all the good things that come to us, we would not so much regard what the things are that we do enjoy from God, as what the principle is from whence they come, that is, whether what we do enjoy from God is from the love of God in Jesus Christ or no? Whether it be from the general bounty and patience of God, or from the special grace of God in Jesus Christ? Our hearts would regard that more if we were spiritual; now then look as a godly man is not satisfied with enjoying any good thing from God except he knows it comes from a principle of love to him in Jesus Christ. So, God is not pleased with anything that comes from us, except He knows that it comes from a principle of Love, Grace, and Holiness in our hearts.

3 Thirdly, according as the heart is, so will the service be. Certainly, if the heart be unclean the duty will be unclean; perhaps the words may be fine and brave, but if there be an unclean heart, the duty will be unclean. As it is with a man that hath the plague, suppose he makes a brave oration, yet his breath is infectious; so it is in our services with God. If so be that our hearts within us have the plague, then certainly the breath that comes from us, all our duties will be unclean, and therefore, that is the first thing that we are to look for in the sanctifying God's Name in holy duties. Look to have thy heart sanctified and consider from what principle it comes; tis for want of this that thousands of our duties are cast aside and God never doth regard them. But this is the first particular, there are many more to speak of.

## **Sermon V**

# Sanctifying the Name of God in Holy Duties

LEVITICUS 10: 3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We proceed. The next thing, therefore, for the behavior of the soul in the sanctifying God's Name in worship is this:

When we come to worship God, if we would sanctify God's Name, we must have high thoughts of God; we must look upon God as He is upon His throne, in majesty, and in glory as in Isa 6:1, 2, you shall find that the prophet saw the Lord upon His throne. It is an excellent thing when all who come to worship God, every time they come to worship Him, have their eyes darted up to heaven and behold the Lord God sitting in His glory upon His throne. So you shall find in Rev. 4, the 24 elders that worshipped God, they saw Him upon His throne in His glory and so they worshipped Him; they worshipped God to purpose indeed when they saw the Lord in that majesty as He was. We should at all times have high thoughts of God; take heed of having low thoughts and apprehensions of the infinite majesty of God at any time, but especially when thou art to worship the great God, then look upon the Lord in that infinite distance that there is between Him and thyself, yea, that infinite distance that there is between Him and all creatures in the world, look upon the Lord as lifted up in glory, not only above all creatures, but above all excellencies that all angels and men, in heaven and earth are able to imagine. Look upon the Lord as having all excellencies in Himself, joined in one, and that immutably; look upon Him as the fountain of all excellency, good, and glory that all creatures in the world have. And look upon the Lord every time thou comest to worship Him as that God whom angels do adore and before whom the devils are forced to tremble; behold Him in this His glory and this will help thee to sanctify His Name when thou comest to Him.

The great reason why people come and worship God in a slight way, it is because they do not see God in His glory. 'Tis a great mercy for God to give unto us a sight of Himself, a sight of His glory here in this world while we are worshipping of Him; this would keep our eyes and our thoughts from wandering, if we had a sight of the glory of God and had high thoughts of God. What's the reason why we wander so as we do, but merely because we see not God? As now suppose you were in your house and looking after every feather that were flying up and down. If you should hear that the King were come into the room, or any great person, it would compose your spirits because you have high thoughts of such, as of those that are above you. So let us look upon God as in His excellency and His glory, and have high thoughts of Him, and this is that whereby we are to sanctify God's Name when we come before Him in holy duties. And that is the second thing: first, a sanctified heart and then high thoughts of God.

A third thing is high-ends, raised-ends in the worshipping of God. Prov. 15:24, "The way of life is above to the wise," it is on high in this respect, when he worships God, his heart is lifted up on high; there is a holy raising of the heart which is well pleasing to God. Our hearts should be on high in regard of the high ends that we aim at in holy duties. Lift up thy prayer, saith Hezekiah to the Prophet in another case. So, I may say, lift up thy soul when thou comest to worship God in regard of the high ends that we aimest at. When we are worshipping God we should have our hearts above all creatures, and above ourselves. Let not our hearts then be groveling upon the ground, mingled with base and drossy things. When we come to worship the Lord indeed it is fit that we should have our hearts low (as we shall show hereafter) in regard of humility, but not low in regard of any baseness of Spirit to mix with any base and low ends. Now there are low and base ends in worshipping of God.

First, we must take heed we do not subject the worship of God unto our lusts, that is a cursed thing. Thou art far from sanctifying God's Name in worshipping of Him that shalt subject His worship to thy

base lusts, this is an abominable and cursed thing indeed. You will say, who doth thus, who is the man or where is he that will do this, subject the worship of God to his base lusts? To that I answer, whosoever doth make use of any duty of worship as prayer, hearing the Word, or whatever it be, to cloak any kind of wickedness, whosoever is conscious to himself of any kind of secret wickedness, and yet shall think to cover it by the performance of duties, and shall reason in this manner, who will think me to be guilty of such a vile thing, when I pray so as I do, and am so careful to hear the Word, and I hope I shall cover some wickedness this way. If there be any in this place whose conscience tells them that they subject the worship of God to such a base end as this is, the Lord rebuke them this day, and speak to their hearts. If I knew any, I would set mine eyes upon them and say as the Apostle to Simon Magus, I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity; and as he said to him that did seek to draw the deputy from the faith, O thou child of the Devil, and full of all subtilty, to damn and undo thyself eternally, that seekest to cloak any wicked way by any duty of God's worship. Is it a great evil for a man or woman to make use of any of God's creatures to be serviceable to their lusts as meat and drink, etc. What a damnable thing is it then to make use of any duty of God's worship, sometimes extraordinary worship as fasting and prayer, to be a cloak to cover their wickedness! Thou art so far from sanctifying God's Name that thou pollutest God's Name; thou doest what in thee lies for to cast even dirt in the face of God Himself that doest so.

The second base end is to subject the duties of God's worship to the praise of men, as to perform duties of God's worship for the esteem of men, and because we shall be well thought of; take heed of this you young ones, and others, you would fain be esteemed well of by those that you live withal. It is a desirable thing to have a good esteem from those that are godly but take heed that you do not subject the duties of God's worship to this. Indeed, it may be an encouragement to you, as David saith in Psalm 52:9, "This is good before Thy saints." David did encourage himself to praise God because it was good before God's saints; and I confess it may be an

encouragement because holy duties are good before God's saints; but take heed that this be not thy highest end that thou aimest at, and that which carries thee on in the work merely to get the praise of men, and that they shall think that thou hast good gifts and parts, and therefore thou art enlarged in that regard. Take heed of that, know that now thou doest not worship God, but thou worshippest men, thou doest make the praise of men to be thy God, for whatsoever thou doest lift up in the highest place, that's thy God, whatsoever it be. Therefore, if thou liftest up the praise of men and makest that thy end, thou makest that thy God, and so thou art a worshipper of men, but not a worshipper of God.

Thirdly, take heed of making self thy end; there are some that are not so base and low in their hearts as to make the praise of men their end, but they aim and look at themselves, that is, they aim at their own peace, and satisfying their own consciences in the performance of duties. Now though it's true, when we perform duties of God's worship, we may expect to receive some good to ourselves, and we may be encouraged to the duties by the expectation of good to ourselves; yet we must look higher, we must look at the honor and praise of God, that the Name of the blessed God may be honored. Now I am going to prayer, oh that I may pray so as I may lift up God's Name. I am going to hear, oh that I may hear so, as God may be honored by my hearing. 'Tis this that carries me on to hearing the Word and makes me rise readily and to go forth cheerfully. I hope that God may have some honor by my hearing this day, and God knows that this is the thing that I aim at. I do not come for company nor to be seen of men, neither do I come merely to satisfy mine own conscience. Others go and hear such truths of God as do good to their souls, and if I should neglect them merely for mine own ease, my conscience would not let me be quiet; howsoever there are many whose consciences will be quiet enough, though they lose an opportunity in the worship of God; but yet there are others whose consciences cannot do so; their consciences would tell them when they are lying and turning themselves upon their beds, "How do you know but that God had something to speak to thy heart this morning,

that may never be spoken to thy heart at any other time?” Therefore, they cannot be at quiet except they attend upon God in the duties of His worship. But still this is not enough merely to satisfy conscience; thy main end it must be that thou mayest this day know some part of the mind of God, that God may speak to thy heart, that so thou mayest be fitted to honor the Name of God, that thou mayest be enabled to live to His honor the week following so much the better.

As in this manner thy thoughts should be, “Lord, I find a drossy carnal heart; I am busy in the world in the week-time, and I find that my heart is fulfilled and defiled with the business of the world, and entangled, but Lord, thou hast appointed Thy Sabbath and Word to be a means to sanctify my heart, and to cleanse it; Oh Lord, communicate Thy grace to my soul through Thy ordinances upon this day, that so I may be enabled the week following the better to live to Thine honor; Lord, I come into Thy presence to that end, that I might know some part of Thy will, and that I might get Thy Spirit to be conveyed through this Word of Thine into my heart.” This should be thy end whenever thou comest and not only self. I will give you two or three Scriptures to show that God regards little any duties where self is the highest end. The first is in Hosea 7:14, “They howled upon their beds,” (saith the text there,) “but they cried not to Me.” The Lord there did acknowledge that they were very much affected in their prayers, but what was it? It was but a howling upon their beds; and how so, it was because only they did cry for themselves. “They have not cried unto Me (saith the Lord) with their heart, when they howled upon their beds. It was but merely for corn, and wine, and oil, but not unto Me, they aimed at themselves and not at Me.”

And in Amos 5:22, there the Lord professes that He did reject the fat of their peace offerings. “Though ye offer Me,” saith He, “burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the peace offering of your fat beasts.” They were careful to offer their fattest beasts in their peace offerings, and will not God regard them? It was in their peace offerings that they offered their fat beasts, and there they were to eat a great part of it themselves.

Indeed, the burnt offering was wholly offered unto God, God had all that, but the peace-offering, those that did offer it, they did eat a great part of it themselves. Now they were very careful in those offerings that they should partake of themselves to offer fat beasts; you do not see that the Holy Ghost takes any notice of fat beasts in their burnt offerings. Now the note from hence is this, that in those things where men are interested themselves, they will be very careful to have the best things. But now the Lord rejected the fat beasts of their peace-offerings. Saith God, you were very careful to offer fat beasts in your peace-offerings where you may feed yourselves, but for those offerings wherein I have all, there you are not so careful, and therefore I regard them not.

The third Scripture is in Zech. 7:5, there they did keep many days in seeking of God, (it is an observable Scripture for these times) "Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests saying, 'When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto Me, even unto Me?'" Mark the phrase, "You fasted in the fifth and seventh month, and for seventy years together," but saith the Lord, "did you at all fast unto Me," and then mark how it is doubled, "to Me, even unto Me?" noting that when we fast or pray, or do anything in the worship of God, we should be sure to aim at God more than ourselves, that God may not say of us another day, "Do you do it to Me, even to Me?"

You may ask me this question; how may I know that I am acted by self-ends in holy duties? For it is a hard thing for one to know one's own heart when one is acted by principles of self, and when we aim at God in holy duties. Now for that I will give you these notes to try whether you be acted from yourselves or no.

The first is this, if a man loves holy duties (though he find no present good comes in by them) because they are such things as God requires and therefore, though I get nothing by them, yet this is enough to carry me on, and to carry me on readily and willingly in the worship of God. Those that can, delight in God's worship even at that time,

though they find nothing coming into themselves. But now when we find not that coming in that we do desire, we begin to be weary of worship, and say, why have we fasted, and Thou seest it not? This is an argument that thou art acted by self rather than by God.

Secondly, to know whether we be acted by self ends, or rather by high ends for God, those men that can rejoice in others, that are able to honor God in holy duties more than themselves, they may have good evidence to their own souls that when they worship God, they are acted by higher ends than self. But now such as are straightened themselves, and when they see others more enlarged in the worship of God, they rather envy them, are grieved and troubled; know that self is a great ingredient in those duties that thou doest perform. If thy heart were raised high to God, though thou canst not thyself be enlarged in holy duties, yet thy soul would be glad that any others are, though I have a wretched and vile heart of my own; yet blessed be God that there are any others that can worship God better than I can.

Thirdly, a man that is acted by self in holy duties he regards holy duties but little, save in time of extremity, in time of fear, or of sickness, or in dangers. But now, one that hath high ends in holy duties makes the duties of God's worship to be the joy of his soul in the midst of his prosperity; and that is an evident sign that thou art not acted by self ends but by higher ends. Canst thou in the midst of thy abundance say, "Lord, thou givest me all conveniences in this world and all outward things that I want; but Lord, this is that which is the joy of my soul, this is that which makes my life comfortable, even communion with Thyself, in the duties of Thy worship, that I have free access unto the throne of Thy grace to worship Thee the Lord, and there meet with Thee when I am in the performance of holy duties. O Lord, Thou that knowest all things, knowest that this is the thing that makes my life comfortable. It is not that I have a table furnished with variety of dishes, and that I can have liberty of time to go into company and spend according as I please, but Lord those incomes of Thy Spirit that I do find in the duties of Thy

worship, those are the things that makes my life blessed indeed unto me.” Such a man as is able thus to appeal to God, surely when he worships God, he is acted by high-ends, and not by self ends. And that is the third thing that is necessary for sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties, thou must have a sanctified heart, high thoughts of God, and high ends.

In the fourth place, there must be much reverence and much fear when thou comest into the presence of God to worship Him; thou doest not glorify God as God, except thou doest come into His presence with much fear and reverence of His great Name. Fear in worshipping of God it is so necessary that many times in Scripture we find that the very worship of God is called the Fear of God, they are put both for one. I might give you divers Scriptures for it, and hence it was that the Name of God was called the Fear of Isaac.

Jacob did swear by the fear of his father Isaac because Isaac, being a great worshipper of God, kept his constant times to worship God, and worshipped Him in such a constant way. As except David and Daniel, we do not find mention of the constancy of any in the worshipping of God as we do of Isaac's; for it is said that he walked but into the fields in the evening as he was wont to do, to meditate, and to pray; and therefore, God is called, The Fear of Isaac. In Psalm 89:7 is a notable Scripture for this drawing nigh to God with fear, “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.” God is to be had in reverence of all of them that are about Him, but in the assembly of His saints He is greatly to be feared, He is daunting terrible (so the words are) in the assembly of the saints. When thou comest nigh to God, thou hadst need have thy heart possessed with much fear. So, in Psalm 2:11 the kings and princes of the earth are called upon to serve the Lord with fear. Let them be never so great, yet when they come into God's presence, they must serve Him with fear. And so, in Psalm 5:7, “In Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple.”

Now this fear of God, it must not be a servile fear, but a reverential fear. For my brethren, there may be a great deal of slavish fear,

where God is not honored; there may be fear from some terrible apprehensions of God, which is not owned by God to this grace of fear. I will give you two notable Scriptures for that in Deut. 5:23-25 compared with verse 29. “It came to pass (saith the text verse 23) when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, for the mountain did burn with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders, and ye said, ‘Behold the Lord our God hath showed us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth, now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God anymore, then we shall die.’”

See with what a terror they were struck at the apprehension of God's appearance; you would think surely these men did fear God much, but mark in verse 29, “O, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me.” Why, did they not fear the Lord? Were they not struck with such fear that they thought they should die? They saw His presence so terrible that they were afraid they should die and yet, “O that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me!”

So that it appears by this, that one may be struck with much terror in the apprehension of God's presence, and yet have no true fear of the Name of God. So, some of you it may be in time of thunder or danger are filled with terror; but yet may it not be said presently after, O that there were the fear of God in the heart of this man or woman, this youth or maid. They are terrified sometimes, but yet there is not a filial and reverential fear of God in them. And I find in 1 Kings 19, (where you have the story of God's appearing in that most terrible manner unto the Prophet Elijah by fire, by thunder, and in a mighty wind) the Prophet was not so struck with fear of God's presence when He did appear in the mighty wind or earthquake or fire, as when God did appear in the small still voice. Therefore, in verse 13 it is said, “And it was so when Elijah heard it (that is, the soft voice, after the fire and earthquake, and the mighty wind) that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering in of the

cave, and behold there came a voice unto him and said, "What doest thou here Elijah?" Then his heart was more struck with fear where was most of God's presence, (though it was in a soft voice) than when the fire and earthquake did appear.

It is a good sign of a gracious fear when the soul can be struck with more fear from the Word, and from the sight of God in enjoying of communion with Him in His worship, than when God appears in the most terrible way of His works; or when there is terror in a man's conscience through fear of hell, when God appears as though He would send him down presently to hell, though God expects to be feared then. But when the soul in enjoying communion with God in holy duties and the more communion he hath with God the more is he struck with reverence and the fear of God, this is a sign of sanctified fear, and then doth the heart sanctify the Name of God indeed when it is so possessed with fear in the duties of worship.

Now this fear of God should be indeed in the soul and expressed outwardly when you are in the assembly by such reverent carriage in prayer, as if a heathen should come in, he may see God's Name sanctified, and may say, how great is this God that this people do worship! And in your families, a reverent carriage, not lying all along in prayer upon the elbows sleeping but carrying yourselves so that if a heathen should come into your families they may say, O how great is this God that this people do worship! And likewise this fear it must be an abiding fear, not only at that instant when you are worshipping of God, or speaking of any of God's titles and names, but a fear that must abide upon your hearts after duty is over; that is, after you are come out from your closets one may perceive the fear of God upon you, and so walking all the day long in the fear of God as it becomes those that have been solemnly setting themselves to worship Him. Now this fear and reverence is contrary to the slightness, vanity, the boldness, and presumptuousness that there is in the hearts of men and women when they are worshipping of God.

Fifthly, the duties of God's worship must be full of strength, for they are not suitable to God else, because God is a God infinite in power and glory Himself, therefore God cannot endure vain worshipping. In Isa 1:13, "I hate vain oblations." Vanity of spirit in worshipping of God is very hateful to God; it doth defile the Name of God. God is dishonored by the vanity of men's spirits. Now this strength is threefold:

1 First, the strength of intention.

2 Secondly, the strength of affection.

3 Thirdly, the strength of all the faculties of the soul, and the strength of body too, as much as we are able should be put forth in the worshipping of God.

1 First, the strength of intention. We must intend our work as if it were for our lives. If ever we were seriously intente or attentive about anything, it must be when we are worshipping of the Name of God. When you are coming to pray, be intent about it. You shall see some when they are going in the street when they have much intention about their business, their friends meet them, and they never mind them; one may perceive as they are going, that they are mightily intent about their business. My brethren, look upon every duty of worship as a great thing which you must be intent in your thoughts about, and not give way to the wandering of your thoughts. I have read of one martyr that when he was to die and the fire a kindling, saith an officer, what, will not you speak when you see the fire kindling? Saith he, "I am speaking to God," that is, he was praying, and he minded not at all what they were doing. O, what little things do take our thoughts away from holy duties! When every toy, every feather, every light matter calls them off, is this to sanctify God's Name? Would not we account it a dishonorable thing if we were talking to one about serious business, and when we are talking, every one that comes by he should be looking after them, and turning aside to talk with them? If a superior be talking with you, he doth

expect that you should mind what he saith. But when God is speaking to you, and you are speaking to God, every vain thought that comes by you are turning aside too, as if it were a greater thing to talk to vain thoughts and temptations, than to the great and glorious God.

Therefore, now that is the very time that the Devil chooses to bring temptations when we are in holy duties, for the Devil knows then he doth two works at once; he doth disturb us in our duties and call off our hearts to that that is wicked, and doth aggravate our sin exceedingly. It may be thou wilt not dare to commit that sin that the temptation doth turn thy thoughts upon, yea, but the Devil hath spoiled the duty by it. The Lord doth expect that there should be strength of intention when thou art upon the duty; and there is no time to parley with temptations now, whatever thoughts come in. The truth is, though they be good thoughts that should come into thy mind, and that time that thou art praying, yet if they be not pertinent to the duty, thou must cast them away as the temptation of the Devil.

You will say, can anything that is good come from the Devil? Certainly, that which is materially good, and coming unseasonably, may be from the Devil; the Devil may take advantage by what is in itself materially good and bring in that in an unseasonable time, and so he may turn it to evil. As now, when thou art hearing the Word, it may be the Devil thinks he cannot prevail to cause thee to have thy heart running about uncleanness; yea, but saith the Devil, if I can inject good thoughts, I will put into their minds some place of Scripture that is no way pertinent to this, only to divert them. The Devil gets much by this, therefore look to it, and know that God expects the strength of thy spirit in duty, that is, strong intention; thou art worshipping of God, and therefore thou hadest need be intent about what thou art doing.

Indeed, sometimes before you are aware, evil thoughts will come into your minds as when a man is keeping of a door, and there is a crowd of people without that would come in; perhaps the man doth open

the door for some gentleman that he hears is at the door, but when he opens it for one that is to come in, forty others will crowd in. And so, it is many times with the soul, that when it opens the door for some good thought, a great many evil thoughts will crowd in. Those people might come in if they would stay their time, but they should not now come in. So about worldly businesses that are not in themselves unlawful, if they will stay the time they may come in; but they must be barred out now at this time. There is required strength of intention.

2 Secondly, strength of affection is required also. That is, the affections must work mightily after God, striving with God in prayer. If ever thou hadest a heart inflamed in anything, it should be when thou art praying or attending upon the Word. As the heathens that worshipped the sun, sometimes I have told you, that they would not have a snail, but a flying horse; they would offer that that was swift so when we come to the living God, we must have living affections, our affections boiling; and that will be the way to cure vain thoughts; as the flies will not come to the honey if it be boiling hot, but when it is cold. So, if the heart be boiling hot, and the affections a-working, it will keep out vain thoughts and temptations. It is a sign of the breath of life when it is warm, but artificial breath you know it is cold; as now, the breath that comes out of the body, that is warm, but the breath that comes out of a pair of bellows, that is cold. So, the breath of many people in prayer, it is discovered to be but artificial breath because it is so cold, but if there were spiritual life, then it would be warm. There must be strength of affection.

3 Thirdly, there must be likewise the strength of all the faculties. We should stir up whatever we are, or have, or can do to work in prayer; then the bent of mind, and conscience, and will, and affection; yea, and the body should be put to it also; and those that worship God to purpose they spend their bodies in nothing so much as in the worshipping of God. It will be a sad thing another day when this shall be charged upon many, thou hast spent the strength of thy body upon lusts, but when didst thou spend any strength of thy body

about any holy duty? What a riddle is this to most people, to tell them of spending the strength of their bodies in prayer, or hearing of the Word, or sanctifying a Sabbath; they think the Sabbath is a time of rest. I confess it is a time of rest from an outward labor, but it is a time of spending strength in a spiritual way; and those that shall worship God aright on the Sabbath will find it a-spending of a great deal of strength and blessed is that strength that is spent in the worship of God rather than in the ways of sin, as most spend their strength.

If God gives thee a heart to spend thy strength in His worship, thou mayest think thus, Lord, thou mightest have left me to have spent my strength in sin, how much better is it spent in the worshipping of Thy Name? There is one notable Scripture in Jer. 8:2 that shows how much strength the idolaters put forth in the worshipping of their idol, they would not do it in a slight and vain way, but their hearts were much in that false worship, saith the text, “And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, (mark now) whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and when they have sought, and whom they have worshipped.” All these are put together in reference to their idols; Oh, that it could be said so of us in reference to God when we come to worship Him whom we have loved, and whom we have served, and after whom we have walked, and whom we have sought, and whom we have worshipped; there is all these several expressions to show the strength of their spirits in following after their idols. And that is the fifth thing in our sanctifying of God's Name.

6 The sixth is, if thou wilt sanctify God's Name in worship, there must be an humble frame of spirit, worship Him with much humility of soul. Abraham did fall upon the ground before the Lord, and dust and ashes (saith he) hath begun to speak unto thee; yea, we read of Jesus Christ groveling upon the earth, and the angels they cover their faces in the presence of God, and so should we be humble when we come before the Lord. There is nothing more abases the soul of man

than the sight of God; and the great reason of the pride of all men's hearts is because they never knew God. If thou didst but see God, thy heart must needs be abased; and when doth the soul see God if not when it comes to worship Him? In Job 42, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Now this humility must be in the sense of our own meanness and baseness. Psalm 34:6, This poor man cried to God. They are poor souls that come into God's presence that sanctify God's Name most; even those souls that do apprehend and are sensible of their own baseness and meanness before God. This poor man cried to God; we use to say, Give that poor man somewhat. It doth affect the heart of God when He sees much poverty of spirit; when we come before Him, we must be sensible of our infinite dependence upon God. Come as the woman of Canaan, O Lord, even dogs do receive crumbs, and though I be a dog, yet let me receive crumbs; here is humility of spirit. Now this humility of spirit appears in these things.

1 First admiring God's goodness that we do live at this time, and that we have liberty to come before Him; we might have been past praying and worshipping of God. Think thus, what a mercy is it that we are not banished out of God's presence, that the Lord hath not spurned us out of His sight as filth, and cast us out as an everlasting abhorring, while others have been praying, we might have been yelling under the wrath of the eternal God. Come with this apprehension of thyself, and adore God's goodness, that thou art alive to pray, and alive to hear God's Word. And that it is not only a duty, but a rich privilege and mercy that God will admit of thee to come into His presence. Again, it is the goodness of God that He will vouchsafe to look upon the things that are done in heaven; then if the Lord doth humble himself to behold the things that are done in heaven, then how doth the Lord humble Himself to behold me, a poor vile captive as I am in myself, and yet that God should not only behold me before Him, but invite me to come into His presence. What mercy and goodness is this!

2 Our hearts must be taken off from the thoughts and apprehensions of all excellencies in ourselves; we must not come in the pride of our hearts because we have abilities more than others; what, do all thy parts commend thee to God? Thou hast ability in expressing of thyself in prayer; why, do thy parts commend thee to God? Whatever is natural in any of our duties is nothing to God, only that which is from His own Spirit, and therefore thou shouldest come in thine own thoughts as vile as if thou hadst no parts and abilities at all. Lay aside all such apprehensions of thyself, for the truth is, some poor broken-hearted sinner that can but sigh out a few groans to God and is not able to speak two or three sentences together in a right language, but only breath out his soul to God, may be a thousand-thousand times more acceptable to God than thou that art able to make great orations when thou comest before Him.

3 Thou must come without any righteousness of thy own, thou must never come into God's presence but as a poor worm; and if there be any difference that is made between thee and others in outward respects, it is nothing to thee; when thou art in the presence of God, thou art as a base vile worm, though thou be a Prince or Emperor.

4 Thy heart must be taken off from what thou doest. If thou hast any abilities of grace, yet thy heart must be taken off there; there may be pride not only from one's parts, but it may be God hath given thee enlargements in prayer; the Devil will come in and seek to puff up thy heart even because of this, but thy heart must be taken off there; and thou must deny thyself in all when thou hast done the best service of all; yet thou must conclude thou art an unprofitable servant when thou hast prayed the best; yet rise with shame, and take heed of having thy heart puffed up even through the assistance of the graces of the Spirit of God in holy duties.

5 Lastly, thou must come with a humble resignation of thyself to God, to be content to wait upon God as long as He pleases, to wait upon God in regard of the time, and of the measure, and of the manner of the communication of Himself, in regard of the meanness

by which He will please to communicate Himself, wait upon Him; let me have mercy though at the last hour. This now is an humble heart in prayer, and when we come with such a poverty of spirit as this is, we may expect that the Lord will accept of us, give this poor man somewhat, will God say, "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him."

In the seventh place, we must bring that which is God's own in sanctifying God's Name. I spoke to this before in the point of preparation, Viz. That in God's worship we must give Him His own. I will only mention it here in the sanctifying of God's Name in two regards:

1 First, to give God His own, for the matter of it.

2 Secondly, to give God His own, that is, what comes from the work of His own Spirit, or else we do not sanctify God's Name. I will give you one text further about the matter of it, in Exod. 39. If you read the chapter, you shall find that there is ten times said that they did as God had commanded Moses. And then in the close of the chapter, when they had done as God had commanded in His worship, the text saith, Moses blessed them. That people is a blessed people that do observe the worship of God as God hath commanded them. But the main thing is, all that we do it must be acted by the Spirit of God. It is not enough to have true silver and gold, but it must have the right stamp or else it cannot go for current coin. And so it is not enough that the things we offer to God in His worship be God's own, be what we have warrant for out of God's Word, but it must have the stamp of the Spirit of God. In the worship of God there be two questions that He will ask, first, who required this at your hands? But then if you can answer thus, Thou O Lord, did'st require it. It is well, but then God hath another question, whose image and superscription is this? If thou canst not give an answer to that, it will be rejected, too. Thou must be acted by Divine principles in all that thou doest; there must be the stamp of the Spirit upon that which is tendered to God else it is nothing. To open this point fully will ask some time.

First, therefore, I will show you how we may know when our duties are acted by our natural parts rather than by the Spirit of God.

Secondly, how we may know whether our duties be acted by natural conscience rather than by the Spirit of God.

1 First, if thou art acted by natural parts, they will not change thy heart. Men that do perform duties by the strength of natural parts, they may be as large as others, and speak to the edification of others, but those duties do never change their hearts; now if thou beest acted by the Spirit of God, thou wilt be changed into the very image of His Spirit.

2 Secondly, if men are acted by natural parts, they will not carry them through difficulties and discouragements; but now the Spirit of God if thou hast acted by Him, though thou doest meet with never such difficulties and discouragements, thou wilt be carried through them all.

3 Thou mayest know it by this, wherein doest thou account the excellency of a duty to consist either in thyself or others? Thou performest a duty, now it may be thy parts do act very lively and to thy credit, and yet thy conscience tells thee that thy heart was straightened. Now canst thou rise up with joy because thou hast thy ends? At another time (perhaps) thy heart is more troubled and broken. But thou doest not express thyself so much, then thou art discouraged. And when thou seest another perform a duty, if thou seest but any failing in their expressions, thou pitchest upon that and lookest upon it as a poor thing. Thou art not able to see an excellency in holy duties, except there be an excellency of natural parts; but those that have the Spirit of God, they can find the Spirit of God acting in others, though they have not such natural parts.

4 Those that are acted by their natural parts, in secret they are less enlarged than they are before others a great deal. Their parts act

much before others, but what is there between God and their own souls?

5 They that be so acted will not be very constant. You shall have young ones that begin to look towards religion; their parts are a little fresh, and they are mightily enlarged in holy duties, and the thing is good for them to make use of their parts; but how ordinary is it, that after a few years they are deader and duller than they were before, and have less mind to the duties of God's worship than they had formerly? Were this the Spirit of God, you would find as much savor and relish in them afterwards as there was at that time.

Secondly, for natural conscience, which sometimes puts men upon acting of duties, and indeed is better than merely natural parts.

1 If it be only natural conscience, it puts upon duties, but gives no strength to do them. But when the Spirit of God puts thee upon a duty, it gives thee some strength to perform it, some strength whereby thou gettest some communion with God.

2 If it be natural conscience, it puts upon the duty, but makes not the heart glad of the duty, and to love the duty; but if it be the Spirit of God, it makes thee to delight in it, and to love it.

3 If it be natural conscience, thou doest not by that increase thy communion with God, thou doest thy duties as in a round, but now when the Spirit of God puts thee upon holy duties, it is not a task done, but thou findest more and more increase in communion with God; thy heart more raised to God, and more closing with the Lord, and so still more and more in the course of thy life. I had a little converse with God at first when God began to acquaint my soul with His ways, but through His mercy now I find more communion with Him. And so thou canst bless thyself in God in that converse that thou hast in communion with Him; thou wouldest not lose that communion thou hast with God in holy duties for all the world; others have their companions that they have their communion

withal, much good may do them, but the Lord hath shown me another manner of communion which my soul can have with Himself in which it hath sweet satisfaction. And thus, you have had seven particulars for the sanctifying of the Name of God in holy duties.

## **Sermon VI**

### **Suiting Our Duties to the God We are Worshipping**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

4 Again, as natural conscience doth give no strength to do the duty, so it makes not the duty to be strong to the soul; that is thus, there's no strength got by the duty, they are not by one duty prepared for another, "But the way of the Lord is strength to the upright," that is, when a gracious heart is in the way of God's worship, it finds the very duty of the worship of God to be strength to it, and so it fits it for another duty.

5 Further, a natural conscience limits itself and is bounded, that is, so much as will serve the turn for its own peace and quiet, so much it will do and no more. But when one is acted by the Spirit of God, one is enlarged without any limits at all, not bounded to one's own peace, for the more peace a gracious heart hath in duty, the more it is enlarged in duty. Now, a natural conscience, that puts to duty and will act you when you want peace, when you are in trouble and fear; but when you are not in trouble and fear, then it puts not on the heart to performance of duty; but the Spirit of God puts on the soul to duty, when there is most peace and comfort.

6 A little will serve the turn to satisfy a natural conscience, so be it they perform the duty it is enough; but one that is acted by the Spirit of God in duty must meet with much of God or else he is not satisfied; he goes mourning in the daytime if he hath not met with much of God in the morning in the performance of duty. Thus, you see there's much difference between the actings of natural parts and conscience in duty, and the acting of the Spirit of God.

There be only now two things more for the sanctifying of God's Name in duty, and then we are to come to show how we should sanctify God's Name in duty in reference to the several attributes of God. But first for those two heads further.

7 The seventh thing is this, when you come to perform holy duties, if you would sanctify God's Name, you must consecrate yourselves to God; there must be a resignation of soul and body, estate, liberty, name, and all you are, have, or can do unto God. This is to sanctify God's Name, the consecration of yourselves to God. And the professing of this in the performance of duty when you are to pray were a very good thing, actually to profess yourselves to be God's, to profess that you do give up all that you are, have, or can do to God: "Lord, I am Thy servant, take all faculties of soul and members of body, and improve all, lay out all to Thine own praise to the uttermost, to bring glory to Thy great Name." If every time you came to God in prayer you did this, this were to sanctify yourselves to God. I spoke before of a sanctified heart, but now this is in a profession of yourselves to God; do it secretly at least in your own thoughts; if you do not every time express it in words, yet in your own thoughts do it; devote yourselves to God every day. Of admirable use it would be if every day when men and women worship God, either in their closets or families, they did professedly devote and consecrate themselves to God. And so likewise, every time they came to hear the Word, or to receive sacraments, God would account His Name to be sanctified in such a work as this is.

8 Lastly, that that must make all up, and without which all the other is nothing, it is that you must tender up all your worship in the name of Jesus Christ; let a man or woman worship God never so well, yet when they have done all, if they do not tender it up in the Name of Jesus Christ, God will not account His Name to be sanctified. Thou must by faith look upon Jesus Christ as the glorious Mediator that is come into the world, by whom thou hast access unto the Father. And act thy faith upon Christ, and give up thy duties into His hand, as the hand of a Mediator to be tendered up to the Father by Him; though thou hast labored what thou canst to perform duty as well as thou art able, yet thou must not think to tender it up by thine own hand unto God; but thou must tender it up to the Father by the hand of Jesus Christ the Mediator, and so thou shalt sanctify the Name of God in holy duties.

We read in Lev. 16:13 that when Aaron was to tender up the incense, he was to “put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the Mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not.” Mark, it is as much as his life is worth, whether he doth it or doth it not. Now incense, it is in the New Testament called prayer, and so in the Old Testament too, it was a kind of emblem of prayer. The offering up of our prayers is the offering up of incense to God, and the Mercy seat it was a type of Jesus Christ. Now the incense should cover the Mercy seat; so, our prayers must go up to Jesus Christ, must be upon Him, and so must be accepted by the Father. And as we read in Judges 13:20 when Manoah offered a sacrifice, the text saith that, “the Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame.” This Angel of God here was Jesus Christ, as we might easily from this Scripture make it out, and He ascends up in the flame from the Altar. Now though we do not offer such kind of sacrifices with fire and incense as they did in the time of the Law, yet when we are offering up of our incense, there must be a flame of fervency and zeal, but that is not enough. Together with the flame of the Altar, the Angel of God, Jesus Christ, the great Angel of the New Covenant (for Angel signifies nothing but “Messenger”) the great Messenger that is come into the world about that great errand of His, to reconcile the

world to Himself, He must ascend up in the flame, and so God will account His Name to be sanctified; the name of God is not sanctified but through Jesus Christ.

The acting of our faith upon Christ as mediator is a special ingredient to the sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties; as you know, the Scripture saith that the Altar doth sanctify the gift offered upon the altar; Jesus Christ is the Altar upon whom all our spiritual sacrifices are to be offered, and this Altar doth sanctify the gift that is offered upon it, let never so great a gift be offered upon any other Altar, it was not accounted holy nor accepted; so let men by their natural strength, or power that they have, offer up the most glorious and speciosest service to God. It is not accepted unless it be offered up upon the Altar Jesus Christ. We have an Altar now, (not the Communion Table) but Jesus Christ Himself is our Altar upon whom we are to offer all our sacrifices, and this Altar must sanctify the gift; we can never have our gift sanctified, no, nor God's Name sanctified in this gift except it be offered upon this Altar, and our faith acted upon Jesus Christ.

People little think of this, but of other things, viz. That when we worship God, we should worship Him with fear, and reverence, and with humility, and with strength of intention, such kind of things every one that hath any enlightening of conscience will think of at some time or other; but people do least think of this, which is the greatest ingredient of all that is required in the sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties, that is, to come and tender up all to the Father in the Name of Jesus Christ. How many men and women that have been professors of religion twenty or thirty years, and yet not acquainted with this great mastery of godliness, to tender up all to God in the Name of His Son. This is that that upon divers occasions I have spoken unto and am willing upon every occasion as I meet with it to speak of, because it is a principal part of the great mystery of the Gospel, without which all our duties are rejected of God and cast away. Now then put all these nine things together and see by them

what we ought to do that we may sanctify the Name of God in holy duties.

But there is something further to be spoken that may help you to sanctify God's Name in holy duties, and that is, several workings of heart suitable to the several attributes of God, for that is to sanctify God's Name, to have the duty to be such as is some way suitable to such a God as we are now worshipping. Now then, let us consider what the Scripture saith of God, and then let us see what suitable dispositions we should have in us unto those things that the Scripture saith of God.

1 First, you know the Scripture saith that God is a Spirit, in John 4:24. Then presently Christ saith that, "He that worships Him must worship Him in Spirit." That is, there must be a suitableness in our worship to what God is: Is God a Spirit? Then all that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and Truth. That is, thus when I am to go to worship God, I must consider of Him as He is an infinite and glorious Spirit; well then, surely bodily worship is not sufficient for me. Though I do kneel down in prayer or do come and present my body to hear the Word, or my body to receive the sacrament, this is not to worship God as a Spirit. If indeed that our God were as the heathens, that were corporeal, then it were another matter; then bodily worship would serve the turn, but God being a Spirit, He must have spiritual worship. Therefore, "My soul and all that is within me magnify His name," saith David, my soul magnify His name, not my lips only, but my soul.

The Apostle, in 1 Tim. 4:8, saith that bodily exercise profits little; it is no great matter for the body, God looks but very little at bodily exercise; but it is godliness that is profitable, it is the work of the Spirit. When we come to pray, we must pray in the Spirit, that is, we must pray with our souls, we must pour forth our souls before God. And when we come to hear, our hearts must not go after our covetousness, we must set our hearts to what we hear, we must hear with our hearts as well as with our ears, our souls must be at work in

hearing of the Word. When you hear, it is not enough for you to come and sit in a pew and have the sound of a man's voice in your ears, but your souls must be at work.

And so, when you come to receive the sacrament, your souls must feed upon Jesus Christ. Bodily worship without soul-worship is nothing, but soul-worship may be accepted without bodily worship; therefore, it is the soul that God doth principally look at in holy duties. If you be not able to worship God in your bodies, you may worship Him in your souls, and God regards that bodily exercise in holy duties is little worth, somewhat it may be worth, I confess sometime bodily exercise may further the soul, as a reverend carriage of the body and the like, but it is nothing in comparison, the great work is the work of the soul, for God is a Spirit and must be worshipped in Spirit. And God is said to be a Spirit not only in that He is not of so thick a capital substance, but it notes the simplicity of God, He is without any composition, whatsoever is in God is God Himself, He is absolutely one, there are not divers things in God. Now then, those that come to worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth, that is, there must not be a heart and a heart, there must not be a compounded heart, but you must bring simple hearts before God, without any composition of drift in yourselves, and of any kind of falseness, but in the simplicity of your hearts you must come to worship God, and thus you shall worship Him with such worship as is some way suitable to Him as He is a Spirit.

2 Further consider God as He is an eternal God; what suitable disposition doth this require of me when I am to look upon God as an eternal being; it requires this only, that therefore thy heart must be taken off from all temporal good things, and set upon that eternal good, thou mayest indeed desire these outward good things but in order to thy eternal good.

Then further, thou art worshipping an eternal God; hence then whatsoever sin thou doest confess although committed twenty or forty years ago, thou must look upon it as if it were now presently

committed and be humbled as much before the Lord as if it were now committed at this present. You will say, why so? Because God is an eternal God? Yes, for if I understand God's eternity, I know that there is no succession in God's being, therefore the sins that I committed in my youth, if I come to confess them, they are before God as if they were now a doing in regard of time; and therefore I must (as much as I can) look so upon them, and be humbled for them as if they were sins lately committed. Many people are troubled for their sins the very day after they commit them, but a little time wears off their trouble; but if you did consider that you had to deal with an eternal God, then you would look upon your sins, though a long time since committed, as if they were now done.

Likewise, there will be this required from the consideration of God's eternity, you must come with such a disposition of heart as not to think much, though what you desired be deferred and not granted in your time when you would have it. For if there be no time that alters with God, but a thousand years are with God as one day, then that that we account long before it's done, it is nothing with God; and therefore, we must have our hearts so work towards God as towards an eternal God, as one with whom there is no alteration of time at all, with whom there is no succession of time. If we come to a man and seek anything of him, if he doth not answer us presently, we will think that he will forget it, and other things will come into his mind; but when we come to worship God, we must look upon Him as an eternal being, and that time alters nothing with Him. Thus, understanding God in a right way will much help us in His worship, and so to sanctify His Name. We cannot sanctify God's Name without knowing His Name, without having serious thoughts about His Name, and getting our hearts to work accordingly.

3 Thirdly, look upon God when you come to worship Him in His incomprehensible being, that is, as a God that fills all places; His being is as real in the room that we are praying in, the place that we are meeting in, as it is in heaven. Now then, when we come to worship Him we must consider that that infinite glorious being

stands before us, looks upon us, is at our elbow; and therefore, especially when you worship in secret consider this, it is good to consider it when you are with others, but especially I say consider it when you are in secret, and know that when you are most private you have one that looks on you and takes notice of you, who is more than if you had ten hundred thousand witnesses standing by you and looking upon you. For it is the Lord that stands by you, and sees your behavior, sees what you do in your worshipping of Him. Take heed therefore that there be nothing done by you that is unbecoming the presence of such a God as the Lord is. Suppose that some of you were praying, and there were some godly able Minister stood near you, it would be some means to stir up your hearts to mind what you did; but now the Lord He is not in the next room only, but in the same room and stands by you. Let there be nothing done therefore unbecoming the presence of that infinite holy God that stands by you. And hold this truth forth, the Lord is present with me, I acknowledge it, and I own it, and therefore I carry myself thus, and all because I would witness to angels and men that I do acknowledge that the Lord is present with me in this duty.

4 Fourthly, consider God is an unchangeable God, immutable. That is another attribute of God, He is unchangeable.

First, therefore our hearts must be taken off from these mutable things and set upon God as that unchangeable good.

Secondly, we must be humbled for our fickleness, and unconstantness; there is no shadow of change in God, and there is no shadow of constancy in us.

Thirdly, when we come into the presence of a God who is unchangeable, then we should look upon God as being the same now that ever He was heretofore. He hath as much displeasure against sin now as ever He had. And that God that hath done such great things for His Church in former times is the same God to do good to His people as ever He was. And make use of this: when you read the

Word and there find how God hath made Himself appear to be glorious for His people and now every time I am to worship God, I should think that I am to deal with God that is the same that ever He was, as merciful, and gracious, and just, and powerful as ever He was, and so my heart is to work towards Him.

5 Fifthly, when I am to worship God, I am to look upon Him as the living God, as that God that hath life in Himself, and gives life unto His creatures.

Then what suitable behavior doth become me? I must come before His presence with fear; “It is a fearful thing to fall into His hands that is the living God”; that hath my life under His feet, He hath the absolute dispose of my present and eternal condition, He gave me my life, He hath preserved my life, and so may take it away when He pleases, and bring death, eternal death unto me. These things may marvelously help your meditation when you are to come before Him, you who are barren in your meditations, go over the attributes of God thus, and consider what you may be able to draw from thence. God, He is the living God. What behavior then doth beseem me towards this living God? Oh, let me be afraid lest my soul depart from the living God. Let me bring a living service to Him, I must not bring a dead heart. Let me take heed how I come before the living God with a dead heart, and with a dead service, to sacrifice that that is dead before it comes, it’s like a carrion that lies dead in the ditch. Oh, let us be humbled for our dead hearts, and dead sacrifices; it is a living God that I am worshipping, and therefore I must pray, “Lord, turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken my heart in Thy Law,” Psalm 119: 37. Remember when thou comest to worship that thou come with a quickened heart, for thou hast to deal with the living God. A man or woman that is of an active spirit cannot endure a dull and heavy servant in the family; but the Lord is a pure act, and nothing else but act, and therefore He doth expect that all His people should have quick active and lively spirits.

6 When you come to worship God, you are to look upon Him as Almighty. And so are first to fear His great power when you come before Him. And secondly, then you are not to be discouraged by any difficulties.

I come to seek for some great thing, and I come to seek to a great God that hath all power in heaven and earth, and infinitely more power than there is in all creatures in heaven and earth; I am praying to a God that can create peace, create help. My condition cannot be so desperate, but this infinite Almighty God is able to help me. Let me make Him the object of my faith as He is so infinitely Almighty. What a full object of faith is this God that hath all power in Him? Let me therefore come to Him as a strong tower; "Run to the name of God as a strong tower," that can help in all straits whatsoever. There would be much drawing forth of our faith if we could present that Lord before us as an infinite Almighty God. When we see outward helps and means near at hand, then we can believe that we may have some succor from Him, but when all outward helps and means fail then we are discouraged, we do not sanctify God's Name, but we rather take this Name of God in vain, when as our hearts are discouraged with any difficulties. Now the Lord expects that all His children that come to worship Him should worship Him as the Almighty God, and so have their hearts working towards Him. There would be mighty workings of Spirit towards God if we saw Him by the eye of faith as well as reason.

7 Look upon God as an omniscient God, as a God infinitely understanding all things. Now what doth this call for?

First, if God be a God of infinite understanding, then let not me bring a blind sacrifice to God, then let not me bring an ignorant heart to God; this is the excellency of an understanding creature to know the rule and end of its own actions. Now thou comest to worship an infinite God of infinite understanding, then know the rule of what you do, and know the end of what you do, and come with understanding into His presence.

Secondly, if He be so understanding, come with a free open heart, to open whatsoever is in thine heart to God. Take heed of keeping any secret resolutions in thine own heart, God knows thee, and can tell how to find thee out; God knows all that is in thine heart before; all the secret baseness that is in thine heart the Lord doth understand it. The Lord's eye is a piercing eye, He sees through and through thy heart. It is a vain thing for thee to come and conceal anything before Him.

You will say, if God understand a man's heart, what need he come and confess?

Yes, He requires it as thy duty that thou shouldest come and open all before Him. In spite of thy heart, thou canst not cover anything from the Lord's eyes, but the Lord will see whether thou beest willing of thyself that He should understand all. God doth not require us to come and confess our sins that so He might know that which He knew not before, but for this end, that there might be a testimony, that thou art willing that He should know all that is in thy heart. Therefore, now when thou comest to worship Him, ransack every corner of thy heart and confess all before the Lord, and give glory to His name, as that God that is an all-seeing God that knows all the windings and turnings of thy heart. Now meditate of these things that be presented to thee, and it will be a mighty means to help thee to sanctify His Name.

8 God is a God of infinite wisdom, therefore when we come to worship God, let us be ashamed of our folly. When thou comest to have to deal with God, look upon Him as a God of infinite wisdom and I say, be thou ashamed of thy folly then, and do thou exercise the grace of wisdom too, when thou comest to God; that is, by propounding right ends (of which we spoke before) that is one part of wisdom to have right ends, and right means towards those ends, so that the meditation of the wisdom of God when we come to worship Him will further us to sanctify His Name.

And further, this is to sanctify God's wisdom when thou comest into God's presence, in thy greatest straits, deny thy own wisdom, come with a resolution to be guided by the wisdom of God in this manner, "Lord, I know not how to order my steps, there is much folly and vanity in my heart, but Thou art a God of infinite wisdom, I come to Thee for direction, and I profess here, I am willing to give up my whole soul to be guided by Thy wisdom." If every time we come to worship God we came thus, Oh Lord, whatsoever our thoughts have been heretofore, yet if Thou shalt but reveal Thy mind to us, we will hearken to Thee, Lord, we believe that Thy wisdom it is Thyself, and therefore we profess to give up ourselves to Thy wisdom. Now this is to sanctify the Name of God.

9 Consider the holiness of God; God is a God infinitely pure from all sin, and therefore when we come to worship God, we must be ashamed of our unholiness, as the Prophet in Isa. 6, when he heard the seraphim's cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts," he falls down and saith, "Woe is me for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." And is God a holy God? Then let me take heed when I come before Him, that I bring not with me a love to any sin for the Lord hates it and let me take heed that I do not cast dirt in the very face of God's holiness but give up my soul to be ruled wholly by Him.

And labor that there may be a suitableness between the holiness of thy heart and of the infinite God. Now this is to sanctify God's Name, when the consideration of this attribute of God hath such effect upon my heart, that I labor upon this to come with a suitable heart before God.

10 When thou comest before God, consider that thou comest to a merciful God. And what should this work?

First, it should make me come joyfully into His presence, as a God that is willing to do good to His poor creatures that are in misery.

Secondly, it should make me to come with a heart sensible of the need of this mercy; O Lord, I have had my heart let out to other vain things heretofore, but now Lord, Thy mercy it is that my soul comes for, as that wherein my chief and only good consists.

Thirdly, it should make me come with expectation of great things from God; do not come unto God as unto an empty vine, but as unto a full vine, and the more thy faith is raised to expect great things from God, the more acceptable art thou to God. Certainly, the higher anyone's faith is raised when they come into His presence to expect the greatest things, the more acceptable. It is otherwise with God than men, if you come to men to beg a little thing you may be welcome, but if you come to ask a great matter, they will look askew upon you. But the truth is, the greater the things are that we come to God for, the more welcome are we into God's presence, and those that are acquainted with God, they know it, and therefore they come the more fully. When they come to ask Jesus Christ Himself and His Spirit that is more worth than ten thousand worlds, they come with more freedom of Spirit than when they come to ask their healths and the like.

Fourthly, it will be likewise another means of sanctifying this attribute of God when thou comest to Him if thou doest come with a merciful heart towards thy brethren. Take heed whensoever you come to worship God that you come not with a rugged and cruel heart towards any of your brethren; therefore you find that Christ lays this upon you in teaching how to pray; you must say, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive our brethren that trespass against us; and you find it repeated again, if you forgive, then your heavenly Father will forgive, and not otherwise. As if Christ should say, when you come to beg mercy, be sure you bring merciful hearts.

Fifthly, it is a good way to sanctify the Name of God in this attribute, for the soul to be solicitous with itself. What is that that will hinder me from the mercy of God, and let me avoid it? It is otherwise, a taking of the name of God in vain, for me to come to profess what

need I have of God's mercy, and yet for all that, never regard to avoid those things that may hinder the work of His grace upon me.

11 Consider the justice of God (that is another attribute). Consider that thou hast to deal with an infinite, righteous, and just God. Do not think that if thou beest a believer, that thou hast nothing to do with the justice of God, for certainly thou art to sanctify the justice of God.

Now you will say, how should a believer sanctify the justice of God? Thus.

First, he should be apprehensive and sensible how by sin he hath put himself under justice and deserved the stroke of justice to be upon him to eternity; he should consider what he is in himself. It is true that Jesus Christ hath come between a believing soul and the justice of the Father, and hath taken the stroke of justice upon Himself; yea but though He hath done it, it doth not hinder but that thou shouldest be apprehensive of what thou hast deserved thyself.

Secondly, here is a special thing in the sanctifying of the justice of God. When we come before Him, we should consider that we have to deal with an infinite, just God, and therefore not to dare to come but through a mediator. Here you have the reason why we must tender up all in the Name of Christ, because when we are to come before God, we are to sanctify the Name of His justice. For thee to think thus, I have sinned, and God is merciful, and I will go and pray to Him that He might be merciful, and there's an end. Is this all? Oh no, God requires the sanctifying of His justice, and there is nothing that doth sanctify His justice so much as this, that when a poor creature sees the infinite distance that sin hath made between that infinite God and it, it sees that through sin it hath made itself liable to justice; and when it sees that there is an absolute necessity that infinite justice must have satisfaction, and thinks the sinner, if it comes to me that I must satisfy the justice of God I am never able to do it, but there is a mediator, and therefore I'll fly to Him, and by

faith tender up to the Father all the merits of His Son as a full satisfaction to His infinite justice. When thou comest thus before the Lord, thou sanctify His Name indeed. Many think that when they come to pray, they should look upon God's grace, and mercy, and not upon His justice; but thou must look upon both.

Another attribute it is God's faithfulness. Consider thou hast to deal with a God of infinite truth and faithfulness, and therefore look upon Him as an object of thy faith to rest upon. And likewise, thou must bring a faithful heart suitable some way to this faithfulness of God, that is, a heart faithful with Him, to keep within the covenant that thou hast entered into and to perform all the vows that thou makest with God. Remember thou hast to deal with a faithful God, and as the Lord delights to manifest His righteousness to poor creatures that seek His face, so this God doth expect that thou should be faithful in all the covenants that thou doest make with Him, and this is to sanctify God's Name.

Now then, put all these attributes of God together and there you have His glory, the infiniteness of His glory. The shine and lustre of all the attributes together is God's glory. I have then to deal with a glorious God and let me labor to perform such services as may have a spiritual glory upon them, that some image of the divine lustre that there is in God may be upon my services; and let me look for glorious things seeing I have to deal with such a glorious God.

You will say, here is a great deal of duty in serving of God, how much is here that we must do?

I appeal to any gracious heart, what canst thou want of any of these, or what wouldest thou want? Doest thou say, here's a great deal? Can there be too much to make thee happy? These things are not only thy duty, but thy happiness, glory and excellency consists in them. If anyone should bring you a great many jewels and pearls, would you say, here's a great deal ado? Oh no, the more the merrier. So say I, this one meditation would take off the thoughts of a great deal, for in

all these my happiness consists, and the more I have of these, the more shall I enjoy of God, the more happy shall I be both here and forever.

Now I had thought to have given you some reasons why the Name of God must be sanctified; only I beseech you, by all that hath been said go away with this thought, what little cause is there that any of us should rest upon any of our duties. If this be required of us thus to sanctify the Name of God in duty, I say we have little cause any of us to rest in any duties that we perform. There are many poor creatures that have no other saviors to rest upon but their prayers, and coming to church, and taking the communion. Now if in all these the Lord expects that thou shouldest thus sanctify His Name, thou hast little cause to rest upon anything that thou hast done; thou hast cause rather to go alone and mourn for taking the Name of God in vain in the duties of His worship. Rest not in any of your performances; labor to perform duties as well as you can, but when you have done, know that you are unprofitable servants after all, and renounce all as in the point of justification, and rest upon something else, otherwise you are undone forever.

## Sermon VII

# Why God Will Be Sanctified in the Duties of His Worship

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We are coming now to the conclusion of this great argument of sanctifying God's Name in holy duties for the general. God expects that we should all in our drawings near to Him in the duties of worship, sanctify His Name. Now we are to consider of divers reasons why God will be sanctified in all the duties of His worship.

1 The first reason is this, it is the very nature of God to will Himself the last end, and all other things to work suitable to the lifting up of Himself as the last end. I say it is as essential to Him as anything, for Him to will Himself as the highest end, and that all things should work so as to be suitable unto that glory of His for the furtherance of it. God should cease to be God, if so be He should not will Himself as the highest end, and so will that all things that have any being should some way or other work for Himself. This is the very nature of God. It is that which I conceive the very nature of God's holiness consists in, the willing Himself as the last end, and so to work all things as is suitable unto His own infinite excellency.

Now as this is God's holiness, so it is the holiness that God requires in His creatures (that are capable of holiness) that they should will Him as the last end and all things suitable to that infinite excellency of His. Now if this be the nature of God, and this be His holiness, then certainly it must needs be a necessary duty in all those that would have communion with God and would honor God, to will as God Himself doth will, that is that all things should work suitable to

the infinite excellency of God, that God may attain the glory of His infinite excellency, and this makes it to be a necessary duty that when we come to worship Him we should sanctify His Name. So that the first reason is taken from the very nature of God, it is the very being of God that all things should work to Himself, and in such a suitable way as to lift up His excellency and glory.

2 Secondly, we must sanctify God in the duties of His worship because it is the special glory that God hath in the world to be actively honored; for His passive glory, that is, to be glorified in a passive way, that He hath in hell, but the special glory that God would have it is that He might be glorified actively. Now there is no such way of glorifying the Name of God actively as by worshipping of Him in a holy manner, and therefore God stands much upon this, that when we come to worship Him, we sanctify His Name, for saith God, If I be not sanctified in My worship, what active glory have I in the world? It is the special active glory that God hath in the world, the sanctifying of His Name in the duties of His worship.

3 Thirdly, that which we have intimated before, that the duties of God's worship are the most precious things, the special conveyances of the choice mercies that He intends to bestow on His saints, and therefore though He loses His glory in anything else, He would not lose it in that wherein He doth especially convey His mercy and goodness to His people. But that we spoke too in showing how we draw nigh to God in holy duties, and it may well come in here again as an argument why we should sanctify God's Name.

4 A fourth reason is this, because there is no way for us to be fitted for the receiving of mercy from God through those duties of worship, but by our sanctifying of God's Name; when thou comest at any time to worship God, what wouldest thou have? There is some communion that thou wouldest enjoy with God, now there is no way to make thee a fit subject of mercy, or capable of the enjoyment of communion with God, but by such a behavior of soul as this is that hath been spoken of, to sanctify the Name of God. Thou wouldest be

loath to lose those duties of worship that thou doest perform, therefore it is required of thee to sanctify His Name lest thou doest lose all, for 'tis this that makes thee the only capable subject of what good is to be had there.

5 We must sanctify God's Name in holy duties because otherwise we should certainly never hold out in duties but vanish and come to nothing; now God would be worshipped so by His creatures as to be constantly worshipped, He would have those that do worship Him to worship Him always, to worship Him forever, and He would have this worship that we perform to Him but to be the beginning of that eternal worship that He shall have from us in heaven. And so the saints do worship God now, the worship which they perform, it is but as the beginning of that worship that hereafter in heaven they shall tender up to God, though there may be some difference in it, as there our prayers will be turned into praises, and it will not be in such outward ordinances as now we worship God in there will be no preaching, nor sacraments. Yet notwithstanding the soul-worship that is now will be in effect the same as it shall be in heaven. God would have us so to worship Him, as to continue to worship Him.

Now I say, unless His Name be sanctified in our worshipping of Him we will certainly fall off; and the truth is, this is the very ground of all apostasy in hypocrites; some that have been very forward in the worshipping of God when they were young ones, and afterwards they have fallen off, they were wont constantly in their families and in secret in their chambers to be worshipping of God, and they accounted it the very joy of their lives for the present to be worshipping of God; but it is not so with them now as it was, yea, they are fallen off it may be, from their very profession of religion, and turned loose. And now to be in vain company, to drink, or play, is better to them than any service or worship of God; they prize more to be in company with their sports than to hear a sermon, or to be in communion with the people of God in prayer. Heretofore, they would not have changed one short time of private communion with God for the enjoyment of a great deal of pleasures and content in the

world, but now it is otherwise with them. How comes it to pass that these are apostatized thus from God? Surely here is the ground of it, that they did not sanctify God's Name in holy duties, at the most it was but a work of conscience that put them upon them, and they had but some flashes; there was no real sanctification of their hearts whereby they did sanctify the Name of God in holy duties, and upon this it is that they have left off. This I dare say, that there was never any soul that did know what it was to sanctify God's Name in worship, that ever was weary of worshipping God.

It may be some of you may say, we have heard that there is much required in sanctifying God's Name in duties, and that is the only way to weary the soul, and to make it fall off; Oh no (as we said the last day) there is not any one thing that hath been opened for the sanctifying of God's Name in duties that any gracious heart can tell how to miss, and the more we do sanctify His Name, the more we shall be in love with worship. For it is from hence that those that sanctify God's Name in worship will hold out, because they will find the sweetness of worship, they will meet with God in holy duties, and so they come to be encouraged in worship, but as for others who do worship God in a formal way, their worship will prove to be tedious to them, for they perform the duties, but do not find God in the duties in that spiritual way as the saints do. If they think they meet with God, it is but an imagination rather than any real meeting with Him; they do not find the influence of God in their souls in holy duties, so as those do that sanctify God's Name in holy duties; here then you see the reasons why we are to sanctify God's Name in holy duties.

Now then for the application of all this.

1 If all this which you have heard be required of us for the sanctifying of God's Name, hence we see how little cause we have to rest upon any duty of worship that we do perform, certainly the duties of worship that we perform are no such things as are fit to be rested upon for life and for salvation. And yet for the most part there is

scarce anything that people have to rest upon, or to tender up to God for acceptance to eternal life but only their prayers, and their coming to hear, and receiving of the communion, and such duties that they perform. This is all they have to tender up for life and for salvation; perhaps they may sometimes speak of Christ, but the truth is, that which their hearts rest upon for acceptance to eternal life is this.

And is it but this? It is a weak prop, a rotten reed that thou hast to rest upon; let the duties of worship be performed never so well. Suppose we did sanctify God's Name to the uttermost that is possible for any creature to do in this world, yet such duties are not to be rested upon. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Apostles, the most holy men that ever did perform duties in the most holy manner, yet woe to them if they have nothing to rest upon but their duties. Consider therefore of this, that what thou must rest upon for acceptance to eternal life, it must be that that must have so much worth in it, as must satisfy for all thy sins that formerly thou hast committed; yea, and for all the sins that ever thou shalt commit. Now I appeal unto anyone's conscience, is that which thou performest is prayer, or receiving the sacrament, or hearing of the word, such a work as in thy conscience thou canst think, it hath so much worth in it as to satisfy God for all the sins that ever thou didest or shalt commit?

I am persuaded if people that have rested upon duties heretofore would but seriously have this thought in their minds, "That I must rest upon nothing for my acceptance for life and salvation, but that that must have such worth in it, as to satisfy God for all my sins that ever have been committed, or shall be committed," this would take them off for ever from resting in duties. Yea, and it must be such as must be the object of the infinite holiness of God to take content in, surely the duties that we perform are no such duties to rest upon. The truth is, if we would seriously consider what they are, as they come from us, we would even abhor ourselves in dust and ashes, and account of them as the Prophet speaks of his own righteousness as menstruous cloths, they are such as if God should deal with us, as

justly He may do, He might cast them and us to the dogs, for they are (as the Prophet saith) torn and rent sacrifices.

Now if a man in the time of the Law should bring to the Lord a sacrifice that was all torn and rent before he brought it, would such a sacrifice have been accepted? All the duties we perform as we read in Exod. 22:31 concerning such things as were torn and rent, that they should cast them to the dogs. "Ye shall be holy men, neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field, ye shall cast it to the dogs, because ye are holy men unto Me." Must the people of Israel manifest their holiness in this, that they must eat nothing torn by beasts, but cast it unto dogs? Or was the holiness of the people of Israel such as God required them, that they must eat nothing that was torn by beasts? What then is the holiness of the infinite God? Our services that we perform are of themselves such as are torn by our beastly lusts many times; how many are there that bring sacrifices to God that are as a carrion that swine have been tearing beforehand, and yet these are the sacrifices that they bring to God, and not only think that God should accept of them, but they do rest upon them for their acceptation to eternal life. How infinitely are these people mistaken, how little do they know of God, or of the way of acceptation to eternal life! That is the first use.

2 Secondly, if all this be required for the sanctifying of God's Name in duties, that we cannot perform the duties of worship without this behavior of soul, hence we see that the work of religion is a hard and difficult work to flesh and blood. A main work of religion is the work of worshipping of God, for indeed those that are not religious and godly, they never worship God to any purpose; then we come to worship God when we begin to be religious and godly. Now it must needs be a busy work to be a religious and a godly man, because there is so much required in the sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties; many people think it a very easy matter to worship God, and the worship that they tender up to God is an easy matter, there is little in it. If it were nothing else to worship God but merely to go and say a few prayers, and come and hear a sermon, and take a piece of

bread and wine, then it were the easiest matter in the world to come and worship God; but there is more required in the duties of God's worship than thou hast been acquainted with; there is a power of godliness in it.

That text of Scripture is a very famous one that shows the difficulty that there is in the worship of God, and how men are mistaken in thinking it such an easy and slight matter to worship God. It is in Josh. 24:16-19, where Joshua doth call upon the people to worship God, and they came off presently and said they would worship Him (so you shall find them profess, verse 16.) But mark what the Text saith in verse 19, "And Joshua said unto the people, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for He is an holy God, He is a jealous God, and He will not forgive your transgressions and your sins,'" As if he should say, You think it is nothing to serve the Lord, and that it is an easy matter to serve Him, you think to put off God with anything. Alas, you cannot serve the Lord for He is a holy God, and a jealous God and you must have other manner of hearts than yet you have, and you must understand His worship in another manner than yet you do; the Lord will be sanctified in those that draw nigh Him and therefore, until you understand God and His ways and worship, you cannot serve the Lord. Know that the work of religion is a very hard and difficult work, for it requireth all this, and therefore the soul had need be very diligent and laborious that would come to worship God in a right way.

3 Thirdly, hence is a use of humiliation to us all, even to the best of us; oh, how little, how little hath the best of us all sanctified the Name of God! How far have we all come short of the sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties! And when we look abroad in the world and see what poor service God hath generally from the men and women of the earth, it should make our hearts bleed within us. Where almost is the man or woman that, according to that text in Isaiah, "Stirs up himself to take hold on God," and I verily believe that in the opening of this point of sanctifying the Name of God in holy duties, that I have been in the bosoms of as many as in the

opening of any point whatsoever; and as many may have cause to lay their hands upon their hearts and say, Certainly I have come short of what is required here, and have not been acquainted with this way, this mystery of godliness in sanctifying God's Name in holy duties as I ought to be. O, be humbled for this, for all the uncleanness of your hearts in the performance of duties.

In Exod. 27:4, 5, you read that at the Altar where the sacrifices were to be offered, the Lord required that there should be a grate made. "Thou shalt make for it (meaning the Altar) a grate of network of brass, and upon the net shalt thou make four brass rings in the four corners thereof, and thou shalt put it under the compass of the Altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the Altar." There was as it were a grate for the ashes of the Altar to go through, as you have grates in your fires to make them burn clear, and for the ashes to fall down, so the Lord would have such a grate for the ashes of the Altar to fall down. We had need of such a grate. Oh, the ashes, and dirt, and filth, that there is in our services when we come to offer and tender them up to God! So that we have cause, I say, to be humbled for holy offerings.

There be many godly people that through God's mercy are able to keep from gross sins, they do not find it any great matter to keep from company, swearing, drinking, uncleanness, lying or wronging of others, and such kind of sins as those are, so that they see not such need of humiliation in this regard, unless it be for that their natures are as corrupt as any, though they break not forth into those actual gross sins. But the main work of the humiliation of those that are godly, it is to be humbled for their thoughts, for the misspending of time, and for not sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties, those are the main things that are the subject of the humiliation of the saints, beside the body of sin and death that they carry about with them. And it would be a good sign that thy heart hath some tenderness in it when thou makest these to be the matter of thy humiliation.

Carnal people little are troubled for these if they fall into such sins, as their consciences do fly in their faces, then they are troubled and humbled; but for such things as these are, they are seldom humbled. To be humbled for thy holy offerings is a good sign of a gracious heart. We read of the cherubims that they had six wings, and with two of their wings the text saith they covered their faces. So, my brethren, we had need have wings as it were to cover our best duties. They had wings, and with two they covered their legs, and with two their faces: we had need, not only of a covering for our lower parts and meaner duties, but a covering of our holy duties, to cover our faces, our best duties of all, the most heavenly duties we perform had need be purged by the blood of Christ.

In Levit. 16:16, we read of their holy things, that there was need of purging of them by blood; and so it should be in our holy duties. Let us be humbled for our best performance that ever we performed in our lives, the best had need be so. But then as for others that have made little or no conscience of sanctifying of God's Name, how had they need be humbled? Thou hast something more to repent of then thou thoughtest of; for the truth is, those that have not made conscience of sanctifying of God's Name in holy duties, they never in all their lives did any service for the honor of God; thou hast lived perhaps thirty, or forty, it may be sixty years or more, and didest never yet honor God in any one thing that ever thou didest in all thy life.

You will say, God forbid: have not I prayed, and heard the Word much, and received the communion often, and yet have I never honored God?

If thou hast not been acquainted with this mystery of godliness in sanctifying His Name in these things, this is said from God to thee this morning, that thou hast never done any one action to the honor of God: thou hadest need begin presently for thy time is not long, and wilt thou go out of this world and the name of God never to be honored by thee?

Yea and further, thou hast lost all thy duties, all the time hath bin lost that thou hast been in performance of duties, now it is an ill thing to idle away time in the things of the world. When a man hath an opportunity for to gain in the world, if so be he loses his time and neglects it, we account it a very sad thing to him, but now to lose our trading time for heaven (for the times of the worshipping of God are our trading times for heaven) that's sad indeed. And yet thou that makest not conscience of sanctifying the Name of God in holy duties, all the time thou hast spent is lost.

And yet further, you that have been false in the performance of duties, and hypocrites, not only all your pains and labor is quite lost (for if that were all it might be well with you) but you have aggravated your sins by your holy duties. Those duties that others have enjoyed communion with God in, and furthered their eternal life by, thou hast aggravated thy sins by them, yet it was thy duty to do them. But I say, by not sanctifying of God's Name, thou hast aggravated thy sins so much the more. As those that are godly, they work out their salvation, even in their natural actions they sanctify God's Name, in eating and drinking, and following their business; they perform those actions in such a holy manner, as they honor God in them, and further their eternal peace; but as they in their natural and civil actions work out their salvation so thou in the very religious actions doest work out thy damnation. Certainly, wicked men that are not acquainted with this work of godliness to sanctify God's Name in holy duties, they work out their damnation even in the performance of them.

You will say, then they had better not do them.

Yes, they are bound to do them; but they are bound to do them in a right manner, as sometimes I have given you this instance, and it is a full and a clear one, to show that men are bound to perform holy duties and not to leave them undone, and yet they may further their own damnation while they are doing of them. As for example, if so be that a King should appoint a man to come into his presence such a

day to petition for his life, which he hath forfeited by the Law, if he do not come he may be a dead man. But now if this man be drunk on that day, and come drunk into the King's presence, he may be a dead man too, for presuming to come drunk before him; so wicked and ungodly men, whether they worship or worship not, they are in danger to perish. But of this more when we come to show that God will be sanctified.

In the fourth place here is a use of exhortation, that seeing we have this truth thus presented to us and opened before us; O that we had hearts to apply ourselves now to it with all our might, to seek to sanctify the Name of God when we draw nigh to Him. The Lord hath shown thee what it is that He requires of thee; make conscience of it for time to come, thou doest not know what blessed communion thou mayest have with God if thou doest make conscience of this. The truth is, if you have not been acquainted with this, you have not been acquainted with the way of a Christian in his enjoyment of communion with God, thou doest not know what the comfort of a Christian life means; do but make trial of this for time to come, and thou wilt find more comfort in the ways of godliness, and more thriving in them in one quarter of a year than thou hast done before in seven years. One Christian that keeps close to God in holy duties and sanctifies the Name of God in them, I say finds more comfort with God, and grows on in godliness more in one quarter of a year, then the other doth in seven years that goes on in an ordinary, dull, and formal way in the performance of the duties of worship.

Some there are in our time that cry out of duties, and what need we trouble ourselves so much? Those that know not how to sanctify God's Name, they think lightly of them. But now do you apply yourselves fully, as you are able, to this that I am speaking of, and you will find yourselves to be, as it were, in another world; you will be able to say, well, I have not yet understood what it was to enjoy communion with God in prayer, in Word, and in sacraments before, this will make your faces shine in your conversations if you would do

it; and now to that end that you may do it, there are these two or three things that I would propound to you.

1 In the first place, learn to know God more with whom you have to do, and present those things that you have heard before you in your meditations, when as you are to come to God in prayer, or in any other duty, and when you are worshipping of God, remember that you have to do with God and none else. You are every time you come to perform holy duties to be as a man or woman separated from all things.

Valerius Maximus tell a story of a young noble man that attended upon Alexander while he was sacrificing, this nobleman held his censer for incense, and in the holding of it, there fell a coal upon his flesh and burnt it so as the very scent of it was in the nostrils of all that were about him, and because he would not disturb Alexander in his service, he resolutely did not stir to put off the fire from him, but holds still his censer. If heathens made such ado in their sacrificing to their idol gods that they would mind it so as no disturbance must be made whatever they endured, what care should we have then of ourselves when we come to worship the high God? And so, Josephus he reports of the priests that were sacrificing in the temple when Pompey brake into them with armed men, and though they might have fled and saved their lives, yet they would not leave off their sacrificing but were slain by the soldiers. They did so mind it as a matter of great consequence. Oh, that we could mind the duties of God's worship as matters of great moment, that so we might learn to sanctify the Name of God in the performance of them more than ever we have done.

2 When thou comest to worship, take heed thou doest not come in thine own strength. For there is more required in sanctifying the Name of God than thy strength is able to carry thee on in, and therefore act thy faith upon Jesus Christ every time thou comest to worship God, not only as I said before, to tender up thy services in His name, but act thy faith upon Christ to give thee strength to do

what thou hast to do. And what strength thou hast received from Christ be sure to stir it up; many godly men and women have more strength than they know of themselves; and if they would but stir up that strength that they have received, they might sanctify the Name of God a great deal more than they do. Therefore, remember that text before mentioned, none stirs up himself to take hold on God. Quicken up thy heart and rouse up thy spirit when thou art to worship God.

3 Whenever thou art worshipping of God, do not satisfy thyself merely in the duty done, but consider, do I sanctify God's Name in the duty? Every time thou worshipest Him, examine thy heart whether thou doest it yea or no. And if thou findest that thou hast not attained in some comfortable measure to this that hath been presented to thee, let the shame and the sorrow for that abide upon thy spirit until the next time thou comest to worship God. At such a time I have been worshipping of God, and God knows I have been stirring up my heart in some measure, but I find my heart dead, wandering sluggish, and dull; I say, when thou findest thou canst not do it according to what is required in any comfortable measure, let the shame and sorrow of heart for it abide upon thee till the next time thou comest to worship God, and that will mightily help thee. Thou art now praying, and thou canst not now get up thy heart to what is required; the next time thou comest to prayer, come in the shame and sorrow of thy heart for the want of sanctifying God's Name the last time, and so for hearing of the Word, or receiving the sacraments and this will further thee mightily for the sanctifying the Name of God in holy duties.

But now that all may be sealed up unto you, and so that we may close the point, know that God will be sanctified in those that draw nigh to Him. And there are these two things in the point.

First, if we do not sanctify God's Name, God will sanctify His Name in a way of justice.

Secondly, if we do sanctify His Name, then He will sanctify His Name in a way of mercy towards us.

For the first, God will manifest that He is displeased with such duties that thou doest perform, He will manifest it one way or other that He is a holy God, and He doth not accept of such unholy things as thou doest tender up to Him; for the truth is, if God should accept of such unholy things from men, God may be said to be like unto themselves. As a man if he doth entertain any as his familiar friend that is naught and wicked, it is his disgrace and dishonor; a man may sometimes employ in some business those that are naught and wicked, and it may be no disgrace to him, but if he doth entertain one in his house that is wicked, it is a dishonor to him.

So God may employ the most wicked men in the world in some outward services, but if He should accept of them in His worship, it would be a dishonor to God, and therefore God, that He might sanctify His own Name, He will manifest His displeasure at one time or other against such duties of worship; you that perform worship in a formal manner, and with unclean vile hearts, I say, it stands upon the honor of God if He will manifest Himself a holy God, He must manifest some displeasure against that way of thy worshipping of Him. This one meditation one would think should mightily sink into the heart of any man that hath an enlightened conscience, to think thus, it stands upon the holiness of God, and He cannot appear to be a holy God except He doth some way or other appear to be against me in such duties that I tender up unto Him.

Now you will say, how doth God appear, that He doth not accept of them? He will appear in these three things:

- 1 First by blasting those that do worship Him thus in a formal way: it shall at first be secret, but afterwards it will appear more apparently, and we see it by experience that such as have been professors of religion, and worship God in hypocrisy, and in formality, they have been blasted in their parts and common gifts. The judgement of God

upon Nadab and Abihu that did not sanctify God's Name it was secret at first; it struck them dead, and though by fire, yet if you read the story, you shall find that their clothes were not burnt, and yet they were burnt in their bodies. So, the Lord sometimes doth blast men inwardly in their spirits, in their souls, in their parts, in their common gifts. He blasts them, I say, inwardly though it doth not appear outwardly, yet at length it will appear before men that they are blasted, and in these times of the Gospel the Lord doth come with spiritual judgments rather than with outward temporal judgements. In the time of the Law, those that did not sanctify the Name of God in holy duties, the Lord did appear by some external and visible way upon their bodies; but now in the time of the Gospel there God comes with more spiritual judgements upon men's souls, and those are the most terrible judgements.

We have a notable Scripture for this in Isa. 29:13, 14, how God doth blast those that do not sanctify His Name in holy duties, "Wherefore the Lord said, 'Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear towards Me is taught by the precepts of men.'" Mark what follows, "Therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work amongst this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." What do they come and draw near Me with; their lips and their hearts are far from Me, and do they worship Me in a formal way? I'll take away the wisdom from the wise, and the understanding from the prudent. And that is the reason why so many great scholars are blasted in their very parts, because they would worship God according to the precepts of men, in a formal way; and so, all hypocrites and formal worshippers the Lord doth blast them in one way or other, the judgements of God upon the spirits of men were sometimes in the time of the Law. But in the times of the Gospel there we find generally the judgements of God to be more spiritual upon the hearts and consciences of men; we find it by experience God doth discover that He doth not accept of such as those are; and

therefore when you see any that have made profession of religion, that had excellent parts at first, many common gifts, and now are, as we say, no body, remember this text, “That God will be sanctified in those that come nigh Me.”

Secondly the Lord doth manifest that He will be sanctified in those that draw nigh Him by awakening their consciences many times upon their sick beds and death beds; the Lord doth force them to give glory to Him, and there to acknowledge that they did not worship God in uprightness but in formality. And now they are in horror of conscience and cry out in the anguish of their souls upon the apprehension of the dreadful wrath of God that is upon them. Take heed for the Lord's sake of this thing, when you are performing of the duties of worship, do not rest in the outward duties for they will never comfort you upon your sick and death beds. You may perhaps put off your consciences a little for the present, but when you come upon your sick beds there will be no comfort unto you, and then you will be forced to say, well, all this while I have but taken the Name of God in vain, and now God hath rejected me and all my services. And you will then speak to those that come about your bedside and bid them take warning by you, take heed that when you worship God, you worship Him to purpose; I have spent time in prayer, and hearing; but for want of this I find I have no comfort at all, but the Lord appears to be terrible to my soul and comes out against me as an enemy. I say now God's Name is sanctified; whatever becomes of thee, He will force glory from thee one way or other, and it may be even here in this time of thy life. But however, at the great day, when the secrets of all hearts must be disclosed before men and angels, then the Lord will appear to be a holy God by rejecting all such services that thou didest tender up to Him. And it will then be a great part of the work of the day of Judgment for God to be sanctified in those that did worship Him, by declaring before men and angels how He did reject such formal and hypocritical worship that they did tender up unto Him. Oh, that God would strike this upon your hearts, that it may abide upon you every time you come to worship Him to think thus, let me look to it to sanctify His

Name now, for I hear that God will sanctify it Himself if I do not do it.

But then on the other side, if so be that thou makest conscience of sanctifying God's Name in duties, then He will sanctify His Name in a way of mercy; that is, He will manifest how He doth accept of the least degree of holiness though there be much mixture. God hath a way to take away the mixture by the blood of His Son, and then to accept of any holiness He sees in thee, He will sanctify His name by meeting with thee, and revealing His glory to thee when thou art worshiping of Him. There is an excellent Scripture for this, Exodus 29:43, "There I will meet with the children of Israel and the Tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory." Thou that hast a gracious heart and art worshiping of God in sincerity, thou art as a Tabernacle of God, and God hath His service and worship from thee, thou art as the Temple of God, "and there will I meet with thee (saith God) and I will sanctify My Tabernacle by My glory." God will sanctify thy heart by His glory if thou doest sanctify His Name.

Further, thou shalt (it may be) not always have such glorious comforts, the full beams of the sun rising upon thee, but at one time or other the Lord will break in upon thee and manifest His glory to thee, and it is like if thou hast not such full comforts now, yet upon thy sick bed, though God doth not then always manifest Himself fully, for sometimes the disease may be a hinderance, yet it is ordinary that those that in their constant way did sanctify God's Name in holy duties they do lie comfortably upon their sick beds, and a glorious entrance is made for them into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And then again, all things are sanctified unto them; as on the other side, those that do not sanctify God's Name all things are cursed to them, if thou doest not make conscience of sanctifying God's Name in duties, God cares not to sanctify anything for thy good. But now, those that make conscience of sanctifying God's Name in holy duties,

the Lord takes care that all things shall be sanctified for their good, for the furtherance of their eternal good.

And how ever it be here, yet hereafter at the great day of Judgment it will be a part of the glory of God to manifest before men and angels how He did accept of those holy services that thou didest tender up to Him; when hypocrites shall be cast away and abhorred, and thou who hadest an upright sincere heart shalt be owned before God, and before men and angels at that great day, and God shall say, Well, it is a part of the glory of My holiness to make it appear that I have accepted of these holy things, that these my poor servants have tendered up to Me. And this now is of marvelous use for the comforting of a gracious heart; those duties that thou doest now think thou hast lost, and there will nothing come of them, thou shalt certainly hear of them another day, God will make it appear, there is nothing that He stands more upon than the glory of His holiness; and it is the glory of His holiness that is thy strength in this thing and that makes it certain to thee that there must be a manifestation of thy acceptance; and therefore take these truths into thy heart about sanctifying the Name of God. You have had only the point in general opened to you. Oh, that the Spirit of God would bring things unto your remembrance.

## **Sermon VIII**

### **Sanctifying the Name of God in Hearing the word**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We have (as you may remember) preached many sermons upon that point, of sanctifying the Name of God in the duties of His worship. We have spoken unto the point in the general, the last day we finished it. I do not intend to look back to anything that was said, but we are to proceed to show how the Name of God should be sanctified in the particular duties of His worship. Now the duties of God's worship are especially these three:

1 The Hearing of the Word.

2 Receiving of the sacrament.

3 And Prayer.

Other things come under worship, but yet these are the three chief duties of worship, and I intend to speak to all these three, and to show how we should sanctify the Name of God in drawing nigh unto Him, in the Word, sacrament, and prayer.

We might choose several Texts for all these, but they fall full within the general and therefore it shall be sufficient for to ground the sanctifying of God's Name in these duties of worship upon this text.

1. Of sanctifying the Name of God in the hearing of the Word.

That which we are to speak to this morning it is the sanctifying of the Name of God in the hearing of His Word. If you would have the ground of what we are to say concerning this in a particular Scripture, you may have it in Luke 8:18, "Take heed therefore how you hear." It is not enough to come to hear the Word, that is good, and no question but God is pleased with the willingness of people to come to hear His Word, but you must not rest barely in hearing, "but take heed how you hear." Now this is a point of great consequence and I hope it may do good to help to make many sermons to be profitable to you, and the point I hope is seasonable and will be very suitable unto you. For those that come to hear so soon in a morning and are willing even in hard weather to come out of their beds, they

give some good testimony that they do desire to honor God in their hearing, and to get good by their hearing; and it is pity that labor and pains should be bestowed and no profit but hurt rather got by it, which God forbid. Therefore, now I am to speak to a point that may help you so to hear, as may recompense all your labor and pains in hearing. In preaching to those that come to hear, that so they may get good and benefit by it, there is a great deal more encouragement than to such as come in a formal way because they use to come; therefore, this point being a great point; I shall open it somewhat largely, and shall cast it into this method:

First, I shall show you that the hearing of God's Word is a part of the worship of God, for otherwise I could not ground it upon any text.

Secondly, I shall show you how we are to sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word, either in regard of preparation unto it, or our behavior in the hearing of the Word.

Thirdly, why it is that God will be sanctified in this ordinance of His.

Fourthly, how God will sanctify Himself in such that do not sanctify His Name in the hearing of His Word.

Fifthly, how God will sanctify His Name in ways of mercy to those that are careful to sanctify His Name in the hearing of the Word.

These are the five principal things that concern this argument.

For the first, that the hearing of God's Word it is a part of God's worship. You heard in the opening of the worship of God in the general what it was, I told you it was a tendering up of the creature's homage to God, a testimony of the respect that the creature did owe to God; now if that be the nature of worship, certainly the hearing of God's Word it is a part of the worship of God, for in the hearing of God's Word we,

1 First do profess our dependance upon God for the knowing of His mind and the way to eternal life. Every time we come to hear the Word, if we know what we do, we do thus much, we do profess that we do depend upon the Lord God for the knowing of His mind, and the way and rule to eternal life; we do as much as if we should say, Lord, of ourselves we neither know Thee, nor the way and means how we should come to be saved, and therefore that we might testify our dependance upon Thee for this thing, we here present ourselves before Thee. Now this is a testimony of the high respect we owe to God.

2 Secondly, the hearing of God's Word is a part of His worship, because in it we come to wait upon God in the way of an ordinance, to have that good conveyed to us by way of an ordinance beyond what the thing is able in itself to do, and therefore 'tis worship. I wait upon God when I am hearing the Word (if I know what I do) to have some spiritual good conveyed to me beyond what there is in the means itself, this makes it worship. When I am busied in natural and civil actions, there I must profess that these things can do me no good without God, but I do not wait upon God in an ordinance for the conveyance of natural good beyond what God hath put into the creature; tis His blessing with it, that God in the ordinary course of His providence doth convey such natural or civil good in the use of those creatures. But now, when I come to hear His word, I here come to wait upon God in the way of an ordinance for the conveyance of some spiritual good that this ordinance hath not in itself, take it materially, but merely as it hath an institution in it, and is appointed by God for the conveyance of such and such things. God doth appoint meat to nourish me, and together with His appointment He hath given a natural power to meat to nourish my body that in an ordinary course of providence is enough for the nourishment of my body. But now when I come to hear the Word, I must look upon that not only as a thing appointed to work upon my soul and to save my soul by, not as a thing that hath any efficacy put into it in a natural way as the other hath; it's not the nature of the thing that carries such a power in it, but it is the institution of God, and the ordinance of God in it.

Now then, when I come to wait upon God in an ordinance for the spiritual good that is beyond the virtue of any creature to convey to me, certainly I worship God, that is a special part of worship to wait upon God in this way. Therefore, in these two respects, the hearing of God's Word it is a part of the worship of God, and I beseech you remember these two things every time you come to hear. I come now to give a testimony that I am not able to understand God and the way to eternal life of myself, but I do depend upon God for the knowledge of it. And here I come to wait upon God for the conveyance of that good to my soul that is not in the power of any creature to convey. Now I worship when I do these.

But further (you shall find it more plain when we come to open how we should sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word) this is divine service, as much as any service can be performed. Heretofore our prelates and those kind of men, made all the worship of God to be in their divine service (as they call it) which was of their own inventions, and made light of the preaching or hearing of the Word, but the Word is a great part of that divine service that God requires of us in His worship, and in it you do tender up your homage to God. You therefore must not only when you come to hear, think, I come to get something, I come to understand more than I did, and to hear such a man's parts, and the like, but remember you come to tender up your homage to God, to sit at God's feet and there to profess your subjection to Him. That is one end of your coming to hear sermons.

Now then you will say, what should be done in the hearing God's Word, so as God's Name may be sanctified? For that, as we opened in the general, that in the duties of God's worship there must be preparation, and then an answerable behavior of the soul, so here there must first be a preparation of the soul to this work, and then an answerable behavior of the soul in it.

1 There must be a preparation of the soul, so as when you come to hear, you may with all readiness receive the Word. The soul must be made ready, in Acts 17:11, there it is said, "These were more noble

than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind." The word is, with all alacrity as well as readiness; their minds were in a fit preparation to receive the Word; and the text saith, "They were more noble," the word that is translated "more noble," it signifies "better bred," for I do not take this Scripture, as if it were meant only of men that were earls or lords that did thus receive the Word with readiness, but they were of a more noble disposition, they were well bred men, so the Greek word signifies. A man sometimes preaching to a company of rude people that never had any good breeding, they will behave themselves rudely, they slight the Word, and like the swine, regard acorns rather than pearls. And the Word is seldom so profitable to a company of rude people that have no breeding at all; but now there is more hopes to preach to men that have breeding. Men that are exercised in arts and sciences, and have some understanding, and so some ingenuity in them, they will hearken to reason.

Now there is a great deal of spiritual reason in the Word, there is a great deal to convince men that are but rational men; let a man be but a rational man and willing to attend to the Word, I say there is a great deal of reason to convince him in it, and it is a sign of good breeding, of men of ingenuity to be willing to hear the Word; who are those in a parish that so disregard the Word as not to hear it, but the ruder sort? There are many, I confess, that are men of parts perhaps the Word doth not prevail with their hearts to convert them; yet if they have any good breeding at all, if the Word be preached in a convincing way so that they see there is pains taken, and preached as the Word of God to them, they will vouch safe their presence at least. But the rude multitude that know nothing at all, they had rather be in alehouses drinking and swilling; they never care to hear the Word. As in such a place as this, there are very few of your miserable poor people that come to hear the Word. What place is there fuller of miserable poor people than this place is and yet what a poor appearance is there of such people at the hearing of the Word? But now those that have any ingenuity in them at all, or any breeding (for so the word is) they will receive the Word with readiness. But this

breeding here spoken of was a little higher than natural breeding; they were spiritually noble, and so they had a readiness in their hearts in receiving the Word. Now this readiness of heart in receiving the Word consists in these particulars:

First, when you come to hear the Word, if you would sanctify God's Name, you must possess your souls with what it is that you are going to hear, that what you are to hear is the Word of God, that it is not the speaking of a man that you are going to attend upon, but that you are now going to attend upon God, and to hear the Word of the eternal God. Possess your souls with this; you will never sanctify God's Name else in the hearing of His Word; therefore, you find that the Apostle writing to the Thessalonians, he gives them the reason why the Word did them so much good as it did. It was because they did hear it as the Word of God, 1 Thess. 2:13, "For this cause also (saith he) thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Mark, so it came effectually to work, because they received it as the Word of God; many times, you will say, come, let us go hear such a man preach; Oh no, let us go hear Christ preach, for as it doth concern the ministers of God that they preach not themselves, but that Christ should preach in them. So, it concerns you that hear not to come to hear this man or that man, but to come to hear Jesus Christ. We as the ambassadors of Christ do beseech you, saith the Apostle.

2. Possess your hearts likewise with this consideration, that I come to hear the Word as an ordinance appointed by God to convey spiritual good to my soul, and this is a very useful consideration, and especially it concerns men of understanding and parts for the helping of them to hear. For men that are of understanding and parts, when they come to hear, this temptation is ready to come upon them, that except they hear some new thing that they did not understand before wherefore should they come? I am able to understand as much in such a point as can be said. And when I have come and heard many

times, I have heard but that I knew before, and upon that they think there is no use of coming to hear. Now this is a great mistake, when you come to hear the Word, you do not come always to hear what you did not know, it may be sometimes God may dart in something that you did not think of before, or so fully understand, but suppose it be not so, you are to come to it as an ordinance of God for the conveyance of spiritual good to your souls.

You will say, cannot we sit at home and read a sermon? But hath God appointed that the great ordinance for the converting and the edifying of souls in the way to eternal life? True, there is some use of it, but the great ordinance is the preaching of the Word, faith comes by hearing, the Scripture saith, and never by reading, so that though when you come to hear, you do not hear that which you heard not before, yet you come to attend upon this ordinance for the conveyance of some spiritual good that it may be hath not been conveyed before, or in a further degree than it hath been conveyed before. And so, you should come to hear the Word with your hearts possessed with that meditation, that it is the Word of God, and the great ordinance that God hath appointed for the conveyance of spiritual good. So that I come now in obedience to God, and in this do I testify my respect to God, that I will attend upon this ordinance of His for the conveyance of Spiritual good to me, and although I may think that this or the other means may do the deed as well, yet because God hath appointed this to be His ordinance, therefore in obedience to Him I will attend upon this means rather than upon other means. As you know, Naaman he thought the other waters would have been as good as the waters of Jordan to have healed him, but if God will appoint him the waters of Jordan that they should heal him rather than other waters he must wash there; no question but other waters had as much natural virtue in them as they had, but because the waters of Jordan were the ordinance that God for that time had appointed to cure his leprosy withal, he must come and wash in those waters rather than in any other. So, because preaching of the Word is the great ordinance that God hath appointed for to convey Himself by, therefore He doth require that thou shouldest

show thy respect to Him, so far as to attend upon Him in this ordinance.

2 The second thing that is to be done in way of preparation, it is to plow up the fallow ground of your hearts, and not to sow amongst thorns, as you have it in Jer. 4:3 and so in Hosea 10. The Word of God, you know, is compared to seed in that parable of Christ in Matthew 13. And an auditory is compared to the ground, I suppose you are all acquainted with that parable of the sower, that it is to set out the ministry of the Word, and what fruit it hath upon the hearts of men; a congregation is like the field; and a minister preaching is like the sower that sows the seed in the field. He knows not which truth, whether that or the other will prosper, the seed being sowed in some part of the ground is lost, and in another part it grows; so in one pew the seed of the word is lost, in another pew it grows up. But now if people that are compared to the ground would so hear the Word as God's Name may be sanctified in it, their hearts must be plowed as if one should sow seed upon green soil, sow it in the fields upon green grass, what would become of it? The ground must first be plowed for the preparation of the seed.

But you will say, what is the meaning of the plowing of our hearts for the preparation of the Word? The meaning is nothing else but this the work of humiliation, the humbling of the soul before the Lord when it doth come to hear God's Word.

Humble it in these two regards:

First be humbled for your ignorance that you know so little of God's mind as you do.

Secondly, be humbled for all the sinfulness of your hearts, be sensible of the sinfulness and wretchedness of your hearts and the miserable condition that you are in, if you can get your hearts broken with the sense of your sin and misery, and come so to hear the Word,

it is very likely the Word may be of mighty use, and God's Name may be very much sanctified in your hearing of the Word.

You will say, must we plow up our hearts before we come to hear? It must be the Word that must plow us, the Word is the plow, and so the ministers of God are compared to plowmen in the Word, "He that puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven."

It is true, it cannot be expected that the heart should be thoroughly plowed as it ought but by the Word, therefore at the first coming to hear there is not hope that men will sanctify God's Name till the Word gets in to plow them, and so by getting at one time into their hearts they come to be prepared for hearing at another time. And yet somewhat may be done before by that natural knowledge that men have, they may come to know themselves to be sinners, and come to understand themselves to be very weak and ignorant by some knowledge that they may have by the works of God, and by conference with others, and by reading and the like, and so they may in some measure come to have their hearts to be humbled. And it is good to make use of these to humble the heart. But now, you that have heard the Word often, and yet have not sanctified God's Name, there be truths that you have heard heretofore, that if you had made use of in private to have, plowed up your hearts, they would have prepared your hearts for the next time in hearing of the Word. If therefore you would hear the Word with a great deal more profit than formerly, your hearts must be plowed by humiliation.

2. Secondly, the heart must be plowed by laboring to get out those thorns that are in the heart, those lusts that grow deep in the heart as thorns grow in the ground. Labor to pluck them out, that is, when thou comest to hear the Word get thy heart into that frame as to be willing to profess against every known sin that thou hast found in thy heart, labor to find out those lusts that are in thy heart and then profess against them that thou art willing to have them to be rooted out of thy heart. If men and women would but do thus when they

come to hear, that God might see this in them, that they have before they come professed against every known sin, this would be an excellent thing indeed.

3. Again in the third place, which will follow from hence, when thou comest to hear the Word, come with a resolution to yield to whatever God shall reveal to be His mind, "I am now going to hear Thy Word, Oh Lord, to wait upon Thee, to know what Thou hast to say to me, and Thou that art the searcher of the secrets of all hearts, Thou knowest that I go with such a resolution to yield up myself to every truth of Thine," how would the Name of God be sanctified if you did thus come to hear the Word. If you did come with such a resolution, Job 34:32, "That which I know not, teach Thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more." In Isaiah 2:3, you have a prophecy of the Gentiles, how they should come to the Word, "And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." Here is a blessed disposition when you come to hear the Word, some of you come together in streets and lanes, and over the fields, when you come together, and meet one with another as you walk over the fields, make use of this text. Oh, that this prophecy might be fulfilled in your coming over the fields every Lord's Day morning and at other times, that you would say one to another, or when you call one upon another to go to hear, come let us go up to the house of the Lord and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. We are resolved that whatever the Lord shall teach us to be His ways we will submit unto it. This is a due preparation of the heart for the sanctifying of God's Name in the hearing of His Word.

4. When you come to hear the Word, come with longing desires after the Word, come with an appetite to it. As in 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby." Do it as newborn babes. Now you know little babes they do not desire milk to play withal but only to nourish them. Children of three or four years old, they may desire milk to play with; but

newborn babes never care for it but when they are hungry to nourish them. And so it is true, many come to hear the Word to play with it, but now you should come to hear the Word as newborn babes, with a hungering desire after the Word that your souls may be nourished thereby. That were excellent if every Lord's Day, and at other days you did come as hungry to the Word as ever you went to your dinner or supper. The Word of God should be to you more than your appointed food, and then you are likely to grow by it and to sanctify God's Name in it.

5. Pray beforehand, that God would open thine eyes, and open thine heart, and accompany His Word, thus did David, "Open mine eyes O Lord, that I may understand the wonders of Thy Law." And you know what is said of Lydia, "the Lord opened her heart to attend to the Word that was spoken." Now seeing it is an ordinance thou doest expect more good from than what itself of its own nature is able to convey, thou hadest need to pray, "Lord I go to such an ordinance of Thine, and I know there is no efficacy in itself, it is not able to reach to such effects as I expect, that is to have my heart spoken to, and quickened, and to have mine eyes opened, but O Lord, open mine eyes and open mine heart; Lord, my heart naturally is locked up against Thy Word, there are such wards in my heart, that except Thou art pleased to put in a key that may fit my heart, it will never open. Man, he is not able to know my heart, and therefore he cannot fit a key to answer every ward, to resolve every doubt, to silence every objection, but Lord thou canst do it. Do Thou Lord therefore fit Thy Word this day that may meet with my heart. Lord, I have gone often to Thy Word, and the key hath stuck in it and it hath not opened; but Lord, if Thou wouldest but fit it and turn it with Thine own hand, my heart would open." Oh, come with such a praying heart to the Word, and thereby shalt thou sanctify the Name of God in hearing His Word, this is to come to the Word, as to the Word of God, you must not come to the hearing of the Word as to hear a speech or an oration, but come in such a preparation as this is, and so I say God will be glorified, and you will be profited.

The next thing is, what should be the behavior of the soul in the sanctifying God's Name in the Word when it is come. Now to that there are these particulars.

1. First, there must be a careful attention unto the Word, you must set your hearts unto it, as Moses in Deut. 32:46, he said unto the people, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life." Set your hearts to it, for it is not a vain thing, it is your life; when you come to hear the Word, give diligent attention to what you hear. In Acts 8:6, it is said, "The people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke."

They gave heed, the word is used often in Scripture, sometimes it is used for "to beware" of a thing, "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." Beware of them, as a man when he sees an enemy and is aware of him, he is very diligent to observe how to avoid him; so there should be as much diligence to get good by the Word, as one would be diligent to avoid any danger whatsoever. And the Word signifies sometimes to give such heed as a disciple gives unto his master, so they gave heed to the Word. So, in Prov. 2:1, 2, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom," we must diligently attend, and not to suffer our eyes and our thoughts to be wandering, but diligently attend to what is said. My Brethren, there is all things that may challenge attention in the Word. What would make you to attend to anything?

First, if he that speaks were much above you, if it were a great Prince, or Lord that spoke to you, then you would attend. Now, though it is true, it is but a man, (that it may be, is inferior to most of you, that speaks) yet know in him it is the Lord of heaven and earth that speaks to you. And so, you know what Christ saith, "he that heareth you heareth Me." So, though you would not attend in respect of the messenger so much, yet as it is the Son of God that is speaking to

you, it may challenge your attention. This day if you should hear a voice out of the clouds from heaven speaking to you, would you not then listen? The truth is, we should listen as much to the voice of God in the ministry of His Word as if (so be that) the Lord should speak out of the clouds to us. And I will give you a Scripture for that, that the voice of God in His Word should be as much regarded of you as if God should speak from heaven to you by an audible voice out of the clouds. In 2 Peter 1:18, 19, “This voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount.” But mark, in verse 19, “We have also a more sure Word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.” Mark, we heard a voice from heaven, saith Peter, yea, but we have a more sure Word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed. There was a voice from heaven spoke, you will say, if we had heard that voice we would have given heed to that. Saith the Apostle, you have a more sure Word of prophecy.

Now prophecy in Scripture is taken for preaching; despise not prophesy. As if the Holy Ghost should say, you must have regard to the Word of prophecy as you would have regard to any voice from heaven. Suppose an angel should come and speak to you, would not you attend to him? Then whatsoever thoughts you had, they would be taken off, for there is an angel that is come down from heaven to speak. Now mark what is said in Heb. 1:1, “God who at sundry times, and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.” And then in verse 3, He describes his Son, “And being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they.” If a prophet should come and speak, that is not so much as if the Son of God comes; no, nor as if an angel should come, for Jesus Christ hath obtained a more excellent Name than the angels, and it is Christ that is in the ministry of His Word, “He that heareth you heareth Me.”

2. Secondly, that which would cause attention is the greatness of the matter propounded. It is true, if a man should speak of some slight

and vain things, there need not so much attention. My brethren, the matters in the Word are the great things of God, it is the voice of God, the great mysteries of godliness, those deep things that the angels themselves desire to pry into. Yea, the angels themselves by the churches they come to have the knowledge of the mysteries of God. I make no question but in the ministry of the Word among the churches, the angels they attend and come to some knowledge in the mysteries of godliness; for so the Scripture saith, that they have it by the churches there the greatest things of God's will, the greatest counsels of God that were kept hid from all eternity, are opened to you in the ministry of the Word. We do not come to tell you tales and the conceits of men, but to open the great counsels of God, wherein the depth of the wisdom of God comes to be revealed to the children of men, and therefore these calls for attention.

3. Thirdly, suppose they be great things, yet if they do not so much concern us, there is no such great reason of attention. Therefore, in the third place, that which we speak, it is your life; it is that concerns your souls and eternal estates, your souls and everlasting estates do lie upon the ministry of the Word, if that be made effectual to you, you are saved, if that be not made effectual to you, you are damned and undone forever. If we should come to tell you of something whereby you might get some good bargain, or of a way how to get great riches, I make no question, but you would rise though it were a cold or rainy morning. But know when you are called to hear the Word you are called to hear that which may do you good forever, that for which you may bless God for to all eternity with the angels and saints in the highest heavens. If they be such things of so great concernment, then there had need be a great attention. You know what Christ said to Martha when she was troubled about His entertainment (Luke 10:41) "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." What did Mary choose? It was this, that she did diligently attend upon Jesus Christ to hear the Word from His own mouth, when Martha was busied in the house to provide for His entertainment, but it is a

better thing to attend upon the Word than to entertain Christ in your houses. You that are of loving dispositions, that if a good minister shall come to your houses, or a good Christian, that you see but the image of Christ in your hearts spring within you, and you will do anything to entertain them. Well, but what if Jesus Christ should come, if you knew that such a man that came within your doors were the Son of God, how would you bestir yourselves to entertain Him? But know, it is a more acceptable service to Jesus Christ to attend upon His Word than to provide for Him in your houses. And there is great reason to, that we should be diligent in drawing nigh to the Word and give ear unto it, because you find that the Lord doth express Himself in the Scripture, how He gives ear to us when we speak to Him. God is said to incline His ear, sometimes to open His ear, sometimes to bow His ear, sometimes to cause His ear to hear, and divers such expressions there are to that purpose. Now if God, when we that are poor wretches speak to Him shall bow His ear, bend His ear, open His ear, cause His ear to hear, much more should we when we come to attend upon Him.

2. Secondly, as there must be attending to the Word of God, so there must be an opening of the heart to receive what God speaks to you, it is true, it is the work of God to open the heart, but God works upon men as upon rational creatures and He makes you to be active in opening your hearts so that when you have any truth come to be revealed, you should open your understandings, your conscience, and will, and affections, "Oh Lord, Thy truth which Thou art presenting here to my soul at this time let it come in, let me receive it," as the expression is in Prov. 2:1, "My Son if thou wilt receive My words," and then in v. 10, "When wisdom entereth into thy heart," the words of wisdom, the Words of God, they must enter into the heart, get in; it may be they get into thy ear, but that's not enough, they must get into thy heart, as in John 8:37. There Christ complains that His Word had no place in them; that's a sad thing when the Word of God shall have no place in the heart. If a temptation to sin comes, that hath a place in the heart, but when the Word comes, that hath no place in the heart. I say, it is a very sad thing that we can find

no room for the Word; we should get room for the Word. Open ye gates, stand open ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in. Know that when you come to hear the Word, the Lord is knocking at the doors of your hearts; have not you felt it sometimes? Open, O open the doors, let all be opened to receive the Word into your hearts. That is the second thing for the behavior of the soul in hearing.

3 The third thing is the careful applying of the Word, so in Pro. 2:2, there must be an applying of the heart to the Word, and an applying of the Word unto the heart. All action is by an application of the thing that doth act unto the subject, there must be an application of the Word to thy soul. As now, suppose thou comest to hear the Word, and thou hearest of some sin, that it may be thou knowest thou art guilty of. Take the Word and lay it to thy heart and say, The Lord hath met with my soul this day, the Lord hath spoken to me, to the end that I might be humbled for this sin, and the other sin that my conscience tells me I am guilty of. So doth the Lord put thee upon a duty that concerns thee? Acknowledge this, the Lord hath spoken to me this day and put me upon the reformation of my family, and the reformation of my own heart. Is there a Word presented? Apply that and let not the trouble of thy heart cause thee to cast off that Word that God hath spoken to thee; application of the Word to thy heart is of marvelous use, and it concerns not only ministers in general to lay before people the doctrine of the Gospel but to apply it and know that it concerns you as well as ministers to apply it. And not only when they come to that that is called use, but all the way in the opening of the Word, it concerns you all to apply it to your own souls, and to consider, how doth it concern me in particular? My brethren, there is no such way to honor God, or get good to your own souls, as the application of the Word unto yourselves. As a man that is asleep, if there be a noise made it will not awake him so soon but come and call him by his name (and say John, or Thomas,) and that will awake him sooner than a greater noise will. So, when the Word makes a noise, when it is delivered only in the general, men take little notice

of it, but when the Word comes particularly to the souls of men and doth, as it were, call them by name, this awakens them.

Now God many times doth speak to your hearts but you should apply it; you know the Word is compared to meat, and it must be applied to the body. Then do we worship God in a right way when as we take notice of God's Word, as concerning us in particular; as that notable Scripture that you have in 1 Cor. 14:24, 25, where there comes a poor man into the church of God, and hears prophesying, hears the Word opened, and the text saith, "he is convinced of all, he is judged of all," and then in verse 25, "Thus are the secrets of his heart manifest and so falling down on his face, he worships God and reports that God is in you of a truth," that is, when the Word comes and meets with his soul in particular, that he finds himself to be aimed at by the Word, then he worships God, and saith that God certainly is in them. Here's the reason now that when you come to hear the Word you do not worship God because you apply it not to yourselves, you are ready to say, this was well spoken to such a one, and it concerns such a one, but how doth it concern thy soul in particular? Sometimes the Lord doth even force men and women to apply it whether they will or no, for that they think the minister speaks to them in particular, and that nobody was spoken to in the congregation but themselves. This is a mercy when the Lord doth it unto you; but it is a greater mercy when the Lord gives you a heart to apply it to yourselves, and although it may trouble you a little for the present, yet be willing to apply it, and account it a great mercy from the Lord, that the Lord will be pleased to speak in particular to your souls.

4. Fourthly, we must mix faith with the Word, or otherwise it will do us but little good; apply it and then believe it. In Heb. 4:2, it is said that "the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Wherefore there must be a mixture of faith to believe the Word that the Lord brings unto you. Now concerning that, I'll but propound these few particulars. You will say, must we believe everything that is spoken? Sometimes there are some things spoken that we cannot tell how to believe? I do not

mean so to believe everything merely being spoken, for you must take heed what you hear as well as how you hear; but do thus much at least.

1. In the first place, whatsoever comes in the Name of God to you, (except you know certainly it is not according to the written Word) you owe so much respect to it as to examine it, at least to try it whether it be so or no, as it is said of those well-bred men that I spoke of, that they did examine whether things were so or no. Do not cast off anything presently that comes in the Name of God. Now anything that hath the broad seal upon it, you must not disobey. You will say, it may be counterfeit but do not disobey it until you be sure it be counterfeit. Oh, that men would give but this respect to all things that they hear, never to cast them off until they have examined and tried whether they be so or no.

2. Secondly, do but grant this respect to the Word that is spoken to you, as to think thus, what if all that I hear spoken against my sin, which lays open the dangerous condition that my soul is in, prove to be true, what a case were I in then? This hath been the beginning of the conversion of many souls, the having but such a thought as this. It may be things are not so terrible as I hear, but what if they do prove so? Then I am undone forever. Dare I venture my soul and my eternal estate upon hopes that these things are not so bad as I hear? I believe if you would put yourselves to it, you would think it a bold adventure, and the comfort that any of you have grounded upon this, merely hoping that things are not so bad as you hear; it is a cursed comfort that hath no sure bottom. Grant that respect therefore to the Word.

3. Thirdly consider this, it may be I do not see clearly that these things are so which are delivered, I do not see enough to believe them now, but what if I were now dying? What if I were now going to receive the sentence of my eternal doom; would I not then believe these things? Would I not then think what I hear out of the Word to be true? It is an easy matter for men to reject the Word while they

have their health and prosperity. But if you were to die, and upon your sick and death bed if you saw the infinite ocean of eternity before you, what would you say then? Were the Word true, yea, or no? Would you give belief unto the suggestions of the Devil then? We find it by experience that men that could easily cast off the Word in their health, yet when they have come to lie upon their sick bed, and death bed, they found the Word true; believe it now as well as then.

4. Consider, if thou doest not believe, what a case art thou in? Am I worse than the devils themselves? The Scripture tells me that the devils believe and tremble; why Lord, do I come to hear sermons, and am I more hard to believe than the very devils themselves? They do believe that Word that I cast off, and they tremble at it, but my soul is not at all stirred, as if there were no reality in such things that have been spoken to me. There be other things which may further help us towards believing of the Word of God, but these shall suffice. And certainly, my brethren, until we come to this to believe the Word, though we should sit under it many years, it will do us little good, and we shall never sanctify the Name of God in the hearing of it.

## **Sermon IX**

### **Sanctifying the Name of God in Hearing the Word**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

The next thing for the right behavior of the soul for sanctifying God's Name is this, we must receive the Word with meekness of spirit; that you have in James 1:21, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls." Receive with meekness; the former part of this Scripture I confess concerns somewhat that was before, about the preparation of the soul, and we shall perhaps afterwards in the application come to open the former part of this verse. "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness." But only now we quote the place for this, "receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls." Let there be a quietness in your spirit in attending upon the Word, no hurrying. There is a twofold distemper of passion in many people that is a great hinderance to the profit of the Word, and sanctifying God's Name in hearing it.

1. The first is a distemper of passion in those that have some trouble of conscience in them, they are troubled for their sin, and their spirits are in a discontented froward humor because they have not that comfort that they do desire, and therefore the Word of God when it comes to be preached to them, if it doth not every way suit with their hearts, and if they do not find present comfort by it, their spirits are in a distemper and frowardness, and cast it off. And if at any time there be never such comfortable things spoken in the Word, yet there is an anger in their spirits because they are not able to apply the Word to themselves, and they think, "This doth not concern me." Now there should be meekness of spirit in those that are in trouble of conscience above all; they should quietly attend upon the Word and wait for the time that God will speak peace to their consciences. And if I cannot find the Word suitable to me at this time, yet I may at another time. Let me attend with meekness, let me receive everything with meekness; the Word is above me, and if ever I have good, it must be by the Word at last. It doeth much concern those that are in trouble of conscience to have meek spirits.

2. There is another distemper in others and that is worse; that is, such as when they find the Word come near unto them, relating those sins that their consciences tells them they are guilty of, their hearts rise against God and His Word, and ministers too, because it would pluck away some beloved corruption, because it rebukes them for some haunt of evil, some distemper of heart that they have been or are guilty of, it puts a shame upon them, and therefore their hearts do rise against it. It is a dreadful thing to have the heart rise against the Word. As we read of that froward Prince Jehoiakim in the Prophecy of Jeremiah, that when the roll was read in his hearing, sitting in the winter time by a great fire, he took a penknife and cut it in pieces and threw it into the fire in anger; and I have read that the Jews kept a fast every year to mourn for that great sin, and yet this Jehoiakim was the son of Josiah whose heart did melt at the hearing of the Word; he had an humble and a meek heart when the Law was read, and yet see what a different spirit Jehoiakim had either from his father or grandfather.

It is a great dishonor to the Name of God for men to give liberty to their passions to rise against the Word; take heed of passion either while you are hearing the Word, or after the Word; as many of you when you are discontented with what is said, when you come in company, what a fury are many men in upon the hearing of some things in the Word that comes close to their hearts; remember when you are a hearing of the Word that it is that which is above you, and it is not fit for one that is an inferior to show himself passionate in the presence of a superior. It is true, the ministers they may be in as low a condition as you, and in a lower; but the Word they speak, it is above all the Princes and Monarchs upon the face of the earth; and it is fit therefore we having to deal with God that we should behave ourselves in a meek disposition.

6. The next thing for the sanctifying God's Name in the hearing of the Word is this, we must hear it with a trembling heart, with fear as well as meekness. And for that you have that famous Scripture in Isa. 66, beginning, "Thus saith the Lord, 'The heaven is My throne, and the

earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me, and where is the place of My rest? For all those things hath My hand made, and all those things have been,' saith the Lord, 'but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at My Word.'" This is a most admirable Scripture. Mark how God lifts up Himself in His glory, so great a God as "the heaven is My throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is that house that ye will build unto Me?" But then may a poor soul say, how shall I be able to stand before this God that is so glorious? Saith God, be not discouraged, poor soul who doest tremble at My Word, for I look to you.

And then this is a further thing observable, that God hath a regard to that soul that trembles at His Word, rather than to any that should build the most sumptuous buildings in the world for Him, for saith God here, "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me and where is the place of My rest?" They have built a glorious temple to God, but what do I regard that, saith God? I regard one that trembles at My Word more than that great house that you have built unto Me. It is a notable Scripture to show what a high respect God hath to one that trembles at His Word; He regards them more than this glorious temple that was built unto Him. If you were able to build such a place as this was for the service of God, you would think it a great matter; it is not so much regarded as if you could bring a trembling heart to God's Word, that's a special thing wherein the sanctifying of the Name of God consists when we come to see the dreadful authority that there is in the Word of God, when we are able to see more glory of God in His Word than in all the works of God besides, for there is more of His glory in the Word than there is in the whole creation of heaven and earth, take the sun, and moon and stars.

You that are mariners, you have seen much of the glory of God abroad that one would think might strike terror into all your hearts but know that there is more of the dreadfulness of God's Name in His Word than in all His works. In Psalm 138:2, "Thou hast magnified

Thy Word above all Thy Name,” the Word it is magnified above all the Name of God whatsoever, and it is a very good sign of a spiritually enlightened soul that can see the Name of God more magnified in His Word than in all His works besides. I appeal unto your consciences in this thing, have you ever seen the Name of God to be more magnified in His Word than in all His works? I may with very good confidence affirm this that there is no godly soul upon the face of the earth that hath the weakest degree of grace but hath seen more of the glory of God revealed in His Word than he hath seen in all the works of God besides, and his heart hath been more taken with it; it requires therefore a trembling frame of heart when we hear it.

And then further, when this is considered that the Word is that that bindeth the soul over either to life or death, men's eternal estates are to be cast by the Word, certainly then it requires a trembling heart to hear that by which the eternal estate of man is to be cast. We do not sanctify God's Name when we come to hear the Word except we come with trembling hearts, and they are the most likely of all men and women to understand the mind of God; as for such as come with conceited spirits that they understand as much before they come and think their reach of wit or capacity is beyond the capacity of any that shall open the Word unto them (yet that were not so much if it did but only rest upon the man and not reflect upon the Word itself) now these that are rich in their own thoughts and understandings are sent empty away, but those that come with trembling hearts to the Word, they are the men that are likely to understand God's counsels revealed in His Word. In Ezra 10:2, 3, “Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam answered and said unto Ezra, ‘We have transgressed against our God and have taken strange wives (etc.) yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God according to the counsel of my lord and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God,’” so that those that tremble at God's Word are such as are fittest to counsel, they understand most of God's mind. And that's another particular of

the behavior of the soul in sanctifying God's Name in hearing His Word.

7. The next is an humble subjection to the Word that we hear, our hearts must bow to it, must lie under the Word that we hear. It is a very remarkable Scripture that we have in 2 Chron. 36:12, there it is said concerning a great King Zedekiah, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord." It is a very strange expression as any we have in the book of God, that Zedekiah a great king should be charged with this as a great sin that he did not humble himself, humble himself before whom you will say? We are bound to humble ourselves before God, but here it is that he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet. Why before the prophet? Because he spoke from the mouth of the Lord. If it be any messenger that speaks from the mouth of the Lord, God expects that we should humble ourselves, so that if any truth comes to be delivered unto you, the Lord expects that you should fall down and yield obedience to it, whatsoever your thoughts, your judgments, your opinions have heretofore been, if there come anything in the Word against it you must submit your judgments, submit your very consciences, you must submit your wills, whatsoever your hearts have been set upon, though it hath been never so contentful to your spirits before, yet now submit, and yield though it go never so cross unto your minds, your wills, your ends, yet all must be submitted, and laid down flat before the Word, so as to be willing to deny yourselves of anything in the world. When a man or woman can say thus, "Lord it is true, I confess before I heard Thy Word opened in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit unto me, I was of such a mind, and my heart went after such and such contentments, and I thought it was impossible that ever my heart should be taken from them, but Oh Lord thou hast been pleased plainly to show to me by the opening of Thy Word in the evidence of Thy Spirit, what Thy mind is. Now whatsoever becomes of my name, of my comforts, of my contentments in this world, Lord here I cast down all before Thee, I submit unto Thy Word." This is a gracious frame. Now is the

Name of God extolled, and lifted up in hearing of the Word, the Name of God is sanctified in such a work of Spirit as this is.

I have read of a German divine writing to Oecolampados another famous German Divine, he hath this expression, "Oh let the Word of God come, and though we had 600 necks we would all submit them unto the Word of God," saith he. So, it should be the temper of such as hear the Word and desire to sanctify God's Name in it, let the Word of God come this morning, let God speak and we will submit had we 600 necks; we will submit all we are, or have, to this Word of the Lord, it is the Word of God that we are willing should triumph over us. To have a congregation to lie down under the Word of God that is preached to them is a most excellent thing, and God's Name is much sanctified. We do not, brethren, desire you should lie under us, we are not only willing, but we are very desirous that you would examine what we speak to you, whether it be according to the Word of God or no. But look to it, that if we do speak to you that which is the Word from the mouth of the Lord, know then that God expects that you should submit your estates, your souls, your bodies, all that you are and have to this Word. And that is another particular in the sanctifying of the Name of God in hearing the Word; there must be an humble submission of the soul unto it.

8. Another particular wherein the behavior of the soul for the sanctifying of God's Name consists is this, the Word it must be received with love, and with joy; it is not enough for you to be convinced of the authority of it, and to think thus, well I must yield to it, this is the Word of God and if I do not yield to it I must expect the plagues and judgements of God to follow it that is not enough. But you must yield to it with love, and with joy, except you receive the Word with love and with joy it is not sanctified; you do not sanctify God's Name, nor is it sanctified unto you. You must receive the Word not only as the true Word of the Lord, but as the good Word of the Lord. In Thess. 2:10, we find it to be the cause of men being given over to a spirit of delusion, "Because they received not the Word of God in love." It is spoken of Antichrist, that at his coming he shall

come with all deceivableness, and he shall prevail with them that perish; who are they? They that receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. It is not enough my brethren to receive the truth that we might be saved; but we must receive the love of the truth if ever we would be saved; good is the Word of the Lord to my soul.

And we must receive it with joy too, as well as with love. Prov. 2: 10, 11, "When wisdom entereth into thy heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, then discretion shall preserve thee; understanding shall keep thee," etc. That is a great matter, when the Word reveals some truth to thy understanding, and thou canst so receive it as it should be pleasant to thy soul, that thy soul rejoices in it; it is a good Word. It is that that doth me good at the heart, when a people can hear the Word, and the Word coming near unto them, they can say, this Word doth me good at the heart, it is pleasant to my soul, that is excellent. In Acts 2:41, the godly are described, those that did receive the Word so as to sanctify God's Name in it; by this, that they "gladly received the Word and were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." There were three thousand in one day that did gladly receive the Word. What an auditory had Peter at this time? Then the Word it did them good, when they gladly received it.

Quest. But it may be said, we read in Matt. 13, of the stony ground, the hearers that were not good and did not profit by the Word so as to be saved, yet they received the Word with joy. And Herod it is said of him that he heard John the Baptist gladly. It seems then that it is not enough to receive it with gladness.

Answ. To that I answer, first, there must be that which hypocrites may have, if there be want of that, we cannot sanctify God's Name. But you will say, we must go further or else God's Name is not sanctified. That I confess; therefore, when I speak of gladness and joy, know that I mean another kind of joy than the stony ground had; and so certainly the pleasantness that is spoken of in Proverbs which

I mentioned before; and the gladness that the three thousand did receive the Word withal is different from the gladness of the stony ground. If you ask me wherein it differs, I would answer it differs thus, the gladness of an hypocrite in receiving God's Word, it ariseth either from the novelty of it, because it is a new thing and he gets new notions that he had not before, or else he is joyful from some other carnal excellencies that he finds going together with the Word, some esteem or honor that he shall get by it; some selfishness there is that makes his heart to be glad, for there is a great deal of natural and carnal excellency that goes along many times with the Word.

But now this gladness that is spoken of in the Acts and in the Proverbs, it is the gladness that ariseth from the apprehension of the spiritual excellencies that there are in the Word, as that it is that Word that reveals God and Christ to my soul; that Word that comes nearest to my soul to the mortifying of my lusts, and the sanctifying of my heart. This is that which makes me rejoice in the Word, the holiness, and the spiritual excellency that I see to be in the Word. "Thy Word is pure (saith David) and therefore doth thy servant loveth it," and rejoice in it. This no hypocrite can say, I see the image of God in His Word, I see the very glass of God's holiness in His Word, I feel that in the Word that may bring my soul to God wherein my soul enjoys communion with God and Jesus Christ, and it is this that gladdens my soul. If we receive the Word with joy thus, we shall come to sanctify the Name of God in the hearing of it; and that is the eighth particular.

9. The ninth particular is this, if we would sanctify the Name of God in His Word, we must receive the Word into honest hearts. This you have in Luke 8:15 in the Parable of the Sower; you shall find there that there are divers grounds that do receive the seed; and by those divers grounds are meant divers sorts of hearers. There is first the highway ground, that is, such as hear the Word and never regard what they hear, and as soon as ever they go out of the congregation the seed of the Word is quite gone and is as if they had not heard at all. And then there is the stony ground, and the thorny ground, that

is, those that hear with joy (as was spoken of before) but the cares of the world choke the seed of the Word; as soon as ever they are gone, they are upon their worldly business, and their thoughts and hearts run that way. But then there is the good ground, that is, those that receive the seed of the Word into a good and honest heart, a good and an honest heart they are both joined together. By a good heart is meant a heart that hath not malice in it, a heart that doeth desire to empty itself of everything that is against the Word, and which is not suitable to the spiritualness of the Word. A heart, I say, that entertains nothing in it that any way makes against the Word; a good heart is a heart which (as the Apostle saith in James 1:21, and that place may very well come in here to be opened) is cleansed from all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness. The Word that is there translated “filthiness” it signifies “excrements”; that which is unclean, that which comes from the body, such is the sinfulness of your hearts; you come to hear the Word, if it be with evil hearts, you mingle that very filthiness which is as vile before God as excrements are. And superfluity of naughtiness, by that I take is meant, as if the Holy Ghost should say, do not think it enough for to purge away filthiness, that is, notorious stinking evils, abominable sins, that you do not come with such filthy, vile hearts, but whatsoever there is in your heart that is any way against the work of grace, it is a superfluity of naughtiness, all kinds of evil thoughts, and evil affections that are more than needs.

Look into your hearts and affections and see whatsoever you find there that is more than ought to be, running out unto anything that they should not, labor to purge out that, saith He, do not satisfy yourselves in any kind of evil whatsoever. It may be you are cleansed from the notorious evils of the world; but if there remains any naughtiness, any kind of drowsiness in your hearts that is not grace, it is to be purged out for it is a superfluity. So then, that is a good heart that entertains no kind of evil in it. It may be there is some evil, but it doth desire to purge out not only that that is filthy, nasty, and abominable; but if there be any thing that should not be there, a good heart is against it. And that is a good heart that is willing to receive

anything that God reveals. As we use to say, such a man is a good man, that is, you can propound nothing to him that is fit to be done but he is willing to hearken to you. A good man he hath no kind of evil ends in him, no evil designs at all, but he is willing to hearken to everything that is good. So, a good heart whatsoever is good, he is ready to entertain, if it be a good thing his heart is suitable to it, and runs presently unto it, having a good heart, it doth presently close with the good Word of the Lord.

But what is meant by an honest heart? By honesty of heart, certainly there is more meant than such a one that we call an honest man, that is, a man that is honest in his dealings between man and man; there is many a man that is accounted a very honest man in the world but hath not an honest heart. I beseech you observe it, that man that hath an honest heart to God is one that receives the seed of the Word, so as he goes beyond the highway ground, the stony ground, or the thorny ground, he goes beyond those three sorts of professors; he is one that hath an eminency in profession of religion beyond those three. Now the world accounts many honest men that do not go beyond any of those three; yea, the world doth ordinarily account any of those three to be honest men, as the highway ground. Are there not many honest men in the world that regard not the Word of God at all, but only come to hear a sermon, and as soon as they have done, as it came in at one ear, so it goes out at the other? I fear there are some men and women that are accounted honest men and women in the world that can hardly give an account of any one sermon they have heard in all their lives, hardly I say, but the Word which they heard is presently taken away from them, and yet these are accounted honest men in the world. But this is not the honest heart the Scripture speaks of. And many there are that go further than these, that come to hear the Word with joy, and yet they have not this honest heart. Yea they may hear the Word so as to bring forth a blade, and yet not have this honest heart. By this honest heart I take therefore to be meant this, a heart that deals squarely and truly with God, behaving itself in a beseeming manner suitable to that

authority and excellency that there is in the Word of God, as now for example.

1. First, amongst men he is accounted an honest man that deals squarely and truly with men in all actions; such a man you will say is an honest man, as honest a man as ever broke bread; that is, one that will deal squarely with men, not only in one thing, but turn him to anything, and you shall find a proportion between one action and another. So, this is an honest heart, not one that only will be forward for God in some one action wherein he may enjoy himself as well as God, but one that deals squarely with God, let God put him upon duty, upon any service, God shall find him still to be the same man. Put him upon an easy service (as many will embrace that) or put him upon a difficult service, it is all one if it be the mind of God; you shall find him square in everything, though he be put upon that which he is likely to suffer very much in, yet he goes on according to his principles. An honest heart is one that hath received gracious principles, and accordingly he acts, all the world cannot take him off from his principles of godliness that the Lord hath put into his heart.

2. Secondly, an honest man is one that provides things honest before men, that doth all things in a seemly way in all those relations that he hath unto others, that we account honesty. So, when a man's behavior towards the Word is such as doth beseem the Word of that God with whom he hath to deal, that look what excellency, what glory there is in the Word of God, such a suitable behavior there is in the heart of a man to it, this is an honest heart. So that there are those two things, when a man is square with God in one thing as well as another, and when there is a suitableness in the behavior of the soul to what excellency there is in the Word, when the heart of man will not abuse the Word at all, but behaves itself honestly, according unto the gravity, holiness, and weight that there is in the Word. And thus, now with such a good and honest heart we are to receive the Word if we will sanctify God's Name in it.

10. A tenth particular is this, if we will sanctify God's Name in the Word we must hide the Word in our hearts, we must not only hear the Word but keep it, preserve it, and then do we declare that we account the Word of God to be worth something indeed. For what is it to sanctify God (as we have opened before in the general) but such a behavior towards Him as may testify the excellency of the Name of God, so the behavior of the soul in hearing the Word must be such as may give a testimony to the excellency of the Word and manifest the high esteem I have of it. Now if I received a thing that is of great value, if I slight it, and let anybody take it from me, I do not give a testimony to the excellency of that thing, but if I take it and lock it up, and so keep it under lock and key I do thereby give a testimony of the esteem that I have of the excellency of that thing. So now, when I come to hear the Word and meet with truths that have gotten into my soul, I close with them, and am resolved within my heart as I am hearing of them, well, this truth I will keep through God's grace, this concerns me, and I will make much of it, and although I forget other things, yet I hope I shall remember this to sanctify God's Name in hearing of the Word.

In Isa. 42:23, "Hear (saith the Holy Ghost there) for the time to come?" When we come to the Word we must not only hearken for the present, as many of us while we are hearing our hearts are stirred for the present. Oh, that we could but have that affection of heart always as we have when we are hearing of the Word. How many of you have said when you have been hearing such a sermon, Oh! Then me thought I could have gone through fire and water for God. I but mark it, you must hear for afterwards. And in Psalm 119:11, there the prophet David professed that he did hide the Word in his heart, the Word was sweet unto him, "Thy Word," saith he, "have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." You that come and hear those truths upon the Lord's Day, if you would hide them thus in your hearts and keep them all the week, they would help you against the many temptations that you meet withal. You go abroad on the weekdays into company, and there you meet with a temptation, and it overcomes you, and you complain, "Alas I am weak, I have met

with a temptation and it hath foiled me.” But had you hidden the Word that you heard on the Lord’s Day in your heart, it would have kept you from the strength of your temptation that it should not have overcome you. Those that are truly godly they have a care to hide the Word in their hearts; when they hear it, they think, this Word shall help me against such and such sins which I am prone to by nature, and when a temptation comes to that sin, I hope I shall have use of the Word that I have heard this day.

As now suppose you hear a Word against passion, then you should hide that Word in your hearts against that time that temptation comes to passion. And you hear a Word against sensuality and abuse of the creatures; you should hide that Word against that temptation cometh. And you hear a Word against unrighteousness and unjust dealings, when a temptation comes to that sin you should hide that Word against that time. So, you hear a Word that speaks of obedience to parents, and servants’ duties to governors, now you should hide that Word in your hearts against that time; “I have hid Thy Word in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.” You say that you would fain withstand and not be overcome with temptations? Why here is the way, hide the Word within thee that thou mayest not sin against Him.

And so, in Prov. 2:1, you have a Scripture to the same purpose, about hiding the commandments within us. And then in 1 John 2:14, “I write unto you young men because you are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you and ye have overcome the wicked one.” I have written to you young men, you are young, you have strong natures, and so strength of nature for God. But how comes this to pass? You are strong and the Word of God abideth in you. Here is an excellent Scripture for all young men, you have your memories fresh, and if you will exercise your memories about anything it should be in the Word of God, it is a comely and an excellent thing to see young ones to have the Word of God abiding in them, that if you come to them, not only a week but a month after they have heard the Word they are able to give you an account of it. I am verily persuaded that there are

many young ones in this place that are able to give you old ones, if you ask them, an account of what it is to sanctify God's Name in the duties of worship, and why? Because the Word of God abideth in them, it is the honor of young men to have the Word of God to abide in them, and hereby they overcome the wicked one.

And on the other side, many young people that do come to hear the Word, it may be they are drawn to it by others, or it may be they love to have a walk in the morning, but the Word of God abideth not in them, and therefore when the wicked one comes with temptations the week after, they are overcome by him. But those that have the Word of God abiding in them they overcome the wicked one. And so, in John 8:31, you have a very remarkable Scripture for this purpose of keeping the Word after we have heard it, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, 'If you continue in My Word, then are you my disciples indeed.'" I beseech you observe it, it is said that the Jews did believe in Christ, and yet saith Christ if ye continue in My Word then are you My disciples; why, were they not the disciples of Christ that did believe in Him? By this believing, therefore, we must understand some kind of general notion that they had of Christ, they began to think that Christ might be the true Messiah, some kind of imperfect believing they had, but they were not thoroughly brought off. Now saith Christ, "If you continue in My Word, you are My disciples." As if He should say, do not you think it enough that you come to hear Me, and that you are taken by what I say; you must continue in My Word, and then you are My disciples. Christ will not own that man or woman to be His disciple that doth not continue in His Word. O, that you would consider of this, you that satisfy yourselves in having some flashes of your affections when you are hearing the Word, but do not think that you are the disciples of Christ because of them. In Titus 1:9, "Holding fast the faithful Word as you have been taught," that is the thing you should labor for, to hold fast the faithful Word, hold it fast, that it may not be taken from you, and so you shall come to sanctify the Name of God in the hearing of His Word.

11. The last that I shall speak to is this, if thou would sanctify the Name of God in hearing His Word, turn it into practice or otherwise the Name of God is blasphemed, or at least is taken in vain by thee if thou do not turn what thou hearest into practice. So, you have it in James 1:25, “He that is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man (saith he) shall be blessed in his deed.” And verse 22, “Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” The word here that is translated “deceiving your own selves” is a word taken from logicians and signifies to “make a false syllogism.” A man that hears the Word and doth not do it, he doth, as it were, reason thus: those that do come to Church (as we use to say) those surely are religious people, but I come to sermons and therefore I am religious. Now this is a false reasoning, and thou doest but cozen thyself. Be not a hearer only, but a doer of the Word, that thou mayest not deceive thine own soul.

So, in Rom. 2:3, “Thinkest thou this, O man that judges them that do such things and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God?” As if he should say, you have the Word, and you are able to judge thereby what you hear, but yet still you are wicked in your lives; this is despising of the riches of the goodness of God towards you. And in Phil. 2:16, you have a remarkable text where the Holy Ghost saith of the Philippians that He would have them, “Hold forth the Word of life.” It were a most excellent thing if it might be said of this congregation, that as they come diligently to hear, and are willing to take pains to get out of their beds so early in the mornings, so all the week after they hold forth the Word of God. You that are servants, it may be your masters are naught, and the families naught from whence you come; now when you go home, though it may be they will not let you repeat the sermon, yet you are to hold forth the sermon in your practice and conversation. How is the Name of God glorified when we hold forth His Word! This is to let not only your light shine, but the light of the Word shine before men that they may behold it and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

So that now put all these eleven particulars together, and then you have made good that expression we find in Acts 13:48, that the Word of God was glorified. And to the same purpose we have another expression in 2 Thess. 3:1, “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified even as it is with you.” This is the commendation of a people, that they do glorify the Word of God.

I beseech you brethren, in the Name of Jesus Christ this morning, that you that are hearers of the Word would glorify the Word and glorify the Name of God in the Word. Oh, that not one of you would be a disgrace or shame to the Word of God; this is the charge that God this morning lays upon you, as ever you expect to receive any good from the Word, or to look upon the face of God with comfort whose Word this is, do not be a shame to His Word, and to the ministers of His Word. Put all these things together, I say, and learn to make conscience of sanctifying God's Name in hearing the Word, that so there may be none of you that may give any just occasion to others to say, is this to hear sermons? Do you get nothing else but this by hearing sermons? If you should open the mouths of men to say so of you, the Word of God as much as lies in you would be disgraced by you, you should rather think thus, it were better for me that I should die, and that I were under the ground and rotting there, than that the Word of God should ever be disgraced by me. Let me hold forth the glory of the Word, the Word is that that hath done good to my soul; the Word is that that I would not for ten thousand worlds but have heard it, and shall I disgrace this Word? Shall I give any occasion that this Word of the Lord should be spoken ill of by reason of me? O God forbid. Therefore, if you regard not yourselves and your own honor, yet regard the honor of the Word; if ever you have got any good by the Word you should go away with this resolution, well, I will labor all the days of my life to honor this Word of God that I have got so much good by. If this were but the resolution of every one of your hearts this morning, it would be a blessed morning's work.

## **Sermon X**

### **Why God will Have His Name Sanctified**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

Now follow the reasons why God stands so much upon it, that He will have His Name sanctified in this ordinance of hearing His Word.

1 First, it is because there is so much of God in His Word, and therefore we should sanctify God's Name. If it were possible there could be sin in heaven, that sin would be greater than sin committed here; therefore, the sin of the angels when they were in God's presence in a more especial manner was the greater. The Name of God being in anything, the greater will be the evil if we do not sanctify God's Name in it; now there is very much of God in His Word, more of God there than in all His works of creation and providence. In Ps. 138:2, "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy Name." There being therefore so much of God in His Word, we must sanctify the Name of God in it.

2 Secondly, God hath appointed His Word to be the great ordinance to convey the special mercies that He intends for the good of His people. That we spoke to before in the general, in showing how the duties of God's worship are as a channel for the conveyance of special good to the saints, but none more than the Word, that's the ordinance to convey the first grace to those that belong to God's election. The sacrament is for strengthening, and therefore there is rather more in the Word than in the sacrament, and yet everyone

thinks in conscience that he is bound to come carefully to the sacrament, and to look to sanctify God's Name there. It is an easier matter to convince men and women that they are bound to sanctify the Name of God when they come to receive the holy communion, than for the hearing of the Word. They think not so much of that, but certainly the Word is appointed to be an ordinance of conveying more blessing than the sacrament, because it is appointed to convey the first grace, and to convey strength of grace as well as the sacrament. Now being appointed to convey such great things to the souls of the elect, both the first grace and strengthening of grace, and comfort, and assistance thereof, the Lord expects to have His Name sanctified in it.

3 Thirdly, the Name of God must be sanctified in the Word, because the Word is very quick and lively; it works men or women to life or death, to salvation or damnation. In Heb. 4:12, "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," etc. It is very quick of operation the text saith; that is, when God hath to deal with men by His Word, He will not stand dallying and trifling with them, but He is very quick with them, either to bring their souls to life, or to cast them away. "The time of men's ignorance God winks at, but now He calls all men to repent." Let them look to it now, God did forbear in the time of ignorance, but He will not forbear so when the Word comes, "Now is the ax laid to the root of the tree."

And when was that? When John the Baptist came to preach repentance because the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Though the tree were barren before and did not bring forth good fruit, yet it might stand still and not be cut down; but when the powerful ministration of the Word comes, then the ax is laid to the root of the tree; either now come in and be saved or resist the Word and perish. And therefore, that is very observable when Christ sends out His disciples to preach, in Mark 16:15, 16, "Saith He, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be

damned.” As if He should say, there shall be quick work made with them, go and preach, and those that belong to My election shall be brought in to believe and be saved, and the others shall be damned. As if God should say, if they will come in and embrace the gospel they shall be saved; if they will not, they shall be damned, and there is an end of them. So that I say, we have need to look to it that we sanctify the Name of God in His Word upon these three grounds because there is so much of God in His Word, because He hath appointed it to convey the greatest mercies to His saints, and because God is very quick in His word, one way or other.

We shall now proceed to the application of this point, and first by way of reprehension to all those that do not sanctify God's Name in hearing the Word. And herein we shall show their fearful condition and how God will sanctify His name upon them in ways of judgement, and then when we come to the use of exhortation, to exhort you to sanctify the Name of God, there we shall show you likewise how God will sanctify His Name in ways of mercy upon those that do sanctify Him in ways of obedience in hearing of His Word.

1. For the first, certainly if that be to sanctify the Name of God that we have spoken of, God's Name is but very little sanctified by people that do come to hear His Word, and we have no cause to wonder that there is so little good got by the Word, because there are so few that make conscience to sanctify God's Name in hearing it; some there are that are so far from sanctifying God's Name in it as they altogether neglect it, and make it a matter of nothing whither they come to hear it or no. Saith Christ in John 8:47, “He that is of God heareth My Word, ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God.” Certainly, he that hath the knowledge of God and any interest in God, and that belongs unto Him, nothing is more sweet to him than the hearing of His Word, but because ye are not of God (saith Christ) therefore you hear not His Word. Those men and women that have no interest in God but live without God in this world, they regard not to hear His Word. Oh, how many have we that belong to this place

that do so! How many live without God in the world and do declare to all the world that they are not of God? They have no part nor portion in God in that they hear not His Word. Some there are that come to hear it, but they come to hear it as a mere matter of indifference, in a mere formal and customary way, or for companies' sake, or to give content to others. These are poor and low ends, thou shouldest come to hear the Word as expecting God should speak to thy soul for the furtherance of thy eternal good, but your consciences may tell you what vain and wandering hearts you have when you come to hear it. The eyes of the fool (saith Solomon) are in all the corners of the earth, up and down wandering, little minding that you are come to hear God Himself speak to you in the ministry of man. And if so be that it be minded, yet ordinarily the hearts of men do put off the Word, and if it come anything near to them, they think to shift it from themselves to others.

We have a notable Scripture in Heb. 12:25, for such men as shift off God's Word when it comes many times very near to them, "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him which speaketh from heaven." See that ye refuse not Him that speaks the Word, see that you do not put Him off. And that that is the signification of it; if you compare it with Luke 14:18, you shall find that there is the same word used where speaking of those that were invited to the supper it is said, "they all with one consent began to make excuse," they began to shift it off, that is the same word. Oh, take heed of this, that when you are hearing the Word and Christ comes and speaks to your hearts, and you begin to think that it may concern you and your consciences begin to stir, take heed that you do not shift Him off, take heed that you do not put away the Word from you by any kind of pretence whatsoever. It may be, you will say, if I were certain it were the Word of God and that God spoke to me, God forbid but that I should submit unto it. But though it may be the hearts of men are not so notoriously rebellious as to resolve to sin against the Word which they will acknowledge to be the Word of God, yet this is the deceit of the heart, when the heart hath no mind

to obey, it will shift off the Word and have pretences, and put offs. Oh, take heed that you do not shift off Him that speaks from heaven by making any kind of excuse whatsoever, but when thou hearest, if the Word of God come to thy conscience, do not listen to vain reasonings that are against it. Others there are that cannot tell how to shift off the Word, but it will come upon them when they are hearing, it may be they are a little stirred, but it is presently gone so that they are far from holding the Word, far from keeping it in their hearts.

Oh, how many of you have been stirred when you have been hearing the Word, and how happy had it been for you if you had hid those Words in your heart that the Lord hath spoken to you in the ministry of it. If you had but the invitations of the Spirit now that sometimes you have had, how happy were it for you? But it is with many in hearing the Word, just as with you mariners when you are to go aboard your friends come with you, take their leaves of you, and then you see them stand upon the shore a while, but when you sail a little further your friends are out of sight, and then you see only the shore, you sail on a little further, and then you see only the houses, you sail a little further and then you see only the steeples and such high places, and you sail yet a little further and then you see nothing but the ocean. So it is in hearing the Word; it may be when you go home there are some things fresh in your minds, but on the Monday morning you have lost some, but then there are some others that do yet present themselves before you, and then you lose more and more until you have lost the sight of all; all truths are gone, you see no more of the Word, as if you had never heard it. This is not to sanctify God's Name; you should treasure up the Word as the most rich treasure that may be.

Another sort to be rebuked are those who are so far from falling down before the Lord to receive the Word with meekness as they can bless themselves in their wicked ways, notwithstanding the Word comes and meets with them. I only name this because of that notable Scripture we have in Deut. 29: 18, 19, saith Moses there to them, take

heed, “Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood,” (what's that root that beareth gall and wormwood?) “And it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse that he bless himself in his heart saying, ‘I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart,’” etc. Take heed there be not among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood. This is a bitter root in men’s hearts when they can hear the Word of God and have their hearts rise against it, and think with themselves that there is no such matter, these are but mere words, but mere wind, let the minister say what he will, and talk as long as he will, I will go on in my way, I shall do well enough, that which he saith it is but his opinion. I say when men can bless themselves thus in their way, and when there are such tumultuous and rebellious thoughts rising in their hearts, this is a root of gall and wormwood, and take heed of it, it will bring forth bitter fruit one day. But I should quickly be prevented if I should launch into this argument to reprove the several ways of sinning against God in the hearing of His Word. And therefore, I leave those and come to show what a fearful thing it is for men and women not to sanctify the Name of God in the hearing of His Word, that so you may see that God will have His Name sanctified upon them. And they are these.

1 In the first place, you that do not sanctify God's Name in hearing His Word in those ways that have been opened to you, first you lose the greatest and happiest opportunity of good that ever creatures had for an outward opportunity. Indeed, when God moves by His Spirit if that be neglected, that opportunity is more than merely hearing the Word, but otherwise except it be at such a time when God adds His Spirit together with His Word, I say you that are cast by the providence of God in such a place where the Word of the Gospel is preached to you, applied and urged upon you, if you sanctify not the Name of God to hear as you ought and to profit by it, I say you lose the greatest opportunity for good that is in the world. Oh, what hast thou lost that hast lived many years under the ministry of the Gospel, and yet hast not been acquainted with this mystery of godliness in sanctifying God's Name in the Word. There are many thousand souls

that are and shall be blessing God to all eternity for what of God they have met with all in the Word, but thou hast fifteen under it stupid as a block, dead and barren, and no good hath been done. “Wherefore is there a prize in the hand of a fool, and he hath no heart to get wisdom?” This will lie upon thee heavy one day, the loss of such an opportunity, and that is the first.

2 In the second place, know that this Word that is appointed by God for the conveyance of so much mercy to His elect, it will prove to be the greatest aggravation of thy sin that can be, “This is the condemnation that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light.” This is [The] condemnation. If so be that light had not come among you, then the condemnation had not been so great, your sin had not been so great, and your punishment had not been so great. In Matt. 10:14, 15, where speaking of those that did enjoy the Word, and yet did not sanctify God's Name in it, “Whosoever shall not receive you (saith Christ to His Disciples) nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet; Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgement than for that city.” It is a most dreadful Scripture; their very dust must be shaken off in token of indignation, and it shall be more easy for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for that place. You would be very loth to be in a worse condition than Sodom and Gomorrah that was consumed by fire from heaven, “and now suffer the vengeance of eternal fire,” Jude 7. Certainly, they shall not be so deep in judgments as those that live under the ministry of the Word and sanctify not the Name of God in it. Your sin is of a deeper dye than the sin of the heathens, yea and in some respects than the sin of the devils; they never had the Word of the Gospel sent to be preached to them and therefore this will aggravate your sin not only beyond heathens but beyond devils. Look to it then, that God's Name be sanctified in the hearing of His Word.

3 Thirdly, know that so much as the Word is rejected, Jesus Christ is rejected. Luke 10:16, “He that despiseth you despiseth Me, and he

that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me.” It is Christ Himself that is rejected when the Word is rejected, thou hast not to do with man so much as with Jesus Christ in the hearing of the Word. And the power of Jesus Christ is to be put forth either to do the good by the Word, or to avenge thy neglect of the Word. Therefore in Matt. 28:18, 19, when Christ sends forth His disciples to preach, He makes this preface, “All power is given unto Me in heaven and earth, go ye therefore and teach,” as if He should say, I have received all power in heaven and earth; through the power I received I send you to preach, “and I’ll be with you to the end of the world.” That is, all power in heaven and earth shall go along with you to assist your ministry, either for the good of those that shall embrace it, or for the misery of those that shall reject it, so that whosoever stands out against the ministry of the Word stands out against all the power in heaven and earth that is given to Christ. Do not think that thou doest resist a poor weak mortal man, but thou doest resist all the power in heaven and earth. And is not this a dreadful thing then, to be guilty of not sanctifying of God's Name?

4 Fourthly, it is an argument of extreme hardness of heart not to be wrought upon by the Word. Luke 16:31, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead,” saith Abraham. Certainly, that man or woman that shall not be wrought upon by the Word so as to sanctify God's Name in it, I say to such, if one should rise from the dead, they would not have their hearts wrought upon, and therefore much less are they likely to be wrought upon by afflictions. It may be some of you think when you are upon your sick beds, then you will repent; no surely, if this that is the great ordinance to bring men to God shall not work upon you so as God shall be honored in it, you cannot expect that sickness and affliction should do it, no. If one should come from the dead to tell you of all the miseries that were there, certainly if the Word work not upon you, that will not do it. But you will say, one would think that there should be more power to work upon the heart; truly no, because that is not such an ordinance appointed by God for working such great works upon the hearts and consciences of men as the

Word is. It is true, the Word is but a weak thing in itself, but here lies the strength, that it is an ordinance of God appointed for to work upon the hearts of men; therefore, if this work not upon you to give God glory in the hearing it, there is no other means is like to do it.

5 Fifthly, when the Word works not upon men, it is a dreadful sign of reprobation. If our Gospel be hid (saith the Apostle in 2 Cor. 4:3) "it is hid to those that are lost." It is a dreadful argument that here is a lost creature, one that God intends no good to; one the Lord works upon, perhaps He lets pass another, one in a family and not in another. Now where it is so that the Word worketh not, I say there is no such dreadful brand of reprobation as this is. It is true, we cannot give any certain sign of reprobation; therefore, I cannot say of any man, he hath now such a mark upon him as doth evidently prove that he is a reprobate; we cannot tell that, because we know not what God may do afterwards, but we may say this, that it is as dreadful a sign as any.

There are not any more dreadful signs than these two: First, for a man to be suffered to prosper in a sinful course; for God to let men go on and have their heart's desire satisfied in an ungodly way. And then secondly, for the Lord to leave them to themselves so as the ministry of the Word shall not work upon them; that they shall be by God's providence so disposed of as to live under a faithful and powerful ministry, and that it should not work upon them. These are the two blackest signs of reprobation, and therefore, it is a most dreadful thing to sit under the ministry of the Word and not to sanctify God's Name in it.

6 In the next place, surely there can be nothing sanctified to thee who doest not sanctify God's Name in His Word. The Scripture saith that everything is sanctified by the Word and prayer. And how canst thou expect that the Word should sanctify anything to thee, seeing that thou doest not make conscience of sanctifying God's Name in the Word? The godly think thus, 'tis the Word that must sanctify all things to my soul, and I had need then sanctify God's Name in that

from which I expect the sanctified use of all blessings. You therefore that can fit under it and make not conscience of sanctifying God's Name in it, I say you cannot expect no sanctified use of anything that you have in this world.

7 Such as do not sanctify God's Name in the Word are very nigh to a curse. There is a notable Scripture for this in Heb. 6:7, 8, where the Apostle compares the Word to the rain that falls upon the ground, "For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But (saith he) that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." The meaning is this plainly. The rain here is the Word, and the good hearers they are like the ground that receive the rain and bring forth fruit and receive a blessing. But now ill hearers that do not sanctify God's Name in His Word, they are like ground that receive the rain as much as the other, hear as many sermons as the other, but they bring forth nothing but thorns and briers; and mark what a dreadful expression is against them. First, it is rejected; secondly, it is nigh to cursing; thirdly, whose end is to be burned. Thou rejectest the Word, doest thou? The Lord rejecteth thy soul. If thou hast no need of the Word, the Word hath no need of thee; it is a dreadful thing to be rejected of God. And then, thou art nigh unto cursing; it may be the Lord may for the time withdraw Himself from the soul, and manifest that it is as it were rejected; but yet the soul hath not the curse of God upon it, to say, well, let this soul perish forever; but some there are that are under an actual curse, and saith God, Well, My Word shall never do good to this soul, such a one hath sat under it thus long, and hath rejected it, My Word shall never do good to him. Like as in Luke 14, where those that made excuses when they were bidden to the supper, the text saith at length, that the Master of the feast was angry, (which was God Himself that invited them by the Gospel to partake of His Son; and when men would not come in but make excuses, and refused the offer of the Gospel,) "Verily (saith He) none of those men that were bidden shall taste of

My supper.” They shall never partake of any good of the Gospel. This is a dreadful curse.

Now the Lord deliver you from having this curse pronounced against you, but yet I beseech you tremble at this Scripture in the Hebrews, they are nigh to cursing. Who knows how nigh some soul in this place may be to this curse, for God to say, this soul hath been often invited, and yet hath made excuses and put off all, he shall never taste of My supper, of the good things in Jesus Christ, the Word that hath been so rejected shall never do them good more; you had better never been born than to have this curse actually upon you. Oh, fear and tremble lest your condition be such as to be nigh to cursing; who knows what a day, a week may bring forth? It may be the Lord may spare and be willing to pass by the neglect of former sermons, but who knows what the next actual rebellion against the Lord in His Word may do to bring the curse upon thee? And then if so, the next part of the verse will prove to be thy portion, whose end is to be burned. Oh! It is a dreadful thing to sin against the Word; God stands much upon it.

8 Eighthly, know that if God's Name be not sanctified in it, the end that God hath appointed it for will be turned quite contrary to thee; the proper end that God hath appointed His Word for, it is to save souls. But now, where God's Name is not sanctified it is turned quite contrary, so the Apostle in 2 Cor. 2:16, “To the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life.” It is a dreadful thing that the good Word of God in which there is such treasures of God's mercy, wherein the counsels of God concerning man's eternal estates comes to be revealed, that this should prove to be the favor of death unto death, unto any soul, that is, to have such an efficacy in it, as to kill them by the very scent of it as it were; as some things have such a poison in them as the very scent is enough to poison one. So saith the Apostle, to some our Word hath that efficacy being turned quite to the contrary end; some souls are saved and are and shall be blessing God to all eternity for the Word, and thy soul is dammed by the Word so as thou wilt hereafter curse the

time that ever thou camest to hear it. That will be a dreadful thing that the same Word that others shall be blessing of God eternally in heaven for, that thou shalt be cursing eternally in hell for; it will be turned to the quite contrary end if it works not in the right way, it will work the other.

The truth is, it hardens men's hearts if it brings them not to God; there is nothing that doth harden the hearts of men more than the ministry of the Word. Yet by accident, not by itself, there is no men in the world have such hard hearts as those that are wicked under the ministry of the Word. It is not only an argument that their hearts are hard, but they are hardened by it. That in Isa. 6: 9, 10 is remarkable for this, and the rather because I find it so often quoted by Christ. I think it is quoted three or four times in the Gospel, "And He said, "Go and tell this people, 'Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed but perceive not; Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.'" This is a strange Scripture. What must a prophet go to them to make their hearts fat, and to shut their eyes, why, the Word is appointed to open men's eyes, but here the prophet is sent to shut their eyes that they might not be converted. This is dreadful, this is for the punishment of some former neglect of the Word of God sent unto this people, above all judgements you should be afraid of this. It is not so much that a fire should be upon your houses, as that God should make His Word to be a means to harden your hearts.

In Ezek. 14, we have a dreadful expression to this purpose by the prophet there, where the Lord saith that the people did come to inquire of Him, with setting up their idols in their hearts, but saith God, "I will answer them according to their idol." If men come to the ministry of the Word with their beloved sins and resolve that they will not part with them, the Lord many times in His just judgment suffers some things in the Word to be accidentally a means to harden them in that sin of theirs, "I will answer them according to their

idol,” those men are in a dreadful estate whose hearts come to be hardened by the Word.

9 Ninthly, if thou doest not sanctify God's Name in the hearing of the Word, what comfort canst thou ever have by the Word in the day of thy affliction? Certainly, when the day of thy affliction comes, then there is nothing can comfort thee but the Word. “Unless Thy law had been my delight (saith David) I should then have perished in mine affliction.” But thou having been exercised in the Word so much and God's Name not sanctified, thou must not expect to have thy soul comforted in the day of thy affliction. No marvel then though the Word hath been applied again and again to your hearts, and nothing would stick. I remember it was an expression of one in a great deal of terror of conscience; many came to apply comfortable Scriptures to him, and he himself for a while did take those Scriptures and lay them upon his heart to pacify his troubled conscience, but a little before he died, he cries out with a most fearful terror, “There is a fair plaster made but it will not stick on, it will not stick on,” so died despairing. So, there is in the Word such a plaster as may help a wounded and troubled conscience, but canst thou expect that hast not sanctified God's Name in thy lifetime that it shall stick upon thy soul in the day of thy affliction? Never expect it, for the Lord hath said otherwise, Prov. 1, “Because when I cried and called, ye would not hear; you shall cry, and call and I will not hear.” The Lord in His Word cries to thee, oh thou sinful soul who art going on in the ways of sin and eternal destruction, return, return, that is the way that will bring thee to eternal miseries, but here is the way that will bring thee to life and eternal salvation. Thus, the Lord cries and calls, “Today, today,” and thou stoppest thy ear; oh how just is it with God to stop His ear from thy crying and calling in the day of thy affliction.

10 Further, know that thou that doest not sanctify the Name of God in His Word, that all the Word of God will be made good one day upon thee; God hath His time to “magnify His Law and to make it honorable,” Isa. 42:21. You slight God's Law, you slight His Word and despise it, but God will magnify it and make it honorable. There

is not any sentence that thou hast heard in the Word, but it shall be made good. Whatsoever becomes of thy soul, thou thinkest that God is a merciful God, and He will not damn thee; but though God be merciful and hath regard to His creatures, yet the Lord hath ten thousand times more regard to His Word than to all the souls of men and women in the world, and God will stand to make that good. He will not have such regard to that wretched, vile, sinful soul of thine as not to honor His Word; He will honor His Word whatsoever becomes of thee, and all that thou hast heard and rejected shall be made good upon thee one day.

11 Again the Word that thou doest reject and sin against, it shall be the Word that shall judge thee, John 12:48. Look to it as well as you will. This Book of God out of which we preach, and those truths that we delivered to you from this Word, they must be called over again at the great day to judge your souls by, the sentence of every one of your eternal estates must be tried out of this Book. Oh, look upon it as the Word that must judge your souls at the last day, and then you will see it a dreadful thing not to sanctify God's Name in it. And then when the Word doth judge you, you shall obey it whether you will or no. Now the Word convinces you and you will not obey it; but when God comes to judge you by the Word, then you shall obey it. Then when God comes to read that sentence out of the Word, "Go ye cursed into everlasting fire" then I say you shall be forced to obey it.

12 Lastly, there is yet one thing more (which should have been mentioned before) which is very remarkable, that those men which do not sanctify God's Name in His Word, they will be blasted, even here while they live their parts and common gifts that they yet have will be blasted, wither, and come to nothing. We find it ordinarily that many that are young had very good beginnings, and very good parts, that were very hopeful, and would speak very favorably where they came, afterwards beginning by degrees to neglect the Word; the Lord hath blasted them, their gifts have withered, the common gifts of the Spirit have been taken from them. I will give you one text for that in Luke 8:18, "Take heed therefore how ye hear." (It is an

exhortation that follows upon the Parable of the Sower that went out to sow) because it is so that when the Word is sown as seed, there is so little of it doth prosper, and most hearers do not sanctify God's Name in it, therefore look to yourselves. Why? "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." You had need look to yourselves how you hear, for the truth is, all depends upon it under God. Have you got any common gifts of the Spirit of God, or any abilities to do any service for God? Do not be proud of them, neither be jolly, nor think that you are able to do better than others, and that those are but ordinary things that the minister speaks, and you are gotten into a higher form.

Look to yourselves, take heed you come not to the Word with a proud spirit, be not offended at the plainness of the Word, take heed how you hear, for if you do not that, that you seem to have shall be taken from you, saith Christ. You seem to have excellent gifts, yea, you seem to have grace too, but take heed how you hear for all this; whatsoever parts you have got, though you be highly esteemed in the company where you come and you are able to do things more than others, yet I say, take heed how you hear for otherwise that that you have will be taken away from you; have we not seen this in our own experience? And it is apparent that they began to be withered and to be blasted by neglecting of the Word. And therefore, I beseech you look to this, that you do sanctify the Name of God in His Word, and let your hearts bow unto it as unto the ordinance of God, and wait upon it in the ministry of it, lest you wither and be blasted and come to nothing.

And thus, I have shown the great evil of not sanctifying God's Name, and how God will be sanctified.

I shall be very brief in the use of exhortation.

Oh, that the Lord by this would cause something to stick upon your hearts, that what hath been preached in this point may be made

useful for many sermons afterwards! That it might be said of you in this place as it was said of them in Acts 13:48, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed!" Oh, that God would make every one of you to be a means to glorify the Word of God! That should be our care that the Word of God may be glorified by us; we come to hear the Word but take heed that the Word of God be not dishonored by us. In 2 Thess. 3:1, "Finally, brethren, pray for us that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you." Oh, that we were able to say so and yet through God's mercy in some degree we hope we can say so and I could heartily pray that the Word of God might be glorified in all places as it hath been with many of you. But yet go on in this, and labor every one of you that it may be more glorified, that you may manifest the power of the Word in your conversations, that all that do behold you may glorify the Word and say, Oh what hath the Lord wrought in such a place, in such families, families that were wretched, wild, carnal, and lived without God in the world, profane, swearers, foulmouthed, unclean. Now since they have attended upon the Word, how hath it wrought upon them; what a change is there in such men and women! That the carnal husband may say, since such time as my wife hath attended upon the Word, I have seen a beauty in her conversation, she is more holy, more gentle, and meek; and so my servant, more submissive and faithful; and so my children more obedient than before. Oh, that the Word may be thus glorified! Take heed, I beseech you, that the Word be not blasphemed by any of you. In Titus 2:5, there the Apostle gives divers exhortations, and among others to wives, and to servants "to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed," you must perform your duties unto your husbands and why? That so the Word of God be not blasphemed, that is, that neither your husband, nor any of your friends may blaspheme the Word and say, what, do you get this by going to sermons? Oh, it should pierce your hearts when as your consciences tell you that you have given cause whereby the Word of God should be blasphemed. And so, he exhorts servants and others, and all in the

strength of this argument that the Word of God be not blasphemed. You get up early in a morning to hear the Word, that's good, but take heed you give no occasion that the Word be blasphemed.

Now, I shall show what an excellent thing it is so to sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word, as to honor it, and how God will sanctify His own Name in mercy to you.

1 First, all the good in the Word is thine if thou doest sanctify God's Name. There is abundance of good in this Word that we preach, it is the Word of the Gospel, and to have all the good in that to be thine, that must needs be an excellent thing. You will say, sometimes I read and hear such things in the Word that if I were but sure that these things were my portion how happy should I be? Here's one sign by which thou mayest be assured that they are all thy portion; is it thy unfeigned care to sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word? Oh, peace be to thee, all the good in the Word is thine. And here we might fall into a commendation of the Word of the Gospel, and if I should give way to that, a great deal of time would quickly be gone.

I will only give you one Scripture for your encouragement to sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word by way of commendation of it. It is Rom. 10: 5-8 (a place I am afraid you have not had the sweetness of it for the want of understanding it.) It is quoted out of Deuteronomy, "For Moses describeth the righteousness, which is of the Law, that the man which doth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep, that is, to bring Christ again from the dead? But what saith it? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is the Word of faith which we preach." The text hath some difficulty and yet exceeding sweet to us to know it; I confess if the Apostle Paul had not quoted this place out of Deuteronomy and thus interpreted it, who could ever have thought in reading of Deuteronomy that by the one had been meant the Word of the Law, and by the other the Word of

the Gospel, therefore the meaning is this: here is a comparison between the Word of the Law, and the Word of the Gospel. Concerning the Word of the Law, there is two things wherein that comes short of the Word of the Gospel.

First, it is not so nigh thee.

Secondly, it is not so certain to assure thy soul what shall become of thee to all eternity. The Word of the Law saith, who shall ascend into heaven, etc. But the Word of the Gospel is nigh thee even in thy mouth and in thy heart. You will say, why is not the Word of the Law as nigh one as the Word of the Gospel? I answer, the Word of the Law, you hear it in your ears, but it is not written in the heart as the Word of the Gospel is. The Law cannot work savingly upon the heart of a man to bring salvation; those that are merely legal they can hear the duties that are required, but that Word hath no power to write in their hearts what they do hear. But now when you come to hear the Word of the Gospel, that is nigh you, even in your very hearts as well as in your ears, God speaks in it, and it comes into your hearts and there it works efficaciously, which the Law cannot. The Law is but as a dead letter in comparison of the Word of the Gospel. If you come merely to hear the Law preached, and not in an evangelical way, you may hear it a hundred times and it will never be written in your hearts. But when you come to hear the Gospel in an evangelical way, that will come to be written in your hearts, so that the Word of the Gospel is nigh you.

But what is the meaning of the other, say not, who shall ascend up into heaven, etc.? The meaning is this, as if the Apostle should say, the truth is, while you have no other but the righteousness of the Law, you are at an infinite uncertainty about your eternal estates. The Law saith, do and live, but you can never know when you have done enough so as to be certain that you are well for eternity. That saith, who shall ascend into heaven to know the mind of God concerning me, whether He will accept of me, and of that obedience and worship that I tender up to Him? Who shall go down into the

deep? Who shall go down to hell to know there whether that place be prepared for him or not? It is a phrase that only expresseth an uncertainty that one cannot be satisfied about his eternal estate, except he could go to heaven and there see and read God's book and so discover God's mind concerning him; or go down to hell and so know whether that place be appointed for him or not; except I can do one of these, I cannot certainly tell, (merely by the Law) whether I shall go to heaven or hell.

As you that are merchants and dealers abroad, you are at a great deal of uncertainty what shall become of your estates. Indeed, if I could send one over to the Indies to tell me how my ship prospered, then I could be at a certainty, then I should hear whether I were a rich man yea or no, but except I could do such a thing I am at an uncertainty. Such is the expression here. As if a poor soul should say, I would fain be saved, and loth to perish eternally. But all the while the soul remains under the Law, it remains in an uncertain condition. But now saith he, the Word of the Gospel is nigh thee even in thine heart; and that is the Word that we preach that saith, Rom. 10:9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." As if he should say, this Word of the Gospel that is come into thine heart doth assure thy soul of thy eternal estate, so that though thou canst not go up to heaven, nor go down to hell, yet thou hast that in thine heart, that doth as it were assure thee that thou shalt be eternally saved, as if thou wert able to go up to the highest heavens and fetch news from thence.

Oh, now the good Word of the Gospel, how should we prize it, and keep it in our hearts? For that is in our hearts that will assure us of our salvation to all eternity, and of God's eternal purpose to do the good in heaven. You would account it a great happiness if there could be any art to send abroad to the straits or to other place to know how things fare with you. But now if thou hast the Word of the Gospel within thee, if that prevails in thy soul, thou hast always got something in thy heart that will tell thee how things are with thee in

heaven, and what shall become of thee for all eternity. Oh, who would not sanctify the Name of God in hearing of His Word, seeing it is such a blessed Word wherein the Gospel is opened with more clearness than it hath been to many of our forefathers.

2 It is a certain evidence of your election, in 1 Thess. 1:3, 4, 5, “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing brethren beloved, your election of God,” Why? “For our gospel came not to you in Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” And know this excellency there is in sanctifying God's Name in hearing the Word, I beseech you mark it, that it is a more blessed thing than if you did bear Jesus Christ in your wombs. You that are women, would not you have accounted it a great happiness if Christ had been born in your wombs? Now if thou comest to the hearing of the Word and sanctifiest God's Name in it, thou art in a better condition and hast a greater blessing upon thee than if thou hadest born Jesus Christ in thy womb. In Luke 11: 27, 28, “And it came to pass as He spake these things, that a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto Him, ‘Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.’” Seeing Christ and what gracious things came from Him, she spoke so. But he said, “Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.” That is, labor to sanctify My Name, (as hath been opened in the particulars) rather is that woman blessed that do so, than the woman that bare Christ. Me thinks this one Scripture should be such a Scripture for women, to cause them to sanctify God's Name in hearing of the Word, instead of a hundred Scriptures; certainly, thou mayest be so blessed if thou wilt believe the Word that comes from Christ's mouth.

3 Do you sanctify the Name of God in the Word that will sanctify you, by that your souls come to be sanctified, and it will comfort you in the day of your affliction, and it will save you at last.

4 You that do sanctify God's Name in the hearing of His Word, you will be the glory of the ministers of God at the great day of judgement. You will be an honor to them before the Lord, and His saints, and angels. In Phil. 2: 16, "Holding forth (saith the text) the Word of life." This is the duty of all the hearers of the Word that they must hold forth the Word of life; when you go home, you must hold forth the power of the Word you hear. Well, what will become of that? "That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." Let that be one motive among the rest, saith the Apostle, this will be such a glory to me, that I in the day of Jesus Christ shall rejoice that I have not labored in vain. I shall bless God for all my studies and care, and all the pains that ever I have taken, and venturing myself for this people, I shall bless God in the day of Jesus Christ. Would it not be a comfortable thing to you that all the ministers of God that come to preach the Word faithfully to you, if at the day of Jesus Christ you should hear them blessing God that ever He did send them to preach the Gospel in such a place, and you should hear them saying, Oh Lord, it may be had I been sent to another place I should have spent all my strength in vain, but through Thy mercy I was sent to a teachable people that were ready to embrace Thy Word, oh this is my crown and glory. Would it not do good to any whose hearts are faithful to think this, that their holding forth the Word of life will not only be a glory to God, which is the chief, but it will be a glory to the ministers to recompense all their labors, that you shall not only be saved yourselves in the day of Jesus Christ, but you shall add to the glory of His faithful ministers likewise when they do appear before Christ?

5 I shall add one particular more. There is a time coming when God shall magnify His Word before men and angels. In Isaiah. 42:21, "He will magnify the Law and make it honorable." What a joy shall it be to thee when the Lord before men and angels shall come to magnify His Word and make it honorable for thee then to think, this is the Word that spoke to my heart at such and such a time, this is that Word that I did reverence, that I did obey, that I did love, that I made

to be the joy of my heart, this Word the Lord now doth magnify and  
make to be honorable? This will be comfortable to thy soul.

## **Sermon XI**

# **Sanctifying the Name of God in Receiving the Sacrament**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

The last day we finished the point of sanctification of the Name of God in the hearing of His Word; and now we will proceed to the sanctification of the Name of God in receiving the sacrament; that's the next duty of worship.

Now first for the word, "sacrament." I confess we have not that word in all the Scripture, as neither have we the word "Trinity", and divers other words that ministers make use of to set forth the mysteries of religion by, but yet it is useful to consider the meaning why ministers in the Church have given this name unto those signs and seals that the Church receives; "sacrament" is to hallow a thing, or to dedicate, because in the sacraments there are outward things that are made holy, for holy and spiritual ends.

Secondly, we ourselves do as it were hallow, or dedicate ourselves unto God in the use of these ordinances; that's one reason from whence it hath the name.

Or otherwise, as some will have it, sacramentum, because it is to be received sacrament, with a holy mind, and therefore called the sacrament. The churches have used it a long time; in Tertullian's time (which was above fourteen hundred years ago) he was the first that we find used this word, and most that would open the Word unto us, say, that especially it was taken from the practice of soldiers, who when they came and listed themselves, bound themselves in a

solemn oath to be faithful to their captain, and to the cause that they did undertake; and the oath, they were wont to call sacramentum, a sacrament. Now in regard that Christians when they come to this ordinance, they come to seal a covenant with God, and though they do not formally and explicitly take an oath, yet they bind themselves in a holy covenant which hath the strength even of an oath in it; (For a solemn promise to the high God hath the strength of an oath in it) and from thence they were called by these names, sacraments; but that for the word, that you may understand it.

But the word the Scripture useth to set out this sacrament, by that now I am speaking of, is the communion of the body and blood of Christ. So, you have it in 1 Cor. 10:16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" I say we are now treating about this point how we are to sanctify the Name of God in that which the Scripture calls the communion of the body and blood of Christ. And now for the opening of that.

First, we must know that this is a part of the worship of God, and we draw nigh to God in this, or otherwise it will not come up to our point.

And then we shall show that God is to be sanctified in this duty of worship.

And then thirdly, how.

First, we do in this draw nigh to God. We worship God. For when we are coming to receive these holy signs and seals, we come to present ourselves before God; and we have to deal with God Himself in a service that He Himself requires of us in a holy, in a divine service. We come to present ourselves to God for blessing, for communication of some higher good unto us than possibly those creatures that we have to deal with are able of themselves to convey to us; come for a higher good than to taste a piece of bread, or to

drink a draught of wine; we come, I say, to present ourselves to God that we might have communion with Him, and that we might have the blessing of the covenant of grace conveyed unto us through these things; now certainly this is a drawing nigh to God. For to present ourselves for the conveyance of the blessing of the covenant of grace through these creatures, yea, that we might have communion with God Himself in them, this is drawing nigh to Him when we come to His Table, therefore we draw nigh to God.

Had not God instituted and appointed these creatures, bread and wine, and the actions about them to be the means of conveyance of blessing unto us, it had been will-worship for us to have expected any further presence of God in such creatures than there is in the nature of them. It is true, God is present with every creature when we eat and drink at our tables, God is present there; but we cannot be said to draw nigh to God and worship God there; for we there look for no further presence of God with us in them, to convey further good than the Lord hath put into the nature of those things. Only when godly people take them and receive them as blessings sanctified by the Word, they take them as the blessings of God that come out of love to them. But now when we come to receive that which is called the communion, there we expect things that are beyond the nature of these creatures to convey that that is by an institution of God set apart for supernatural uses and ends, not to convey in any natural way such and such things but in a supernatural way, through the institution of God, and so it comes to be worship.

Had we not, I say, a command for this, it would be superstition and idolatry for us to make use of such creatures for such ends. If any man in the world should have appointed a piece of bread or a draught of wine to have signified and sealed the body and blood of Christ, it had been superstition, and will-worship, and sinful and abominable to you; but we are to look upon God setting apart these creatures for such holy and solemn ends, and therefore when we come to be exercised in them, we come to worship God; and we come likewise to tender up our homage to God, when we come to attend

upon Him in such ordinances as these are; to tender up that homage that is due from us poor creatures, unto such an infinite and glorious God, and therefore we draw nigh to Him in these.

Secondly, we must sanctify God's Name in drawing nigh to Him. Whatsoever we do, whether we eat or drink we must do all to the glory of God. Now if in our common eating and drinking we must do all to the glory of God, then certainly in this spiritual eating and drinking there must be some special thing done for the glory of God in this.

1. Because there is so much of God in it; for here there is a presenting before us the great, yea, the greatest mysteries of salvation, and the deep counsels of God concerning eternal life are presented before us in these outward elements of the bread and wine, and the action thereof. Now when we come to eat and to drink those things that are appointed to set forth the greatest mysteries of salvation, and the deepest of the counsels of God concerning man's eternal good, wherein especially God will glorify Himself, we had need there sanctify the Name of God, for the things are very great and glorious that are presented unto us.

2. This ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or the Communion, it is an ordinance that Christ hath left to His Church out of the abundance of His love, and therefore you shall find if you read the institution of it, in Matthew 25, that the same night wherein Christ was betrayed, He took bread and brake it; though Christ was to die the next day, and to encounter with the wrath of God, yea that very night He was to be in an agony, and to sweat drops of water and blood, and the next day to die and to have these trials of wrath poured upon Him, so as to put Him to cry out, "My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken me?" Yet He busies His thoughts that very night to institute this supper; surely it must be a great ordinance, and there is a great deal of the love of Christ in it. Christ saw that His Church had need of it, that He should that night when He was betrayed have His thoughts busied about such a thing as this is. One would think at that time that He had

enough to take up His thoughts concerning Himself, being to encounter with the Law, and with the wrath of God for man's sin; but for all that great work Christ had to encounter with, yet His thoughts are busied about this great ordinance of the institution of the supper, and therefore there was great love in it. Christ saw that it was a matter of great moment; now if it is so, then there is great cause why we should sanctify God's Name in such an ordinance as this is, and not to account it as a common and ordinary thing.

3. We must sanctify God's Name in this, because it is the sacrament of our communion with Christ; wherein we come to have such a near union and communion with Him as to eat His flesh and to drink His blood, and to sit at His table. We come to have communion with Christ even in all our senses; now Christ coming so fully to us, that calls upon us to sanctify His Name when we come before Him.

4. In this the covenant of grace is sealed, the covenant of grace comes to be sealed in both the parts of it; now when we come to have to deal with God in the way of the covenant of grace, both to have the seal on His part, and the seal on ours, surely this must needs call for a sanctified use of such a thing as is so holy as this is.

And that's the first reason why we are to sanctify God's Name in this, because if we be in ordinary eating and drinking we must do it then in this, wherein there is so much of God, wherein the mysteries of godliness are set before us, wherein there is so much of the love of Christ, wherein we are to have close communion with Jesus Christ, and wherein the covenant of grace comes to be sealed on both sides, there had need therefore be a sanctifying of God's Name in the use of it.

Secondly, consider this, that there is no duty in all the book of God that I know of that is urged with more strength and severity than this is, as that place in 1 Cor. 11 showeth, where you have required of every one that comes to receive the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, that they should examine themselves and so eat, and you

have the most dreadful expressions against those that do not do it that I know are mentioned against the neglect of any duty in all the Book of God. There, the Holy-Ghost saith that whosoever eats and drinks unworthily, first, he is guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and then secondly, he eats and drinks his own damnation. These two expressions have as much dreadfulness in them as can be imagined, and we do not find an exhortation to a duty backed with two such severe expressions, in case we should neglect our duty, as this exhortation. What if we do not sanctify God's Name in this duty? We come to be guilty of the body and blood of Christ.

Blood-guiltiness is a terrible thing; you know David cries out, Lord deliver me from blood-guiltiness; to have but the blood of an ordinary man to lie upon one, to shed the blood of the vilest rogue that lives, in a murderous way, it would lie upon the conscience and be very terrible; it is impossible that such a man can be quiet all his days though he hath never such a seared conscience. A heathen could not be at quiet if he hath the guilt of blood lie upon him; but to be guilty of the blood of Christ, whose blood is ten thousand thousand times more worth than the blood of all the men that ever lived upon the face of the earth, must needs be a most dreadful thing. It is a fearful expression, guilty of the body and blood of Christ, that is, he offers such an indignity to the body and blood of Christ, as the Lord will charge him of being guilty of it, guilty of abusing of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

And then he doth eat and drink his own damnation; but we shall speak more to that when we come to show how God will sanctify His Name in those that do not sanctify it here in this holy ordinance. I will not therefore spend further time in those Scriptures, for I bring them only now to show that there is a necessity of it, that we do sanctify the Name of God in this ordinance.

Thirdly, there is nothing that strikes more upon a man's conscience; we find it by experience, even upon wicked men's consciences, and especially upon such as begin to be enlightened in the holiness of this

ordinance, God hath put much honor upon it. I confess some men may use it superstitiously though it be an ordinance of Christ, yet God hath put a great deal of honor upon this ordinance that men that are very wicked otherwise, yet their consciences tell them that when they come to this ordinance, then they must be good, then they must not sin but have good thoughts and good prayers at that time. And many times, they dare not come if their consciences tell them that they live in some sin. I knew one myself once that was to be executed, and he had never received this ordinance in all his life, though about forty years of age, and being asked the reason why, he confessed he lived in some sin that he was loathe to leave, and therefore would never come to that ordinance all his life, though herein the Devil gulled and deceived him. But I mention it to show what a power there is in the consciences of men about this ordinance; this ordinarily is one of the first things that strikes upon the souls of men, when they come to have their consciences awakened, oh how have I profaned the Name of God in the ordinance of the holy communion and have not sanctified His Name in it.

That God should be sanctified in this ordinance, that's clear enough.

But now the great work is (which is the third thing that I promised to show) how we should sanctify God's Name in this ordinance. Certainly, the Name of God hath been much taken in vain, there hath been a great deal of pollution in the use of this ordinance and in men's spirits when they have been exercising themselves in such an holy ordinance as this is. Therefore, I will open this to you, and shall not be very large in it, only to show you the main and principal things that may serve for the direction of us, that the Name of God may not be so taken in vain and dishonored as heretofore, and I shall cast what I intend to speak of into these particulars.

1 That whosoever was to partake of this must be holy himself; none can sanctify God, but he must have a sanctified heart himself.

Secondly, this ordinance it must be received in a holy communion. There must be a communion of saints for this ordinance, and it cannot be received anywhere else but in a communion of saints.

Thirdly, the holy disposition of soul particularly, or the qualifications of soul that are required for the sanctifying of God's Name in this ordinance.

Fourthly, the manner of the explicit goings out of the soul, that there are to be at that very time of receiving.

Fifthly, the keeping of the institution of Christ in our receiving. These things are required for the sanctifying of the Name of God in this ordinance.

For the first, those that come must be holy themselves.

This is an ordinance not appointed for conversion, to make holy; others that are not converted may come to the Word, because the Word it is appointed to work conversion; 'tis appointed to work grace, to work the first grace, faith comes by hearing. But we do not find in all the Scripture that this is appointed for conversion, but it supposes conversion; none are to come to receive this sacrament but men and women that before are converted by the Word. The Word first, therefore, is to be preached to men for their conversion; and then this is an ordinance appointed for to seal them. Therefore in the primitive times they let all come to hearing of the Word, and then when the sermon was done there was an officer stepped up and cried holy things for holy men, and then all others were to go out, and therefore it was called "Missa" (though the Papists did corrupt it and so called it the "Mass" afterwards, by mixing their own inventions instead of the Supper of the Lord, but it had that name at first). I say this holy communion was called by the name of Missa, because that all others were sent away, and only such as were of the Church, and accounted godly, staid. Holy things to holy men.

And this must needs be so, because that the nature of it being the seal of the covenant of grace requires it. It must be supposed that all that come hither must be in covenant with God, they must be such as have been brought to submit to the condition of the covenant. Now the condition of the covenant of grace is believe and be saved; it is therefore appointed for believers. And as the nature of it being a seal supposeth a covenant, so none can have this covenant sealed to them but those that do first submit to it and are brought into covenant. When you make an indenture and put to the seal, certainly the seal belongs only to those that have their names in the indenture. Now 'tis true, though men's names are not mentioned in the Word, yet the condition is to those that are brought in to believe in Jesus Christ; saith God, I come now to seal all My mercies in Christ to their souls.

We abuse God if we come to take the seal to a blank; it is to make this ordinance a ridiculous thing. Therefore, there must be some transactions between God and your souls before you come to the seal. If a man should say to you, come set your seal to such a thing, and there were never any kind of transactions between this man and you before, you would account it ridiculous; after there hath been agreements between you, you use then to seal. So, it must be here; I would appeal to many of your consciences that have come to the Lord's Supper, what transactions have there been between God and your souls? Canst thou say, the Lord was pleased to reveal Himself to me, to make known to me my wretched condition, and the way of grace and salvation, and showed me that upon my coming in to receive His Son, He would be merciful to me and pardon my sins; and I have found the Spirit of God working my heart to Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven speaking to me, and I sending an answer to heaven again, how willing my soul was to accept of the covenant which the Lord hath made with poor creatures in the Word of His Gospel? Canst thou say this in the uprightness of thy heart? If not, know that this seal belongs not to thee until the Lord hath by His Word subdued thy heart to this agreement first with Him.

Secondly, this ordinance, it is the ordinance of spiritual nourishment, of eating the flesh of Christ and drinking His blood in a spiritual way. Now it must needs suppose that first there must be life before there can be any nourishment received in. If it be appointed to nourish and increase grace, then surely there must be grace before; what nourishment can a dead child take? The very first thing that is to be done is nourishment here, the Word hath power to convey life and then to nourish, but we read of no such thing here, but that which is to be done here is presently to feed, to eat, and to drink, that's the end of the sacrament; therefore it must be supposed that thou must have spiritual life, there must come no dead soul to this ordinance, but those who are quickened by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, they must come for nourishment.

Thirdly, the act here required doth note that only those that are holy and godly can receive this sacrament; we are required by the Apostle to examine ourselves. To examine ourselves of what? It must be of our godliness, examine what work of God hath been upon the soul, how God hath brought the soul to Himself, and what graces of the Spirit of God are there, and how we have been brought into covenant with God. Now if only those can receive worthily, and are to come that first examine themselves, then certainly such only as are godly are to come, for they only can perform those acts that are required.

Fourthly, it's a sacrament of communion with God, and communion with the saints; now what communion hath light and darkness, or what fellowship hath Christ with Belial? If it be a sacrament of communion, of coming to the Table of God will God have His enemies to come to His Table? You will invite no enemies to your Tables, but your children and friends, so they must be the children of God and the friends of God, these that are reconciled to God in the blood of His Son, and those that are His children that must sit at His Table, therefore they must be holy. Now this may suffice for that first thing, that this is not an ordinance for all sorts of people, but such as have submitted to the condition of the covenant before. Such as have grace, and ability to examine themselves of their graces, and such as

are children and reconciled to God, and so are fit to sit at the Table of God, and to enjoy communion with Him and with His Son, and with the saints; for we are one body sacramentally when we come to this holy ordinance; all others therefore certainly are to be kept from this sacrament but such.

2 The second thing will make it out more fully and that is, it is not enough that we be holy ourselves; (and so all ignorant, profane, and scandalous, yea, all that are merely civil, that cannot make out any work of godliness upon their hearts in bringing them to Christ, are excluded.)

But that whosoever was to partake of this, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, must be holy himself. None can sanctify God, but he must have a sanctified heart himself, but it must be done in holy communion, and it is clear out of that place in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" and then saith the Apostle in verse 17, "For we being many are one bread and one body," therefore all that come to receive the sacrament, they must so come as they must be one body, one spiritual corporation; this very consideration, that those with whom we receive the sacrament are one body with us, it hath a great deal in it, for the helping of us to sanctify God's Name. This ordinance I say, it is to be received only in a holy communion; one Christian cannot receive the sacrament alone; there must be a Communion wheresoever it is to be administered; it is not enough there is one godly man there, but there must be a communion of saints, and in that communion, it is to be received.

Quest. You will say, must it be received in a communion of Saints? What if wicked men do come there? Will that hinder us from sanctifying God's Name in partaking of the sacrament with them? Do not we find in Scripture that the Church had always wicked men among them? There are always tares growing up with the wheat. If you read even in the Corinthians, you shall find that there were some

in that Church that were wicked, yea, and it is thought that Judas himself did receive the sacrament too; therefore, what if wicked men be there, doth that hinder?

Answ. I answer, first it is true, that in the Church of God there have been wicked men and is like there will be wicked men to the end of the world; but yet wheresoever there is a right communion of Saints, there ought to be the power of Christ exercised to cast out those wicked men, or at least to withdraw from them. This is the Law of Christ, that if there be any that have communion with you, if any of them do appear to be wicked, you are bound in conscience to go and tell them; if they do not reform, you are bound to take two or three, and if they do not yet reform, then you are bound to tell the church, to tell the assembly of the Saints when they meet together. For so the word "Church" doth signify, and we find in the 1 Cor. 5, that when there was an incestuous person to be cast out, it was done in the presence of the congregation. Thus far you are bound to do, otherwise you cannot say that it is nothing to you if wicked men be there, for you have not discharged your conscience, and so you come to be defiled, and you do not sanctify God's Name in this ordinance, because you have not done to the uttermost of your duty for the casting out of those wicked men.

And mark in 1 Cor. 5:6, 7, there the Apostle writing to the Church, bids them that they should "purge out the old leaven, know ye not," saith he, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" The Apostle doth not speak there of sin, but of the wicked incestuous person, saith he, you must look to it that this man be purged out from you, or otherwise you are all leavened by it, that is, the whole Church would be leavened by it, if there were not care taken to purge out that one man.

You will say, shall we be the worse for one wicked man's coming? No, if we be no way faulty of it, then we cannot be said to be worse, and it cannot leaven us. But now when it is our duty to purge him out and we do not do it, as in all communion of saints there is a duty, and

there is not any one but may do something towards it, thus far every communicant in every communion of saints must go. If there be a wicked man there, if you come to know it, and do not go thus far as I have spoken, you art defiled by him, you are not defiled by the mere presence of wicked men, (for that's a mere deceit and gall that some would put upon men that differ from them otherwise) but thus now you are defiled by their presence if you do not do your duty, and the uttermost that you are able to purge them out, yea, then the whole congregation is defiled if they do not do their duty. Now this is the duty of everyone in the congregation to tell their brother, or to take two or three, and after that to tell the Church, and so come to profess against them. Or if the Church will not do their duty as they ought, yet then to free their own souls as to profess, here is one that is so and so guilty, and may be proved thus and thus, and so for my part I, to free my own soul, profess that this man or woman ought not to have communion here.

And thus you come to free your own souls, and when you have done thus, though wicked men be there, you may there eat and drink and not be defiled by their presence, for you cannot be said properly to eat with them now, not to have communion with them, no more than if a dog should come and skip upon the table and take a piece of bread; you cannot have communion with him because he takes it. No more have you with those wicked men when once you have dealt so far with them, you for yourselves profess against them that you for your own particular cannot have communion with them herein; this is not to eat with them.

The Apostle in 1 Cor. 5, latter end, he doth there require in verses 11 and 12 that, "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no not to eat; for what have I to do to judge them also that are without?" that is, the heathens, and those that were in no communion with them, I have nothing to do to judge them; "do not ye judge them that are within?" When we have so far freed ourselves as professing against their sin, then we cannot be said to

have communion with them, and then we do withdraw from those that walk disorderly, when we do our duty thus far. 2 Thess. 3:14, "If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." And in the sixth verse of that chapter, he commands them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that they "should withdraw themselves from every brother that walked disorderly." So that till we do our duty we come to be defiled; but now, if we do our duty, then it is not the mixture of a congregation that is enough to hinder any from receiving the sacrament there, and this will tend much to satisfy men about the receiving in mixed congregations where any are cast into them and are actual members there.

But now on the other side, if we be in a place where either this congregation will not take upon them any such power to cast out unworthy ones, or are not convinced of this power, then there is no rule that Christ hath set that we must be forced all our days to continue to be in such a congregation as denies one of the ordinances of Jesus Christ; if so be there be any such that are wicked, and we do first what we can to have them cast out, and we wait with patience in such a congregation for to have them cast out, and yet we see that either the congregation doth not understand that they have any such power, or do deny such a power that they have, and so upon that all people are left in a mixed way, I say then there is no rule in all the book of God that should force men to continue to be members of such a communion where they cannot enjoy one ordinance of Jesus Christ, which is the ordinance of separating the precious from the vile, the ordinance of casting out the wicked and ungodly.

It were a very diseased body and in danger quickly of the loss of life to take in everything into it, and to have no expulsive faculty to purge anything out again; so a congregation that is altogether without such an ordinance as that is of expelling such as are wicked and ungodly, I say, I find no Scripture that doth force people and require them as bound in conscience to continue there where they may not enjoy all the ordinances of Jesus Christ, and the right understanding of what I

say now will help us to answer all those Scriptures that are brought. As if it be that of Judas, first it is hard to make it out clear whether it were the Lord's Supper that he received yea or no. But suppose it be granted that he did, yet I make no question but such as Judas was, that shall continue to make such an outward profession as he did and could not be discovered in the church-way, but that we may receive with such as are close hypocrites.

You will say Jesus Christ knew him to be faulty, and he told John that lay in His bosom what he was; but though He knew him as He was God, yet He deals with him in His ministerial way, and He had appointed before that none were to be cast out but were to be dealt withal in such a ministerial way; so that it is not enough though I knew by revelation from God that such a man were an hypocrite. Suppose God should reveal from heaven to me that such a man were an hypocrite, I think I might communicate with him still, when he doth not so far discover himself that I can by witnesses prove his evil. Therefore, though men be wicked, yet it doth not defile the communion where they are if there hath been that way used that Christ hath appointed for to be observed in His Church. And when that is done, then I am to withdraw from him, and to profess against communion with him, so that it's enough to answer the case.

We read likewise that there were divers wicked men among the Corinthians, and of tares that grew in the wheat. It's true, there were wicked men among them, but they were enjoined by the Apostle to cast out those wicked men, and if they did not do it, it was their sin, and they were defiled by it. And for tares that were among the wheat, take it that this is meant concerning the Church, (suppose it were and yet Christ saith plainly that the field is the world, and 'tis the godly and the wicked living together in the world) and so I find many interpreters take it, but howsoever take it that it is meant of the Church-communion, yet thus far is clear that it was through the fault of the officers that there should be any tares among the wheat; for so the text saith plainly, that while the servants slept there did tares spring up; therefore, there should have been none.

Secondly, they were not such tares as would spoil the wheat, but as Jerome saith in those countries, the tares did grow much like wheat all the while. It was in the blade so that they were hardly to be distinguished, though some that were of more understanding were able to discern them from the wheat. Therefore, though such as do grow up like unto the wheat may be suffered, and yet in this case only, that is, in case that it will prejudice the wheat, that is, when they are so close to the wheat as there will be danger by plucking them up to pluck up the wheat too, then they must be let alone. Mark, first it was through the negligence of the officers; they should have been kept out. Secondly, if they do get in, yet while they grow so close to the wheat as there will be danger that when you pluck out them to pluck out the wheat too, only in that case it must be forborne. But this gives no liberty that therefore all sorts may be let into the Church, and there should be no kind of ordinance to cast out those that are venomous weeds that will do hurt and mischief.

But if you understand it (as many do) concerning the world, then the meaning is thus, the preaching of the Gospel that comes to a place, and there's only good seed sown, and is a means of the conversion of many, but together with the conversion of some, there are others that do hear the Gospel preached, and the truth is, they being mingled among the hearers of the Word, instead of bringing forth good fruit according to the Gospel, they bring forth the tares; now saith the servant, Lord, how comes it to passe that we preach such excellent truths in this place, and yet there are so many wicked men that bring forth such wicked fruit? Lord, is it Thy mind that we should be wholly separated from them and have nothing to do with them, that there should be a full separation while we live in this world?

No, saith Christ, not so; for then the truth is, if all godly men should wholly withdraw from wicked men, and believe that they may not live among them, they could not live in the world. If you did believe it were your duty not so much as to live near a wicked man, nor to have anything to do in any kind of converse with him, there would be no wheat growing in this field of the world here; and therefore you must

be content, when you live where the preaching of the Gospel is, and the seed brings forth good fruit in some, and in others it brings forth tares. You must not be offended by this, that here in this world God doth not by some visible stroke of judgement come and strike them dead, or that God doth not take some course that there should be a full separation here, but that they might live together till the day of judgement; here, I say, you shall not have such a full separation. So that you see, it carries a very fair sense to take the field to be the world, and the kingdom of heaven there to be the preaching of the Gospel in any place, and so we must be content while we live in this world to be where wicked and ungodly men are. But it doth not follow from this place that we are to have converse in the closest communion, in church-communion with wicked men, to be made one body by eating the same bread, and drinking the same wine; it holds not forth such close communion as this is; so that there's little strength can be taken from that place, but still it holds that wheresoever there is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there must be a holy communion of saints.

Object. The Scripture only saith, let us examine ourselves.

Answ. I grant for the benefit to mine own soul; I must look to examine myself more especially; but now for another I am but only so far bound to look to him as to keep myself clean. It is true, I am not bound to go and pry into his life and all his ways so as to force him to give an account of things that are secret, but I am bound to keep a watch, and if anything be done that offends me, then I am bound to go to him according to the former rule of Christ; and if he appears to be wicked, then I am bound to see him purged from the congregation. For take but that other text in 1 Cor. 5:6, "Know you not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" If I do not do so much as concerns my duty, then I am defiled by it. So as that you must not think that it is nothing to you how many wicked men come to the Lord's Table, and that it belongs only to the ministers and they are to look to it; the truth is, that everyone in his place is to look to it, and everyone may be defiled if he doth not perform this duty that

God requires of him. Do not say, what have I to do with my brother; am I my brother's keeper? It was the speech of Cain; if thou be of the same body, you are to have a care of your brother; do not ye judge those that are within? There is some kind of judgement that everyone may pass upon such as do join with them in the same body; surely it concerns me much; what shall I do in such an action as to join with them to eat bread, whereby I must profess that I do believe myself to be of the same body that this drunkard is of, that this whoremaster is of, that this swearer is of?

Whenever you receive the communion with any company, you do profess yourselves to be of the same body with that company; only in this case, if I have discovered any, and can particularly profess against anyone, then I do not profess myself to be of the same body with him. But now when I come in an ordinary way, and I know such to be wicked, vile, and profane, and I profess nothing against them, nor take any course at all, I do then by partaking with them profess myself to be of the same body that they are of. Thou doest, as it were, openly declare, Lord, here we come and profess that we are all of the body of Jesus Christ. Now when thou knowest such and such as are notoriously wicked and profane, and dost nothing in the world to help to purge them out, dost not thou think that God's Name is taken in vain? Is not God's name profaned here? Therefore, it concerns us very much to look unto it, that it be a holy communion that we receive the bread and wine in.

I beseech you, therefore, understand things aright that I have spoken of; I have labored to satisfy men that there is a way that we may partake of the sacrament though wicked men be mixed with us. But this is that that is required of you for doing your duty, to keep yourselves clean that you may not be accessory any way to any wicked man's coming to partake of this holy mystery of the body and blood of Christ. There are divers things further about this, and the special thing I thought of was to show you the holy qualifications that there ought to be.

But this I conceived to be necessary, and I should not have had peace in mine own conscience as being faithful to you in what I am speaking, of sanctifying the Name of God in this ordinance, if I should not have mentioned this that I have spoken unto you, and there's an error on both sides that I desire to meet withal. Either those that come hand over head, and think it concerns them not at all with whom they come to the sacrament, but to look to their own hearts; and there's an error on the other side, that if they do what they can to keep them away, and yet if they should be suffered to come, they may not come to partake of those things. Now, it is very useful for us to know what we should do in this case.

## **Sermon XII**

### **What is Required in Receiving the Sacrament**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

I shall add something to one particular that I had the last day, concerning peoples withdrawing from such a congregation where they could not receive all the ordinances of Jesus Christ.

As now, if I were in a church where I could have but a piece of the sacrament, suppose they dealt with me as the papists do with the people, that is, they will give them the bread and not the wine, certainly I were not bound to stay with them then, but I were bound to go where I might have the whole sacrament. So, if a church will give me some one ordinance and not another, I confess so long as there is hope that I may enjoy it and that they are in a way for enjoyment, I think there should be a great forbearance to a church as well as to a particular person. As I must not withdraw from a

particular man, where there is hope still of his reformation, and that there may come good of my forbearance, so towards a church much more. But I say, if I cannot enjoy, neither doth there appear any hope of the enjoyment of all ordinances, certainly it were but a cruelty to force men to stay there, when as elsewhere they may enjoy all ordinances for the good of their souls. And this cannot be schism thus to do; as now is this schism? Suppose a man were in a place and joined in such a communion, for his outward benefit he may remove his dwelling from one place to another if he can have better trading in another place; then certainly if he may have more ordinances for the edification of his soul, he may as well remove from one to another, as he may remove if his trading be better in one place than another.

Christ would have all His people look to the edification of their souls; and should I account that schism when a man or woman merely out of tenderness and a desire to enjoy Jesus Christ in all His ordinances for the benefit of their souls, they find such want to their souls of all ordinances, that though they may have some in one place, yet if they cannot have all, their souls do not so thrive. Now if this be all the end why they remove that they might have more edification to their souls enjoying the ordinances of Christ more fully, God forbid that this should ever be accounted such a sin that the Scripture is to brand. No, that's schism when there is a violent rending out of malice for the want of love; for as apostasy is a rending from the head, so schism from the body, that is, when it is out of an evil spirit, from envy, or from malice, from want of love, or from any base sinister ends, and upon no just ground.

But now when it is merely out of love to Jesus Christ that I might have more edification to my soul, and still I retain love to the saints that are there as they are in a communion, and so far as they have anything good among them, I hold communion with them in that; only I desire in humility, and in meekness that I may be in such a place, where my soul may be most edified, where I may enjoy all those ordinances that Christ hath appointed for His Church,

certainly, that soul that can give this account to Jesus Christ for going from one place to another will be freed by Jesus Christ from such a sin, as this that the world calls schism.

But the truth is, this word is in men's mouths that understand not what it means, and the Devil always will have some word or other cast upon them that are good; for he hath heretofore gained much by it, so still he makes account to gain much by words, and terms, and therefore men should take heed of words and terms that they do not understand, and examine seriously what the meaning of these words, and what is held forth in those words; and thus much for that point, that it must be in a holy communion; wherever there is the receiving of the Lord's Supper, it must be received in a holy communion.

Now we are to proceed to that which is the main thing, and that is, what are the holy qualifications or dispositions of the soul, together with the actings fit in the receiving of the Lord's Supper, what is required in the soul for the sanctifying of the Name of God in this holy sacrament? There are many things required.

As first, there is required knowledge; I must know what I do when I come to receive this holy sacrament, knowledge applied to the work that I am about. When some of you have come to receive this sacrament, if God should have spoken from heaven and have said thus to you, what are you doing now, what do you go for? What account had you been able to have given unto Him? You must understand what you do when you come thither.

First, you must be able to give this account to God: Lord, I am now going to have represented to me in a visible and sensible way the greatest mysteries of godliness, those great and deep counsels of Thy will concerning my eternal estate, those great things that the angels desire to pry into that shall be the matter of eternal praises of angels and saints in the highest heavens, that they may be set before my view. Lord, when I have come to Thy Word, I have had in mine ears sounding the great mysteries of godliness, the great things of the

covenant of grace, and now I go to see them represented before mine eyes in that ordinance of Thine that Thou hast appointed.

Yea Lord, I am now going to receive the seals of the blessed covenant of Thine, the second covenant, the new covenant, the seals of the testimony and will of Thine; I am going to have confirmed to my soul Thine everlasting love in Jesus Christ.

Yea, Lord, I am going to that ordinance wherein I expect to have communion with Thyself, and the communication of Thy chief mercies to my soul in Jesus Christ.

I am going to feast with Thee, to feed upon the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Yea, I am now going to set to the seal of the covenant on my part, to renew my covenant with Thee, I am going to have communion with Thy saints, to have the bond of communion with all Thy people to be confirmed to me, that there might be a stronger bond of union and love between me and Thy saints than ever. These are the ends that I go for, this is the work that I am now going about, thus you must come in understanding. You must come with understanding; you must know what you are going about; this is that which the Apostle speaks of when he speaks of the discerning the Lord's body. He rebukes the Corinthians for their sin and shows them that they were guilty of the body and blood of Christ because they did not discern the Lord's body. They looked only upon the outward elements but did not discern what there was of Christ there, they did not understand the institution of Christ; they did not see how Christ was under those elements, both represented, and exhibited unto them. That's the first thing, there must be knowledge and understanding.

And now for the knowledge and understanding of the nature of the sacrament, there need be knowledge in other points of religion, for we can never come to understand the nature of this sacrament without knowing God, and knowing ourselves, knowing in what

estate we were by nature, knowing our fall, knowing the way of redemption, knowing Jesus Christ, what He was, and what He hath done for the making of an atonement, the necessity of Jesus Christ, and what the way of the covenant is that God hath appointed to bring men's souls to eternal life by. The main points of religion must be known, but especially that that concerns the nature of a sacrament.

Now this knowledge likewise must be actual, not merely habitual knowledge, but there must be a stirring up of this knowledge, that is, by meditation. I must be meditating, have actual thoughts and meditations of what I do know; that ought to be the work of a Christian in coming to receive the sacrament, to quicken up his knowledge, to have a renewed work of his knowledge by actual thoughts and meditations of the main points of religion, and especially of the nature and the end of this holy institution; that is the first thing.

Secondly, as we must come understandingly, without which we cannot sanctify God's Name, so we must come with hearts suitable to the work that we are about, that is, because the great thing that is here is the breaking of Christ's body, and the pouring forth His blood. A suitable disposition to this is brokenness of heart, sense of our sin, of that dreadful breach that sin hath made between God and the soul; our sin should be upon our hearts so as to break them. But this brokenness must be evangelical; it must be through the applying of the blood of Christ unto my soul; I must come to be sensible of my sin, but especially be sensible of it by what I see in the holy sacrament, that must make me sensible of my sin. There are a great many things to make me sensible of my sin; the consideration of the great God that thou hast sinned against, and the curse of the Law that's due to thee, the wrath of God that is incensed against thee for thy sin, and those eternal flames that are prepared for sinners, those everlasting burnings.

But now those are not the things that will break the heart in an evangelical way, in a gracious way. The main thing by which the soul

must come to break its heart must be the beholding of the evil of sin in the red glass of the blood of Jesus Christ, the beholding Him broken. And truly there is nothing in the world that hath that power to break the heart for sin as the beholding of that which is to be beheld in the holy sacrament; and that heart is a hard heart that can see what is there to be seen, and not break in the apprehension of sin. When here I see what my sin cost, what a price was made for my soul, when I see the hatred of God against sin, and the justice of God in not sparing His Son but in breaking His Son for my sin, and in shedding the blood of His Son for my sins, I see here that the making of my peace which God did cost more than ten thousand worlds is worth. I see that by my sin such a breach was made between God and my soul, that all the angels in heaven, and men in the world could never make up this breach. Only the Son of God, He that was God and man that was thus broken by the burden of the wrath of His Father for my sins, could do this.

The truth is, when we come to this holy communion, we are to look upon Christ as if we saw Him hanging upon the Cross. Suppose thou hadst lived at the time when Christ was crucified, and hadst understood as much concerning the death of Christ as now thou doest, and what Christ was; if so be that thou shouldest have beheld Him in the garden, and there sweating drops of water and blood, and lie groveling upon the ground, crying, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; and shouldest have followed Him to the cross, and there have seen His hands and feet nailed, and His side pierced, and the blood trickling down, and have heard Him crying out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Would not such a sight as this is have broken thy heart for thy sin? The truth is, there is more, I won't say only so much, but I say there is more in this sacrament to break the heart for sin then such a sight as that.

You will say if you should have Christ to be crucified again before your eyes, if you should see the body of Christ hanging upon the Cross, and there behold Him crucified, and hearing of Him cry out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" you would think if

your hearts did not break for sin then, that they were desperately hard. Know every time that thou hast come to receive the sacrament, thou hast come to see such a sight, and it is as great an aggravation of the hardness of thy heart if it hath not broken at this sight, as it would be if it should not break at that sight. We read in Gal. 3 of Paul's speaking of the preaching of the Gospel, he saith that Christ was crucified before those that did hear the Word; and "Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" He doth not mean that Christ was crucified in Galatia, but that where the Word was preached, He was evidently set forth and crucified among them. But now my brethren, the crucifying of Christ in the Word is not such a real, evident, and sensible setting forth of Christ crucified, as when He is set forth in this sacrament, and 'tis that which works with more efficacy to break the heart than that other sight; and the reason that I give is this.

Because you do never find that God did set that apart as an ordinance, an institution appointed to that end that they should come to look upon that for the breaking of their hearts; there was indeed a naturalness in it, that if they did behold Christ, it might break their hearts, but it was not such an ordinance, it was not a sacrament as this is. Now this being in a sacramental way in the use of an ordinance appointed by Jesus Christ to set forth His sufferings and all the riches of the covenant of grace to the soul, there may be expected here a further blessing than in the other, though it is true, the other might work mightily upon the heart. But yet this being a great ordinance of Christ in the church, a great institution of Jesus Christ for the setting out of His sufferings, it hath a more special blessing that goes along with it; every ordinance hath a promise, and a more special blessing than any other thing that is not an ordinance. So, when you come here to behold Christ crucified before you, you cannot see Christ naturally crucified as upon the Cross, but you have Christ crucified before you in the way of a sacrament, in the way of a solemn institution of Jesus Christ that hath a special blessing which goes along with it. Therefore, if the heart be not broken here, there is

an aggravation of the hardness of the heart as great as if we should behold Jesus Christ upon the Cross and our hearts not broken there. And indeed, this is a special reason why those are said to be guilty of the body and blood of Christ that receive unworthily; as if a man had been then alive, and had been before the Cross, and there have seen how the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for sin, and should not have been affected with it, but should have accounted it as a common thing; this man in some regard might have been said to be guilty of His death; that is, to have joined and consented with those that did crucify Him. For if a man sees another commit a sin, if he be not affected with that sin, and it does not stir his heart, he may come to be partaker of his sin; so those that shall come to see Jesus Christ crucified and have not their hearts at all stirred with the crucifying of Christ, they are in some regard truly said to be guilty of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. And that is the second thing, brokenness of spirit is suitable to the sight of a broken Christ.

The third thing that is here to be done in the sanctifying of God's Name is the purging and cleansing of the heart from sin; an actual cleansing and purging the heart from sin there ought to be. The Jews in their Passover were to cast out all leaven, and those that write of the custom of the Jews say that they were wont to do three things in the casting out of their leaven. They made diligent search for leaven; they lighted candles to look into every corner lest there should be any bit of leaven left in the house. When they found it, they cast it out. They used an execration; they did curse themselves if they should willingly keep any leaven in the house.

So my brethren, when we come to partake of this holy ordinance, there should be a diligent inquisition for sin, for sin in Scripture is compared to leaven; thou shouldest make a diligent search what sin there is in thy heart, in any of the faculties of thy soul, what sin there is in thy thoughts, in thy conscience, in thy understanding, in thy will, in any of thy affections, what sin there hath been in thy life, what family sins, what personal sins. Thou shouldest make a diligent search to see whither there be not some leaven, some evil in thy

heart; and whatever sin thou shalt come to find out in thy heart, there must be a casting of it out; that is, thy soul must be set against it to oppose it with all thy might. Whatever beloved sin, whatever gainful sin, whatsoever become of thee, thy soul must renounce that sin of thine; yea and in a kind of execration of thyself. That is thus, Lord, as ever I expect to receive any good by this body and blood of Christ that I come now to receive, so Lord, here I profess against every sin that I have found out in my heart; I desire to find out all, and profess against all, and renounce all, and would do to the uttermost that I am able for delivering of my soul fully, from every known or beloved sin, oh, that there might not be any remaining in my heart. This must be the disposition of the soul coming hither, and it must needs be thus or else we cannot sanctify God's Name because there is nothing more suitable than this disposition unto the receiving of the sacrament; for we come here to profess that we do acknowledge that sin did cost so much as it did, that it cost the blood of the Son of God. Now this cannot choose but cause the heart to renounce sin. If indeed I do believe that sin hath cost the blood of Christ, that it cost Him so dear as it did, that it did trouble heaven and earth, that there must be such a mighty wonderful way of satisfaction to God for my sin committed against Him, certainly sin hath a dreadful evil in it; oh, let me never have to do with such sin that was the cause of such sufferings to my Savior, that did shed His blood.

If so be that thou sawest a knife that had cut the throat of thy dearest child, would not thy heart rise against that knife? Suppose you come to a table and there is a knife laid at your trencher and it was told you, this is the knife that cut the throat of your child, or Father. If you could use that knife as another knife, would not anyone say, there was but little love to your father or child? So, when there is a temptation comes to any sin, this is the knife that cut the throat of Christ, that pierced His sides, that was the cause of all His sufferings, that made Christ to be a curse; now wilt not thou look upon that as a cursed thing that made Christ to be a curse? Oh, with what detestation would a man or woman fling away such a knife! And with

the like detestation it is required that thou shouldest renounce sin, for that was the cause of the death of Christ. I remember it is reported of Anthony when Caesar was slain, he comes to stir up the people against those that had slain Caesar, and he takes the clothes that were bloody and holds them forth to the people and saith, here is the blood of your Emperor, and upon that the people were enraged against those that had slain him and went and pulled down their houses upon them. So, when thou comest to this sacrament, thou seest the blood of Christ gushing out, and for thy sin, if ever thy sin be pardoned; either thy soul must be eternally damned for thy sin, or else thy sin cost the gushing out of the blood of Christ. Now when thou seest this, this should cause a holy rage in thy soul against sin that caused this, surely the putting away sin, the risings of the heart against sin must needs be a disposition suitable to such an ordinance as this is. And that's the third thing required in the sanctifying of God's Name in this ordinance, the purging out of sin, and rising of the heart against it.

The fourth thing that is to be done for the sanctifying of God's Name here, it is the hungering and thirsting of the soul after Jesus Christ; whosoever comes hither, he comes to a feast, and the Lord expects that all His guests should come with stomachs unto this feast, come with hungering and longing for Jesus Christ. This should be the disposition of the soul, oh that my soul might enjoy communion with Jesus Christ; now, this is the end that I am come for. Oh, the Lord that knows the workings of my heart, knows that this is the great desire of my soul, that I might enjoy communion with Jesus Christ; oh that I might have more of Christ, that I might meet with Christ, that I might have some further manifestation with Jesus Christ, that I might have my soul further united to the Lord Christ, and so have further influence of Christ to my soul. I come with thirsting after the Lord Christ knowing my infinite need of Him, and the infinite excellency that there is in Jesus Christ; my soul doth famish and perish forever without Christ; but in the enjoyment of Christ there is a fullness for the satisfying of my soul.

That I have had of Christ sometimes in the Word and sometimes in prayer, that hath been sweet unto me, but I expect a further communion of Christ here, for this is the grand ordinance for communion with Jesus Christ. Indeed, the Word in this respect it is beyond this ordinance, that is, it is not only for the increase of grace, but for the begetting; this is only for the increase of grace and not appointed for the begetting. Now in that respect the Word is above the sacrament, but now this sacrament is a more full ordinance for communion with Jesus Christ, this is the communion of the body of Jesus Christ, and of His blood, and therefore there ought to be hungering and thirsting desires of the soul after Jesus Christ. Therefore, you must take heed you do not come with your stomachs full of trash, as children when they can get plums and pears and fill their stomachs with them, when they come to your tables, though there be never so much wholesome diet, they have no mind at all to it. So it is with men of the world, they fill their hearts with the trash of this world, and with sensual delights, and hence, it is that when they come to such a great ordinance to enjoy communion with Jesus Christ that then they feel no want at all of Christ, only they come and take a little piece of bread and a draught of wine, but for any strong pausing desires to meet with Jesus Christ there in the ordinance to come so as they know not how to live without Christ, even as a man that is an hungered cannot live without his meat and drink, and so for the soul to have such a disposition after Christ, this is a rare thing; but know that God's Name is not sanctified, unless thou doest come in such a way unto this holy sacrament. That's the fourth thing, hungry and thirsty desires after Christ from a deep sense of the need of Him, and the apprehension of the excellency in Him.

In the fifth place, there must be an exercise of faith for the sanctifying of God's Name here. Faith, that is both the hand and the mouth for the taking of this spiritual meat, and spiritual drink; when thou comest to the feast of the Lord, faith first is the eye, and then the hand and mouth; it is the eye of the soul to give a real sight of what there is here, you are not able to discern the body of the Lord but by the eye of faith; if thou comest only with bodily eyes to look

upon what is here, thou seest nothing but a little bread and wine. But now where the eye of faith is, there is a real appearance of Jesus Christ to the soul, as if Christ were bodily present, and we need not have the bread turned into His body; for faith can see the body of Christ through the bread, and the blood of Christ gushing in the wine. And it is a mighty thing to have Christ and such spiritual things made real and not to be a fancy. If one look upon the fire that is painted, one cannot heat oneself in cold weather with that but fire that is really burning upon the hearth. So those that come to receive the sacrament and not come with faith, that have only the eye of their bodies, they only see, as it were, a painted Christ, they do not see Christ really. His body and blood and those great mysteries of the Gospel are not presented as real things to their souls; and hence it is that they go away and get nothing. But now when the soul comes with the eye of faith, the soul sees the wonderful things of God, it is the most glorious sight in the world; all the glory of God in the heavens and earth is not like this sight of Jesus Christ and the mysteries of the Gospel that do appear to the eye of faith. Therefore, you may by this know whether you have come with faith or no to the sacrament, whether you have seen the most glorious sight that ever your eyes did behold. Alas, with our natural eyes we behold a minister coming with a piece of bread and a little wine, but when the eye of faith is opened, then we behold the glorious things of the Gospel. Many times, when you come to hear the Word, your hearts burn within you, as they that went to Emmaus; but when you are breaking bread, the eye of faith must look upon Jesus Christ; and in this sense, those that have pierced Christ must look upon Him. That Scripture is fulfilled in Zach. 12, latter end, "they shall look on Him whom they have pierced by their sins," and then mourn and lament; this eye of faith will cause mourning and lamenting for sin.

And then as faith is the eye to make what is here real, so faith is the hand to take it. When you come to a feast, you must have something to take the meat to you. So saith Christ, He brake bread and gave it to His disciples saying, "Take, eat this." Take it; how shall we take it? By reaching out of the hand, if you sanctify God's Name in this

ordinance, as you reach out your hand to take the bread and wine, so there must be an actual reaching out of the soul by faith, putting forth an act of faith to receive Jesus Christ unto the soul, to apply the Lord Jesus Christ to thy soul with all His merits and good things that He hath purchased. When the minister doth give out that ordinance, you should look upon God the Father giving out His Son; as if this were your condition, I am now in the presence of the eternal Father, who now doth actually give out His Son to my soul and saith, Soul, here receive anew this day My Son with all that He hath purchased for thy good. Now then the soul acts upon this, and by stirring up an act of faith, comes and closes with this gift of the Father, and casts itself upon Jesus Christ, and saith as it were, Amen, to what the Father gives. Oh Lord, here I come and embrace Thy Son as my life, as my Savior, as the fountain of all my good, in whom I expect all the good I am likely to have either here or to all eternity; so that there must be a stirring up of the act of faith in an actual taking of Christ, if thou beest a believer.

Canst thou remember what thou didst when first thou didst take Jesus Christ? When the Lord in the preaching of His Word did reveal Jesus Christ to thy soul, what didst thou then, oh soul? How did thy soul work in closing with Christ? As thy soul did then in closing with Christ, so it must now renew the work, there must be a renewal of the work at that time. So that when you come to the sacrament, you must not think that it is then a time to listen to doubts, fears, and scruples; no, but it is a time that God calls for the exercise of faith, the casting of the soul upon Christ and His merits for life and for salvation, or else the Name of God is not sanctified as it ought. Thou doest not sanctify God's Name when thou art busying thy soul in doubts and scruples in thy receiving of the sacrament.

And then faith is as the mouth; when thou comest to eat and drink, how canst thou if thou hast not a mouth? Thou hast a bodily mouth to take in bread and wine; but know that without faith thy soul cannot take in Christ. Faith is, as it were, the mouth; that is, by the act of faith the soul doth open itself for Jesus Christ, and not only

opens itself, but takes in Christ to the soul and makes Christ and the soul as one. As our bread and wine is made one with our body, so faith takes in Christ and makes Him as one with thee, and turns Christ into the nourishment of thy soul, and thou and Christ by faith are made as truly one, as the bread and wine that is put into thy body is made one with thy body. This is the work of faith, without which we cannot sanctify the Name of God.

Sixthly, there must be spiritual joy; that must be exercised here, for it is a feast. Here we come to sit with Christ at His Table, we come as children to our Father's Table, and to sit there with Jesus Christ our elder brother. Now as a father doth not love to have his child set in a sullen and dogged way at his table, or to be crying, but he would have the child set in comfort, and with a holy cheerfulness with a holy freedom of spirit, not in a sullen way, but as a child in the presence of his father, and not as a servant with the master.

Object. You told us before that there should be brokenness of spirit and sense of our sin.

Answ. That may be, and joy; we rejoice with trembling. Therefore, that brokenness of spirit that I meant must not be slavish horror and fear, but a kindly melting of the soul from the apprehension of the love of God unto it in Jesus Christ, that was willing to be at so great cost to purchase the pardon of sin. Such a gracious mourning as may stand with joy, and the truth is that that sorrow for sin in the sacrament that is not mixed with joy is a sorrow that doth not sanctify God's Name. Godly sorrow and evangelical joy may stand together very well, and therefore know that this is not the time, neither to give liberty to have your hearts sink. No, there must be no sinking sorrow of heart, but such a sorrow of heart as in the midst of it, you may be able to look upon God as a reconciled Father to you and have a cheerfulness of spirit as in the midst of it, you must look upon yourselves as God's guest, to be merry at His Table. Now this is a great mystery of godliness, that there should be at the same time the sight of Christ crucified, and yet at the same time a spiritual

cheerfulness in the assurance of the love of God in Jesus Christ. I say it is a mystery and only those that are believers are able to understand this mystery, how to have their hearts break, and yet how to rejoice at the same time in that unspeakable love of God that is here presented unto them in this sacrament.

Seventhly, in the next place there must be thankfulness; therefore, it is called the Eucharist, and in one of the evangelists where it is said, Christ blest the bread, in another it is said, Christ gave thanks. Christ, when He instituted this sacrament, He gave thanks; He gave thanks for what? He gave thanks to God the Father that He was pleased to send Him into the world to die for poor souls. Now shall Jesus Christ give thanks unto God the Father for that that did cost Him His life? Yea, saith Christ, I see that here is a way to save souls; and let it cost Me My life if it will, yet I bless Thee O Father, if souls may come to be saved though it cost Me My life. Christ rejoiced in His Spirit in thanking His Father for this; then how should our hearts be enlarged with thankfulness when we come to this that the ancients were wont to call the Eucharist, that is, a thanksgiving? We are to give God thanks for every mercy; you will not eat your own bread without giving of thanks. But when we come to have this bread, this bread of life, here is matter of thankfulness, here is matter of enlargement of soul; thou that hast the deadest and dullest soul, and straightest spirit, yet when thou comest hither and understandest what thou doest, here thou canst not but see matter for the enlargement of thy heart, and wish that thou hadst ten thousand thousand times more strength to express the praises of the Lord.

Here is a thing that must be the subject of the hallelujahs and doxologies, that angels and saints must forever sound out in the highest heavens; dost thou know what the Lord presents to thee here? It is more than if the Lord should say, I will make ten thousand worlds for the sake of this creature, and give all these worlds to him, thou wouldest think that thou wert bound to bless Him then. Only when God in the bread and wine reaches out to thee the body and

blood of His Son, here is more matter of praise than if ten thousand thousand worlds were given to thee, and therefore, God expects that thou shouldest say to thy soul, "My soul praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me, praise His Holy Name; bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." O poor soul, here is the foundation of all mercies. Dost thou praise God for justification, for sanctification? Here is a glorious application of the mercy of God to the souls of sinners, and therefore, if ever thou wert thankful, be thankful here. The Sabbath my brethren, that is appointed to be the set constant day of thanksgiving for the great mercies of God in Christ, and there are other days for national mercies. Now a special work of the Lord's Day is the celebration of this holy sacrament, and the Christians in former times were wont to do it every Lord's Day, because that's the day appointed by God for to be the day of thanksgiving for that great mercy, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's the reason why the Sabbath was changed; the last day of the week was the Jewish Sabbath, and that was to celebrate the memorial of the creation of the world; and the first day now, it is to be the day of thanksgiving for all the work of God in man's redemption.

Eighthly, a further thing is this, if you would sanctify God's Name, you must be willing to renew your covenant, that's the end of it. There must be an actual renewing of your covenant with God, that is thus: I come to receive this bread and this wine, and this is to be as the seal of the covenant on God's part; now this will be employed in the nature of the thing, that if I take the seals of God's covenant, that I must be willing to set to my seal too, to renew the covenant that God calls me to. Now know, all men and women that are saved, they are saved by the virtue of the covenant of grace, and there God on His part promises and makes a covenant that He will bestow His Son, life, and salvation through Him; and thou must likewise come in on thy part and believe on His Son and repent, which is the tenor of the Gospel. Now every time thou comest to receive this sacrament, thou comest to renew this covenant, as if thou shouldest say, Lord, Thou hast been pleased to make a covenant of grace, as the first

covenant was broken and all men were cast by that covenant, now Thou hast made a covenant of grace, and callest Thy servants whom Thou intendest to save that they should renew their covenant with Thee in this sacrament of Thine; Lord here I come; and Lord here I renew it and set to my seal, to promise and covenant with Thee, that as ever I expect to receive any good from Christ, so Lord here I will be Thine, I will give up myself forever to Thee. As Thou hast given me the body and blood of Christ for my salvation, so Lord, here I consecrate my body and blood to Thee, the last drop of my heart blood shall be given up to Thee, and so my strength and estate, and name, and whatever I am or have shall be Thine. Have you done thus when you have come to receive the sacrament? Have you actually renewed your covenant with God? You that have taken the body of Christ, have you given up your body to Christ? What is the reason then that you sin so much with your bodies? That you abuse your body with uncleanness and drunkenness and other wickedness afterwards? Oh, you profane the Name of God and the very body and blood of Christ in this, except thou givest up thy body and soul to God in way of covenant.

Ninthly, in the last place for the sanctifying of God's Name there is required a renewing of love, the coming with lovely dispositions and the renewing of the grace of love, not only towards God, but towards our brethren. For it is the feast of the Lord and it is an act of communion, communion not only with Christ, but with His churches, with His saints. And as I have told you that there is a profession of ourselves to be of the same body with Jesus Christ, then the Lord requires that His children should not fall out that come to His Table, but that there should be love and peace. There is a mighty bond upon thee when thou comest to the sacrament, and therefore, first all heart burnings and heart grudges must be laid aside; and secondly you must come with a willingness to be reconciled one to another, willingness to pass by all infirmities in thy brethren. Here I have the seal of God's willingness to pass by all my sins, and therefore I must be willing to pass by all infirmities in my brethren; I must now cast out all ill wishes towards others and come

with a desire of all good unto them, and with a heart ready to embrace any opportunity to do any good. Thou doest lie unto God except thou commest with such a heart as this is; Lord thou knowest that I am willing to take all opportunities to do good to those that I now do communicate with, for it is the nearest communion that possibly can be in this world between one creature and another; and this is the reason why there should be that ordinance of Christ set up everywhere to cast out those that are unworthy, because it is the greatest union and communion that possibly can be, for it is the sacrament and communion of the same body; they are the same members of Christ.

Now if thou doest not think such a one to be a member of Christ, why doest not thou what thou canst to have him cast out? But so long as thou hast done nothing in private to him, or in telling the Church, thou doest own him to be a member of Jesus Christ; if thou doest so, take heed how thy heart be estranged from him, take heed how thou behavest thyself to them; take heed how thou livest in a jarring way, and a contentious way with them, and holdest them off at staves end, or walking at a distance from them, though they be never so poor and mean, know that thou doest profane this holy ordinance every time thou commest to it when thou commest with such a heart as this is. If thou dost not find this renewed love, Lord, there began to be a strangeness between me and those that have communicated with me, but Lord Thou art pleased to vouchsafe us to come once more to this ordinance, and Lord here we do profess that this ordinance shall unite our hearts together more than ever they were. I will study to do what good possibly I can to my brother; that as we join here to the feast of the Lord with comfort, so we may live together in peace and love as it becomes the saints of God, and the members of the body of Jesus Christ; Oh, how far are people from any such work of God as this is! The Lord expects that this should be in you every time you come to the holy communion.

Here hath been nine particulars now mentioned for the sanctifying of the Name of God when we come to partake of the sacrament; but oh

Lord, what cause have we to lay our hands upon our hearts! For if this be to sanctify Thy Name, then it hath been a riddle, a mystery to us. Certainly, my brethren, these things are the truths of God that I have delivered, and so far as you have been wanting in any of these, know so far you have taken God's Name in vain in this holy ordinance, you have not been worthy receivers of this sacrament, you have cause to look back to your former ways and spend much humiliation for your sin herein, and not to be so greedy of it as some are; they must have the communion; but I put it to your consciences, have you repented you for the profaning of God's Name? And that's that we should further have spoken of, that God will be sanctified. That is thus, if we do not sanctify God's Name, it will quite turn to the contrary; it is the proper end of the sacrament, to seal up our salvation. But if we sanctify not God's Name, it will seal up our condemnation; if it hath not been thy endeavor to sanctify the Name of God so many times as thou hast received the sacrament, so many seals hast thou upon thee for the sealing up of thy condemnation.

But yet for thy comfort, while thou art alive, it is possible that these seals may be broken open; as we read in the revelations that John saw the book that had seven seals upon it, and none could be found that was able to open it; at length the Lamb that was slain He was found worthy to open the book. So, I say, thy condemnation is sealed up with many seals, and there is no creature that is able to cancel these seals, only the Lamb, Jesus Christ, yea that Christ whose blood thou hast shed, and been guilty of, only He is worthy; and He is willing to open these seals. For as it was with those that did crucify Christ, yet they were saved by the same blood that they had shed, as in Acts 2. So, though thou hast been guilty of shedding the blood of Christ again and again by thy profane coming to the sacrament, yet know, seeing there is life in thee, and the day of grace is continued, it is possible that thy soul may be saved by that blood that thou hast crucified. Oh, how many are cut off that have thus profaned the Name of God in this sacrament, and never came to understand this danger! They are cut off and now are undone forever; then bless God that thou art alive to hear more about this sacrament, and how God's

Name should be sanctified; that thou art alive, and hast time to repent thee of this great evil of profaning the Name of God in this holy sacrament.

## **Sermon XIII**

### **Keep to the Institution of the Sacrament**

LEVITICUS. 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

There is one thing more about the sanctifying the Name of God in the sacrament which clearly concerns us, and that is:

To keep to the institution of the sacrament, for this is such a worship of God as depends merely upon institution, that is, upon a positive Law, upon the will of God. There are some duties of worship which are natural that we may know by the light of nature they are due to God. But the sacrament is a duty of worship that is only by institution; and if God had not revealed it, we had not been bound to it. Therefore, in these duties of institution, God stands very punctual upon them; we must be very exact, neither to err on the right hand nor the left; to make any alteration in the points of institution. Now therefore, for the institution of this sacrament we find it in divers of the evangelists, in Matt. 26:26, there you shall find that Christ and His disciples they eat the sacrament together; and this was the way of it; they were together sitting at the same table; so it is called the Table of the Lord sometimes in Scripture; therefore that's the first thing that is according to the institution, that those that do communicate must come to the Table as near as they can; as many as

can set about it, and all to come as near as they can. And the reason is, because that otherwise you will not be able to attain the end why God would have you come to receive; the end is to remember the death of Christ. Now except you be able to see the sight, to see what is done, to have your eye as well as your ear exercised, you do not fully accomplish the end that is appointed; for this is a sacrament that doth present to our eyes the death of Christ, and the great mysteries of salvation, and therefore it is according to the institution that every communicant must be where he may behold what is done, he must be where he may see the breaking of the bread, and the pouring forth of the wine. Certainly, it hath been a disorderly way, therefore, for people to set up and down in their pews everywhere in the congregation and for the minister to go up and down after them, so that they could see nothing, nor scarce hear anything. It is much for the attaining to the end of the institution for all communicants to look upon the breaking of the bread, and the pouring forth of the wine in the sacrament, and therefore all should come together, and there as many as can sit at His Table, or those that cannot, near to it. And the rather because this is not only from the example of Christ that He did so, though that's somewhat, but because it hath a spiritual significance in it, and that's the reason that it should be done.

We find in Luke 22:26 the institution of the sacrament. Now mark upon their coming and being with Christ at the Table, saith Christ in verses 29 and 30, "And I appoint unto you a Kingdom as My Father hath appointed unto Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." He spoke it upon that occasion of the disciples sitting with Him at the table, when they did eat bread and when they took the cup. Upon that occasion, Christ spoke to His disciples and said, I appoint to you a Kingdom, and so sit on thrones judging at My table in My Kingdom, and so sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, as if Christ should say, you can sit with Me at My table here, and know that this sitting with Me at My table it is but as it were a praeludium, a fore signification of the communion that you shall have with Me in

My Kingdom. You shall have that familiar communion with Me when I come unto My Kingdom, there to sit, as it were, with Me, to join with Me in My Kingdom judging the twelve tribes of Israel, even as you do now in that holy fellowship, join with Me in sitting at My table. This is the meaning of Christ, so that the gesture in the sacrament is not a mere indifferent thing; heretofore, it hath been thought unreasonable to contend for what gesture we should use.

Now that which hath been the institution of Christ and hath a spiritual significance in it is not indifferent, for not only the eating the bread and drinking the wine is significative, but the gesture whereby we have fellowship with Jesus Christ here, to signify that fellowship we shall have with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven, so that the people of God were deprived of a great deal of comfort, and of one special benefit of this holy sacrament, whereas they might not receive it sitting, whereas Christ saith that your sitting with Me here is a signification of your sitting with Me when I come into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some say they must kneel because they may receive it with more reverence; certainly, were it a thing as some say indifferent, it were another matter; but for to say it is not reverence to sit, in that they accuse Christ Himself for want of reverence, as if He would appoint a way, or would have His disciples use any such way as were not reverent. Saith Christ, I intend by your very gesture to have this signified unto you, that though you be poor, wretched worms, yet even such is My love to you as you shall sit with Me when I come to My Kingdom and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. And every time you come to My table and there sit at it, or about it, then you should be put in mind that there is a time, that though you be poor unworthy creatures, worthy to be among the dogs, yet the mercy of God is such unto us as He hath appointed us to have a familiar fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ when we come in His Kingdom to sit with Him, and even to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, yea to judge the whole world. For so saith the Scripture, shall not the saints judge the world? Now this hinders spiritual meditation and comfort

that the saints have, therefore, we are to look to the institution and to follow it; that is the first thing in setting with Christ at His Table.

The second thing in the institution is that the bread being taken by the minister is to be blessed, broken, and then to be given. Christ took it, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it; and the people they are to look upon all this; to look upon the ministers taking, blessing, breaking, and giving; and then the cup by itself. We find Christ in Matt. 26:27, He first blest the bread, and then He blest the cup distinctly by itself, saying, "This is My blood of the New Testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." And you shall observe that the text saith, "He drank it, and said, 'Drink ye all of it,'"

so that this is not according to the institution for a minister to go up and down, and to give it into every man's hand. Certainly, this was not so from the beginning; this is a way of man's own devising for the bread and the cup to be given into every body's hand by the minister. Christ did but give it once, He gave it to them all, and said, "Drink ye all of this," so it was done.

Quest. But you will say, is it not better for it to be given into every one's hand?

Answ. No, because that the giving of it once for all doth signify more fully the fellowship and communion that they have together; as at a table, it were a strange thing that every bit of meat must be given to everyone particularly; no, but the dishes must be set before them, and they must take it themselves. Indeed, if they be children, you cut every piece of meat and give it into their hands or mouths, but that's suitable to a fellowship at table and communion to have the meat set before them, being blest, and then for all to partake of it.

And besides this, giving it into everyone's hand, certainly, it came to us from a Popish and superstitious conceit of the Papists, for the Papists will give it into their mouths because the people must not defile it with their hands, and it was to bring more reverence to the

sacrament. Now there's a great deal of danger for to bring in men's devices for to cause more reverence; we are to look to the ordinance of Christ; He gave it once and said, "Drink ye of it," in general to them all, and so the ministers should do.

And besides, there is this in it more, and one would wonder that ministers should give it in particular and not in general to the Church. For by this means ministers might abundantly ease themselves of a great deal of charge and guilt; for upon this ground it will appear that a minister, though as an eminent officer, he is to look to his congregation that they be fit, yet the truth is, it concerns the Church as well to look who comes there, and likewise the minister I say, to look about him that he doth not say, "The body of the Lord Jesus Christ was given to thee," when he knows they are profane and wicked. It concerns the minister to look that he doth not tell a lie; but now when the minister gives it generally to the Church, "Take, eat," and "Take, drink," he gives it particularly to no body. Now then, his charge is divided to the Church, and if there be any body that is unworthy, let the Church look to it as well as he. Though he as an eminent officer, it is more especially in particular his duty than any others', heretofore the charge would lie much upon the minister. But the minister according to the institution should give the sacrament to no particular, but in general to the Church, and therefore if there were but any particular that the minister upon a particular knowledge did know to be naught, he might in great part discharge himself, as professing against this or that particular man; for it is not in his power alone to keep any from the sacrament, but if so be that he shall profess against such and such men, the Church must join with him to labor to keep them from the sacrament, and that is the next thing for the institution. Christ gave it not into any particular men's hands, but He gave it to all, saying, "Drink, and eat ye all of it."

A third thing that is to be observed for the institution of this, that all the while the communicants are taking, eating, and drinking the bread and wine, they should all of them, that while, have their

thoughts exercised about the death of Jesus Christ, for that's the institution, "Do this in remembrance of Me." There should be no action intermingled in the time of the receiving of the sacrament, nothing but minding the work that you are about, that is, to remember the death of Jesus Christ, and to discern the body of the Lord, not only when you take yourselves the bread and wine, but when you see the bread and wine broken or powered forth, and you see others taking the bread and wine, all that while, you should be thinking of the death of Christ, and discerning the Lords body, and consider what these outward elements do signify, and that they do seal the great benefit of the covenant of grace. Therefore, it is not according to the institution to be singing of Psalms in the meantime while the sacrament is receiving and so to have your thoughts about other things. Singing of Psalms in its due time is a good thing, but for you to do it at that time when as the death of Christ is presented before you, and Christ calls you to look upon His body, and to think upon what He hath done and suffered, this is no seasonable time of singing. And if you read the institution, you shall find that Christ, after all was done (the text saith) they sung an hymn, so that according to the institution it is after the action is done of eating and drinking, then for the Church to join together and sing a Psalm in the praise of God. And then they must mind all the same thing together, for that's the thing to be done in the sacrament, that look what one doth, all must mind together; for when one part sings, and the other are waiting for the bread and wine, this is not suitable to the holy Table action, and that communion that God requires of us. Though the things in themselves are both good that are doing, yet when we are about this holy ordinance, being it is an ordinance for communion, all are to be doing the same thing at the same time; and so, when all have done eating and drinking, then for all to join together in singing to the praise of God.

Now it may be this at first seems strange to many, yet certainly observe this; do but keep to the institution in the sacrament, though you may think it a more mean way, yet you will find a greater beauty in this ordinance than ever you found in all your lives; for the more

we keep to Christ's institution and mingle nothing of our own, the more glory, and beauty, and excellency doth appear in the ordinances of Jesus Christ. But when any man shall mix any of his own inventions, though he may do it to a good end and think to add to and put a greater luster upon the sacrament, the truth is, that which he thinks to be a greater luster, reverence, or honor put upon it, it doth rather take off the luster and glory of the sacrament; then are the institutions of Christ glorious when there is no mixture among them; thus we should sanctify the Name of God, in receiving this holy sacrament. You have had divers things propounded to you whereby you may come to know and easily to see that there hath been a great deal of dishonor done to this sacrament, and the beauty and glory of it hath been darkened, and the sweet that the saints might otherwise have received in plucking hath been exceedingly hindered. There is but one thing more that I shall propound to you, and that is the several meditations that we should meditate on in receiving of the sacrament; the most concerning meditations are suggested in the holy communion that are in anything whatsoever, more concerning, more efficacious, more various meditations we have suggested here than in any thing, and it is a great sign that men and women do not discern the Lord's body if so be their meditations be barren at that time. I will therefore suggest some nine or ten meditations that that ordinance of God may hold out very plainly and familiarly to every communicant, for the busying of their thoughts all the time that action is a doing.

Meditation 1. As first, that the way of man's salvation it was by a mediator, it is not only by God's mercy, God's saying that He is offended by sin, but He will be content to pass it by; no, but it is through a mediator. Now this meditation is suggested thus, when I see the bread and wine, if I discern what that signifies it will hold forth this to me that the way of man's salvation, it is not merely from hence that God saith, well, I will pardon them, and no more, but there is required a great work of God to make an atonement between sinners and Himself. This sacrament doth hold forth thus much unto

us, wherefore else have we bread and wine, but to signify that the way of our reconciliation it must be through a mediator?

Meditation 2. The second meditation is this, that this mediator that stands between God and us is verily and truly man; He hath taken our nature upon Him. The bread that puts us in mind of the body of Christ, and the wine of His blood, and therefore we are to meditate of the human nature of Jesus Christ; and this is a meditation that hath abundance that might spring out of it; what hath the Son of God taken our nature upon Him? Hath He body and blood and human nature upon Him? Oh, how hath God honored human nature? Then let me not abuse my body to lust, to wickedness, seeing that Jesus Christ hath taken the body of man upon Him, human nature upon Him, let me honor human nature that is so nearly united to the divine nature; that's the second meditation.

Meditation 3. Here is presented unto us what this mediator hath done for the reconciling of us unto God, that His body was broken; He hath subjected Himself to the breaking of His body, and to the pouring forth of His blood for the reconciling of us. It is not merely (as before) that God saith, I'll pardon them, but Christ undertaking to make peace between His Father and us, it cost Him the breaking of His body, and the pouring forth of His blood; this is a useful meditation. Oh, what should we be willing to suffer for Jesus Christ in our bodies, even to resist unto blood, seeing Christ hath been content to have His precious body broken, and His blood shed for us!

Meditation 4. Again, a fourth meditation is this, that here we come to see we have occasion of meditating of that the Scripture saith, that we are by the blood of God saved, it is the blood of God, they crucified the Lord of glory, that's the Scripture phrase. We should consider when we see the wine poured out, and so put in mind of blood, whose blood and whose body is this; it is no other but the body and blood of Him that was truly God, the second Person in Trinity. This is the great mystery of the Gospel, and this is very needful for us to be thinking of when we see the body broken and the

blood poured out. What, will the breaking of the body and shedding of the blood of a mere creature be sufficient to make peace between God and man? Surely no, therefore you must meditate whose body this is, and whose blood this is, it is the body and blood of Him that was God. It's true, God hath no body nor no blood, but the same person that was God had a body and blood; that body and blood was united unto the divine nature in a hypostatic union, and from thence it came to have an efficacy for to satisfy God, for to reconcile God and us together, this is the great mystery of godliness.

Meditation 5. Another meditation is this, when you see bread broken and wine poured out, oh the infinite dreadfulness of the justice of God! How dreadful is the justice of God, that coming upon His own Son and requiring satisfaction from Him, that should thus break Him and bruise Him, that should have His blood, that should require such sufferings even from His Son! Dreadful is God's justice, the justice of God; it is to be feared and to be trembled at; here we see what is required for the sin of man, and nothing would be bated to Jesus Christ Himself.

Meditation 6. Another meditation is this, here I see presented to me what every soul that shall be saved cost; whoever shall have his soul saved he hath it saved by a ransom, by a price paid that is more worth then ten thousand, thousand worlds; thou slightest thine own soul, but if it prove to be saved, it cost more than if thousands of worlds had been given for thee; even the shedding of the blood of Christ, every drop of which was more precious than ten thousand worlds.

Meditation 7. Again, from hence see what is the evil of sin, how great it is that hath made such a breach between God and my soul that only such a way and such a means must take away my sin. I must either have lain under the burden of my sin eternally, or Jesus Christ that is God and man must suffer so much for it. Oh, what meditations are these to take up the hearts of men!

Meditation 8. Behold the infinite love of God to mankind and the love of Jesus Christ, that rather than God would see the children of men to perish eternally, He would send His Son to take our nature upon Him, and thus to suffer such dreadful things; herein God shows His love; it is not the love of God so much in giving you a good voyage, and prospering you outwardly in the world, “But, so God loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,” and it pleased the Father to break His Son, and to pour out His blood, here is the love of God and of Jesus Christ. Oh, what a powerful, mighty, drawing, efficacious meditation should this be unto us!

Meditation 9. Those that are believers they shall be nourished to eternal life, so that there is no fear that ever a believer should quite fall off from God and die in his sin. Why? Because the body and blood of Christ is given unto him for his spiritual nourishment. Though a believer be never so weak, yet seeing God hath appointed the body and blood of His Son for him to feed upon and to drink in a spiritual way, surely then the weakest in the world will be strengthened to go through all the hazards and dangers that there are in the world; ‘tis this that strengthens believers to encounter with all kinds of dangers, it’s this that preserves the weakest grace in a believer, namely the spiritual nourishment that God the Father hath appointed to them, even the feeding upon the body, and drinking the very blood of his Son; this is meat indeed, and drink indeed that will nourish to eternal life.

Meditation 10. The last meditation is this, when you come to this, seeing the bread broken and the wine poured out, you have an occasion to meditate of the whole New Covenant, the covenant of grace that God hath made with sinners, for so the words of institution are, “This is the cup of the New Testament.” The New Testament which is all one with the New Covenant, only different in this particular, it contains the substance of the New Covenant, but called Testament in this regard, to show that the Lord doth do all in the New Covenant, that is, He doth not only promise such and such mercies upon condition of our believing and repenting, but He doth

work believing and repenting, and works grace, and therefore the same thing that is sometimes called a Covenant is called a Testament. That is the will of God wherein the Lord doth bequeath His rich legacies to His children, to those that shall be eternally saved so that all the good things in the Covenant of Grace they are bequeathed by way of testament as well as Covenant, and this is a mighty, comfortable meditation to the saints. For indeed, when they look upon the way of the Gospel as in a way of Covenant, why then they think this, this requires somewhat of our parts to be done, and indeed God will keep Covenant on His part, but it may be we shall not keep Covenant on ours, and so we may fail at last. But now when thou lookest upon all the good things in the Gospel dispensed in the way of a Testament, that is the will of God, the legacies that God doth bequeath to His servants, this is a mighty comfort to the soul, that all the precious things of the Gospel come to me in the way of a Testament, and that's the meaning of the new Testament, that is, the mercies of God in Christ coming now in the way of another administration than they did before. 'Tis not only new in respect of the covenant of works that God made with Adam, but new in respect of the administration; our forefathers, the patriarchs, they had the same thing in substance, but administered in a darker way, and many differences there are; but now when we hear of the New Testament, there is presented unto us all the riches of the Covenant of Grace in the way of a legacy and in the administration of it with clearness, and with a great deal of mercy and goodness of God, the terror and harshness of the old administration being taken away. Now these are the meditations by which we should labor to sanctify our hearts when we are receiving of the sacrament, and in the working of these meditations upon our hearts we shall come to sanctify the Name of God when we are drawing nigh to Him in that holy ordinance of His, thus for meditation.

The next thing when we are there must be an actuating of these holy dispositions that before we spoke of; 'tis not enough for a Christian to bring grace to the sacrament, but there must be a stirring of that grace at that time, or otherwise the Name of God is not sanctified in

the receiving of the sacrament, and above all graces the actuating of the grace of faith; 'tis not enough that thou beest a believer, but thy faith must act at that very instant, as thus.

First, when thou hearest the minister in the Name of Christ say thus, "This is the body of Jesus Christ which was given for you, take, eat," thou shouldest have thy faith so acting upon the mercy of God in giving Jesus Christ for the nourishment of thy soul to eternal life as if thou didst hear a voice from heaven saying, "Here is the body of My Son given for thee particularly, take it and eat, apply it to thee, and so make Christ one with thee by faith, as the bread is made one with thy body when thou doest eat it."

And then when thou comest to take hold of the bread, thou art to put forth an act of faith, faith being as the hand of the soul, and at that instant when thou takest the bread and puttest it into thy mouth to eat, thou shouldest stir up the act of faith afresh, laying more hold upon Jesus Christ. Look as once thou didst in thy first conversion, when Christ was presented to thee in the Word or in any other way, there was an act of faith drawn forth whereby thy soul did cast itself and roll itself upon Jesus Christ. So shouldest thou renew it; renew the same work of faith that thou didst find in thy very first conversion; and thereby thou shalt come to have renewed comfort in the renewing of that act. I might name thee other graces and dispositions, how there should be a stirring and an acting of them, only remember I leave all this point with this note, that grace is not enough for partaking the sacrament of the Lord's supper, except there be an actuating, and a stirring up of that grace. Many Christians are careful to prepare and examine before whether they have grace or no; but at that time when they come to receive, then there is not a lively working and stirring of that grace, and so they come to lose the comfort and benefit of that ordinance. Thus, much shall suffice for this point of sanctifying God's Name in receiving the holy communion; I shall now come to the last point, which is the sanctifying the Name of God in prayer.

## ***Sanctifying the Name of God in Prayer.***

Now, this argument might take us up many sermons, but upon occasion of the days of prayer and humiliation, I have preached divers sermons about the point of prayer; therefore, I shall be brief, and only now reckon up together and set before your view the several things that are to be done for the sanctifying of the Name of God in prayer. First, for prayer in that we draw nigh to God, and it's a duty of God's worship that I suppose all of you cannot but acknowledge, and that it is a natural duty of worship. The other was instituted, but this is natural; it's natural for the creature to draw nigh to God in prayer, wherein the creature tenders up his homage to God, and manifests his profession of his dependance upon God for all good that he hath, and acknowledges God as the Author of all good, therefore this is worship, and it is a great part of worship. Prayer, it is such a part of worship as sometimes in Scripture it is put for the whole worship of God, "He that calls upon the Name of God shall be saved," that is, he that worships God aright. Jeremiah 10:25, "Pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen that know Thee not, and on the families that call not on Thy Name," that do not pray, that is, that do not worship Thee; there one part of worship is put for the whole, as being a principal part of the worship of God.

Surely, we must sanctify God's Name in prayer, for it is that that sanctifies all things to us; 1 Tim. 4:5, everything "is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." And if the argument of Christ was right, as no question but it was, that the temple was greater than the gold upon the temple, because the temple did sanctify the gold; and the altar was greater than the offering that was offered upon it, because it did sanctify the offering; then prayer must needs be a mighty great ordinance; a greater thing than any other, because it sanctifies all things. The Word sanctifies the creatures, but prayer sanctifies the very Word unto our use, and therefore when we read the Word, we are to pray for a sanctified use of the Word. Prayer is a great ordinance, a great duty of worship that sanctifies all; prayer hath a casting voice (as I may say) in all the great works of God in the world,

the great affairs of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of His power, and the Kingdom of Christ. I say prayer hath a kind of a casting voice, and doth order under God the great things of the world, they are according to the prayers of the saints, they bring down blessings upon the godly, they pour forth judgements on the wicked; the prayers of the saints, they are the vials that are poured forth in a special manner upon the heads of the wicked. Therefore, God's Name is to be sanctified in prayer.

It is to be sanctified first in preparation; Psalm 10:17, "Thou wilt prepare their heart; Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear." It is the Lord that prepareth the heart, and then He causes His ear to hear; and therefore in 1 Pet. 4:7, we are there required to "watch unto prayer"; men and women should keep a narrow watch over their hearts and minds, that they may not be hindered in their prayers, that they may be always in a fit posture to pray. Watch unto prayer, it is that that would help us against many temptations to evil. If I give way to such and such temptations it will hinder my prayers; I shall not have that freedom and enlargement in prayer as otherwise if I give way to such and such things, therefore, let me take heed of this, for it will hinder my prayers. As if the Apostle should say, this should be the care of Christians, then they are likely to sanctify the Name of God in prayer, if this be their great care that there is nothing in the world that shall hinder their prayers. O, let me take heed I do nothing to hinder my prayers; if I go abroad into company, and am merry and jocund, and there game and drink, and sport myself in company, will not this hinder my prayers? Will not this hinder the spiritualness of my heart in communion with God in prayer, when I come home at night? I appeal to you, have you had that freedom in prayer, afterwards? Surely no, therefore, watch unto prayer.

Now for the preparation of the heart to prayer, we must understand either first, what is to be done in the course of one's life, or secondly, what's to be done just when one comes to prayer.

For the first, the course of one's life: labor to keep all things even and clear between God and your souls, that so you may not come with shackles about your legs; with guiltiness (I mean) upon your consciences; men that have given way to any base sinful way, when they come to prayer, the guilt of their hearts doth even sink them; but those that can keep their peace with God in the course of their lives, they have other manner of freedom in prayer than you that walk loosely and contract guiltiness upon your spirits.

And then, the second thing is to keep our hearts sensible of our continual dependance upon God; sensible how we depend upon God for whatsoever we are, whatsoever we have, whatsoever we do, for the blessing of all is from God. The beams of the sun do not so depend upon the sun as we upon God; that if He doth but withdraw Himself never so little from us, we all sink down to nothing and perish forever; that soul that every day and hour is sensible of the infinite dependance it hath upon God for its present and eternal estate will be fit for prayer and that should be our care for to carry ourselves, as any hour in the day, or minute in the hour, we might be fit to go to prayer; and that is one meaning of that place in the Thessalonians, "pray continually." Not that every moment we should be praying, but that we should keep our hearts in a praying frame. Some of you when you have let out your passions and are in a distemper, what, will you go to prayer now? Your conscience will tell you that you are not fit to go to prayer at that time; certainly if you be not fit to pray, you are not fit to live; you are in an ill condition at any time if you be not fit to pray; and there can be no excuse whatever that can be sufficient to plead for yourselves why you should not be fit to pray at any time; there is that continual dependance upon God for all, and that need you have of the blessing of God for everything, that there is reason you should be in a fit condition for praying at all times; but now when you come to prayer at the set time, then there should be a special preparation.

First, you should prepare yourselves by getting fresh and powerful apprehensions of the glory of God before whom you go; prepare by

meditation about the glory of that infinite God that you are now addressing yourself unto; possess yourselves with thoughts and meditations of the glory of the great God, that's the first.

Secondly, labor to get your hearts sensible of what you go for. I am now going to God, for what? For pardon of sin, or for assurance of His love; or for power against sin; or for such and such mercies; let me by meditation work my heart to be sensible of these things that I am going to God for, to set a due prior upon those mercies that I am praying for, and to get my heart affected with them.

Thirdly, labor to get your hearts separated from the world, and from all things that are here below in the world; and that should have been a third thing in the course of your lives, you should never let out your hearts to any creature, either to businesses or pleasures in the world so but that you may have command of your hearts to call them when you will; to call them in to God in prayer; and then when you come to prayer there should be an actual separation of your hearts from all things in the world; dedicating yourselves to God for this time, as one that hath nothing to do with the world, nothing to do with anything but this duty that now you are about; this is the preparation of your hearts to prayer in the course of your lives.

Now then for the prayer itself. First, we must consider of the matter of prayer. And secondly, of the manner of it.

First for the matter of it, we must look to it that it be according to God's will; 1 John. 5:14, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." Therefore, for the matter we must be sure it must be good that we pray for; it must be for the glory of God; for the good of ourselves and the good of our brethren.

First, for the glory of God, that should be the chief matter that we are to pray for; so, Christ when He teaches us to pray, He begins the very first petition, Matt. 6:9, 10, "Hallowed be Thy Name; Thy Kingdom

come; Thy will be done.” First begin with the glory of God, mind that in the chief place above all other things. God gives you leave to pray for outward things, but first for the glory of God, minding that before your own benefit, before the pardon of sin and your daily bread, how few do sanctify God's Name in this? People have little mind to pray, but when they are in outward afflictions, when they are upon their sick beds then they will pray, or at sea in storms then they will pray, then it seems that the main matter of your prayer is only for yourselves; but how hath the matters of the glory of the great God, and the good of the churches taken your hearts all this while? How have your hearts been affected with this, that the Name of God hath been so little sanctified in the world, and that the Kingdom of God hath not come, and that the will of God hath not been done, have these things taken up your hearts in prayer, the matters of the glory of God and the good of the churches, though yourselves have not any particular interest in them? If these things did but take up your hearts in prayer, then when you are at sea you would remember the cause of the churches, as much as yourselves; the Church is, as it were, in the midst of the sea, tossed up and down and in a great storm. Now why do not you pray as earnestly for the Kingdom of Christ among His churches as for yourselves when you are in a storm at sea?

Yea, and spiritual things should be the chief matter of your prayer; for they are the nearest to the glory of God; though God hath His glory from other things, yet spiritual things are nearest the glory of God. Now in these days of prayer, many will come to pray that they might be freed from danger, that they might have outward peace; this is good. But spiritual things are the chief things, and therefore the strength of your spirits should be thus poured forth to God. O, that I could get my heart to God, and the assurance of the love of God! O, that I could get the shine of His face! O, that I could get power over such and such corruptions.

And I beseech you observe this, that spiritual things may be prayed for absolutely, but outward things must be prayed for conditionally. I

may pray (and never put any condition in at all) that the Lord would pardon my sins, and help me against my corruptions, etc. But when I pray for the health of my body, I ought to pray, if this be according to Thy will, then restore me to the health of my body, or the health of my husband, or the health of my wife; but thou mayst pray, Lord convert the soul of my husband or the soul of my wife, without any condition at all. When your estates at sea are in danger, when you pray for them, you must make conditions; Lord, as thou seest best for me, so do thou deal with me. This shows the excellency that there is in spiritual things above outward things, surely spiritual things are more to be desired for they are to be prayed for absolutely, and the other to be prayed for only conditionally; that's for the first.

In the second place we are to pray for our own good. God doth give us leave so to do, only here comes in a question.

Quest. Whether it be sinful to pray for afflictions, as sometimes some will be ready to do.

Answ. To that I answer, first, take it absolutely considered, we may not pray that God would afflict us, because affliction is in itself materially an evil thing, and a fruit of the curse, therefore we may not (I say) absolutely pray for it; but thus far we may pray for afflictions disjunctively, conditionally, comparatively.

Disjunctively thus, Lord, either grant unto me a sanctified use of such a mercy, or otherwise let me rather be without it; let me have a sanctified use of my sickness, or otherwise let my sickness be continued to me; thus, now you may pray for continuing in sickness.

Or thus, conditionally, Lord, if Thou seest that my heart be so vile and wretched that I will abuse (through my corruption) such and such mercies, Lord rather take them from me, and let me be without them; if Thou seest that there be no way to break this proud heart of mine but such a way, Lord, let that be Thy way to break it, if Thou seest it according to Thy will as the fittest way.

Then comparatively thus, Lord, rather let me have any affliction than sin, rather let me suffer loss of my estate than sin against Thee, than depart from Thee; anything Lord rather than sin. Thus, you may pray for afflictions, but not absolutely. You must not pray that God would send you afflictions absolutely, for you do not know your hearts; it may be if afflictions should come, your hearts may be as stubborn under your afflictions as they are now, for affliction hath no power in itself to do us any good.

And then for the good of others, for Christ teaches us to pray, Our Father.

There comes in here a rebuke of the wicked practice of divers in cursing, and then a question about it.

It is a wicked thing to use curses; but it's a most wicked thing to wish evil to others in a way of prayer; yet how many do so? Though it may be they do not think it, they speak to God and desire Him to bring such and such evils upon their neighbors, yea, sometimes parents upon their children. This is a wicked practice of men. What, is it not wickedness enough for thee to have any desire that there should any evil befall thy brother, but wilt thou dare to presume to call God to be an instrument of the execution of thy base sinful wrath, that God must be a drudge, as it were, to thy wrath and to thy passion? This is abominable wickedness. Any of you that ever have been guilty of this sin of cursing others, wives, children, servants, or friends, the Lord rebuke you for this sin; how far hast thou been from sanctifying God's Name in prayer? Whereas, instead of sanctifying the holy Name of God, thou hast called God to be a servant, and a drudge to thy passion, God must be called to help the venting of thy passion. Oh, remember this you that have been at sea, and have been angry, and things not going according to your mind, have fallen a cursing, and a wishing such and such evils might come upon those you are angry with; that's a kind of prayer, but it is a most fearful taking the Name of God in vain in the highest degree, and certainly God will not

hold him guiltless that shall so take His Name in vain; therefore be humbled for this sin.

Object. But you will say, do not we read in the book of the Psalms where many times the Prophet David doth curse the enemies of God and wishes evil to come upon them?

Answ. To that I answer, first, that the prophets, and those that penned the Psalms they had a prophetic spirit; and those places that you read that are in way of cursing, they are rather prophetic predictions of evil than direful imprecations; they are rather foretelling what shall be in a way of prophecy than wishing what should be.

Secondly, if they be wishing what should be, then I answer that those that were endued with such a prophetic spirit, they did know who were the implacable enemies of God and who were not, as David prayed against Judas so many hundred years before he was born; by a prophetic spirit, he knew that he was the child of perdition. Indeed, if we could certainly know a man that were to be a cast-away eternally from God, it were another matter, as the Church in the time of Julian, because of his apostasy being so abominable, it was determined almost generally by them that he had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and upon that they cursed him. Now I say, those that had an extraordinary spirit that did know who these were, they might do it, but this is no example for us in an ordinary way to wish evil and curses upon others. But thus far we may do with the enemies of the Church.

First, we may curse them disjunctively; Lord, either take them out of the way, or keep them that they may not do such mischief in the Church. Or thus, conditionally, if Thou seest Lord that they be implacable, Thou knowest them, if so, let Thy wrath and curse pursue them; Lord Thou seest what evil they are set upon, and therefore, rather than they should attain their mischievous designs, let Thy wrath and curse pursue them. So, we may do it, but not

absolutely to curse any, though they should do us never so much wrong, we are called to blessing. But now in zeal to God, take heed that we be not carried on in our own passion, but being sure it is in a zeal to God; we may wish the curses of God to pursue those that God knows to be implacable. This is but an appealing to God, and not at all fastening it upon any particular persons that we know but leaving it unto God for the execution of it, and so in a zeal to the glory of God, we may do it, and we are warranted so to do by the second petition, Thy Kingdom come. For that petition that requires us to pray for the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ doth also require that we should pray against all means that hinder the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, so that every time that the Church prays, Thy Kingdom come, or any prays, Thy Kingdom come, they do as much as say, O Lord, do Thou set Thyself against all the enemies of Thy Kingdom. If they belong to Thy election, Lord convert them, but otherwise Lord confound them. Now thus we see how we are to sanctify the Name of God in prayer, in regard of the matter of the prayer, but now for the manner of prayer. The most things I confess are there.

First, when we come to prayer, we must be sure to pray with understanding. 1 Cor. 14:15, "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and will pray with understanding also." God doth not love the sacrifice of fools; we must not come babbling to God in prayer to speak we know not what, and to multiply words we know not wherefore, but God doth require that those that come to prayer come with understanding, that they offer to God a rational, a reasonable, an understanding sacrifice; God is a Spirit, and He will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Now as it belongs to all other duties of worship, so especially in prayer, to know what we do when we pray, not to think to put off God with a mere empty sound; that's the first thing.

The second thing in the manner of prayer, it is the giving up all the faculties of our souls in it. I spoke to that in the worship of God in general; we shall apply it now particularly to prayer, the giving up

not only our understandings, but wills, thoughts, affections, strength in prayer. In 2 Chron. 20:3, it is said of Jehosaphat that he “set himself to seek the Lord,” he did give his whole self to seek the Lord; we are to give our whole self and not to divide in prayer. Now this were an argument that indeed might well take up a whole sermon in showing the evil of the wandering of our spirits in prayer; we should take heed of the wandering of our spirits in hearing of the Word, and receiving the Sacraments, and so in prayer. The people of God are much troubled with the wandering of their thoughts both in Word and Sacrament, and it is their great burden and should be so, but I never hear any more complainings of the wandering of their spirits than in the time of prayer. The people of God are much pestered in their spirits with this evil, it is very grievous unto them, and many of them go under it as a grievous burden all their days. The chief burden that is upon their spirits is their wandering in prayers, so that if God should speak to them as He spoke unto Solomon, and bade him ask what He should give him, I verily believe there are many in this congregation that have already good assurance of God's love in Christ, if they had not that, that would be the main thing that they would ask. But having attained that, if God would speak from heaven and say, what shall I give you for yourselves, if He should ask you in the general, it may be you would ask something for the churches; but if it be for yourselves, you would put up this petition, oh Lord that I may be delivered from a wandering spirit in holy duties, and especially in the duty of prayer, that I may thereby come to enjoy more holy communion with Thyself than ever yet I enjoyed. And they would account this to be a greater mercy than if God should give them to be kings or queens over the whole world. If God should put these two into the balance, either the whole world to possess or otherwise to have more free hearts in coming to God in prayer, and to be delivered from that that hath so much hindered their communion with God in prayer, they would despise and scorn the world in comparison of such a mercy as this is. Howsoever carnal hearts they think little of it, but those that are the servants of God they find it to be very grievous to them; but being the time is past, I

shall reserve that to speak yet a little more largely for the help of those that are under the burden of it.

I'll only speak one thing further now, and that shall be to those that are wicked and vile, that not only have vain wandering thoughts in prayer, but even in the very duty of prayer, many times have wicked and ungodly thoughts; how horrible are they? Unclean thoughts, murderous thoughts it may be, and most abominable. I confess even those that are godly may sometimes have some blasphemous thoughts cast into them, for the Devil is never more busy than at the time of prayer; but they rather come from the Devil than from the stream and corruption of their own hearts, which may be we may make out more clearly afterward; but now I speak to such as have most wicked abominable thoughts rising from the stream and corruption of their hearts, such thoughts as their hearts do close withal in prayer, and they can roll those thoughts about in their minds as a child will roll a piece of sugar in its mouth; and this is the wickedness of many men and women's hearts.

Take but this one note with you, that all those dreadful, vile, unclean, covetous thoughts of thine in prayer, they have been to God as if you had spoken them in words; thoughts to God are all one with Him as words are to men, for God is a Spirit, and the Spirit doth converse with God in thoughts as well as men do converse with men in words; and what a woeful guiltiness would have been upon you had you spoken such vile and wicked things to men as some times hath been in your minds, even when you have been praying to God, how would the company have even spit in your faces, and kicked you from them? None that have any face of godliness would have endured you in their company, and yet here's the evil of it, your hearts are not troubled, but you rise off your knees and away you go. Thou hast a cauterized conscience, a seared conscience that canst entertain such vile thoughts at any time without having thy spirit afflicted and going away with shame and confusion, as if the greatest evil had befallen thee; therefore, take heed of this.

## **Sermon XIV**

### **Sanctifying the Name of God in Prayer**

LEVITICUS 10:3

I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.

We are first to sanctify God's Name in regard of the matter of our prayers. And secondly in regard of the manner. For the first, we made an end of it the last day, and came unto the manner, and there were two things mentioned.

First, that we must pray with understanding. Secondly, we must give up ourselves to prayer. Now in the close of the exercise we had occasion to fall upon that argument about the wandering of our thoughts in prayer, and by that we come to take God's Name in vain instead of sanctifying of His Name. God expects that we should have our thoughts and wills, and affections, our whole souls acting upon Him in the duty of prayer, or else we do not pray to God as unto a God; vain thoughts in prayer do pick up the sacrifice like the birds that Abraham drove away from the sacrifice, that they should not peck it. Wicked lusts in men's hearts are like swine to take the meat and all, to hale it in the dirt, so their prayers are filthy and dirty with their lusts; but those that are otherwise godly, yet by their vain thoughts the beauty and excellency of their prayers is taken away. As wine and beer that have the spirits of them gone, so the life and spirit of our duties are gone by our vain thoughts, and therefore vain thoughts do dead the heart very much.

So saith David in Psalm 119, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken me in Thy Law." While our eyes look upon vanity, there will be no quickness in our hearts in any service that we

tender up to God. Now many of God's people have experience of the evil of this and they groan under the burden of this, and as I said the last time, if so be that the Lord should speak from heaven to them and ask them what they would have, they have already the assurance of His love in Christ, they would ask the deliverance from a vain spirit in the performance of holy duties. "Bring no vain oblations," saith God, Isa 1:13. Oh, what vain oblations do we bring by the vanity of our thoughts in prayer! 'Tis true, the best of all will have vain thoughts sometimes; but yet, as one compares the vain thoughts of men in prayer like unto a spaniel that goes out with a man, he walks perhaps but half a mile, but the spaniel will be running up and down, this way and that way, and if all the space of ground which the spaniel hath gone over should be measured, it may be while you are walking half a mile, the spaniel fetching compasses here and there would be half a dozen miles, so our fancies are like a spaniel which will have fetches about this way and that way, in a thousand vain thoughts. But thus, now it is with a godly man as a spaniel though running from his master, yet if he give him a call, he is able to call him to him presently; and it were well if it were so with us, though our fancies be wild, yet if we were able to call in our fancies and to have them at command, it were well with us.

And I find it very much that those that are newcomers they complain much of the vanity of their thoughts, they were wont to pray before, and they never had such vain thoughts as now they have. The reason why there is so much vanity of thoughts, or at least so much taken notice of it, is first because there is but a little grace in the midst of a great deal of corruption in young converts, like a spark of fire in the midst of a great deal of ashes. Now if there lies a heap of ashes and nothing else, you do not stir them; but if there be ashes and some fire, then you will stir them and be blowing those sparks to kindle another fire by. Now when you come to make any motion, then the ashes will fly about, whereas before they lay still. So it is here, before God wrought upon thy heart, there was nothing else but ashes upon thy soul, and then they lay still, but now God hath kindled some sparks of grace in thy heart, and God is blowing them up to a greater

heat and is bringing of them to a flame; upon this motion that is in thy heart, and the stirring to kindle those sparks further in thy heart, it is that the ashes of thy corruptions do, as it were, fly about thine ears, and that there is such stirrings of corruption more than there was before. 'Tis not because there is more corruption than there was formerly, but before there being nothing else but corruption it lay still, and now because there is something else, therefore it is that corruption doth so stir.

And besides, you know a man that was wont to keep lewd company. If God turn him so that he will keep that company no more, at first, he shall be more troubled with them than he was before; and they will keep oftener knocking at his door, and laboring to get him to them again. So 'tis here, when the soul, vanity, and lusts were as friends together there was no disturbance and taking notice of anything then, but now when the soul is casting out those sinful distempers and will have no more of them, they for the present will be more importunate, active, and stirring than they were before. And besides, the Lord doth this to humble thy heart the more, that thereby thou mayest come to see the great corruption that was in thy soul before; the working of thy corruptions will discover much evil in thy heart that thou didst not think was there before. When the corruptions of men and women lie still, they think there is no such thing in their souls; as your civil men, what's the reason that they bless themselves and think they are in a good condition? It's because their corruptions lie still in them and do not stir, they cannot believe what abundance of wickedness there is in their hearts, if God should open the wickedness that there is in the hearts of men naturally, and so all unregenerate men they would think you speak strange riddles, whereas they bless themselves; they bless God they know no such thing in their hearts, no? Yes, there are such things, only they are not stirred, but they lie quiet as mud in the bottom of a pond. There it is, yet you cannot see it till it be stirred. At first conversion, I say, the Lord suffers thy corruption thus to stir, that He may discover to thee what an evil heart thou hast, what abundance of sin there is in thy

heart; and therefore, your young converts look upon themselves more loathsome and viler than ever they thought they had been.

And besides, the Devil sees it a vain thing to tempt a young convert to any gross act of sin, when conscience hath life and power in it, he shall never prevail that way; but now he thinks he may prevail to disturb them with vain thoughts, and therefore he lays his strength most that way. Therefore, let not such be discouraged that find their spirits annoyed and pestered with them, if they make them to be the burden of their souls; notwithstanding much vanity of thoughts, the Lord will accept of any desire that they have to sanctify His Name in holy duties, and I shall give you these three or four rules to help you against these wandering and vain thoughts in holy duties, and especially in prayer.

First, when thou goest to prayer, account it to be a great work; set a high price upon thy prayer, not as having any excellency in it as it comes from thee but set a high price upon it as a great ordinance of God, wherein there is communion with God to be enjoyed, and the influence of the grace of God to be conveyed through it. So, set a high price upon prayer at every time thou art going to prayer, Lord, I am now setting upon a work that is of very great consequence, and much lies upon it, and I would account it to be a sore and a great evil to me if I should lose but this prayer. This would be a special means to compose thy spirit, and to keep thee from wandering, as Nehemiah, in Neh. 6:3, a place that I have sometimes quoted upon such an occasion, when the enemies of Nehemiah that would hinder the building of the temple sent to him that they might talk together, no, saith he, "I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down." So, when the Devil and the vanity of thine own heart would send to thee to parley, and talk as it were, with thee, give an answer, I cannot stand parlaying with these things; the work that I am about is a great work. There are very few people that do account the work of prayer a great work; if thou didst, it would help thee much against the vanity of thy thoughts.

Secondly, every time thou goest to prayer thou that art most troubled with such vain thoughts, renew thy resolutions against them: I have been troubled with vain thoughts heretofore, and am afraid if I look not to it that I shall lose this prayer also; and therefore O Lord, here I renew my resolutions to set against them in this prayer with all my might. It is very much that may be done by strong resolutions, and especially if thy strong resolutions be renewed resolutions, for an old resolution begins to grow weak. A man that hath resolved upon a thing a great while ago, it hath little power over him, but now when a man hath resolved upon a thing but this morning, and just at the time when he is going about it, now he doth resolve upon it, and set himself upon it, and doth resolve through the grace of God that whatsoever difficulty he meets with all, whatsoever it cost him, that he will go through this work. I say that resolutions renewed have a great deal of power, and you cannot imagine what a great deal of power the renewing of resolution against vain thoughts will have if they were renewed every time thou goest to prayer, until thou gettest power over thy thoughts, do but make trial of this. Thou hast lost many a prayer by vain thoughts, and thou hast been troubled for them, and yet they come again, do but try for this week. As I remember I said in the point of passion and anger that we should resolve with ourselves well whatsoever falls out this morning, I am resolved I will bear it. So bethink thyself how many prayers thou hast lost by vain thoughts, and now renew thy resolutions and covenant with God, that for this prayer I will set myself against them, whatsoever pains I take, I will be sure yet withal to look up to God's grace to assist me, I will be sure this prayer to keep my heart close to what I am about; and perhaps that will help you a little. But yet some vain thoughts will come for all that, then the next night renew them again; and the next morning renew them again; and that till thou comest to a habit of keeping thy heart close to the duty, though now thou feelest thy heart so wild that thou thinkest it is impossible to bring it into order, but certainly by such a means thy heart will be brought into order.

Thirdly, be sure to set the presence of God before you in prayer, have a real light of the infinite greatness, majesty, and glory of that you present yourselves unto when you are calling upon Him. If so be that thou canst have a real sight of God in His glory, it will keep thy heart close to the duty, as if a man be wandering with his eyes, and looking after every feather, if the king or some great person come into the room, all his thoughts would be about the king, or the great person that were coming in. So, if you would present the Lord in His glory and greatness, excellency, majesty, and power before you, and what a dreadful God He is in Himself, and yet what a merciful God He is to us in His Son, this would mightily compose our hearts. Certainly, men and women that are so wandering in their prayers it is because their eyes are not open to look upon God in His glory, they are as it were dreaming, and do not apprehend that God stands and looks upon them, and observes them, and that God takes notice of every wandering thought that comes from them. They do not consider that God doth converse with the thoughts of men, as well as men do with the words of men; that's a third rule.

Fourthly, take heed thou be not deceived, because that those thoughts thou hast in prayer do not appear to be very evil in themselves. This is a great deceit and hinders many in the sanctifying of God's Name in prayer; there is sometimes darted in some vain thoughts; now because the thought hath no great evil in itself, therefore they think they may play with it, and their hearts close with it, and so run along with it as the fish doth with the bait. If the Devil casts in a thought of blasphemy, that makes thee quake and shake; but if thy thoughts have no great evil in them, but they are slight things, matters of no moment one way or other, upon that thy heart begins to be dandling, and playing with them. Therefore, remember this rule, that in the time of prayer, whatsoever thoughts be in thy mind that do not concern the present duty, they are sinful before God, though the thoughts for the matter of them be never so good, yet thou art to abandon them as sinful at that time. Therefore, never be deceived with this, that the thoughts are not very sinful; that's another rule.

In the last place observe this rule, if ever God hath helped thee at any time in prayer, that thy heart hath been kept close to a duty, and thou hast had communion with Him, bless God for that, bless God for that help. 'Tis a rule of very great use for us to get further assistance from God in anything, if so be our hearts be enlarged to bless God for any assistance we have had heretofore. And the reason why we gain and prosper so little in our Christian course, it is because we do not take notice of what God hath done for us, to give God glory for mercies formerly received, and therefore God takes little or no delight in coming in with further mercies to us. It is as if you had a young nursery of trees, and they began to thrive very well, but there comes a company of caterpillars and spoils almost all the young trees that are set; only two or three are kept from the caterpillars. A man goes into his orchard and looks upon his trees, and this is spoiled, and that is spoiled; but he sees two or three and these flourish fairly, and these are full of buds, and are likely to come to something, and he rejoices mightily in those because they are saved when so many others are spoiled. And so do thou view thy prayers and consider how many hath been spoiled, as it were, by these caterpillars. For I compare wandering, vain thoughts in prayer unto caterpillars that are upon the trees; and we see that if stormy, rainy weather comes the caterpillars will fall. And one would think that these blustering storms and the hand of God that hath been out against us should have cleansed our thoughts and souls from these caterpillars that have been upon our duties, but many duties have been spoiled; yet thou mayest say that through God's mercy such a morning in my closet the Lord hath preserved a prayer to Himself, and I have gotten power over this vain heart of mine, bless God for this, and so the Spirit of God will be more ready to come in and help thee another time. But thus much shall suffice to speak to this, that's the second thing, we must give up ourselves wholly to this duty.

The third thing for the sanctifying of God's Name in prayer is this, there must be the breathings of the Spirit of God, otherwise God's Name is not sanctified. That in Rom. 8:26 is clear for this, "Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we

should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." If any of you should say, how can we sanctify God's Name, we are poor and weak, we can do little? Mark, it is said here, that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities to pray, and the Word is exceeding emphatic in the original; in your books 'tis but merely helping our infirmities, but the meaning of the Word is, in these two things, the Spirit helps, that is, look how a man that is taking up a heavy piece of timber at one end, he alone cannot get it up, but there comes another and takes it up at the other end and so helps him. The Word signifies such a kind of helping, as when a man takes a thing at the other end, or on the other side, one standing the one way, and the other standing the other way, or one taking up one end, and the other the other end, that is the meaning of it; He helps our infirmities. The poor soul is pulling and tugging with its own heart, and finds his heart heavy and dull, like a log in a ditch, and have not many of you found your hearts so? But now then, when you are tugging with your hearts, and would fain lift up your hearts to God in prayer, there comes the Spirit of God at the other end and takes the heaviest end of the burden and helps you to lift it up. If a child were at one end of the log, and that were but light, and the other end very heavy, if one come and take up the heaviest end, a little strength will serve for the lighter end. So, the Spirit comes and takes up the heavier end in duty, and so helps our infirmities, helps together. And then the other Word is the Spirit; that is together with the acting of the graces of the Spirit in our hearts, you must not say so, Alas, what can I do? It must be the Spirit of God that must do all; it is true, He doth all.

First, He gives converting and habitual grace, and assisting and actuating grace; but now when the Spirit hath wrought grace so as to convert the heart, and hath given habitual grace in thy heart, why then when the Spirit comes to assist, He doth expect that thou shouldest stir up all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and the very strength of thy body. The Spirit of God expects that thou shouldest act to the uttermost thou art able, what power hath been given thee by God, and when thou art in acting, then the Spirit comes and helps

together with us; noting that we are to put forth what strength we have, and thus God's Name will be sanctified, when as we putting forth the graces of the Spirit in us, then the Spirit comes and helps. And what comes from us now comes from the breathings of the Holy Spirit in us, and then God who knows the meaning of the Spirit, will know now the meaning of our sighs and groans. Therefore, when thou art going to prayer, thou art to eye the Spirit of God; thou art by the eye of faith to look upon the Spirit of God, and to cast thy soul upon the assistance of the Spirit of God. Thou art to look upon the Holy-Ghost, as appointed by the Father and the Son to that office, to be a helper to His poor servants in the duties of worship, and especially in that great duty of prayer.

Now upon the reading of this text, and having it thus opened, this is one good help for thee in prayer. Read this text, and then exercise thy faith upon it. Lord, hast Thou not said that Thy Spirit helps our infirmities, when we know not what to pray for, nor how to pray for anything as we ought? But the Spirit will come, now Lord, make good this Word of Thine to my soul at this time and let me have the breathings of the Spirit of God in me; alas the breaths of men, if it come from gifts and parts, I know Thou wilt never regard it, except there be the breathings of the Holy Ghost in me in prayer.

Now, if you would know whether the Spirit of God doth come in or no, you may know it by this: the Spirit of God carries unto God, and He makes the prayer sweet and delightful, so much of the Spirit of God as is there, He comes to the soul in the duty, and He leaves a savor behind it; a gracious savor is always left behind when the Spirit of God comes to breath. O, the breath of the Spirit of God is a sweet breath, and it makes prayers sweet; it never comes into the soul but after it hath done any work it came for, it leaves a sweet scent, after that, the soul finds a sweetness in that prayer. Now many of you have been in the morning at prayer, but I appeal to you, what sweet savor of the Spirit of God is left behind? Certainly, if the Spirit hath been there it is like civit that is put into a little box, though you should take out the civit, yet there will be a sweet savor left behind;

so though the Spirit of God, in respect of the present assistance, withdraws Himself, yet He leaves a sweet savor behind.

The fourth thing is purity of heart; pure heart and hands, in Heb. 10:22. Rev. 5:8, “having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.” Mark, the prayers of the saints are odors in golden vials, the golden vials I may compare to the heart; the hearts of the saints must be as golden vials, and then their prayers will be as odors. In 1 Tim. 2:8, the Holy Ghost giving directions how we should pray, it is with this qualification, “I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.” The outward conversation must be pure, and the heart pure. In Job 22:23, 26, mark what is said concerning that holy man; there is a promise made to him for the lifting up of his face to God, putting away iniquity from his tabernacle, that by putting away evil from our tabernacles, and so from our hearts, we may be able to lift up our hearts with joy to go; and that is the fifth thing, purity of heart and hands.

The sixth thing is, in truth, when we come to call upon God, we must call upon Him in truth, Psa. 145:18, “The Lord is nigh unto all, to all that call upon Him in truth.” You will say, what is the meaning of that? To that I answer.

First, there must be inward dispositions answerable to the expressions; as for instance, when I come to express the greatness of the majesty of God, then I must have an inward disposition suitable to this expression. I must have a fear and reverence of the infinite majesty of God.

Secondly, when I come to confess my sin, to judge myself for my sin, there must be an inward disposition suitable to such a confession. O, how many men and women will come and speak great things against themselves for their sins, and judge themselves for their sins, and yet there is no such disposition in their hearts suitable to their words. You shall have some in praying with others, they will be a means to

break the hearts of others, they will so follow their sin and take such shame and confusion upon themselves for their sin, and yet God knows their hearts are not stirred all this while; and then they will call upon God for pardon of sin, and for power against their sin, and yet God knows that their hearts do close with their sin, and are loath to part with their sin in the meantime; this is falseness of heart, when the inward disposition is not answerable to outward expressions. I beseech you my brethren, consider of the prayers you have made, and especially you that pray much with others, look what expressions you have made, and see whether there be answerable dispositions to the expressions you have made, and how that the Lord doth remember every expression that you have made.

Thirdly, we must call upon God in truth; that is, conscionably to perform the engagements of prayer; prayer puts an engagement upon the heart. Now those that call upon Him in truth are conscionable to perform the engagements; as now, do I pray for any good thing? I am engaged to endeavor in the use of all means for the attaining of the good thing. When you confess a sin, why, you are engaged by that means to endeavor all your might against that sin; and when you pray for My grace, you are engaged to make use of all means you can for the attaining of that grace. And then besides, in prayer there is much profession unto God of our sincerity and uprightness, and of our willingness to be at His dispose, perform these engagements that thou makest to God in prayer; if God should present to us all our professions that we have made to Him in prayer and tell us how we have come short of them, it would make us be in shame and confusion in our own thoughts.

Another thing in prayer must be faith; pray without doubting as in the former Scripture, the prayer of faith prevails much; James 1:6, 7, a man that wavereth and doubteth must not think to obtain anything of God. But I should have opened what that faith is that we should have in prayer; we must have faith to believe that the thing that we do pleaseth God, and faith in God's promises, and faith in God's providence; this should be exercised in the time of our prayers. And

therefore, after we have done, to go away believing, as Hannah in 1 Sam. 1:18 we read of her, that after she had been praying, she went away and looked no more sad, the text saith, noting that after we have been pouring forth our souls to God, we should believe and exercise faith and not go in as drooping a way as ever we did.

Object. You will say, yea, if we knew certainly that God will hear us.

Answ. The way to be assured that God will hear you is by casting yourselves upon God. How can you know that He will hear, but by resting upon Him? I have been with God, and I have been doing the duty of a poor creature, and for the success I leave it to God, and therefore it must be with faith.

But I have so many sins mixed with my prayers; how can I believe?

You have an excellent Scripture for that to help a soul, to exercise faith in prayer, notwithstanding there hath been many infirmities, in Psa. 65:2, 3, "Oh, Thou who hearest prayers, unto Thee all flesh shall come." Thou hearest prayers, but I have a great many sins that hinders; no, mark, what though iniquity prevails against me, as for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away? Oh, make use of this Scripture, though you remember not other things, yet you that have dejected hearts and are afraid that God will not hear your prayers, see what the text saith, "Thou hearest prayer, Lord," but will not my sins hinder? "No," saith David, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions Thou shalt purge them away." Exercise faith in this and know that God doth not hear prayer because thou art not sinful, because of thy worthiness, but merely for His free grace.

Another holy disposition in prayer should be this, the soul should come with a holy freedom, with the Spirit of adoption to God, crying, Abba, Father. If thou comest to God merely as to a judge, though it's true, those that do not know that God loves them, yet are bound as creatures to pray, but thou canst never sanctify the Name of God till thou hast a child-like spirit, the Spirit of adoption. The Lord loves to

have His children come with freedom of spirit to Himself in prayer, to come as children and not to come with dejected countenances and discouraged hearts; but come freely to open thy heart to God as any child would open his heart to a gracious and loving Father.

Another disposition is fervency in prayer, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” and that will be a means to help against vain thoughts, too, as when the honey is scalding hot, then the flies will not come to it; if thy heart were, as it were, scalding hot in prayer thou wouldest not have such vain thoughts.

Next, there must be constancy in prayer; in 1 Thess. 5:17, by that I mean this, never to give over until we have that we pray for, or something else in lieu of it. It may be thou hast prayed and nothing is come of it; be not discouraged, thou hast to deal with a great God, and therefore pray again and again, and again, and pray with this resolution, well, let God do with me what He will; I will as long as I live call upon Him, and if God shall cast me away, yet He shall cast me away calling upon Him, as the poor woman of Canaan when Christ called her “dog,” and discouraged her, yet still she would pray, I but dogs may have crumbs. That heart is in an ill condition that is discouraged in prayer because it doth not get what it would, and therefore to think with themselves, I had as good not pray at all, take heed of any such thoughts.

Again, if you would pray to God indeed, so as to sanctify His Name in prayer, there should be humility in your hearts so as to be sensible of your own unworthiness. I spoke somewhat about being sensible of the distance between God and us when I spoke about sanctifying of God's Name in general. The last that I shall speak of is this, when you have done all, this all, these qualifications will not sanctify God's Name, except all be tendered up in the Name of Jesus Christ, and in the power of His merits. Let a man or woman pray with as much fervency, zeal, constancy, purity, in truth and sincerity, yet except he puts up all in the Name of Christ, I say he cannot be accepted; our spiritual offerings must be tendered up in His Name, but I have

preached much about that. But now put all that hath been said together, and this it is to pray, that is, when as I pray understandingly, when I give myself to prayer, when there are the breathings of the Holy Ghost in my prayer, when there is purity of heart like a golden vial, together with sincerity, when it is in truth of heart, when it is in faith, when it comes from a spiritual adoption, when it is in fervency, when in constancy, reverence, humility, and all put up in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Now a man prays, as it is said of Saul, "Behold, he prayeth." So I may say of those that are instructed in this art, "Behold they pray." You see now that prayer is more than to read in a book, more than to say a few words; you see it is a very hard thing to pray, a work of great difficulty, and no marvel though we have lost so many of our prayers as we have done. We must not charge prayer and God with it but look to ourselves (I mean not charge the ordinance of prayer) but the vileness of our carriage in our prayers; and let us for time to come know what a Christian life means. It is said of Christ in Luke 9:29 that as He was praying, the fashion of His countenance was changed. Oh, that's an excellent thing, that when we have been in our closets at prayer, to come away with our faces shining. My brethren, could we but pray in such a manner as this is, the very fashion of our countenances would be changed, as Moses when he came from the presence of God upon the Mount, or as Christ that had the fashion of His countenance changed. Prayer, it is the sweet ease of one's spirit, it is the help at a dead lift, it is the great ordinance of our communion with God in this world, and therefore, let us learn this art of sanctifying God's Name in prayer.

I shall conclude all in this. You have heard the mystery of the sanctifying the Name of God in worshipping God; now I beseech you, you that have been a long time in the school of Christ, as it were apprentices to Christ to learn Christianity, be ashamed that you have understood so little of this art in sanctifying the Name of God in prayer. It is an art and a mystery that you must be instructed in, and you are not Christians until you are instructed in this, as in an art

and mystery. And that man and woman that shall be instructed truly in this art and mystery in sanctifying God's Name now in the worshiping of Him, such a man and woman shall be to all eternity sanctifying the Name of God in praising of Him. There is a time coming when all the saints must be in the presence of God, and be always praising of Him, and they shall then sanctify God's Name forever. Let us now learn this art of sanctifying God's Name in praying, that we may eternally sanctify His Name in praising of Him.

FINIS.

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