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WILL YOU HAVE THIS CHRIST?

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DEAR READER: If you are wise, if you love truth, you will admit the scriptural account of human nature. Every jail, every court, every soldier, every police-officer, every lock and bar and bolt, every sigh and groan and tear declare that man is a sinner. Men of the world often admit as much. In a letter to Meade, Alexander Hamilton says: "Experience is a continual comment on the worthlessness of the human race. I know few men estimable, fewer amiable." In his letter to his daughter, Orsini uses strong language respecting the general deceitfulness and wickedness of mankind. The biography of any man will show the same humiliating truth.

The Bible abundantly teaches the same thing. The first three chapters of Paul's Epistle to the Romans give an overwhelming argument on this subject. The same is fully declared by David, by Solomon, by Isaiah, by all the prophets. The best men the world has ever seen deplored their sinfulness. Hear Job: "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes;" David: "I acknowledge my transgression and my sin is ever before me. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me!" Isaiah: "I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips;" Peter: "I am a sinful man;" Paul: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The Scriptures clearly state these five things as attending man's present fallen state:

1. Great darkness of understanding. We know nothing

as we ought to know. Carnal men are blind, and cannot see afar off. To them, the doctrines of the gospel, and even the terms in which they are taught, seem strange. In their sight, the most glorious objects possess no lustre. Even Christ Jesus is to them without form and comeliness. In him they see no beauty, that they should desire him. In heaven, and among the righteous, he is the centre of attraction. To the unrenewed, he is as a root out of a dry ground. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Eph. iv. 18.

2. Man in his fallen state is guilty and condemned. "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. . . . Through the offence of one many be dead. . . . The judgment was by one to condemnation. . . . By one man's offence death reigned by one. . . . By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. . . . By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Rom. v. 12, 15-19. Every mouth must be stopped and all the world become guilty before God. Rom. iii. 19.

3. Man is vile, depraved. "Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee?" Job xl. 4. Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually. Gen. vi. 5. Out of his heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, hypocrisies, lasciviousness, an evil eye, pride, foolishness. Matt. xv. 19. Mark vii. 21, 22.

4. In his fallen state man is miserable. Destruction and misery are in his ways. The way of peace he has not known. Rom. iii. 16, 17. This misery is so great that the whole creation groaneth. The sighs and groans and screams of earth are inferior only to those of the pit of woe. Men continually gather vanity.

5. Man is helpless. He is without strength. Rom. v. 6. He has no might, Is. xl. 29. He cannot come to

Christ, except the Father draw him. John vi. 44. He is weak as water.

To such the Gospel ought to be good news. The Scriptures represent Christ in various ways, so as to set forth his fitness and fulness as a Saviour. Sometimes they say that *Christ is our life*. Col. iii. 4. If Christ is our life, then we have not life in ourselves. We are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. As we come into the world, we are dead in trespasses and in sins. Yes, by sin we are dead. If we are God's children, we are also dead to sin. We no longer work iniquity. We are above the world; to us, the things that perish have no charms. True christians have set their affection on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; so that they are not listless; much less is their life annihilated. They live, that is, Christ lives in them. Their life is hid with Christ in God. Christ is their life.

Christ is the life of the saints, as he is their Prophet, Priest, and King—their Sacrifice, Saviour, and Redeemer. He is God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever. As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. This life is the light of men. Of the fulness which dwells in him, he gives to all his saints, and so they receive grace for grace.

This he does chiefly by making them partakers of his merits, and of his Spirit. By his merits, we are forgiven and taken into the divine favour. By his Spirit, we are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. His righteousness justifies us; his Spirit sanctifies us. By his righteousness, sin is pardoned; by his Spirit, sin is expelled. By his merits, we become righteous in law; by his Spirit, we become upright in heart. By his righteousness imputed, we are accepted; by his Spirit imparted, we are purified. His righteousness removes condemnation; his Spirit takes away depravity.

Christ's righteousness is put *upon* us; his Spirit is put *within* us. His righteousness is reckoned to our account; his Spirit is poured upon us. His righteousness was wrought out *for* us; his Spirit works *in* us. By his life of obedience and suffering, Christ brought in everlasting righteousness; by his amazing energies, the Spirit becomes the author of our personal holiness. Christ's righteousness gives us a *title* to heaven; his Spirit gives us a *fitness* for heaven. His righteousness gives us authority to become the sons of God; his Spirit gives us meetness for beholding the face of our Father who is in heaven. The one answers all the demands of the penalty of the law; the other secures conformity to the precepts of the law. Christ's blood washes away our guilt; his Spirit washes away our defilement. The former delivers us from the curse of the law; the latter removes the stains from our soul. One purges our consciences, the other our hearts. Without the former, we are accursed; without the latter, we are polluted.

In the possession of Christ's righteousness, we defy the accuser; in the indwelling of his Spirit, we have proof that our confidence shall not be disappointed. The former is the foundation of salvation; the latter is the evidence that we have built on the Rock of ages. The one is perfect here, the other shall surely bring forth judgment unto victory. Of Christ's righteousness being ours let us know the reality; of his Spirit abiding in us let us seek for larger measures.

Christ's righteousness makes our prayers prevalent; his Spirit makes them frequent and fervent. The one brings us into the covenant; the other makes that covenant dear to our hearts. The former makes us resplendent before God; the latter makes our light shine before men. Christ's righteousness removes all just cause of dread of the wrath to come; his Spirit implants in our hearts that love which

casteth out fear. By the former, God's justice demands our acquittal; by the latter, we obtain rectitude of nature. The one gives us grace, the other enables us to exercise grace. One gives us God's favour; the other, God's image.

Whoever has Christ's righteousness, has in some measure his Spirit also. These gifts are never wholly separated, though they are easily distinguished. Where one is, there is the other also. Both are essential to salvation. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," and so cannot save us. If to any man Christ is made righteousness, to him also he is made sanctification. We must be in Christ; we must be new creatures.

Oh that men would flee to Christ! Oh that they would cease to reject his righteousness, and to grieve his Spirit! Oh that we may all be found in him, who is *The Lord our Righteousness!*

Nor do the Scriptures stop here. Of all Christ's titles, none suggests more weighty or welcome truth than that of *Surety*. This is expressly given him in Heb. vii. 22. "Jesus was made a surety of a better Testament," or covenant.

A surety is one who answers for another, who takes the place of another in any matter of responsibility, who undertakes any service for another. Thus Paul was surety to Philemon for Onesimus. Thus Judah was surety to his father for the safe return of Benjamin. More commonly suretyship relates to the payment of debts, or the fulfilling of covenants.

There is no question of the validity of Christ's suretyship for us, if, first, he acts voluntarily; if, second, the guaranty given is ample; and if, third, God freely accepts and fully approves of this arrangement. On all these points the Scripture is full and clear. Christ was not forced into this undertaking: "I delight to do thy will, O my God—I lay down my life, no man taketh it from me," must settle

the first point. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and many other Scriptures, must settle the second. "A body hast thou prepared me—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," must settle the third.

Our guilt would always bring us before God loaded with chains; our depravity would ever cover us with shame; our ignorance would render us liable to the most fatal mistakes; our misery would always present us in his sight as wretched objects; while our helplessness would show us all to be dead men. So that our need of a surety was beyond a question, and the love that gave us a surety beyond a parallel.

As our surety, Christ was made a curse for us; he bore our sins in his own body on the tree; he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and thus he became the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; having suffered for us until he, by the eternal Spirit, said, "It is finished."

This is the great work of our Surety, that without which all else would do us no good. Sin was the only barrier to man's salvation. Christ hath borne our sins in his own person for us: blessed be his holy name. He answers the demands of the law.

He also secures our acceptance of the grace offered in the gospel, and our steadfastness in the ways of God. He heals our blindness, he cures our love of sin, in his strength our weakness vanishes away. This is all done efficiently by his Spirit, whom he sends to lead us in the ways of righteousness.

Let every child of Adam who hears this glorious message say, "Thou blessed Saviour, I take thee to be my surety. Unless thou pay my debts, they will remain ever unpaid. I accept thee in all thy offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. I trust thy grace. I have no confidence but in thee. My tears cannot wash away my sins. Even my blood

can make no atonement, for it is the blood of a sinner. Christ is my all, and in all. Oh that my faith in him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, may never, never falter! He is my Lamb, who taketh away my sins, my Ark of safety, my Rock of defence, my All. Oh that I loved him more! Oh that I may see his face, and be for ever like him, and with him!

And now will you have this Saviour? Will you come to Christ? There are many and good reasons why you should. Listen to some of them. You ought to come to Christ:

Because he is the Son of God. Matt. xxvii. 54.

Because he is the Son of man. Heb. ii. 14.

Because he is the great Prophet. Acts iii. 22, 23.

Because he is the great High-priest. Heb. vii. 26.

Because he is King in Zion, and Lord of all. Psalm ii. 6.

Because you are guilty, and his blood cleanses from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

Because you have broken the law, and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4.

Because all your righteousnesses are filthy rags, and he is the "Lord our righteousness." Isa. lxiv. 6. Jer. xxxiii. 6.

Because you are naked, and he has white raiment wherewith you may be clothed. Rev. iii. 18.

Because you are in darkness, and he is the light of the world. John i. 9.

Because you are foolish, and grace and truth came by him. John i. 17.

Because you are vile, and he is made of God sanctification. 1 Cor. i. 30.

Because you are dead, and he came that you might have life, and have it more abundantly. John x. 10.

Because you are perishing, and he came to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke xix. 10.

Because you are weary and heavy laden, and none but Christ can give you rest. Matt. xi. 28.

Because you are poor, and he has unsearchable riches. Eph. iii. 8.

Because you cannot see, and he was sent to heal the blind. Isa. xlii. 7.

Because he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Song v. 10, 16.

Because when you hated him he loved you, and gave himself for you. Rom. v. 8.

Because he is able to save you, however vile, guilty, helpless, ignorant, and hardened you may be. Heb. vii. 27.

Because he is willing to save you. 1 Tim. ii. 4.

Because there is salvation in none else. Acts iv. 12.

Because all the prophets point to him. Acts iii. 24.

Because all the types direct you to him. Heb. x. 1-9.

Because he is the way, the truth, and the life. John xiv. 6.

Because he never rejects any that come to him. John vi. 37.

Because he is the resurrection and the life. John xi. 25.

Because he is to be your Judge at the last day, and you should now make him your Friend. Acts xvii. 31.

Because God's command makes it your duty. 1 John iii. 23.

Because if you come not to him, you must lie down in eternal sorrow. John iii. 36.

Surely here are as many reasons as you could desire, and they are very weighty. You never had as good reasons for any thing as you have for fleeing to Christ. Will you go just as you are? Do not try to make yourself better. It is of no use. Go now to Christ. Tarry no longer. Now

is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. By God's grace arise, and go to Jesus NOW.

WILL YOU BE SAVED? The present is a favoured time. The door of mercy is open. The call of the gospel is urgently made. Christ is constantly held up before the people. God's Spirit is poured out in many places and in large measure. Every thing seems to say, *Will you be saved?*

You *need* salvation. You need nothing so much. No man ever needed health or friends, or help from man, so much as you need salvation. Without it you have before you an undone eternity. Your sins rise up like the mountains. Unless they be pardoned, they will like a mighty millstone sink you to an eternal hell. Unless they be subdued, they will torment and defile you for ever. Your native ignorance of God, if it continue, will be as fatal as heathenism. Oh, you need salvation. You *must* be saved. Your soul is worth too much to allow it to be for ever lost. You cannot afford to be damned. *Will you be saved?*

You *can* be saved. God says so in many parts of his blessed word. He also tells you how rich are the provisions of his grace. You have no want but can be supplied from the vast store-house of his mercy. Twenty-six times in one psalm of as many verses, it is said, "His mercy endureth for ever." His Son has died. Heaven calls you. Others are entering. There yet is room. *Will you be saved?*

You must be saved *soon*, or not at all. The day of grace will not last for ever. God's Spirit will not always strive with man. There is but one lifetime on earth given to any man, and that is very short. Life ended without an interest in Christ, eternity must be rueful. This moment God waits to be gracious. Beware how you lightly esteem the most

glorious offers ever made to sinners, even by God himself,
Oh! will you now be saved?

If you are saved, it must be by the *blood and merits of Christ*. Stoddard, the grandfather of the elder President Edwards, wrote a good book entitled, "The Safety of appearing at the Day of Judgment in the Righteousness of Christ." There is no safety for any sinner who attempts to go through the trials of the last day in any other righteousness. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified;" "The just shall live by faith;" "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" these are some of the forms in which God's word shuts us up to the faith of Christ. No blood, no merits, no advocacy, no priesthood, no sacrifice but Christ's can avail. Will you be saved by Christ? WILL YOU?

Nor can you be saved without *a new heart*. You must be born again. You must be converted. Your will and affections must be changed by the power and energy of the Holy Ghost. He can take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. He can annul the love of sin within you, and write the law of God on your heart. He can purify your affections, and make you fit for the heavenly inheritance. He above can effect so great a change. Will you be saved by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Will you be saved? I hope you will. Many are praying that you may. God invites; mercy calls; hell threatens. Your case is urgent. No mortal can state any case more so. If you die in your sins, you will mourn at the last, when your flesh and your body are consumed, and say, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teacher, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!"
Oh, will you be saved?

Richard Cecil says, *Hell is the truth seen too late.*

Will you not see the truth in time to be saved by it? Open your eyes. Oh, think! Oh, consider! If you die without the salvation of the gospel of Christ, you die "*without mercy.*" Why will you pull down ruin on your poor perishing soul? I ask again—it may be the last time any mortal will ever ask—WILL YOU BE SAVED?

HERE IS MY HEART.

"MY SON, GIVE ME THINE HEART."—Prov. xxiii. 25.

Here is my heart!—my God, I give it thee;
 I heard thee call, and say,
 "Not to the world, my child, but unto me:"
 I heard, and will obey.
 Here is love's offering to my King,
 Which, a glad sacrifice, I bring—
 Here is my heart.

Here is my heart;—surely the gift, though poor,
 My God will not despise;
 Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
 To meet thy searching eyes;
 Corrupted first in Adam's fall,
 The stains of sin pollute it all,—
 My guilty heart!

Here is my heart!—my heart so hard before,
 Now by thy grace made meet;
 Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
 Its anguish at thy feet;
 It groans beneath the weight of sin,
 It sighs salvation's joys to win,—
 My mourning heart!

Here is my heart!—in Christ its longings end,
 Near to his cross it draws;
 It says, "Thou art my portion, O my Friend,
 Thy blood my ransom was."

And in the Saviour it has found
 What blessedness and peace abound,—
 My trusting heart!

Here is my heart!—ah! Holy Spirit, come,
 Its nature to renew,
 And consecrate it wholly as thy home,
 A temple fair and true.
 Teach it to love and serve thee more,
 To fear thee, trust thee, and adore,—
 My cleansed heart!

Here is my heart!—it trembles to draw near
 The glory of thy throne;
 Give it the shining robe thy servants wear,
 Of righteousness thine own:
 Its pride and folly chase away,
 And all its vanity, I pray,—
 My humble heart.

Here is my heart!—teach it, O Lord, to cling
 In gladness unto thee;
 And in the day of sorrow still to sing,
 “Welcome my God’s decree.”
 Believing, all its journey through,
 That thou art wise, and just, and true,—
 My waiting heart!

Here is my heart!—O Friend of friends, be near,
 To make each tempter fly,
 And when my latest foe I wait with fear,
 Give me the victory!
 Gladly on thy love reposing,
 Let me say, when life is closing,—
 HERE IS MY HEART!