

Pilgrim's Progress (4): The Cross and the Sepulcher

Galatians 6:14

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This is our fourth in our study of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and we come tonight - and as it so happens in the marvelous providence of God...it wasn't something that I had particularly planned...but tonight we come to The Cross. I'm so glad it wasn't last Sunday evening when we were looking at The Man in the Iron Cage and somber and dour as that necessarily was, tonight we come to burdens being lifted at Calvary.

Our text for this evening as a key to the understanding of what Bunyan is doing at this stage in *Pilgrim's Progress* is from Galatians, chapter six and verse 14. Before we read the passage together, let's look to God in prayer. Let's pray.

Once again, O Lord, with our hearts full of those words 'I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord'', we are in the house of the Lord. We are amongst Your people, Your gathered people on the Lord's Day, and we are glad. Our hearts rejoice in every promise that You have made, and we thank You especially for the gift of Your word, a word that is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. And we pray now, Holy Spirit, that You would cause this word to be written upon our hearts; that we might read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest; that we might become as those wise ones who build that house upon the Rock of Jesus Christ. Bless us, we pray, as we read Your word. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

This is God's holy and inerrant word.

“But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Amen. And may God bless to us the reading of His holy and inerrant word.

Now we come to this point in the narrative of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and many of you have been telling me that you've picked up your treasured family heirloom of *Pilgrim's Progress* — some of you have editions that I've coveted and envied. Some of you were ordering several — I overheard somebody ordering

seven copies this morning of the child's version of *Pilgrim's Progress*, a marvelous edition with wonderful, wonderful pictures, and if you're an adult make an excuse that you're buying it for your grandchild or something — but it's well worth perusing. The pictures are just absolutely marvelous.

We come now to the section in which Christian has gone through the Wicket Gate. He's still carrying this enormous Burden upon his back; he's carrying the good Book in his hand. He has been through the Slough of Despond. He has gone to the House of Interpreter; he has seen the seven things which have been shown to him.

And now finally, after some words of rebuke and words of encouragement from good old Evangelist, he has been pointed once again in the direction of The Cross. And we pick up the narrative, the allegory, of Bunyan now at this point:

Now I saw in my dream that the High-way up which Christian was fenced on either side with a Wall, and that Wall is called Salvation. Up this way therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty because of the load on his back.

He ran thus until he came to a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a Sepulcher. So I saw in my dream that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his Burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the Sepulcher where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, 'He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death.' Then he stood still awhile to look and wonder, for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his Burden. He went, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks.

Well, it's a beautiful, beautiful description of Christian finally losing this Burden off his back.

"The cross," Luther once said, "puts everything to the test." And it is at the cross that Christian finally loses his burden. Now, he will struggle with sin again, but from now on his relationship to sin is always going to be different. There is no burden of sin anymore. It is gone. It has rolled away, tumbled down into that Sepulcher never to be seen again. Something decisive has happened, and it has happened here at the sight of The Cross.

Now the problem, as we've already noted in previous weeks, is Why did Evangelist not point Christian to the Cross in the first place? Why did he point

him in the direction of a Shining Light? Why did he point him to this Wicket Gate? Remember, he comes up to Wicket Gate and knocks strenuously on the door and asks for entry, and Help, you remember, pulls him in and the gate is shut. And you remember there were arrows coming in the direction of the gate from the castle in which Beelzebub had some of his minions aiming his arrows at Christian. Why did Evangelist point Christian in the first place at the direction of Wicket Gate?

Now, the problem was, you remember, that after he had gone through the Wicket Gate, he still had the burden. Even though there were words of great counsel about his condition, now, having entered through the Wicket Gate, he had looked to Jesus Christ. I said at the time we were looking at the Wicket Gate that we should think of the Wicket Gate as Jesus Christ in the allegory. Why does Bunyan portray Christian still retaining his burden, even though he has passed through the Wicket Gate?

It's been a point of great controversy down through the ages. No less than C.H. Spurgeon, for example, in a very famous sermon criticized Bunyan, whom he loved greatly; Spurgeon was always quoting Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* in his sermons. But at this point he said, in a way that only Spurgeon could say, and I send you to the sermon — you can find it on the net somewhere, I'm sure. You can read the Victorian, late nineteenth-century language of Spurgeon, but he's saying, to all intents and purposes, he could have got Christian to loose his Burden a lot sooner than Bunyan managed to. And the credentials of Spurgeon being the strong Calvinist, Reformed Christian that he was are not in question.

Now, the issue is complex, and we don't have time to go into all the details of it this evening. We could readily spend several hours now examining the theological complexity of what it is that Bunyan is actually doing here. You know, as you read the story, you may just think of it as a story, and a raving good yarn or tale, and move on. But you know, if you've got that kind of antenna that sort of starts beeping every now and then when you're reading, this is a point in which your antennae are going to beep, and you're going to ask the question:

What is going on here? It's partly something to do with Puritan theology. Bunyan is writing in the middle of the seventeenth century. He's writing this just about the time, a little after the time of the writing of *The Shorter Catechism* or *The Larger Catechism* or *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. He's actually reflecting something of the theology that is packed into those last two pages of our hymnbook where *The Westminster Confession of Faith* and *The Shorter Catechism* are to be found. He's actually addressing something that is of particular importance to us as Presbyterians, and tonight as we reflect on the past and as we reflect on the theology that has held this building and this church together, it seems appropriate now that we should be addressing something like this.

It was, just as a point of interest, something that arose in particular in the 1720's and thereafter in a very famous controversy in the Church of Scotland, called "The Marrow Controversy"¹, a controversy in which Thomas Boston was involved. It arose because of the republication of a book, probably published by Edwin Fisher a hundred years before in 1645. And it has to do with the issue of salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. And the issue was...there was a question put at the time of the ordination ceremony ritual, trials, of a young would-be Presbyterian minister of the gospel, a man by the name of William Craig. And a deliciously phrased double-negative question — beware of double-negative questions, because they're always tricky! — but a deliciously phrased double-negative question was put to this young man, William Craig, candidate for ordination at a famous presbytery of Auchterarder, and the question was, "Can you affirm this: "I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ"?"

Well, it's a tricky question, and it's a double-negative. William Craig believed that it certainly was necessary to forsake sin in order to believe in Jesus Christ; and his opponents believed that in saying so he was denying free grace, he was denying the doctrine of salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.

You remember back in the time of the Reformation it was said we are saved by faith alone, but that faith that saves is never alone. It's always accompanied by works of repentance. Well, Bunyan is reflecting some of that enormously complex but crucially important dispute, and in this allegory he's doing at least two things.

The first thing that he's doing is he's trying to rescue the church from easy believe-ism. You know, easy believe-ism: that you become a Christian simply by assenting to a list of questions or something, or signing a pledge card, or walking down the aisle, or putting up your hand; and once you've affirmed that in your head that you're a Christian and you must never doubt again — that isn't just something that's a phenomenon of the twentieth century, it was something that Bunyan himself was concerned about.

And he was concerned that it is too easy to produce what he would have regarded as man-made Christians: Christians who said they were Christians simply because they had assented to a certain number of truths, but demonstrated in their lives no great visible transformation or work of the Holy Spirit that led to repentance as well as faith. And Bunyan, like his contemporaries, was concerned about what he would have called a "gospel hypocrite"; that is to say, someone who thought he was a believer, but actually wasn't. And they're very dangerous people, because they're very difficult to reason with, because they think that they are believers, they think that they have done that which the gospel demands, but they don't demonstrate in their lives any fruits of repentance. So that's a part of what Bunyan is doing here.

The other thing that Bunyan is addressing is the whole issue of assurance, and probably Bunyan is reflecting his own experience. You remember Bunyan overheard some women talking about spiritual things, and he was greatly convicted as a young man, as a teenager. He was convicted especially because of his foul mouth, and for upwards of a year to sixteen months, Bunyan was under conviction of sin, but he had no assurance that he was a believer. Was he a Christian? Was he not a Christian? He wasn't sure. For a period of about sixteen months, he moved in this sort of 'Twilight Zone' where he wasn't what he was, but he wasn't assured either that he was a true child of God. That's why we sang — not just because it's a favorite hymn of this congregation — but that's why we sang right at the very beginning of our service this evening, *Blessed Assurance! Jesus is Mine*.

You remember in the story — and those of you who have read ahead will perhaps this afternoon have come to a point that immediately after his burden rolls away into the Sepulcher, he meets Three Shining Ones, the first of whom says to Christian, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"; and the second takes away his rags and gives him a fresh suit of clothes; and the third places a mark on his forehead and gives him a roll with a seal on it — and this is later described as "...the assurance of his life and acceptance at the desired haven."

Now, let me suggest to you that Bunyan is actually teaching us three very important things.

I. The first is that the burden of sin is lifted at Calvary.

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed? And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head for sinners such as I?" ---

"At the cross, at the cross, when I first saw the light,
and the burden of my heart rolled away;
It was there by faith I received my sight,
and now I am happy all the day."

And that's Bunyan's testimony here about Christian: that that takes place at the Cross. By having the Burden roll off his back and down that hill because of his glimpse of the Cross, Bunyan is making the cross of Jesus Christ central to salvation and our experience of salvation. That's why Paul can say in Galatians — and Bunyan is reflecting that — "Far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Boasting in the cross of Jesus Christ...I dare say that that hymn medley that we sang this evening moved your heart. It would be a fair test of whether or not the true matter was in you, as to whether or not you're a true child of God. But you could sing those hymns and not be affected by the theme of the cross. And Paul is saying, "Far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of Jesus Christ."

“I boast in the cross of Jesus Christ”: that’s a very strange thing to say, to boast in an instrument of execution. It would be like saying ‘I boast in an electric chair. I boast in a syringe’, because that’s what Paul is saying: “I boast in the cross of Jesus Christ.”

But it’s not the instrument of execution so much that Paul is boasting in: it’s what that accomplishes. It’s the meaning of the cross for Paul that makes him boast.

And what is the meaning of the cross for the Apostle Paul? Well, the cross for the Apostle Paul accomplishes two things.

It accomplishes first of all, redemption. In Galatians he tells us that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law”; that the cross of Jesus Christ redeems. That is to say, it liberates us, sets us free from that bondage and incarceration; removes that weight of sin by paying the ransom price of His death, that our sins may be forgiven. So that we say tonight, and we sing tonight, “Redeemed, how I loved to proclaim it! Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child and forever I am.”

But Paul glories in the cross for another reason, too: Not only because it redeems him from his bondage, but it also provides propitiation for our sins. Christ redeemed us because He was made a curse for us. This burden, this enormous burden — and if you’ve been looking at Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* with pictures, you’ve got this picture in your mind now: this enormous burden on the shoulders of Christian, and it’s weighing him down. It’s the burden of his sin; it’s the burden of the just deserts of that sin.

And what the cross signals for the Apostle Paul as it signaled for John Bunyan and as it signals for every believer in this building this evening, is that that which my sins deserved has been borne, and borne to the full, by Jesus Christ. He has borne the penalty that that sin deserved. “He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be reckoned the righteousness of God in Him.”

On the cross, my sins were reckoned to Jesus Christ, and God the Father, in His infinite justice, poured forth His unmitigated wrath that that sin deserves, so that Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, should cry out, “My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me?” And He was forsaken. He was put in outer darkness because He was bearing the guilt and the consequences of that guilt of my sin — of my sin — so that “There is a green hill far away, without a city wall, where my dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.” And that’s why Bunyan has Christian gaze at this Cross...to gaze at this Cross, and immediately he gazes at this Cross...and it comes as a surprise to him that looking at what is to all intents and purposes the most sorrowful sight in all the world...that it becomes to him a sight of great joy. And as soon as he understands that there on the Cross his sins were dealt with, his Burden immediately looses from his back and begins to roll

down that hill and into that Sepulcher. The first thing, then, is that burdens and the burden of sin is lifted at Calvary.

II. The second thing that Bunyan is teaching us is this: that a great exchange takes place at Calvary.

Bunyan employs the picture of a change of clothes, recalling, I think, II Corinthians 5:20,21: "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be reckoned the righteousness of God in Him." My sins are reckoned to Christ's account, and His righteousness is reckoned to my account. The great exchange: my sins go to Christ, His righteousness comes to me. And the way Bunyan pictures that is the way the Bible pictures it. That exchange of my sins to Christ and His righteousness to me is pictured by Bunyan as a change of clothes. His rags are taken away, and one of the Shining Ones gives him a fresh suit of clothes.

It isn't enough, you see, that our sins be dealt with. We also need a positive righteousness, an obedience to every facet of God's law, in order to be made right with God. It's not enough that the penalty of our sins be wholly dealt with on the cross: we also need the righteousness, the obedience of Jesus Christ — that perfect, spotless, righteous robe of Jesus Christ — reckoned to our account.

Now, that's something that has come under a great deal of scrutiny and a great deal of attack in recent days. It's something the elders and the senior minister of this church have been greatly concerned about in writings and so on - this issue, very crucial issue, of the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ — and here Bunyan pictures it as this fresh suit of clothes.

This holy obedience of the last Adam as our sin-bearer, as our substitute, as our go-between, as the One who stood in our place, reckoning the obedience that a holy God requires on our behalf, and reckoning that obedience to our account, so that we are justified — that is to say, we are made right with God — so that we can be introduced to our heavenly Father and have access into His glorious presence because of what Jesus Christ has done in both His holy obedience to the law, in His perfect obedience to the law, and in His taking the curse that our sins deserved upon Himself. And as we give ourselves by faith to Jesus Christ, and resting upon Him alone with nothing in our hands, He gives to us His righteousness; so that in the very act of closing with Christ, we receive divine pardon and acceptance which we otherwise would not have.

Now, Bunyan wrote a wonderful treatise, a wonderful book, and called it *Justification by Imputed Righteousness: or...* [and Puritans were fond of giving lengthy subtitles!...] *or, No Way to Heaven But by Jesus Christ*. Isn't that a glorious title? *No Way to Heaven But by Jesus Christ*. And for Bunyan, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ was at the very heart of salvation by

faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.

Well, of course, it's in our *Shorter Catechism*:

Question 33: What is justification?

Answer: Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

A new dress, a new suit of clothes, a new change of raiment — and there Bunyan is reflecting that biblical truth.

Well, the third thing that Bunyan is teaching us — not only that the burden of sin is lifted at Calvary; not only, in the second place, this holy, important truth of the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ — but the third thing he teaches us is this:

III. That assurance is to be found at Calvary.

Bunyan is probably reflecting here something of his own experience of grace: that having entered the Wicket Gate, he didn't actually get assurance of his faith for something like fifteen or sixteen months. Some of you, I know, have had such an experience in your own lives. Now, Bunyan isn't saying that that is to be the experience of every Christian. Some people, the moment they believe — “I'm one of them!”

I didn't go through so much as one day of that dark night of the soul. As soon as I was convicted that I was a sinner, I put my faith in Jesus Christ and I received, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, assurance at that very moment. I can remember it was the 28th of December in 1971; it was about eleven o'clock at night, when I got down on my knees. I knew if I died at that point I was going to hell, and when I got up from my knees about twenty minutes later, having prayed the sinner's prayer, I remember getting up...and I couldn't have told you what the answer to *The Shorter Catechism* Question No. 33 was, because I didn't know there was a *Shorter Catechism*! Never heard of it! But I could have told you [that] if I died at that moment, I was going to heaven. I doubt that I could give a comprehensive theological analysis of what it was I was saying. I just knew that a transformation had taken place, and I was safe in the arms of Jesus, looking to Him and to Him alone —

“Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness, my beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, with joy I lift up my head.”

And that's why Bunyan has the third of the Shining Ones give to Christian a sealed Scroll and a mark upon his forehead. In the allegory, Bunyan is undoubtedly referring to the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit Himself is that seal. The Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts is the seal, the guarantee, the down-payment, as it were, that what we have now is a guarantee of what we will have in the future: that, as it were, the Judgment Day scrutiny has been brought forward to the present, and what God will say at the end of the ages, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; receive the kingdom that was prepared for you from before the foundation of the world," that verdict is given to us now so that we may be assured, "Now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is."

Brad was quoting John 14, at least, in the 8:30 service this morning, at the communion table:

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

And Christian is assured of that now. He knows that he's a pilgrim on the road to the Eternal City. He knows that from now on God's promises are 'yea' and 'amen' in Jesus Christ, and it is the sight of the Cross...not just the Cross, but do you notice where this burden rolls to? It is into the Sepulcher. That is to say, into the tomb. Why the tomb? Because the empty tomb of Jesus is guarantee that the Father has accepted all that the Son has provided. It is the guarantee, it is the affirmation that everything Jesus said, everything that Jesus has ever done is wholly acceptable to our glorious Father in heaven.

And so we have this beautiful, beautiful picture: Christian coming to this hill, and seeing the sight of the Cross, and his sins — the burden of his sins — rolling down that hill and disappearing into the tomb, never to be seen again; and being assured that his sins are forgiven him, being given this new robe of righteousness, and the seal of the Holy Spirit being put in his heart to assure him that now he is a child of God.

My dear friend, I don't know what brought you here this evening, but perhaps it was the occasion of this closure of this building. And you know, the most beautiful thing in all the world tonight would be the assurance that your heart is right with God, that your sins have been forgiven, that you have an assurance that you are a child of God and on the road to heaven. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Put your faith in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. "Come unto Me," Jesus says, "all ye that are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Let's pray together.

Our Father in heaven, as we come now to the close of this Lord's Day, we thank You for the gospel in all of its beauty. How we love it in all of its parts. How we thank You from the very depths of our beings for the provision of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We thank You that He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be reckoned the righteousness of God in Him. And we pray tonight that we might each one of us have that assurance, that gospel assurance, that Holy Spirit-given assurance, that we truly are a child of Yours. Have mercy, we pray, on anyone in this building tonight who is not a Christian. Give them no rest until they find that rest which alone is to be found in Jesus Christ. For Jesus' sake we ask it. Amen.

Please stand and receive the Lord's benediction.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

1. The Marrow Controversy. In order to understand the Marrow controversy in its historical perspective, it is necessary to make a few remarks about the history of the Reformation subsequent to the Westminster Assembly.

Although the Reformation was never as strong in England as on the continent, due to the efforts in England to make a Protestant State Church from a Roman Catholic Church - which efforts differed from the Reformation on the continent where reformation took place by way of separation from the Romish Church nevertheless, Arminianism itself did not appear in England until 1595, when it was taught by Peter Baro, Margaret professor of Divinity at Cambridge. His teachings occasioned the formulation and adoption of the Lambeth Articles which were added, though never officially, to the *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England. *The Lambeth Articles* made specific certain points of doctrine involved in the defense of the truths of sovereign grace over against Arminianism, which were less explicit in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. In 1596 Baro resigned his position because of his views.

These same views were, however, taught and defended by others. We have noticed earlier how Amyrauldianism came into England and was taught by the Davenant School and represented at Westminster by the men who belonged to this school of thought. But the same ideas were taught by Richard Baxter (1615-1691).

In his doctrine of Christ and the atonement he was Grotian; in his teachings on salvation he was Amyrauldian and Arminian. He believed it his calling to fight a certain antinomianism that had appeared in the church, but he became in fact neo-nomian and taught justification by faith and the works of the new law.

It is of some interest to note in this connection that the charge of antinomianism is often an easy charge to make and was many times brought by Arminians in their opposition of the truth of justification by faith alone. When some in the church lived lax lives, certain opponents of the truth of sovereign grace were quick to find fault with the truth of justification by faith alone and blame this doctrine for wicked excesses among the people, when in fact, the problem lay elsewhere. Already the Heidelberg Catechism addressed itself to this problem in Question and Answer 64: "But doth not this doctrine (of justification by faith) make men careless and profane? By no means: for it is impossible that those, who are implanted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness."

It is important to understand this because the question of antinomianism and neo-nomianism occupied an important place in the Marrow controversy.

However all that may be, Baxter was opposed by John Owen, especially in his famous book on the atonement: *The Death of Death In the Death of Christ*. In the introduction referred to in the footnote, J. I. Packer claims that Owen was writing against: 1) Classical Arminianism, 2) Amyrauldianism, and 3) The views of Thomas More. He also claims that Usher, Davenant, and Baxter, while holding to a modified Amyrauldianism, had not yet appeared in print with their views at the time Owen wrote his book. But, Packer insists, and correctly so, the book is not only about the atonement; it is also about the gospel.

"Surely all that Owen is doing is defending limited atonement?" Not really. He is doing much more than that. Strictly speaking, the aim of Owen's book is not defensive at all, but constructive. It is a biblical and theological enquiry: its purpose is simply to make clear what Scripture actually teaches about the central subject of the gospel the achievement of the Saviour. As its title proclaims, it is a "treatise of the redemption and reconciliation that is in the blood of Christ; with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby." The question which Owen, like the Dort divines before him, is really concerned to answer is just this: what is the gospel?

Concerning the gospel Owen taught that the preacher may not preach that Christ died for each one who hears and that God's love is for each one. Man cannot save himself. Christ died for sinners. All who confess sin and believe in Christ will be received. And those who do confess sin and believe in Christ are those whom God has chosen from all eternity. All who hear the gospel face repentance and faith as a duty, but to this is always added a particular promise so that the general command which comes to all through the preaching is always accompanied by a particular promise which is made only to those who repent and believe, i.e., the elect.

The preacher's task says Owen, is to *display* Christ. In this connection, Packer

claims that Owen held to the ideas of an offer and invitation. But this is not entirely true. Owen used repeatedly the word "offer," but, as we have noticed before, it can be used in a good sense -- as many early theologians used it. He used it in the sense of Christ presented, Christ portrayed, Christ set forth in the gospel -- a meaning which comes directly from the Latin root: *offere*. It is also true that Owen used the word "invitation," but used it in the sense of the invitation of a king, i.e., the command comes from the King Jesus to all who hear the gospel to repent from sin and turn to Christ. Yet Packer makes a point of it that Owen pressed home the idea, so important a part of Puritan thinking, that God through Christ urges upon all sinners to believe, and does this with the tenderest of entreaties and most urgent pleas.

These issues were also to occupy the attention of the men who were involved in the Marrow controversy. And they were of particular concern in connection with the dispute over a book called *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, which was first published by Edward Fisher in 1645 and republished in 1648 or 1649. The first part of the book, the part which is of particular concern to us, is written in the form of a conversation between Neophytus, a new convert to the faith, Nomista, who represents the position of antinomianism, and Evangelista, a pastor, who speaks the views of the author and expresses what Edward Fisher considered to be the truth of Scripture. It is therefore a discussion about the relation of the gospel to antinomianism and neo-nomianism.

The book did not attract a great deal of attention when it was first published, but came to the attention of the Scottish theologians in the early part of the eighteenth century under rather interesting circumstances.

The Presbytery of the Church of Scotland called the Auchterarder Presbytery was examining a certain candidate, William Craig, for licensure to the ministry. In the course of the examination he was asked to subscribe to the statement: "I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ." To this rather strange statement and clumsily worded article of faith William Craig refused to subscribe. Put into a bit more simple language, the expression simply meant that it was heretical to teach that it is necessary to forsake sin in order to believe in Christ. Or to put it yet differently: Orthodoxy says that one can come to Christ without forsaking sin. Because he refused to subscribe to this statement, William Craig was denied licensure to the ministry and the matter came to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for resolution. The statement under question became known as "*The Auchterarder Creed*."

Full text source: <http://www.prca.org/pamphlets/Free%20Offer/chapter6.htm>

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