

The Trial & Triumph of Faith

SERMON 9

By [Rev. Samuel Rutherford](#)

“O LORD, thou Son of David.” The one word “O Lord,” holdeth forth Christ’s Godhead; the other, “Son of David,” holdeth forth his manhood. Here is the perfection of our Mediator, in that he is the substantial covenant, and Emmanuel, God with us, or God us, in a personal union; the substantial marriage and alliance between the two houses of heaven and earth; God and clay. (2.) “He is not ashamed to call them brethren,” (Heb. 2:11). And why would he take part of flesh and blood, but because he would be a child of our house? (Verse 14.) (3.) He would be of blood to us: not only come to the sick, and to our bed-side, but would lie down and be sick, taking on him sick clay, and be, in that condition of clay, a worm and not a man, that he might pay our debts; and would borrow a man’s heart and bowels to sigh for us, man’s eyes to weep for us, his spouse’s body, legs, and arms, to be pierced for us; our earth, our breath, our life, and soul, that he might breathe out his life for us; a man’s tongue and soul to pray for us: and yet, he would remain God, that he might perfume the obedience of a High Priest with heaven, and give to justice blood that chambered in the veins and body of God, in whom God had a personal lodging.

USE 1. Oh, what love! Christ would not intrust our redemption to angels, to millions of angels; but he would come himself, and in person suffer; he would not give a low and a base price for us clay. He would buy us with a great ransom, so as he might over-buy us, and none could over-bid him in his market for souls. If there had been millions of more believers, and many heavens, without any new bargain his blood should have bought them all, and all these many heavens should have smelled one rose of life; Christ should have been one and the same tree of life in them all. Oh, we under-bid, and undervalue that Prince of love, who did overvalue us; we will not sell all we have to buy him; he sold all he had, and himself too, to buy us.

USE 2. What an incomparable thing must the Mediator God-man be? There is no fair creature, no excellent one, but there is a piece of nothing, and creature baseness and creature vanity in it; even a thing of blood, to the mother-nothing of the creation of God. There is no rose, but it hath a briar growing out of it, except the rose of Sharon, that flower of the field, not planted with hands; the Son without a father, “and who shall declare his generation?” A rose that should smell, and cast out odours for a mile of earth, or for ten miles, could draw to it many beholders; but if it should smell for the bounds of the half of the earth, it

should be more admirable. The flower that sprang out of the root of Jesse, spreads his beauty, and the odours of his myrrh through heaven and earth. Could the darkness of hell stand and look on the face of the sun, blackness of darkness should be better seen. But convene all the little pieces of the creation; summon before Christ, fair angels, all the troops of the sinless glorified spirits; the broad skies, fair heavens, lightsome stars; all the delicious roses, flowers, gardens, meadows, forests, seas, mountains, birds; all the excellent sons of Adam, as they should have been in the world of innocency, and let them all stand in their highest excellency before Jesus Christ; the matchless and transcendent glory of that great ALL should turn the worlds all into pure nothing. What wonder, then, that this same Lord Jesus be the delight, and heaven of all in it? The Lamb hath his throne in the midst thereof. (Rev. 7:17). "And they shall see his face," (Rev. 22:4.) They do nothing else, but stare, gaze, and behold his face for ages, and are never satisfied with beholding: suppose they could wear out their eyes at the eye-holes in beholding God, they should still desire to see more. To see Him face to face, hath a great deal more in it, than is expressed; words are short garments to the thing itself. Your now sinful face to his holy face, your piece clay face to his uncreated soul-delighting face, is admirable. We do not praise Christ, and hold out his virtues to men and angels. The creatures, as the heaven, sun, moon, are God's debtors, and they owe him glory: but men, who have understanding and tongues, are God's factors and chamberlains, to gather in the rent of glory and praise to God. The heavens do indeed "declare the glory of God," (Psalm 19:1,) but they are but dumb musicians; they are the harp, which of itself can make no music: the creatures borrow man's mouth and tongue, to speak what they have been thinking of God, and his excellency, these five thousand years. Now, all the glory of God, and the glory of the creatures, are made new by Christ, (Rev. 21:5,) and made friends with God. (Col. 1:20,) and are in a special manner in the Mediator Christ; he is, *Apaugasma tes doxes*, "the irradiation or brightness of the glory, and the character or express image of his person," (Heb. 1:3). All creatures, by Adam's sin, lost their golden lustre, and are now vanity-sick, like a woman travailing in birth, (Rom. 8:22). All the creatures by sin, did less objectively glorify God, than they should have done, if sin had never been in the world; and so, they were at a sort of variance and division with God. "And it pleased the Father in Christ, *Apokatallaxai ta panta*, to make friendship between God and all things," (Col. 1:20,) that is to confirm angels, to reconcile man, to restore the creatures to be more illustrious objects of his glory. Now, the income of the rents of glory is more due to Christ, and the debt the greater, in that Christ hath made all things new; and why should we not, in the name of sun, moon, earth, heaven, which are all loosed from the arrestment of vanity by Christ, and in the name of angels and of saints redeemed, hold forth the praises and the glory of God in Christ? Pay, pay what you owe to Christ, O, all creatures! but especially, you redeemed ones.

USE 3. If Christ the Mediator be so excellent a person, we are to seek our life the gospel-way in Christ. We often conceive legal or law thoughts of Christ, when we conceive the Father just, severe, and Christ his Son to be more meek and

merciful; but the text calleth him Lord, and so, that same God with the Father; nor hath Christ more of law, by dying to satisfy the law, nor is he more merciful than the Father, because he and the Father are one. There are not two infinite wills, two infinite mercies, one in the Father, another in the Son; but one will, one mercy in both; and we owe alike love and honour to both, though there be an order in loving God, and serving him through Christ.

USE 4. Infinite love, and infinite majesty, concur both in Christ. Love and majesty in men, are often contrary to one another, and the one lesseneth the other; in Christ, the infinite God breatheth love in our flesh. (1.) If we see but little of Christ, we know not well the gospel spirit. We rest much on duties, to go civil saints to heaven; but the truth is, there be no moral men and civilians in heaven, they be all deep in Christ who are there. We are strangers to Christ and believing. (2.) The spirit of a redeemed one can hardly hate a redeemed one, or be bitter against them; Christ in one saint, cannot be cruel to Christ in another saint. (3.) Christ cannot lose his love, or cast it away: the love of Christ is much for conquering hearts; "his chariot is bottomed and paved with love." Duties bottomed on Christ's love, are spiritual. As the Father accepteth not duties, but in Christ, so cannot we perform them aright, when the principal and fountain-cause is not the love of Christ. (John 21:15.)

USE 5. The Ancient of Days, the Father of Ages, taketh a style from his new house, the Son of Man: he hath an old house, from whence he is named, the Son of God. He must affect us, and his delight be with the sons of men, when he taketh a name from us: we should affect him, and affect a communion with him, and strive to have Christ's new name, as he taketh our new name, the Son of Man, of David.

"Son of David, have mercy upon me." The second article of her prayer is conceived under the name of mercy.—Why? God's mercy is a spiritual favour: deliverance to her daughter is but a temporary favour that may befall a reprobate. The devil may be cast out of the daughter's body, and not out of the mother's soul. Yea, but to the believer, all temporal favours are spiritualised, and watered with mercy.

1. They are given as dipped in Christ's bowels, and mercy, wrapt about the temporary favour. Jesus cured the leper. (Mark 1:41.) But how? "Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him." So is the building of the temple given, but oiled with mercies, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be builded in it." (Zach. 1:16.) Epaphroditus recovered health, but with it some of God's heart and bowels also, "For indeed he was sick, near to death, but God had mercy on him." (Phil. 2:27.)

2. The ground of it is God's mercy; the two blind men, put this in their bill: they cry, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David." (Matt. 20:30.) They will not

have seeing eyes, but under the notion of mercy. David, pained with sore sickness, as some think, or under some other rod of God, desireth to be healed upon this ground, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak." (Psalm 6:2.)

3. Faith looketh to temporal favours, as faith, with a spiritual eye, as Christ and his merits goeth about them. "By faith, Joseph, when he died, made mention of the children of Israel's departure:" (Heb. 11:22,) "By faith, Moses, come to age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." (verse 24.)—Why? and that was but a civil honour: Moses' faith looked at it in a spiritual manner.

4. That same ground that moveth God to give Christ, is enough to move him to give all other things with Christ. As by what right? even by the right of a son. A father giveth the inheritance to his son; by that same, he giveth him food, raiment, protection, physic. There are not two patents here, but by one and the same covenant. The Lord giveth to his people remission of sins. (Ezek. 36:25,26.) And "He multiplieth the fruit of the trees, and removeth the famine." (verse 30.) In the same spiritual capacity of sons, we pray, that our Father would forgive us our sins, and give us our daily bread. Get Christ first, the great ship, and then all other things: the cock-boat saileth after him, with the same motion and wind; they be not two tides and two winds that carry on the ship and the boat. Christ, enjoyed by faith, traileth after him death, life, the world, things present, and things to come. If God give you Christ, in the same charter all things are yours, "because ye are Christ's, and Christ God's." (1 Cor. 3:23.) Christ watereth with his blessing all things. If all that a saint hath be blessed, and every thing (to speak so), mercied and christianed, even his basket and his dough, (Deut. 28:5,) his inheritance must be blessed: much more, all Christ's inheritance must be blessed; because he is the seed, the spring, and abstract of blessings. Now, Christ "is appointed the heir of all things." (Heb. 1:2.) Then he is the heir of a draught of water, of brown bread, of a straw bed on the earth, and hard stones to be the pillow. To the saints, to the children of God, hell (to speak so), is heavened, sorrow joyed, poverty riched, death enlivened, dust and the grave animated and quickened with life and resurrection. God save me from a draught of water without Christ! Peace and deliverance from the sword, without Christ and the gospel, are linked and chained to the curse of God. Alas! if men have the single creature, they make no account how other things go. Give us peace upon any terms, say they. You may have the earth, peace, and the creature, and the devil to salt them to you with the curse of God. Judas had the bag at his girdle, but withal, the devil in his heart. The creature wanteth life and blood without Christ. (2.) All mercy—that is, graced mercy, is to be sought in Jesus Christ; every mercy is mercy, because it is in Christ; every stream is water, because it is of the element of water. Every thing in its own element and nature is most copious. Water is nowhere so abundant as in the sea; so in Christ the great treasure of heaven, there is fullness, (John 1:16). But (Col. 1:19,) there is a pleroma, a fullness in Christ. But [2.] A pan to pleroma, fullness, that fullness, that all-fullness. And [3.] That all-fullness is not in Christ, as a stranger in an inn, coming in, and going out; "but it pleased the Father that it should dwell and

remain in him.” The grace and mercy that is in Christ must be sought, and no other, upon these grounds: [1.] It is a special choice mercy that is in Christ. For, (1.) No person could serve God’s ends in such a way as Christ did, being so complete as he is. God, out of the depth of his wisdom, found out such a Mediator, and so graced. Isaac should have been undutiful, if he had refused a wife of his father’s choosing, for both out of love and much wisdom he choosed her. Now, when God, out of infinite love and deep wisdom, hath chosen to us an husband, an head, such a head, such a captain and leader, in whom there is such fullness, shall we refuse him, and shall we not seek the best things in him? Now, Christ is a husband of God’s choosing, “Behold my chosen one in whom my soul delighteth.” (Isa. 42:1.) (2.) It is not from God that we now receive mercy immediately, but from Christ, God in the Mediator. Though grace and mercy be every way free, yet now mercy is a flower that groweth in our land, in him who is our blood-friend: so now, we have mercy by nature, as well as by good will; we must have it by an act of the man Christ’s will; and when our writs are waxen old, why seek we not that which God hath laid by for us? Grace is more con-natural to us now, in that it is in the bosom of our brother, and ours by derivation. (3.) There is a difference between mercy and purchased mercy; it is paid-for mercy that we receive, and so, more excellent than angel mercy. As some waters that run through metals have a more excellent virtue than those that spring from pure earth, mercy is so much the more desirable, that it is a river issuing through that more than golden and precious Redeemer; and so, to us it is twice mercy, to the angels it is but once mercy. Even as the bee gathers sweetness out of various and divers flowers, yet it is so composed, that the liquor resulting out of them all, hath not any particular taste from the sundry flowers, the violet, the pink, the rose, the woodbine, the clover, but it tastes of honey only;—so all we have meeting in Christ, wife, children, houses, lands, honour, to the saints have not their own natural taste, but out of all there is in them a spiritual resultance of some heavenly composure of Christ’s sweetness, and are so sprinkled, and dipt in grace and mercy, that as fresh rivers do borrow a new taste from the sea, when they flow into its bosom, so all earthly favours borrow a new smell and relish from the fountain Christ. What do they say, then, that teach, that a man may have all graces, yea, and poverty of spirit, and yet want Christ; as if these could be separated? He that believeth hath the Son: Grace and Christ cannot be separated. (Eph. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; John 1:16.) These byways sunder souls and the foundation Christ.

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