

Monergism



*Love to Christ*

NECESSARY TO ESCAPE  
THE CURSE AT HIS COMING

**THOMAS DOOLITTLE**

Monergism



*Love to Christ*

NECESSARY TO ESCAPE  
THE CURSE AT HIS COMING

**THOMAS DOOLITTLE**

# **Love to Christ**

## **Necessary to Escape the Curse at His Coming!**

**by Thomas Doolittle, 1693**

He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. Mat. x. 37.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

Mat. xxv. 41.

LONDON, Printed for Tho. Cockerill, at the Three Legs in the  
Poultry, over against the Stocks-Market. 1692.

**The Epistle to Non-lovers of Christ,  
Lamenting Their Sin and Misery**

"If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — let him be Anathema! Maranatha." 1 Corinthians 16:22

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me!" Matthew 10:37

"Then He will also say to those on the left hand: Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25:41

That glorious person, who is both Lord and Jesus, and Christ, has suffered, and done, and promised, such things that might gain the love of sinners to himself; and by these he pleads with them, to set their affections upon him. In opposition to him, the world and sin stand in competition with him, for the love of man's heart. Jesus calls, "Sinner, love me!" Sin and the world cry, "Place your love on us!" The Spirit, the Word, ministers, mercies, and a well-informed awakened conscience, press hard for the love of man to Christ. The devil and the flesh solicit for the heart of man, for sin and world. Love man has, and one of these he will love. He cannot love both at the same time, with a supreme love — for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one — and despise the other. "You cannot (love and) serve God and mammon," Matthew 6.24. Predominant love to the one, is inconsistent with such love unto the other. "Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world — the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15.

This considered, what thinking man can forbear to grieve, abstain from floods of tears, and bitter lamentation — when he sees that the love of man, such a noble affection in itself — is set so much on sin, which is so bad in itself, and unto its lovers, and upon the world —

which proves vexation to those who are so fond of it, who love and vex, who vex at it, and yet still continue and increase their love unto it, and their vexation by it does not abate their inordinate affection to it; while Christ, who is the primary, principal, and most delightful object of love — is slighted by so many, even by the most?

Blind sinners! Do you thus love sin which is so vile, and the world which is so contemptible — and not Christ, who is altogether lovely and desirable? What perverseness is this — that Christ who is best in himself, and best for them — should be refused; and sin which is worst in itself, and worst to them — should be embraced? What folly and madness is this, that Christ should be kept out, standing at the door — when sin and world are admitted in, and lodged, and kindly entertained in the chief room of their hearts!

Cursed doings! When sin should have no love — shall it have all a man's love? When Christ should have all a man's love — shall he have none? When the whole world should be as your footstool — shall it, or anything in it, be set up in your hearts, as in its throne? How is it that you are so much mistaken, as to think see beauty in deformity — and deformity in beauty itself? Why is odious sin so lovely — and a precious Christ so unlovely in your eyes? Have you considered what sin is, and what Christ is — that you have greater love to that work of the devil, than you have to God's own Son? And this, when sin is so evil and vile, that, as sin, it cannot be loved by the worst of men, until it is first disguised, and dressed up with the appearance of good; and Christ is so good, that as Christ, he is to be loved most of all?

When called, invited, and charged, in the name of God, by the ministers of Christ, showing you God's call, invitation, and charge, to love this lovely Jesus — why do you retort and say, "What is your beloved above another beloved, O teachers of Christ? What is your

beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?" How long will you say, "He has no form or loveliness? We see no beauty in him that we should desire him?"

How long shall Christ complain of you, that you hate both him and his Father? And is not this complaint more grievous, when you hate him without a cause, and do not love him — when there is so much cause and reason why you should? What has sin and the world done for you, and what has Christ ever done against you — that you love your worst enemies and hate him who would be your surest Friend?

Has sin afforded you pleasures? But how long will they last? And what will you do when the pleasures of sin are past and fled away — and the pains and punishment for sin are come, and shall never, never, pass away? Has the world allowed you its profits? But whose shall these be, when you are dead, and lodged in the dust? What profit is there in all your profits, if you gain them — and lose your souls? Will not your gain be your everlasting loss?

Is Jesus the admiration of angels — and is he your derision? Do they adore him — and do you thus despise him? Do holy saved souls in Heaven, delight and rejoice in their love to him, and in his to them — and do you turn away your love, and alienate your hearts from him, and love sin, and rejoice in that your love? Do holy souls on earth, in this imperfect state, cry out, "Whom have we in Heaven but Christ, or what is there on earth that we desire, or love, in comparison of him?"

Do you prefer your lust, and fleshly pleasures, and worldly profits — before him? Have you done so, and will you still continue? Are you so resolved? Are your hearts so hardened? Are your minds so blinded, and so enslaved to sin and Satan? Alas for you! You born without

love to Christ — and have you lived so long without love to him? And will you die at last without love to him?

Where are the mourners, that they may with flowing tears bewail your sin and misery?

Why do you love your sin? Because you do not love Christ. Why your misery? Because you must be Anathema! — accursed when the Lord shall come. Alas for you, who are ignorant of Christ — for you cannot love whom you do not know. Alas for you, whose hearts are full of love to a vain, deluding world, and empty of sincere love to Christ! For you must all be Anathema! — accursed when the Lord shall come.

Let angels blush! Let the heavens be ashamed! Let godly men weep! Let the earth mourn, let all the creation of God sigh, and sob, and groan — that the Son of God is not beloved by so many of the sons of men!

O my soul! where is your love to these poor souls, empty of saving love unto your Lord? Where is your sorrow for their lack of love to Jesus? Where are your feelings of compassion to those who have no pity on themselves, in that they will have no love to Christ? Do you not know that Maranatha! — the Lord will come? And are you not sure, that then they will be Anathema! — under a bitter and eternal curse? Do you see how the devil turned men's hearts from their Lord Creator, and how he keeps their love from their Lord Redeemer — for which the devil gloats over them — and will not you be grieved for them?

Blessed Jesus! I am ready to blame them, because they do not love you — yet I blame myself for lack of grief in me, for lack of love to you. Methinks that godly parents should mourn, because they have a

child, or children, who do not love Jesus Christ, and say, "What! they love us — but not the Lord! What pleasure can we take in their love to us — when they have none to Christ?" Methinks the children who have love to Christ should weep and bitterly lament, to be loved by their parents with a greater love than they have for Christ. The wife who is a lover of Christ, should be filled with sorrow, that she has one so near — who is so far from loving the only Savior, and say, "Alas! alas! My husband will be Anathema!"

Weep then, weep, weep abundantly, for any in your house, among your relations, friends, acquaintance and neighbors, who are not lovers of Christ. Oh! that your heads were waters, and your eyes fountains of tears — that you may weep day and night, for those who do not love the Lord Jesus. How can you go with dry eyes, without tears trickling down your cheeks, one hastening to overtake the other, when you behold non-lovers of Christ, and consider next, Anathema, Maranatha? Oh! that you had in some wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, or some retired corner in your house, that you may leave your worldly business for a while, and go from them, to wash your faces in your tears — that your dear relations do not love that Lord of yours, who is dearer to you than they are, or all this world besides.

Weep most bitterly, when you think how by them your dearest Lord is undervalued, and their precious souls are endangered — by their not loving of him, for they must be Anathema when Maranatha. Alas, poor loveless souls! The Lord will come, will surely, quickly come — and then they will be miserable — surely then they will be miserable souls indeed!

But is this enough for you, O you non-lovers of Christ, that others lament your woeful case, while you yourselves spend your time and

waste your days in sinful loves, and carnal delights, and sensual joys? Were you convinced of your present sin, and did you see your future approaching misery — could you be so full of mirth, upon the very borders of the place where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth? Could you laugh and joke, so near the bottomless pit — where your laughing shall be turned into mourning, and your mirth into everlasting sorrow?

Were you men who had your eyes opened, would you not, every one of you — bitterly bewail your present danger, in the sense and apprehension of your speedy and eternal woe, and say, "Alas, what shall I do, when sickness shall come, and death shall come, and the Lord himself shall come — when I have no love for him? Woe is me! How shall I die, and after death appear at his tribunal — whom I never loved? Oh my poor departing soul — now as full of terror, as empty of the love of Christ — what will become of you, when you step out of time into eternity! Oh dreadful, dreadful, this is exceedingly dreadful — to leave all that I ever loved — and go to be judged by him whom I (woe to me that I did!) never loved. I loved my wife and children — but not Christ; and now I must leave them whom I so much loved — and receive my doom from him whom I so much hated. I loved my pleasures, and my sensual delights — and now there is an end of them. Now I must go unto those miseries, woes, and torments which shall never, never end! Woe is me, that now I am a dying man, and shortly, alas a day or two more, an hour or two more; so shortly, for lack of love to Christ — and I must be a damned man! When I was well, and did not love Christ, (well — and did not love Christ!) when I thought I was well without love to Christ, I thought my pleasures were sweet, my riches were my happiness, and my beloved relations were my joy. I thought my love was rightly placed upon them — but now upon this dying bed, when I look backwards upon time now past, and forwards into eternity, which

never will be past — I find the remembrance of them torments my departing soul — they are as bitter as gall! For the more I loved them heretofore — the more they torment me now.

Now! Woe is me — my torments will be forever! O! what did I mean — to give that love to them, which I should have given unto Christ! Had I loved him, as I loved them — then my love to him would have been as great a comfort to me, on this dying bed, as the love of them is now a terror to me. But I did not — O cursed fool that I am — that I did not love Jesus! And now the Lord, by death, has come to me; and after death I must go to him, to be judged by him, and in my sentence I shall hear God's Anathema, "Depart from me you who are cursed — into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" In that I never loved Christ, I sinned like the devil — and in my sentence, for that sin I must be condemned, and in Hell suffer with and as the devil."

But yet all this may be prevented! And will you not endeavor it? How? By calling off your love from other things — and placing it supremely upon the Lord Jesus. By faith in him, and love unto him — the curse might be escaped, and the blessing obtained, at his coming. Had you rather be eternally condemned — than love Christ? Indeed! Is your enmity so much to him — that you had rather be miserable forever, than place your affections upon him? Are you not yet willing to forsake your old love to sin — and get new love to Christ? Can you be willing to be miserable, and pained, and tormented, in extremity, to all eternity? I know you cannot — and yet I know, whether you are willing or unwilling — without love to Christ, miserable you must be.

O that you clearly saw, steadfastly believed, and distinctly apprehended the transcendent excellency, the amiable beauty, the

invaluable worth of this Lord Jesus — that you might prize him more than gold and pearls, and costly jewels, and love him more than all.

How is it that when you hear those on earth, who love him most — who so much complain of the smallness of their love to him — that you do not reflect upon yourselves, and say: "What sinners then are we, who have no love at all to him — and yet are not troubled, because we do not love him?"

For my own part, I mourn that I cannot love this blessed Jesus with that strength of love which I ought to love him, and earnestly desire to love him with. I grieve more, because I love him no more. I loathe myself so much the more, by how much I fall short of that love I ought to have to him. O that others may make up what I lack, and may be enlarged, and abound in that love — wherein I am straitened and defective. O that the degrees of love to Jesus which I cannot reach — others on earth might attain unto; that while I mourn for the smallness of my own love — I might rejoice in the greatness of the love of others unto this lovely Jesus. And yet when all this is infinitely less than he is worthy of — let it be some joy unto my grieved soul, that saved souls above, and angels in glory love him with a perfect and eternal love. Though I cannot love him as they do — yet I may rejoice on earth, that there are ten thousand times ten thousands, and thousands of thousands in Heaven, rejoicing in the fullness of love which is in them to him, when thousands upon earth never will, and millions in Hell never can, love this most lovely Lord Jesus Christ.

But still I must grieve and groan, that when my Lord asks me, "Do you love me more than these?" Sometimes I doubt, and dare not say, "Lord, you know all things — you know that I love you!" But my heart pants, and my soul longs that my love to him might be inflamed —

that the actings of it might be more vigorous, and the workings of it so sensible, that they may put me into pleasant pangs, and sweetest pains of love.

Lord! I shall not account myself to be well, until I am sick with love to you — that so I may, from what I feel and find, in my own soul, recommend the sweetest delights, the rational pleasures, and the spiritual comforts — to the lovers of vanity, to allure and draw their love to Christ — that I may speak more of the unspeakable joy that fills the heart of a strong lover of Christ; and more pathetically persuade, more effectually plead — until God powerfully prevails with them, to turn the stream of their love (which now runs waste) into the right channel, and glide along until it empties itself into that sea of love, which saints and angels flow in unto Christ.

I have made a small attempt in this little treatise, to show the necessity of sincere love to Christ — whether God might move the hearts of any to fix their love upon him. I have written with as much plainness and gospel simplicity as I could. If any for this shall dislike it, when they have taken it up, and looked into it, and see it to be such — they may as easily lay it down, and slight it as they please. I am willing to be accounted a fool for Christ. I doubt not but I shall have more comfort on a dying bed, when I shall reflect that I aimed not at vain applause of dying men — but to gain the hearts, and the hearty love of the readers of these sermons.

And if God will please to own them in men's reading, as he did in the hearing of them, by many, when not I, but the grace of God, did so much affect their hearts, that they some time later desired that it might be preached to them a second time, which I did; and these sermons successfully and effectually worked as at the first — not that I was anything, but God did all, both first and last. Very many, who

confessed they did not love Christ, but world, and vanity, and sin, before — now desired all in the congregation earnestly to pray, that God would give them this love unto his Son, which I hope they have, and are increasing and growing therein.

My fervent prayer is that God may bless this treatise to many poor, plain country people, whom my voice cannot reach, and to whom I cannot go. Amen.

Thomas Doolittle, 1693

## **Chapter 1.**

### **Section 1. The Introduction.**

What! not love the Lord! Hellish sin!

What! not love Jesus! Stupendous wickedness!

What! not love Christ! Monstrous impiety!

Not love him who is both Lord, and Jesus, and Christ! What name might we call him by?

Is he a man — or a beast?

Is he a man — or a devil?

Do you confess him to be Lord, and Jesus, and Christ — and love sin, and not him? Do you love the world — and not him? Do you love sin — and not him? This may be . . .

the astonishment of the heavens,  
the amazement of the earth,  
the wonder of angels,  
the joy of devils,  
the burden of the creation of God.

The earth groans to bear them;  
the sun is grieved to give light unto them;  
the air laments to be sucked into sin-filthy bodies, wherein are more filthy souls, because they are void of the love of Christ! Yes, all this world looks more like Hell than Heaven, because of the swarms of men therein who have no sincere love to Jesus Christ.

Let all among you this day, who are not sensual beasts, or incarnate devils — who have the understanding and hearts of men — stand and wonder, that though devils will not love the Lord Jesus Christ, that a man should deny Christ his love. Good Lord! What a thing is this! What cursed wickedness is this! What wonder that you behold such a sight as this — a man without love unto your Son — and allow him to continue to be a man; or not make him . . .

a sick man,  
a poor man,  
a tormented pained man on earth,  
or a damned man in Hell!

But though you bear with such a man, is he not a wretched, miserable man — though he is a rich and prospering man? Oh what punishment waits for him! How devils hope for his death, that they might drag him down to that hellish crew, where there is not one lover of Christ among them all!

But what is he? What shall he be that does not love Christ? What? Anathema, Maranatha! What is that? The explanation will tell you.

## **Section 2. The Explanation of Anathema, and Maranatha.**

1. Anathema, when found in scripture, is usually translated accursed. "And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said: We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul," Acts 23.14. The same word is used: "But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1.8, repeated in verse 9. "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Romans 9.3.

Not to love Jesus, is to accursed — whoever does not love him, shall be anathema forever. This Greek word is used as the Hebrew word Cherem, which is translated, utterly to destroy; namely, "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly!" Samuel 15.9. The Greek verb signifies such cursing, as when a man either swears, vows, or wishes himself to die, or to be given to the devil; and the Hebrew word that answers to it, signifies, utterly to destroy, to devote to destruction.

As much as to say, If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be utterly destroyed, devoted to destruction, let the devil take him! And so he will, by God's own order and command. "Then shall he say unto those on the left hand, Depart from me, you who are cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25.41. "But God said: You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you!" Luke 12.20. In the Greek, They shall require, demand, fetch away your soul. They — what they? The devils, that seize the souls of all that love not Christ, whenever they die.

2. Maran-atha — two Syriac words, signifying, to come. A man that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be cursed in all nations, in all languages, by all people — all the world shall account that man to be anathema.

Anathema, Maranatha; some render it, "Let him be accursed when the Lord comes!" Or, "He shall have due vengeance from the Lord, when he comes." And all for lack of love unto him. And with this highest degree of excommunication, shall all the non-lovers of Christ, at his coming, be excluded, and stand excommunicated from the favorable presence of the glorious God, and of Christ the gracious only Savior, from the company of all the holy angels, and society of the blessed saints, from the holy place above, and from all the joys and happiness thereof.

The manner how the Jews excommunicated the Samaritans was very solemn and dreadful. These curses they wrote upon tablets, and sealed them, and sent them through all Israel, who multiplied also this great Anathema, or curse, upon them.

But the excommunication of all the non-lovers of Christ will be inconceivably more terrible, when the Lord himself shall come with millions of his holy angels, and with ten thousands, yes, thousands of thousands of his saints, and the trumpet sounding, the saints singing, and the air ringing, Christ and all shall say, "Now cursed forever be every man who did not love the Lord Jesus!" That is, let them never come into the kingdom of Heaven, nor have a share in the happiness that God has prepared for those who love him! And all the saints and angels shall say: "Amen, amen!"

There is another text, setting forth the contrary good condition of those that love Christ, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Amen." Ephesians 6.24. Paul, standing

upon Mount Ebal, denounces a curse against those who do not love the Lord Jesus. He then stands upon Mount Gerizim, and pronounces a blessing upon those who love the Lord Jesus. (Deuteronomy 27)

But now, though you are not unjust towards men, not drunkards, not swearers — yet, if non-lovers of Christ, the curse lies upon you! At the coming of the Lord, it will be in vain to plead your praying, hearing, church attendance, your moral conduct — if void of the love of Christ; for Christ shall declare you accursed, and all that shall attend him at his coming, shall say, "Amen!"

### **Section 3. A Division and Paraphrase of the Text**

The whole text consists of these seven parts:

1. The grace to be obtained, the duty to be performed, or act to be exerted — namely, love to Jesus. This is sweet, pleasant, and delightful.
2. The object of this act, or person to be loved, called the Lord, and Jesus, and Christ.
3. The subject of this act, or who should do this duty — man. Beasts cannot, devils will not — man ought.
4. A supposition, If a man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — and it is indeed to be supposed that many will not.
5. A heavy imprecation, or solemn denunciation of vengeance, Anathema! If he will not be a lover of Christ, let him be accursed.

6. A determination of the time when this at furthest shall be executed, and poured forth upon him; Maranatha, when the Lord comes, though he prosper in the mean time — yet when Maranatha, then Anathema.

7. The extent of this curse; "If any man" — let him be what he will — a scholar, a preacher, a professor, an emperor, and yet not a Christ-lover — the plagues of God at the coming of Christ shall light and lie upon him. If this "any" be ever so many, vengeance and damnation shall overtake and seize them all.

I cannot yet get off the words of the text, without another view of each term, one by one.

IF — this if, joined to the not loving of Christ — is one of the saddest ifs you can suppose!

If you should be poor,  
if you should be cast into prison,  
if you should be banished,  
if you should suffer the loss of liberty and life  
— it is not nearly as bad as if you should not love the Lord Jesus Christ. For, if you do not love Christ — then you will be cast to Hell and damned forever! If God is true, and Christ is true, and the Word of God is true — you can never be saved, if you never love Christ! Even if you pray until you wear the skin from off your knees — or if you cry for mercy until your tongue waste away — or if you confess sin, and weep yourselves blind — or if you go as far towards Heaven as ever any deceitful hypocrite did, and all this while have no sincere love to Christ — you never shall escape the damnation of Hell! If you do — then I am a liar, and I preached falsehood and deceitful words unto you.

You will surely say, "What! will you drive us to despair?" Yes, that I would with all my heart, into this despair of ever getting to Heaven without sincere love to Christ. For you must despair of having happiness and eternal glory any other way than what God has prescribed in his word — and love to Christ is one qualification of that man who shall be saved. "I have sworn in my wrath — they shall never enter into my rest!" It is sufficient to alarm sinners, that God swears, if they continue to the death without love to, and faith in Christ — they shall certainly not enter into his rest.

The heathen cannot love Christ, because they do not know him. But any man, especially one who lives under the means of grace, any base man — or any noble man; any ignorant man — or any learned man; any man of any age, of any sort, of any calling, of any place or nation, where they have so often and so long heard of Christ — if any such man does not love Jesus, though he often talks of him, though he prays to God in Christ's name; though he professes him, suffers or dies for him — the Lord almighty, the only Potentate; the Lord who has the power of life and death, able to take up to Heaven, and cast down to Hell, to damn and save, who reigns over men and devils, who has all power committed to him; who is Jesus, the only, mighty, all-sufficient Savior, who came from Heaven to earth, to get and purchase for men a passage from earth to Heaven, who suffered, bled, and died to save sinners from sin, from Hell, from everlasting burnings; when there is no other name under Heaven by which sinners can be saved, than the name of Jesus; who is designed from all eternity, and sent in the fullness of time to bring about and accomplish the work of man's redemption; who was furnished with all manner of qualifications to bring souls to eternal glory; and yet not love Christ — they shall be Anathema — cursed and miserable wretches, devoted to damnation, separated from God, cast to devils — when Maranatha, the Lord comes. To be Anathema when

Maranatha — is to be accursed indeed, and forever! Then cursed men must be with cursed devils to all eternity!

.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **Section 1. The Doctrine and Method.**

From this text, thus explained, this doctrine clearly results: "That whatever man has not sincere love to the Lord Jesus Christ, is in a deplorable condition, and shall be accursed when the Lord comes. For . . .

his sin is great,

his mind is blind,

his will is perverse,

his heart is hard and carnal,

his affections are corrupt and base, and

his soul and body shall then be doomed down to blackness of darkness, to extremity and eternity of misery, to pains and punishment, that no tongue can express, no heart conceive, no pen can write, how great, how terrible, how intolerable it will be found to be!

The method in treating on this subject is cast into these five general heads:

1. What is the nature of this love to Christ; what kind or manner of love it is; without which if a man is found — he is Anathema, and shall be plagued with this heavy curse at the coming of the Lord?

2. That whoever is without this love to Christ, is in such a miserable condition, and, dying without it, shall be damned when Christ shall come — is to be demonstrated.

3. What are the properties of this curse, that will make it so exceedingly grievous and intolerable.

4. Why so great a stress is put upon such love; why the Lord insists so much upon the love of man unto his Son, that whoever lacks it, shall be thus accursed.

5. The improving of this doctrine by practical application.

What is the nature of this love to Christ — what kind or manner of love it is; without which if a man is found — he is Anathema, and shall be plagued with this heavy curse at the coming of the Lord? My thoughts concerning it, I shall give in these twelve following particulars, which, being taken up, and laid together, will contain a description of this love.

1. This love to Christ supposes the goodness and excellence of the object — the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. This love to Christ includes or implies the illumination of the understanding to see and discern this incomparable goodness in Christ.

3. This love to Christ includes a discovery of the suitableness of Christ unto the soul in all respects.

4. This love to Christ supposes a sight of the obtainability of that good which is discerned to be so suitable.

5. This love to Christ supposes highest valuation of Christ, greatest estimation of him, which is called appreciating love.

6. This love to Christ contains the permanent volition of the will, and the settled inclination of the heart towards the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. This love to Christ includes the prevailing and predominant degrees of our love to be to Christ, more than to anything else whatever.

8. In this love, is the choice of the will, choosing Christ for himself, and for the excellency of his own person — though not with the exclusion of our own advantage by him.

9. Christ, as Lord, as well as Savior, is the object of this love; Christ in all his offices, as Teacher, Ruler, as well as Benefactor, is beloved. In this respect, the love of all hypocrites and carnal professors falls and comes short.

10. This love to Christ is wrought by the powerful special operation of the Spirit of God upon the heart.

11. Whence follows a voluntary resignation of a man's self to Christ, without reservation.

12. When all this is done, the soul . . .  
delights in Christ, if present;  
or desires after him, if absent;  
or mourns for him, if it cannot find him.

For one of these three ways love will be working, and by these workings discover itself.

## **Section 2. The nature, requisites, and the description of this Love to Christ.**

This love to Christ supposes the goodness of the object, as all love does; for nothing can be loved, but what is really good, or at least appears so unto the lover. This holy love therefore being the choicest, chief love — supposes Christ to be the choicest, and the chief good. That he is a good Savior, a good Redeemer, a good Lord and Master; a good excelling, transcending all inferior, sublunary good; good! not only good, but best — best in himself, and best for us!

And because he must be loved with such a love, as that we are willing at his call to part with all other good for his sake — therefore he is looked upon, and loved as a universal good. Whereas riches, honors, friends, and all things of this world are but particular good — no one thing is good for all things. Food and drink are good to satisfy your hunger and thirst — but not to clothe you. Clothes are good to cover you, but not to feed you, etc.

But the soul whose love is fixed upon Christ, sees and says:

In poverty, Christ will be my riches,  
in disgrace, Christ will be my honor,  
in bonds and imprisonment, Christ will be my liberty,  
in pain, Christ will be my comfort,  
in death, Christ will be my life,  
in the loss of all things, Christ will be better to me than the  
enjoyment of all these things!

He who does not love Christ as an incomparable object — does not love him as he ought. "Whom have I in Heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever!" Psalm 73:25-26

The spouse saw such goodness in Christ, that she was lovesick for him: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am love-sick," Song of Songs 5:8. Others wonder what a gracious soul sees in Christ, that it is so inflamed with love unto him. "How is your beloved better than others, most beautiful of women? How is your beloved better than others, that you charge us so?" Song of Songs 5:9

What is he? In a large description of his excellencies she answers to this question: "My beloved is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand!" Song of Songs 5:10.

And in the 16th concludes, "Yes! He is altogether lovely; this is my beloved, and this is my friend!"

What then? Does the transcendent goodness of Christ, thus displayed, draw the heart, allure the affections? Yes, truly, for it immediately follows, "Where has your beloved gone, most beautiful of women? Which way did your beloved turn, that we may look for him with you?" Song of Songs 6:1

1. Christ as GOD is incomparably good — for so he is . . .  
originally good;  
infinitely good;  
eternally good;  
immutably good;  
incomprehensibly good.

2. Christ as MAN, is the most excellent of all men"

Adam in innocence,  
the prophets and apostles in all their greatest dignity,

and the saints in Heaven in perfect glory —  
are not comparable to the man Christ Jesus!

3. Christ, as GOD-MAN and Mediator, surpasses in goodness all the holy ones on earth, and all the angels in Heaven: "And seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come!" Ephesians 1:20-21. And though he calls his people, his brethren, and his fellows, "Yet God has anointed him with the oil of gladness above all his fellows," Psalm 45.7.

Is Christ thus incomparable in your eyes — and to your hearts?

### **Section 3. The Second Requisite of this Love.**

This love to Christ includes and implies the illumination of the understanding, to see and discern this matchless goodness in Christ. Though knowledge is not love — yet it is necessarily prerequisite to it, for this love is not blind. What we do not know — we cannot love, nor desire: "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says unto you, give me to drink; you would have asked of him, and he would have given you living water!" John 4:10.

You might love an unseen Christ, but you cannot love an unknown Christ: "Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not — yet believing," (and faith includes knowledge,) "you rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory!" 1 Peter 1.8.

The prophet Isaiah, speaking of graceless men as disliking, not desiring, nor loving Christ — brings them in as saying, "He had no

beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him!" Isaiah 53:2

What! No loveliness in Him who is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person!" Yes! there was, there is — but they had no eyes to see it! It is as if a blind man should say the sun is dark, because he has no eyes to behold it's light. It was, because in seeing — they did not see. How could they look upon Him with an eye of love — when they did not discern Him with an eye of faith?

But a holy soul, whose eyes are opened, sees that superlative goodness, beauty, and excellency in Christ — that all other things, which are good with an inferior goodness — seem to him as dross and dung! "But whatever was to my profit, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish," things cast to dogs, or dog's-food, "that I may gain Christ!" Philippians 3:7-8

The holy man, whose mind is savingly enlightened, can say: I see that goodness in the Savior, which far surpasses all the goodness of the creature! Though the stars in the coldest night might be seen — yet when the sun arises, they all disappear. Just so, in the night of ignorance, when my mind was blind, my heart hard, and my affections frozen — I was bewitched with the goodness of riches, of honors, and of worldly pleasure. Yet when the Sun of righteousness with His radiant rays shined into my soul, and with His warming influences thawed my benumbed frozen heart — when Christ the day-star arose in my soul — then, O then, the glory of these things which once dazzled my eyes, presently vanished and withered away!

Then, when once I had got a view of Christ's transcendent loveliness — in comparison to Christ — I saw . . .  
an emptiness and vanity, in all the creature's fullness;  
beggary, in all the world's nobility;  
shame, in all the world's glory;  
poverty, in all the world's riches;  
the world's greatest resplendent luster, to be darkness;  
the world's wisdom, to be folly;  
the world's beauty, appeared to me no better than deformity!

#### **Section 4. The Third Requisite.**

Love to Christ includes a discovery of Christ unto the soul, as the most suitable good. A thing is desirable, because it is suitable. Our desires do not make the goodness of the object — but the suitability of the object allures our desires and love.

Suitableness is the ground of love. A thing might be good in itself, yet, if we apprehend no suitability in it to us — then the love of our hearts is not upon it. Therefore, in pain, and sickness, a man judges ease and health to be better for him than gold and silver — because they are more suitable. A man in hunger and thirst, esteems bread and water to be better than honors and pleasures — because they are more suitable.

Love to Christ is grounded on the soul discerning the suitability of Christ unto him. He says,

"Food is not more suitable to a hungry man,  
nor medicine to a sick man,  
nor clothing to a naked man —  
than Christ is to me, a poor, sinful, and lost man — an undone,  
perishing, and damned man! For . . .  
I am naked — and He will give clothe me with His perfect

righteousness,  
I am blind — and He will restore my sight,  
I am enslaved to sin and Satan — and He will give me liberty,  
I am lost — and He will save me,  
I am guilty — and He will pardon me,  
I am polluted — and He will cleanse me,  
I am an enemy to God — and He will reconcile me,  
I am ignorant — and He will teach me,  
I am indebted — and He will be my Surety,  
I am poor — and He will make me wealthy to all eternity,  
I am a stranger to God — and He bring me into acquaintance with  
Him,  
I am unfit for Heaven — and He will make me fit to be partaker of the  
inheritance of the saints in light.

What shall I say?

Though I have riches — then I might be damned.

But if I have Christ — then I shall be saved!

Though men admire me — yet God might loathe me.

But if I have Christ — then the Lord will love me!

Though I prosper in the world, in all my pomp — I might be walking  
in the way to everlasting misery!

But if I have Christ — He will lead me in the paths unto eternal glory!

Look, O my soul, look round about you, and you shall find none so  
suitable to you, as the lovely Savior. Then He alone shall have my  
best love. Is there none for me like Him? Then I will fix my love on  
Him!

## **Section 5. The Fourth Requisite of this Love.**

Love includes a sight of the obtainability of that good that is discerned to be so suitable to the person who would love it. Possibility of obtainability is necessary to the begetting or raising of the affections; for while we see a good, though in every way suitable — yet if it is impossible to be obtained — then we can have no hope of it, but sink under despondency and despair.

And though love respects its object simply as good, without reference to it as hard or easy to be obtained; yet that which is good in itself, but impossible to us — is not a good to us, because it is a good not to be possessed by us. Such a good cannot be loved with such a love as we ought to have to Christ, who is to be loved by us as good, and our good, or as obtainable by us. For good as unobtainable to us, so considered, may beget vexation, anguish, and horror — but not that delight, which makes love.

This might be one reason why there is no love in devils to Christ, nor can there ever be. Why? Are not devils under inexpressible horror — and would not deliverance be esteemed by them as a good suitable to them? They know that there is no Savior but Christ — why then do they hate him? Why? The benefits of Christ are not obtainable to them! The sufferings of Christ, though sufficient to have redeemed all the devils in Hell — yet were not ordained by God nor endured by Christ for any such end, or with any such intention. Christ did not die to make salvation and eternal happiness possible for devils, or finally-unbelieving impenitent sinners. Therefore, though they know Christ to be good, and freedom from misery would be suitable to them — yet this good being unobtainable to them, they neither have, nor can have, sincere love unto Jesus. Hence it is they hate Christ with an implacable hatred, and oppose his kingdom and interest with

the strongest opposition: "And behold the unclean spirits cried out, saying, What have we to do with you, Jesus, Son of God? Have you come to torment us before the time?" Matthew 8.29. As if they had said, "There is no good which could come by you to us; we expect no salvation, no deliverance from our pain and misery; you are a Savior to men, but not to us. You will have nothing to do with us in a way of mercy — and we have nothing to do with you, by any hopes of redemption through your mediatorial undertakings. Men on earth have to do with you, and therefore have cause to love you. You have come into the world to have to do with them, to seek them, and to save them — they may have you for a Redeemer, and a Savior — but so for us! Men are fallen, and by you might be restored; but we demons are fallen, and must lie where we fell — without hope, without a possibility of recovering. Heaven and salvation are unobtainable to us. There are no dealings between you and us for eternal life and happiness. None of your sufferings are for us; you have not come to offer us any terms of mercy, or to make any propositions of peace between God and us — and therefore our recovery is impossible. Therefore being fallen, we lie down in utter despair of ever obtaining any of the benefits of your death and sufferings. Having no hope of merciful redemption by you — we neither have, nor will, nor can have, any love unto you.

The condition of damned men is the same as that of damned devils. Men on earth might have love to Christ — but in Hell they cannot — for on earth Christ had to do with them, and they with Christ; and mercy had to do with them, and grace and patience had to do with them. But when once in Hell, Christ is done with them, and the Spirit is done with them; the grace, mercy, and patience of God are done with them. There is no more offer of grace, no more tender of peace and reconciliation, no more overtures of mercy — to all eternity!

But now wrath has to do with them, and vindictive punishing justice has to do with them. They have fallen into the hands of the living God, who is a consuming fire! Being past all possibility of benefit and advantage by Christ — they cannot love him, but only have more rooted hatred to him than ever.

Let me note, that you should with fear and trembling diligently labor, fervently pray, speedily repent and turn from sin, and sincerely believe, that you might not at death be doomed down to Hell, because by damned souls Christ cannot be loved!

But the case is otherwise with men on earth — with the worst of you in this congregation this day. The swearer might yet have benefit and pardon by Christ. The vilest, the greatest sinner on earth this day — may yet be saved, if he will hearken to the voice of mercy, to the commands and invitations of the only Savior, to the calls of grace, and answer to those calls. Salvation yet is possible to you, and God reconcilable to you, and Christ and his benefits — upon the conditions of the gospel preached to you.

For who dare say there is no difference between the state of the damned in Hell — and the worst of men upon earth? Or that there is no more hope or possibility of salvation by Christ for the greatest sinners upon earth — than of the devils themselves. Or that God is no more reconcilable, and the benefits of Christ no more obtainable, to them — than to the damned demons? To sinners on earth, commands are given to repent, and believe, and turn to God in hopes of mercy; and conditional promises of life, and a conditional grant of pardon is given to them — which is not the case of devils or damned souls. Therefore we study in hope, and pray in hope, and preach in hope of your conversion and salvation — even when there is no hope

of those who are gone down to eternal death, and utter and eternal darkness.

Methinks, this considered, should win your love to Christ, and cause you to break forth into such language as this, and say,

"O my soul, as yet, through the mercy and patience of God to you — there is a wide difference between your state, and the state of damned souls. For though you hitherto have not loved Christ, which is your heinous sin — yet you may, which is God's great mercy to you. For though now you are without Christ, which is your misery — yet you might have Christ, which will be your remedy! When the damned do not love Christ, nor can love him, for they have not Christ, nor can have him. You are yet in the land of hope, and under the means of hope, and your remedy is at hand — if, by your willful refusals of saving grace, you do not dash away this hope — when those poor, wretched souls, who have passed . . .

out of time — into eternity,

from earth — to Hell,

from hearing in this world — to howling in the next — are eternally Christless; and because eternally Christless — they are therefore there, now and forever, hopeless and remediless!

"O then, my soul, look towards this Christ that you may obtain him! Behold this Christ and all his benefits, upon gospel-conditions, are yet obtainable unto you for your everlasting good. Do you not hear the offers of pardon, peace, and glory — made to you in his name? Do you not perceive him yet standing at your door, and knocking, crying, calling, there, "Open to me, and I will save you!"

Do you not see that mercy has not yet delivered you into the hands of justice, and to God's fiery indignation? Here you are on earth — - while others are lying and rolling in the lake of burning brimstone!

Does not his grace still woo you for your love? Does not his goodness still entreat you, and his patience still wait upon you? If you will be holy — yet you may. If you will have mercy — then mercy you may have. If you will have the fruit and benefits of Christ's death — as yet it is not too late.

Is not this enough . . .  
to melt a heart of stone?  
to break a heart as hard as adamant?  
to dissolve you into tears?  
to kindle and inflame your love?  
and with admiration cause you to cry out, and say, Is this your  
mercy, Lord, to me! — to me! — to me who has so long . . .  
abused your grace,  
despised your mercy,  
and slighted your love!

To me, who has lived so long, and never loved you! — to me, who might have been damned before this day, and so have been shut up under an impossibility of salvation by your blood and bloody sufferings! Yes, I have had the hatred of my heart fixed upon you, and my love never bent towards you! But forasmuch as you are pleased to this day to follow me with your calls of mercy, with the entreaties of your grace; and still the voice of love is sounding in my ears, and you say to me, "If you will love me — then I will pardon you. If you at last will give me your heart — then I will be your Savior. I have waited so long, but if now you will hearken and consent — then all shall be your own!

My righteousness shall be yours,  
my merits shall be yours,

my Spirit shall be yours, and  
my Heaven shall be yours!"

"O blessed Lord! I cannot withstand your pleading love. I can no longer dispute your astonishing grace. I have — but now I cannot; I have — but now I will not. You promise that you will yet be mine, and the blessings of the covenant may yet be mine, and Heaven itself may yet be mine. Dearest Lord! you have won my heart, you have gained my love — and, lo, I give it all to you, I place it all upon you!"

### **Section 6. The Fifth Requisite of Love to Christ.**

This love to Christ includes highest valuation of him, greatest estimation, which is appreciating love. We can only love him — when we prize him. We can only love him most — when we prize him most. We cannot despise a thing or person — and yet love him. We cannot have base, low, and undervaluing thoughts of one — and yet love him more than another whom we more highly esteem and value.

Does not the worldling, who loves his money more than other things — value it above other things? Does not the ambitious person, who loves his honor and his credit more than other things — esteem it more than other things? And will it not be so with him who loves Christ? He is a cursed man who values anything above Christ, and esteems it more than Christ As Christ is precious to him who believes, 1 Peter 2.7 — so he is to him who loves.

Pearls are valued but as pebbles,  
and diamonds are valued as dirt,  
and diadems are valued as dung,  
by a man who loves Christ — when they stand in competition with our love to Christ. In the practical judgment of a sincere lover of Christ, Christ cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the

precious onyx, or the sapphire; the gold and the crystal cannot equal him, and he would not exchange him for jewels of fine gold. With him no mention shall be made of diamond, or of pearl — for the worth of Christ is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia does not equal him, neither shall the purest gold, or the most refined silver, be weighed, in the balance of his judgment — to be preferred before Christ. For to him Jesus is more precious than rubies; and all the things the heart of man can desire besides him, are not to be compared with him!

Christ is that treasure hidden in a field, which when this lover has found, for joy thereof, he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. He is that goodly pearl of great price, which when found, all shall be left, or lost, and parted with — that this might be obtained, Matthew 13.44-46. And what a man gives all for — he values that more than all he gives for it.

Can that man be judged to love Christ, who values his corruptible silver — above the incomparable Savior? who esteems earth — above Heaven? who values the creature — more than the Creator? Or is not he deservedly to be reckoned an anathema, who shall esteem the dross of this world — above the darling of God? or thick clay — above him who excels the clearest crystal? or the things of time, which are only for time — above that Christ who is a good for all eternity?

### **Section 7. The Sixth Requisite of Love to Christ.**

This love to Christ takes in the permanent volition of the will, the settled inclination of the heart, towards the Lord Jesus Christ. For what else is love, but the volition of the rational appetite? Or the will's volition of good, apprehended by the understanding? Or the will's choosing him, and adhering to him? Disobeying of the will from Christ, is no better than hating him!

Can a man love Christ — and yet not will to obey him? Can he love him, and yet not choose him? Can he love him, and the will refuse him? Was disobedience — ever accounted as loving? or turning away of the heart from an object — ever taken for the loving of it? or is it not a contradiction? Will not — and love not — is all one. "You will not come to me! I know you, that you have not the love of God in you!" John 5.40, 42. What the object of the love of the heart is — is object of the choice of the will. And such as is the choice of your wills — such are you.

If you choose the world before Christ — I dare boldly to call you a worldly man!

If you choose pleasures before Christ — I dare confidently to declare you a voluptuous man!

But if Christ is chosen before all other things — I may term you to be a truly holy man.

Suppose then the world, and the riches thereof, the honors and the pleasures of it, were set on the one hand — and Christ on the other hand. Which would you really choose?

It is an easy thing to say that you would choose Christ, and not the world. But my question is, which you would really choose?

Can you say, and appeal to God who knows your heart: "Lord, you who know all things — you know that I choose Christ before riches, Christ before pleasures, liberty, life, or anything that is dear unto me in this world. You know that I would rather have Christ without the world — than the world without Christ. You know that I would rather have the Lord Jesus with disgrace, with poverty, and with the cross — than all the treasures of the world!"

This must be a man's will, and this must be a man's choice — or he cannot be said to have sincere love to Jesus Christ.

### **Section 8. The Seventh Requisite of Love to Christ — the SINCERITY of it.**

This love consists in the prevailing and predominant degrees of affection unto Christ. If Jesus is not loved above all — He is not sincerely loved at all. There might be love of other things subordinate to the love of Christ, but not equal with it, much less superior to it. You might love your friends, and love your enjoyments, and love the comforts of your life — but you must love Christ above all. The love of these must be swallowed up in the love of Christ, and be subordinate unto it.

"Simon, son of Jonah--do you love me more than these?" John 21.15. Degrees of love might be considered in respect of the things loved, or the object of our love. That the word more means that you love Christ more than the world, sin, self — or do you love these more than Christ?

I judge it is of great concernment, and necessary for every man who has a soul that must be damned or saved, to know and understand this. For I do not fear to say, that where a man's love is less to Christ than to the world, and sin, and carnal self — God will surely damn him. Does this grate upon any ears — that a man who does not love Christ more than sin, and more than pleasures and profits — has no sincere love to Christ, nor shall be saved by him? Surely such a man would judge in another case, if he had a wife that loves him — yet loves another man more than himself, she had not sincere marital love to him.

The plainest, fullest, and, I hope, no offensive answer, shall be the words of Christ himself, showing wherein sincerity of love to him consists. "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it!" Matthew 10:37-39

All the love to all inferior things, in comparison of the degrees of love we should have to Christ, more than unto these, is rather hatred than love: "If any man comes to me, and hates not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yes, and his own life also — he cannot be my disciple," Luke 14.26.

What interpretation can these words bear? That no real disciple of Christ may or ought to have true love to father or mother, brother or sister, wife and children, or to his own life? This is an absurd and irreligious sense — being contrary to the law of nature, and Christ's constant doctrine in his word. What then? This — that a true disciple of Christ must and ought to love these things less than Christ — and Christ with prevailing degrees of love. True love in the heart to Christ makes it incline more to Christ, than to all other things!

### **Section 9. The Eighth Requisite in Love to Christ.**

This love chooses Christ for himself, and for the excellency of his own person; though not with the exclusion of our own benefit and salvation by him. Our own benefits by Christ might be looked at by the returning soul at first: the soul might first be allured and drawn to look after Christ, and to love him, by the consideration of the matchless good and benefits it might have by him, which the convinced sinner sees he can find in no other. But in process of time, and in his progress in the way to Heaven — he learns and sees that

excellency and beauty in Christ, that he is in himself more amiable than all the objects of his former love.

To ask therefore, whether we are to love Christ for himself — or for the benefits we have by him — is to propound a question which yet I have not observed in the scripture, nor disjunctively answered therein; for one is subordinate to the other, but not opposed.

I am to love Christ for himself, and for the goodness, excellency, and amiableness of his own person; and I am to love Christ for the good I have received by him, and for the benefits I hope further for his sake to be made partaker of. The one is a help unto the other. Though I am to love Christ more for himself, than for my advantage by him — yet in loving him, I am not to cast away the consideration of the benefits by him.

As we should not put the seeking of God's glory, and our own salvation, in opposition, but in subordination — though God's glory and the pleasing of his will is the ultimate end, and our salvation to be sought by us in order thereunto. Wherefore, in seeking after an evidence of grace, and title to Heaven — I think it is a needless and unwarrantable puzzling of ourselves, and that which has sorely afflicted some gracious people, and filled them with unnecessary doubts, and fears, and torments of mind, to demand of ourselves — whether we could be content to be damned, to go to Hell, to suffer everlasting torments, and the burning, fiery, flaming wrath of God poured out upon the damned, so that God may be thereby glorified.

I shall forbear to judge the state of my soul by this as a character of grace, and preaching it unto others, until some shall show me this is propounded in the gospel as a condition of the pardon of my sin, and the salvation of my soul, which hitherto I have not observed. For how can I earnestly desire to be saved, and yet be willing and content to

be damned? How can I long to be with him, and yet be content to be forever separated from him? I find that God threatens men with Hell, to awaken them to look after Heaven, and deliverance from Hell — but I do not find God propounding as a condition of salvation, to be content to go to Hell, that we might be received up to Heaven.

That I leave and loathe my sin, repent and turn to God, believe and love him above all, and thankfully receive him for my Lord and Savior — is plainly required from me. And upon the sincere performance of these conditions, and persevering therein unto the end of my life, for Christ's sake, beloved and believed on — I may comfortably and well-groundedly hope, wait for, and expect, through the riches and freeness of his grace, everlasting happiness!

In like manner, I judge it a perplexing question — whether we should love Christ for himself, or for the benefits received by him. Lord, help me to love Christ for himself — and for all the good I have and hope for by him; but the one subordinately, the other ultimately. Such love I read there was in David: "I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my supplications." Psalm 116.1.

### **Section 10. The Ninth Requisite in Love to Christ.**

Sincere love to Jesus Christ respects him, and is placed upon him — as he is Prophet, Priest, and King. In which respect, the love of hypocrites and carnal professors fails and comes short.

Most will profess love to Christ, as he is Jesus — a Savior, to deliver them from the guilt of sin, and punishment of Hell, and the wrath that is to come. Yet they will not love him, nor have him, as a Teacher and a Ruler. As if a woman should love her husband, as he makes provision for her, and protects her from wrongs and injuries. But as he is her head, to guide, to rule and govern her — she cannot thus

endure him. Would you not in such a case cry out against such love, and say, this is but partial and pretended love? And do not you see that you deal as deceitfully and hypocritically with Christ, when in one respect you say you like and love him — but indeed in other respects, you dislike and hate him?

Do you think that Christ will save you from Hell — if he does not save you from your sins? Do you think that he will make you eternally happy — if you are never holy? Or do you hope that he will bring you to Heaven, without your being made fit for Heaven? Does not your own reason and conscience, if you consult them, condemn such hopes of happiness, that are built upon such partial love?

Must sin be loved as a lord — and Christ loved as a Savior? Do you think that if sin is your lord — Christ will be your Savior? What is the meaning then, that the object of such love which you must have, if you would not be anathema, in the text is set down as the Lord Jesus Christ? The anathema at the last day applies to those who never would submit to Christ as Lord and Ruler — nor love him in that relation. Christ looks upon them — not as lovers of him, but as enemies to him; and will deal with them, not as lovers, but as enemies! "But those enemies of mine, who do not want me to reign over them — bring them here, and slay them before me!" Luke 19.27.

What is the meaning then, that Lord and Savior, so often in scripture are put together — if, as the objects of your love they are to be parted asunder? In many texts, Lord and Savior, Lord and Jesus, Lord Jesus Christ — are set together. And in all these respects propounded to us, Jesus is to be loved and received by us — if we would have grace, mercy, and peace from God, and salvation by him. And as he is offered in Scripture — so he must be loved and accepted — or you must go without him and his benefits forever.

## **11. The Tenth Requisite to Love to Christ — or the Worker of it.**

This love to Christ is wrought by the powerful operation of the Spirit of God upon the heart. For though there is affection of love naturally in all men — yet there is not the grace of love naturally in any man. There is love to sin, and to the world, and there might be love of man to man and some common love in man to God, by some common workings of the Spirit. But there can be no special saving love to Jesus Christ — but by the special operations of the Holy Spirit. Saving love to Jesus is a flower that does not grow in nature's garden — but is planted by the Spirit of God. Therefore spiritual holy love is said to be a fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5.22. And, if any, such surely is sincere and saving love to Christ.

## **Section 12. The Eleventh Thing required in it.**

This love includes a resignation of a man's self to Christ, without reservation of anything he is, or has. A lover of Christ is not reluctant so devote, dedicate, and give up himself sincerely to Christ, as to his rightful owner, and bountiful benefactor. He looks upon himself to be Christ's, more than his own; to live to Christ, and not to himself, and to seek Christ in all, and not himself.

In marital love, there is a mutual giving each to other.

Just so in this holy spiritual love between Christ and the soul — Christ gives Himself unto the soul, and says, "I am yours, My righteousness is yours, My merits are yours, and all My benefits shall be yours!"

So the soul in love with Christ, says, "Lord, I give myself to You! My understanding shall be Yours, my will, my heart, my estate, my all

shall be Yours — at Your command, at Your disposal." In marital love, there is a mutual giving each to other.

Just so in this holy spiritual love between Christ and the soul — Christ gives Himself unto the soul, and says, "I am yours, My righteousness is yours, My merits are yours, and all My benefits shall be yours!"

So the soul in love with Christ, says, "Lord, I give myself to You! My understanding shall be Yours, my will, my heart, my estate, my all shall be Yours — at Your command, at Your disposal." "My Beloved is mine — and I am His!" Song of Songs 2:16

### **Section 13. The Workings of this Love, as it is delighting, desiring, or mourning Love.**

When all this is done, the soul delights in Christ — if present; desires after him — if absent; or mourns for him — if it cannot find him. One of these three ways, love will reveal itself. There are three sorts of love.

1. DELIGHTING love. If a man finds Christ's gracious quickening presence in his soul, discovering and manifesting himself and his love unto him — he rejoices in it more than in all riches, and says, "My life is a pleasure, my heart is filled with comfort, my soul with heavenly delights."

"Many are asking, 'Who can show us any good?' Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD. You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound!" Psalm 4:6-7

"Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest — is my lover among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to

my taste. He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love!" Song of Songs 2:3-4

2. DESIRING love. If Christ is withdrawn, the soul longs, pants, and thirsts after him — and cannot rest until Christ returns: O where is my beloved gone? Where shall I seek him? When shall I find him? How long! How long will it be! O "stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am love-sick!"

"As the deer pants for the water brooks — so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm 42:1-2

"O God, you are my God, early will I seek you. My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you!" Psalm 63:1

"My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord — my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God!" Psalm 84.2. My soul desires, yes, is consumed with desires after God!

As a lover of the world loves and desires the silver, and gold, and the riches of the world — so the Christian desires Christ with earnest, ardent, continual love!

3. MOURNING love. The soul grieves, and is filled with sorrow — when it has not the thing that it desires. Alas, that I should go from duty to duty, to look for Christ, and cannot find him. Alas, that I should seek him, but cannot see him! Alas, the soul grieves, it groans and weeps, for the absence of its beloved Lord. In company — you might see his tears. In secret, were you near him — you might hear his groans, and bitter sorrowful complaints: "My Lord is gone; my Love, the dearly beloved of my soul, behaves himself like a stranger to me!"

"They said unto Mary, Woman, why do you weep?" "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him!" John 20.13.

The sum of all these particulars opening the nature of this love, being contracted and laid together, make up this description.

#### **Section 14. The Description of Love to Christ.**

Love to Christ is a special grace wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, enlightening the mind — whereby the soul, discerning the incomparable goodness, suitableness, and obtainability of Christ unto him, and in his judgment having a superlative valuation of him, the will chooses him before all; primarily for himself, and secondarily for his benefits. And giving to Christ the supreme degrees of his affections, the soul resigns himself to Christ in all his offices. Delighting in him — if present; desiring after him — if absent; or mourning for him — if he cannot find him.

This is the love you must have to Christ, if you would not be Anathema — accursed when the Lord shall come!

### **Chapter 3.**

#### **Ten Arguments that prove the Necessity of this love to Christ, for the avoiding of the Curse.**

"If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — let him be Anathema! Maranatha." 1 Corinthians 16:22

Does it need any further proof than the text itself? What other construction can you make of it? If you believe that this is the word of God, and that God's word is true — then how can you question whether a non-lover of Christ shall be a cursed wretch at the coming of the Lord?

But you do not love Christ — and yet you hope to be blessed when he comes! You have no sincere love to him — and yet persuade yourselves your condition is good for the present, and shall escape the curse hereafter!

What! against the plain assertions of the word of God? Will you disbelieve Paul, nay, and God himself also — that it is well with you now, and shall go well with you at the coming of the Lord?

You will be miserable men forever — who have no other hopes that they shall escape the curse, but that God should be a blatant liar; and his word should be a pack of lies; and all his servants who come and preach to you in his name, and warn you of this curse — only tell you blatant lies? But whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, I will proceed to evidence this truth to you by these following arguments.

Argument 1.

He who does not love Christ — is not in Christ.

He who is not in Christ — is in his sins.

He who is in his sins is accursed — therefore he who does not love Christ, is accursed; and being found so when he comes, shall be cursed at his coming. He who has no sincere love to Christ — has still his old heart and his old love remaining in him. He who has his old

heart — is not in Christ: "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new!" 2 Corinthians 5.17.

Can you be in Christ — and have not the love of Christ in you?

Can you be in Christ — and your heart turn away from Christ?

Can you be in Christ — while your heart is set against Christ?

Is not your heart set against him, while you have no love for him?

Can there be any union, where there is no love and affection?

Does not hatred keep at the greatest distance, and maintain the widest separation?

If you are not in Christ — can you bring forth any fruit pleasing unto God? "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine — no more can you, unless you abide in me." John 15.4. And if you bring forth no fruit — shall you not be cast into the fire? "If a man abides not in me — he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned!" John 15.6. Are you such as shall be cast into the fire, and flames of Hell — and are you not in a cursed, dangerous, and miserable condition? Can a bad tree bring forth good fruit? If it does not bring forth good fruit — is it not fuel for the fires of Hell? "And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree which does not bring forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire!" Matthew 3:10.

Has not the rain of heavenly doctrine dropped upon you — and yet you bring forth anything but briars and thorns, when you have no love to Christ? And are you not then rejected, and your final end be

to be burned? And is then the curse far from you? "Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed, receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned!" Hebrews 6:7-8. And when you come to that end — will you not then acknowledge yourselves to be anathema — cursed by God?

Argument 2. He who does not love Christ sincerely, is under the curses of the law. Therefore he who does not love Christ, is accursed. For if all the curses of the law lighting and abiding upon a man, will prove a man an accursed man — then the man who has no sincere love to Christ, must be that man! For though the law as a covenant is not in force, so that we are not to seek salvation by it; yet the penalty and threatenings of the law are in full power against the man who does not submit to Christ, according to the covenant of grace. For though Christ was made a curse to redeem us from the curse — yet those only have the saving benefits of that redemption, who have found faith in, and sincere love to, Jesus Christ.

If by the law you would escape the curse threatened by the law — you must do everything contained in the law: "All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.' Clearly no one is justified before God by the law." Galatians 3:10-11.

You cannot do any one thing required in the law, as prescribed by the law — and yet you so slight Christ, that you will not so much as love him. Yet you still think that you are exempted from the curse of the law. God will convince you to the contrary; and unless you hasten to love Christ before you die — the flames of Hell will convince you to

the contrary! It would be your safer way now by the word of God, to be convinced to the contrary.

Argument 3. He who does not love Jesus Christ sincerely, is under condemnation by the gospel. Therefore he who does not love Christ is accursed. The gospel, taken for the whole doctrine of Christ, has its terrible tidings — as well as comforting tidings. The gospel has threatenings — as well as promises. The gospel has a sentence of damnation — as well as of absolution — and more dreadful and intolerable than those of the law! And to whom do they belong, and upon whom shall they be inflicted — if not upon the despisers of the message of the gospel; and who despise the gospel-message more than those who will not be persuaded to love the Lord Jesus Christ?

Does not the gospel set forth Christ in his excellency and beauty to sinners? Does it not declare what he has suffered for sinners? Does it not tell you what he has purchased for sinners, and will bestow upon sinners? And is not all this to gain your love, to win your hearts and affections to Christ? Yet after all, you slight him — and for his love, and for his sufferings — you will not so much as love him.

Consider seriously what Christ says concerning such: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil!" John 3.19. If the law condemns you — you might have recourse to the gospel. But if the gospel condemns you — where will you go for support?

Argument 4. There is no way ordained by God, for non-lovers of Christ to escape the punishment of sin, and the torments of Hell. Therefore such are in an accursed damnable condition. When man had broken the covenant of works, God sent his Son to die, and satisfy for the breach of that covenant, so that salvation is not impossible — and the escaping of the threatened curse, is not

impossible. And though you have sinned against the gospel by not loving Christ hitherto — yet Christ has so far satisfied for sins against the gospel, that upon your acceptance of Christ, you might have remission of sin and salvation. But you sin against the very remedy prepared to help sinners out of their misery. Can you be saved, who finally refuse the Savior? Can you escape the curse, who to the last gasp reject the only remedy? For besides this, there is no other.

"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left — but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?" Hebrews 10:26-29.

Argument 5. He who has no love to Christ, has no faith in Christ. He who has no faith in Christ, is condemned. He who is condemned, is in a miserable cursed condition! Therefore he who does not love Christ, is in a miserable cursed condition!

Sound faith and sincere love are inseparable graces. Those who are non-lovers of Christ, are unbelievers — and unbelievers are condemned men: "Whoever believes in him is not condemned — but whoever does not believe stands condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3.18.

O pity your children, your parents, your friends, and neighbors — who do not love Christ; for, being destitute of love to Christ — they are void of that faith which is a condition of salvation; and, being void of faith — they are condemned people.

Argument 6. Those who have not sincere love to Christ, are in the same condition in which they were born — which an accursed damnable condition; for by nature all are "children of wrath!" — and children of wrath are cursed children. Some are so ignorant, as to say, they have loved Christ ever since they were born, as if they were born with love in their hearts to Christ. Whereas love to Christ is not in us by the first birth — but by the second birth; not by the natural birth — but by the spiritual birth. Our state by nature is a state of bitterness and bonds — as bitter as gall! Acts 8.23.

And while you are in a state of nature, the world has your love, and sin has your love — therefore Christ is not the object of it; for the world and Christ, sin and Christ, cannot at the same time, by the same man, be superlatively loved.

It must then be granted, that you were born without love to Christ — and, being in the same condition in which you were born, you have lived hitherto without love to Christ; and if you die without love to Christ — then the next moment after death, your condition is accursed.

Argument 7. Deceivers in the worship of God are accursed; those who come to pray and hear, and not love Christ — are such deceivers. All such men's religious duties and services are done in deceit and hypocrisy — they are deceivers of themselves, deceivers of other men, and go about to deceive God himself. What is it to play the hypocrite, if not this — to give God your words, but not your hearts. What is deceitful dealing, if not this — to give God and Christ outward service, and deny him your heart's love? To do the outward action — and withhold from him the inward affection?

Would you be paid what is owed to you in such coin — in that which has the color and resemblance of gold, but underneath is base metal?

Would you not cry out of such a one as a deceiver? Is this a fault in men to you — and is it no fault in you to God? Are you ready to curse such a man — and will not God curse you? "Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it — but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations!" Malachi 1:14

You bring him some cold prayers — and you do not have a heart to give him. You bring him some outward expressions of worship — and you do not have inward affections to bring him. You offer him your words — and deny him your love. These are cursed doings — and you, the doers of them, are accursed!

Argument 8. Robbers and thieves are accursed — and non-lovers of Christ are robbers and thieves. For whose are you? God's — or your own? Whose by right are your hearts? The world's — or Christ's? Who should have your love as due, to whom does it belong — to the world, to vanity, to self — or to Christ? That which you purchase — do not you call your own? That which you pay for — is it not your own? Would it not be robbery in another, without your consent, to keep it from you? Has not Christ bought you with a price given for you, more than you are worth? He made your hearts to love him, and when you defaced them, and sinned away the love of God — did not Christ buy you? Has not he paid dearly to have your love? Might you set your love upon whatever you please? Are not you, body and soul — Christ's by purchase? "You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Is it not a robbing of Christ, to deny him his own? And is not he who is a robber of God and Christ — a cursed wretch?

If you should rob your father, or mother, or a stranger — would you not be accounted a vile transgressor? How can you rob God, and Christ — and make no matter of it? But God does. "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me!" Malachi 3:8-9. They are said to rob God in tithes and offerings — and you rob God in your hearts and affections. And what is the robbing of tithes — to the robbing of the heart, and love thereof? Yet God cursed them with a curse, that is, certainly accursed them — how then will you escape? God might charge you, that you have played the thief with him, and have stolen away your love from him; and have gone and pawned it for a little money, or a filthy lust; and yet you have no mind, nor serious thought to get it redeemed, or fetched your love out of pawn.

Argument 9. Those who do not love Christ, are spiritual adulterers, and go a whoring from God. Do not you profess to be married to Christ? What! and give your love to the world, to pleasures, to the strumpet sin? Is that a chaste woman who loves another man more than her own husband? To love other things more than God and Christ, is called in scripture, "a going a whoring from God;" "a playing the harlot;" "You have played the harlot with many lovers," "committing adultery." "You adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of this world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God!" James 4:4. A lover of the world is an enemy of God; and are not those whom God marks as his enemies, in a bad and miserable condition, and will be worse when the Lord comes?

Some please themselves with this as an evidence of their good condition, and hope of salvation — that they are neither harlots nor thieves. But such as do not love Christ above all, in a spiritual and

scriptural sense, are both harlots and thieves. Such a one is a thief, in robbing God of that love which is his due. He is guilty of spiritual whoredom, in loving other things more than Christ. If you think to escape the curse, continuing in such sins, when the Lord comes, and you are tried at his bar — you shall find you were greatly mistaken, and meet with a curse, when you expected a blessing!

Argument 10. Such as shall be commanded to depart from Christ, and be driven from his glorious presence — are accursed. Non-lovers of Christ shall be commanded to depart from Christ, and be driven from his glorious presence. Your heart that does not love Christ — it is not towards God and Christ. And when he comes — his heart shall not be towards you! Your heart is alienated from Christ — and then Christ's heart shall be alienated from you. While you will not love him, you say in your hearts to Christ, "Depart from us! We do not even desire the knowledge of Your ways!" Job 21:14. And Christ will say to you, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25:41.

As he who trusts in the creature — his heart departs from God; so he who loves the creature more than God — his heart departs from God. He whose heart departs from God, either by trusting to, or loving of the creature more than God, is accursed: "Thus says the Lord, Cursed be the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord!" Jeremiah 17.5. And when Christ shall command you to depart from him — you shall find yourselves in a cursed condition!

Such as do not love the Lord Jesus, do not obey the gospel, for the gospel commands your love. Those who do not obey the gospel, at Christ's coming shall be separated from him; and those who shall be separated from him then — shall find and feel themselves accursed,

"This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed." 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

Are you not yet convinced of your deplorable condition by reason of the lack of love to Jesus Christ? Do you not see that the curse of God hangs over your soul? Can you give a suitable reply to this, or deny it? Or will you still hold to your old conclusion, that you shall not be thus accursed — like to what is recorded, "And it shall come to pass, when he hears 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, to add drunkenness to thirst," Deuteronomy 29:19. Behold a man blessing himself — whom the Lord declared accursed! But what then? Is the curse the further from him — or the blessing nearer to him? Read on: "The LORD will never be willing to forgive him; his wrath and zeal will burn against that man. All the curses written in this book will fall upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under Heaven. The LORD will single him out for disaster, according to all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law!" Deuteronomy 29:20-21

It is but a poor shift to lull your consciences asleep with groundless hopes of escaping the curse, contrary to the express word of God, who will not allow one tittle of it to fall to the ground — even though, in the accomplishment and fulfillment of it, millions of sinners fall into Hell.

The curse then being certainly to fall upon the final non-lovers of Christ — the third thing in order follows — to open to you what kind of curse it shall be, to be Anathema when Maranatha — cursed when the Lord shall come.

.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **Ten Properties of the Curse upon Non-Lovers of Christ.**

1. To be Anathema, or accursed — when Maranatha, or when the Lord shall come — will be to be cursed with a dreadful curse! This is more general, and the following properties will show it to be so dreadful — so dreadful, as will make your joints to tremble, your knees to knock together, your faces gather paleness — for you will be cursed by God himself!

As to be blessed by God is the greatest blessing — so to be cursed of God is the sorest curse! A great emphasis is laid upon those words, where God calls a people, "the people of my curse!" Isaiah 34.5. When the church prayed against her enemies, it was a sore petition: "Give them sorrow of heart, may your curse be upon them!" Lam. 3.65.

If the devil should curse you — yet God may bless you.

If men should curse — yet God might bless you; as David prayed, "They may curse — but you will bless!" Psalm 109:28. As if he had said, if I have God's blessing — I will not fear wicked men's cursings; for when they curse — God can turn it into a blessing. "However, the

LORD your God would not listen to Balaam — but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you!" Deuteronomy 23:5.

The form of the rash and wicked speech of ungodly men, much given to cursing — shows it to be a dreadful thing to be cursed of God — when they say: "May the curse of God fall upon you!" — they mean the sorest, the heaviest, the greatest curse — by the curse of God! But though men might wish you so accursed — yet you might be far from it. But if you do not sincerely love the Son of God — then the curse of God will overtake you, and lie upon you, and then you will be accursed indeed! O now love Christ indeed, that you might then escape the curse indeed; which else will be a curse indeed — heavy indeed, and indeed eternal and intolerable.

2. To be Anathema when Maranatha, accursed when the Lord comes — will be to be accursed totally. All unrepentant sinners shall lie under this curse — his body shall be cursed, and his soul shall be cursed. The curse in this world falls upon all who are disobedient and rebellious: "However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today — then all these curses will come upon you and overtake you! You will be cursed in the city — and cursed in the country. Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. You will be cursed when you come in — and cursed when you go out!" Deuteronomy 28:15-19

"If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — let him be Anathema! Maranatha." 1 Corinthians 16:22

Oh you non-lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ — when the Lord comes, you shall be cursed in all you are!

You shall be cursed in your BODY, and all the parts thereof:  
cursed shall be your eyes — which were as windows to let vanity into your heart;  
cursed shall be your ears — which hearkened to the enticements of sinners, but not to the commands and calls of God;  
cursed shall be your hands and feet — which acted wickedly, and carried you on in ways of sin.

You shall be cursed in your in your SOUL, and in all the powers and faculties thereof!

Cursed shall be your understanding — which never was enlightened with the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Cursed shall your will be — which never made choice of Christ for your Savior and your Lord.

Cursed shall your conscience be — which did not effectually stir you up to look after, and to hasten to, Jesus Christ.

Cursed shall be all your affections — which you shall be constrained to confess that love which was set upon the world and sin, which should have been better placed upon Christ, was cursed love.

Those desires which ran out after vanity, which should have been upon the wing in moving after Christ — were cursed desires.

Those delights which were fetched from the creature, and from sinful objects — were cursed delights.

That hatred which you had to Christ and His ways, which should have risen against sin — was cursed hatred.

Thus where the love of Christ does not rule in the heart, sin is spread all over — so then the sinner shall be cursed all over.

In this life, spiritual curses upon the soul are the heaviest curses, as blessings on the soul are the best of blessings. When men will not be persuaded to love the Lord Jesus, but will love their cups, and their lusts, and their profits, and pleasures, better than Christ. But after long wooings of grace, and entreaties of mercy, after many strivings of the Spirit, and calls of conscience, and waitings of patience — they will love their sin, and not Christ, the world, and not Christ; God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, may give them up to these vile and cursed affections, and say to them, as Christ cursed the fig — tree on which there was no fruit, "May fruit never more grow on you!" Mark 11.13-14, 20-21.

Lost sinner, will you not love me? Then will never repentance will never be found in you; then pardon be will never bestowed on you. Will you not love me! Then . . .  
let him love his swearing still;  
let him love his filthy unclean doings still;  
let him remain under hardness of heart to his dying day.

What should I do with him? My ministers have begged him to give me his love — and he will not; my Spirit has striven with him — but he will not. What, will he not love me! No, then let him love what he will. This is a great curse upon the soul of a sinner while Christ defers his coming. "He who is unjust — let him be unjust still; and he who is filthy — let him be filthy still!" Rev. 22.11. Some have had great God-given abilities, and with them they have not loved Christ — and Christ has cursed them. Some have performed many duties, and were outward professors, but all this while they prayed, and heard, and received — they did not love Christ, and Christ has cursed them,

and they are turned profane. Some are given to swearing, to immorality, and drinking. It is not only their sin, but the curse of God upon their souls, that he has given them over, because they have refused to love his Son.

"But My people would not heed My voice, and Israel would have none of Me. So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels!" Psalm 81:11-12. "Ephraim is joined to idols — let him alone!" Hosea 4:17.

My Spirit — let him alone!

My ministers — let him alone!

My ordinances — let him alone!

Conscience — let him alone!

All let him alone!

He is stubborn, willful, and perverse; his heart is joined to his profits, and to his pleasures. Let him alone — let him take his course, and walk in the foolish imagination of his own evil heart — a heavy curse in this life.

But when, Maranatha, the Lord comes, these curses on the soul shall be settled, fixed — and never removed. This was the man who never loved me; now, let him never repent — except it be with a vain, empty, self-tormenting repentance. Now, let him be without holiness forever, and without love to me forever.

3. To be Anathema, when Maranatha, shall be to be cursed with a bitter curse, without any ingredient of the least blessing to allay or mitigate the bitterness of it. Then he shall have . . .

sorrow — without joy,  
mourning — without mirth,  
darkness — without light,  
pain — without ease,  
misery — without mercy,  
all evil — without the least good, and  
all this without end, and therefore without hope!

This cup of cursing, because it shall be so pure without mixture, shall be so exceedingly, so inconceivably bitter! "He will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever! They have no rest day and night!" Revelation 14:10-11

A bitter cup — a bitter curse; more bitter than the water of jealousy that caused the curse, which a woman drank who had given her love to another man, and had sinned against her husband; the water was bitter water, and the curse a bitter curse; "for it made her belly to swell, and her thigh to rot, and she was a curse among the people!" Numbers 5:27.

This bitter curse, at the coming of Christ, shall embitter your thoughts, your soul, your very being, and make you cry out, "Oh this is a bitter place! This is a bitter state! This is a bitter condition, exceedingly bitter! My loving of the world and sin was not so sweet — as this is bitter; that seemed to me once as sweet as honey — but this is more bitter than gall.

But here is my woe, which makes it still more bitter — the sweet is gone — and the bitter remains! The sweet will never return — and the bitter will never be gone! I put bitter for sweet, and sweet for

bitter — but now I cannot: the bitter is so bitter, that I cannot put it for sweet, nor imagine it to be so. Oh! never thought the sweet delight I took in what I loved, would have brought upon me this bitter curse, or me to these bitter torments!

4. To be Anathema when Maranatha, will be . . .  
to be accursed publicly and openly before all the world;  
to be accursed before blessed angels, and cursed devils;  
to be accursed before the blessed saints, and other cursed men.

You openly declared your love of pleasures, you openly followed such courses, which all might see are inconsistent with sincere love to Christ — and you shall be openly accursed. Or though you openly prayed, and publicly hear and profess the ways of Christ — but secretly in your heart loved something else more than Christ — yet for your secret hypocrisy — you shall be publicly accursed!

Before the greatest congregation that ever eyes beheld, before a greater number than ever yet at once were gathered together — even before millions of angels, before all that shall be found alive at Christ's coming; and all who have been dead, who shall then be made alive — even all people, of all nations, even before them shall you stand, and be manifested and declared a cursed wretch, because you never loved the blessed Son of God. What shame shall then confound you, and what confusion shall then cover your face — when you who thought yourself a blessed man, and others thought you to be blessed — that you and they were quite mistaken! When Christ before them all shall pronounce a sentence upon you, whereby you are published to be accursed, and condemned with all the plagues and curses of God upon your soul and body, to "depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matthew 25.41.

5. To be Anathema when Maranatha, is to be cursed really — sentenced to real pains, to real torments. These will be so great, so grievous, so many, so extreme, so continual, and so universal — that they shall wring out a confession from you: "Now I am accursed indeed!" To lie in these flames that cannot be quenched, to burn in this fire in which I cannot be consumed — is such a curse, so intolerable, that will make you curse the day in which you were born, and curse the time you ever lived in this world — because not better improved, to escape that curse you lie under in Hell.

When you shall cry out and roar, "Woe is me, poor miserable wretch! I am tormented in this place, and cannot have one drop of water to refresh and cool my parched tongue! Woe is me, poor cursed wretch! I am in pain, in pain, in extremity of pain — and here is no ease! Alas! here is no ease! I toss and tumble in this bed of flames, and cannot rest! If I wander from one side of Hell unto another, I cannot find one corner where I might have a little rest! Oh! cursed creature, that I did not love Christ! If I had loved Christ as much above the world, as I loved the world above Christ — then I might have been among the blessed saints, and not in the midst of such a cursed crew! Had I loved Christ so much more than sin, as I loved sin more than Christ — then I might have been a blessed one; but because I did not, Oh cursed wretch, that I did not! I am now this cursed wretch!"

Who can be in these torments — and not acknowledge the curses of the Lord have overtaken him? Who can feel what is here to be endured — and yet who can endure to feel it, which yet in feeling must be endured, and not reckon himself as cursed as cursed can be! "This, I was told, for lack of love to Christ, would be my cursed state; the Lord has come, and now, for lack of love, it is my cursed state forever! I was told, If I do not love Christ, I would be Anathema when

Maranatha; I did not love Christ, and now Maranatha, and I am Anathema."

6. To be Anathema when Maranatha, will be to be cursed privatively — with the loss of God, of Christ, of Heaven, of the society of saints and angels, and of all the joys and happiness that God has prepared for those who love him. The one who does not love Christ, shall then be openly cast out of God's favor forever. You cast off Christ — and that is your sin; Christ will cast you off forever — and that will be your curse. The love of your heart is not towards Christ — and that is your sin; and God's face and favor shall not be towards you — and that will be your curse. Can he be blessed who loses God, who is our blessedness? Must not he be cursed, who lies under the punishment of cursed devils?

Now you do not love Christ — and yet you will be confident that you shall escape Hell, and obtain Heaven, and be blessed. But if you continue without love to Christ, you will be shut out of Heaven; and where then? Do you know of any other place, (whatever Papists may dream) but Hell? and when out of Heaven, and in Hell, what a poor blessedness will your groundless confidence bring you to!

7. To be Anathema when Maranatha, will be to be finally accursed. While Christ is tarrying, if you are not in a good and blessed state one day, you might be another. Though last Lord's-day you were in a miserable condition — yet this day you may (and oh! that you might) be translated into a better state. If not this day, if you live until the next day, you may be then in a blessed state. You should desire to get out of a cursed dangerous condition this day, before the next, for this day is yours, the next might be none of yours. But when Christ shall come, that will be the last day, and there shall not be a next day.

Therefore to be accursed that day, will be to be sent away with a curse upon your souls, without any possibility of a blessing!

When Christ was upon the earth, the last act he did relating to his disciples, was an act of love; his valedictory act was an act of blessing, "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven," Luke 24.50-51. And when Christ shall come again, the last act relating to those who do not love him not, shall be an act of justice, and vengeance, and wrath; his valedictory act, will be an act of malediction. After this, no act of mercy, of love, or favor shall be shown to them, therefore shall they be finally and eternally accursed.

8. To be Anathema when Maranatha, will be to be accursed, without an appeal to any higher court, or superior judge — for such none is. If it were the last thing that Christ would do to them — yet if they could remove their cause, and have a hearing in another court, and before another judge — then they might hope the curse may be repealed, the sentence whereby they are declared accursed might be changed, and their sad condition altered for the better. But this cannot be, for all judgment is committed to the Son, John 5.22. All men must stand or fall, live or die, be damned or saved, according to the sentence that Christ shall pass upon them. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Corinthians 5.10.

In the description of the process of the day of judgment, we find, without appeal to any other court, the execution shall certainly follow. Those whom Jesus shall pronounce blessed — shall go into eternal life; and those whom he shall declare accursed — shall go into

everlasting punishment. "Come, you who are blessed by my Father! Depart from me, you who are cursed. These shall go away into everlasting punishment — but the righteous into life eternal," Matthew 25.34, 41, 46.

9. Therefore to be Anathema when Maranatha, will be to be accursed with an irrevocable curse. Though they should cry, call, and beg for a blessing, with greater importunity than Esau did, who cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father" — yet the Lord Jesus at that day will be inexorable, not to be entreated. As Isaac said concerning Jacob, "I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed" — so Jesus shall say concerning those who loved him, "I have blessed them — and they shall be blessed!" He shall say to those who hated him, "I have cursed you — and you shall be cursed!"

So much we learn from Luke 13.25-27. "Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us!' But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'" Luke 13:25-27

"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:22-23

Christ in these scriptures speaks of many who shall find the door shut, themselves excluded — shall be importunate for admission into a state of everlasting blessedness, by knocking, calling, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But Christ disowns them, and denies their request. They

plead their prophesying, their hearing, their eating and drinking in his presence, casting out devils, and doing many wonderful works in his name; but Christ replies, "All this you did, but you did not love me, and you were not lovers of me, for you were workers of iniquity!" Both a lover of Christ, and a worker of iniquity — a man cannot be at the same time. So that such as shall then be so cursed as to be shut out of doors, are past recovery, past hopes of mercy, past a possibility of being blessed. And, therefore,

10. To be Anathema when Maranatha, will be to be accursed with an eternal curse! They must exist forever — they cannot die. They cannot shake off the curse — therefore they must be cursed forever. For a man to be accursed all his days, would be a sore judgment; but for a man to be accursed to all eternity — is beyond conception tormenting and grievous! To live forever, and to be accursed forever — is worse than never to have been, or to have their being turned into nothing.

All the curses that men void of the love of Christ lie under in this world, they make light of. If now they are cast out of God's favor, it is a great curse — but they are merry under it. If now they have no grace, it is a great curse — but they account it no curse; they have no grace — and they desire none.

But there are curses waiting for them, and shall be poured out upon them at the coming of Christ, which in the eternal world shall be heavy indeed, and intolerable; and under them they shall never have a merry heart forever. For to be Anathema when Maranatha, is to be cursed dreadfully, because totally, bitterly, publicly, positively, privatively, finally — therefore uncontrollably;

therefore irrevocably;  
therefore eternally!

.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **Eight reasons why Christ must be loved — or the sinner accursed.**

The fourth general head in the method propounded, is: Why there is such an absolute necessity of our sincere love to Christ, for the escaping of this accursed curse? Why does God so much insist upon our love unto his Son, that whoever does not love him, shall be Anathema?

This is not to be understood exclusively, as if other graces and conditions were not also necessary; for in other texts we find, that for lack of FAITH, this curse will overtake many: "He that believes not, shall be damned," Mark 16.16. "He who believes not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him!" John 3.36.

And for lack of REPENTANCE, "Unless you repent, you shall all likewise perish," Luke 13.3.

And for lack of CONVERSION, "Truly, I say unto you, Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven," Matthew 18.3. "Truly, truly, I say unto you, Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3.

And for lack of OBEDIENCE: "And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who were disobedient?" Hebrews 3:18

Sometimes the condition is expressed by the term of a new creature: "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," Galatians 6.15.

Sometimes faith and love are put together: "For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which works by love," Galatians 5.6.

And indeed, all these are requisite, and are found together in the same person, for . . .

he who has faith — has also love;

and he who has love — also repents;

and he who repents — also obey;

and he who believes, loves, repents, and obeys — is a new creature.

Yet LOVE is thus insisted on for such reasons as these.

I. Love commands the whole man; for it is in the will, which is the commanding faculty.

1. Love commands and sets on work all the other affections. If a man loves Christ, it sets desires on work, if he is absent. It sets joys on work — if he is present. If Christ is absent, and the soul sees a probability of obtaining him — love sets hope on work. If there are any impediments which hinder a man in his prosecution — it sets anger on work for the removal of them.

2. Love commands the thoughts and mind — for love to Christ sets the mind on thinking on Christ, and meditating upon him. The mind

muses upon what the heart loves. Where love is fixed — the thoughts dwell: "O how love I your law! it is my meditation all the day!" Psalm 119.97.

3. Love commands all the outward members of the body. Love to Christ sets . . .

the tongue to speak of Christ, and for him;

the ear on hearing of his word;

the eyes in seeing the tokens of his love and goodness;

the hands in acting, and the feet in walking to those places and duties where Christ is to be found, and enjoyment of him to be had.

II. If Christ has our love — then he has our all. Christ never has our all from us — until he has our love. Love withholds nothing from Christ, when it is sincerely set upon him.

Then he shall have our time,

and he shall have our service,

and he shall have the use of all our abilities, and gifts, and graces!

Yes, then he shall have our estates, liberty, and our very lives, when he calls for them.

As when God loves any of us — he will withhold nothing from us that is good for us; no, not his own only begotten Son! Romans 8.32. And when Christ loves us, he gives all unto us:

his merits to justify us,

his Spirit to sanctify us,

his grace to adorn us,

his glory to crown us.

Just so, when any of us love Christ sincerely, we lay all down at his feet, and give up all to be at his command and service: "And they did not love their lives unto the death!" Rev. 12.11.

III. Love gives the character to a man, according as the object is which he superlatively loved. As is the love — such is the man. As is the love — such might you boldly call the man.

If he is a lover of honor — then he is an ambitious man.

If he is a lover of pleasure — then he is a voluptuous man.

If he chiefly loves the world — then he is he is a covetous man.

If he loves holiness — then he is he is a pious man.

If he loves the things above — then he is a heavenly-minded man.

If he loves Christ with a supreme love — then he is a Christian man!

"The upright love you!" Song of Songs 1.4.

IV. Without love, all other things, though ever so many, great, and excellent in themselves — are not acceptable unto God. He does not regard your prayers — if you do not love him. He does not value your hearing — if you do not love him. All your alms-deeds are poor things in his esteem — if you do not love him. Yes, all your suffering for religion, and for Christ, are nothing — if you do not love him. If a man could preach like an angel, and yet not love Jesus — he would not be accepted by him! " If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love — I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love — I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love — I gain nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Love therefore is above all these — for all these without love are nothing!

V. Love makes us most like to God — for God is love! John 4:8. God loves Christ above all the men on earth, and above all the angels in Heaven — he therefore calls him his beloved Son.

God loves all men with a common love, John 3:16. Titus 3:4.

God loves holy men with a special love. God loves angels with a higher love. But God loves Christ most of all — as he is the Son of his love, Colossians 1.13.

In the same way, our love should be graduated. When we love as God loves, our love makes us most like to God. We ought to love . . .  
all men with some degrees of love,  
holy men and angels with a higher love,  
and Christ with the highest love!

VI. Love is the highest improvement of the faculties of our souls.

1. We have understandings to know God and Christ — and love to God and Christ is the highest improvement of all our knowledge. For if we know him and do not love him, then the more we know of him — the more our knowledge increases our sin, and will aggravate our condemnation.

2. We have wills to choose the Lord Jesus Christ; and when we choose him — then love is the improvement of our wills, in taking delight in him who is the object of our choice.

3. We have consciences, which dictate to us that Christ is best, and best for us — and we improve those dictates, when we love him; else all those dictates of conscience are lost, and come to nothing.

4. We have memories, wherein the sayings of Christ to us, the sufferings of Christ for us, and the benefits of Christ bestowed upon us — should be lodged and laid up. And when we love him — we shall love to remember all these things which we have by him, and from him — and himself, who is the purchaser and the giver of them!

But if our love is supremely placed upon anything below Christ — then all the powers of the soul are debased!

The reason of man is degraded in contriving the getting of such ignoble and sordid enjoyments as his highest end. The will is debased in choosing them, and the memory in being stuffed with the remembrance of them, forgetting God and Christ, and better things — so that the man is more a brute than a man — without sincere love to Christ!

VII. Love is the end of all other graces, and that in which they terminate their operations. Our knowledge of Christ ended in our loving Christ. Our believing on him, hoping in him, trusting to him — like so many streams, at last run into the love of Christ.

VIII. Love is the everlasting grace which shall abide and be in use and exercise, when the actings of other graces shall cease. There are some graces suitable especially to our state of imperfection in this world.

To live by faith,  
to repent, and mourn for sin,  
to live in hope of the glory that is to be revealed,  
to wait until we be possessed of the mansions which are above,  
to desire all the good that is promised to us — but not yet conferred upon us.

But in eternity . . .  
faith shall be turned into vision,  
hope shall be turned into fruition,  
desires shall be turned into possession,  
and waiting shall be turned into obtaining.

And then we shall . . .  
believe no more,  
hope no more,  
desire no more,  
wait no more.

But then we shall love still — yes, more than ever, more abundantly!  
Yes we shall then love . . .  
perfectly, without diminution;  
continually, without intermission;  
and eternally, without cessation!

In which respect, among the three cardinal graces, love has the pre-eminence, "Now abides faith, hope and love, these three — but the greatest of these is love" — because it is the longest in duration. So that those who love Christ sincerely here on earth — shall love him perfectly hereafter, and be forever blessed in that love. But those who do not love him on earth — cannot love him in the eternal world; and for lack of such love, shall be accursed forever!

## **Chapter 6.**

## **The Application of the Doctrine.**

The last thing propounded in the method of this subject, is the use and application of it — to bring it down to our own hearts — and to work this truth upon our minds, consciences, and affections. And now, O that God would help me, and Christ would help me, and the blessed Spirit of God and Christ would so help me — and give me lively words, a lively heart, a lively and inflamed love to blessed Jesus, and to your immortal precious souls!

O that I might speak and apply this great truth, as befits a man who truly believes that every one of you in this congregation this day, must be Anathema when Maranatha — if you live and die void of love to Jesus Christ!

O that I might speak and apply this great truth, as befits a man who truly believes that each of you must either be blessed or cursed, either be damned or saved forever — as you are prevailed with, or not prevailed with, to give Christ your hearts, and hearty love!

O that I might speak and apply this great truth, as befits a man who truly believes your everlasting state is much concerned in this one point that now is before us!

Alas! Methinks I see the great multitudes that this Anathema will fall upon! Methinks I see the Lord a-coming! Methinks I hear the trumpet sounding, and the voice calling to the dead, "Arise, and come to judgment! Come, you cursed souls, who have been in the infernal lake — and appear before my judgment bar! Come, you cursed bodies — awake, arise, and stand before my judgment-seat! Let those cursed souls be again united to those cursed bodies — and

now be both cursed together, and cursed forever, and let both be inseparably linked together to endure this curse to all eternity! Methinks I see them coming — but unwillingly! They come, but with fear and trembling, with horror and amazement.

Now! What can be done now? Now, Maranatha — and now every one of us who did not love that Lord who now has come — must be Anathema. Oh woeful souls! Oh miserable sinners! Oh cursed wretches! What shall you do now? Where shall you go now?

"What shall we do now?" We should have asked this question before this day, that the Lord has come. Do? We should have done that which we did not do — and now must go thither, where we would not go! O that we might rather cease to be — than to be what we must forever be; and go, from whence we never must return; and feel what will make us cry and roar, toss and rage, and be forever restless — and the more restless, because hopeless and remediless. Oh, sirs, my heart is pained, my joints shake with trembling — lest any of you in this place, should fall under this curse, when the Lord shall come!

The USES of this doctrine shall be:

1. By way of inference or instruction — what things from hence may be deduced and learned.
2. Of reprehension or reproof — showing the aggravations of lack of love to the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. For examination or trial — distinguishing the non-lovers of Christ from such as sincerely love him.
4. By way of entreaty or exhortation — that as you would escape this curse, be careful that you get this love to Christ.

5. For the comfort, encouragement, and joy — of such as love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity above all.

## **Chapter 7.**

### **Under the first use, we might learn these lessons — or deduce these ten corollaries.**

1. God alone has power to curse any of his creatures. He who made us, can alone really and effectually make us a blessing — or a curse. Sin might meritoriously subject us to the curse — but God alone can inflict all the curse which sin deserves. Wicked men might wish others accursed, and do; but their wishing them to be so, does not make them so. By cursing others, they might sooner bring a curse upon themselves — than upon those whom they curse. Let them beware of this, who cannot speak of some people, but with a curse in their mouths: "As he loved cursing — so let it come unto, him; as he delighted not in blessing — so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing, like as with a garment — so let it cursing into his heart like water, and like oil into his bones," Psalm 109.17, 18.

That cursings as well as blessings belong to God, Balaam himself taught: "Then Balaam uttered his oracle: Balak brought me from Aram, the king of Moab from the eastern mountains. 'Come,' he said, 'curse Jacob for me; come, denounce Israel.' How can I curse those whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce those whom the LORD has not denounced?" Numbers 23:7-8

Therefore when we find holy men of God in scripture using imprecations and curses — we must not draw them into examples, to

fill our mouths with curses against any — for there is not the same reason between us and them.

1. When they cursed, they had the gift of discerning spirits, whereby they perceived such were designed by God unto destruction, as a payment for their cursed sinnings, against whom they used such fearful imprecations of eternal damnation: "Peter answered: May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin!" Acts 8:20-23

The like is to be said of David's cursing his slanderous enemies, praying against their person, family, name, honor, estate, and eternal salvation: "They repay me evil for good, and hatred for my friendship. Appoint an evil man to oppose him; let an accuser stand at his right hand. When he is tried, let him be found guilty, and may his prayers condemn him. May his days be few. May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. May his children be wandering beggars — may they be driven from their ruined homes. May a creditor seize all he has — may strangers plunder the fruits of his labor. May no one extend kindness to him or take pity on his fatherless children. May his descendants be cut off — and their names blotted out from the next generation!" Psalm 109:5-13

2. The imprecations of such men in scripture might be taken rather as predictions, than as curses; or at least imprecating predictions. They, speaking by the Spirit of God, foretold what curses would be inflicted by God upon them for their sin — and in a way of sin overtake them.

3. There is a ministerial and a magisterial cursing. The minister is to make anything or person accursed, as the desert of sin. The magistrate is to pronounce, wish, or declare anything or person accursed — and this is all that men can do. Therefore, though men pronounce Anathema against some without cause, as the pope and his councils against Protestants — we need not be terrified therewith, else the most happy men might be the most accursed: "It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day!" 2 Samuel 16.12.

2. This teaches us the evil nature of sin, and what a cursed thing it is, as being the meritorious cause of all the curses that befall any of the creatures of God. If sin had been kept out of the world — then curses would never have come into it. But sin made way for the curse, and brought it in — the commission of sin, was the introduction of the curse: "And the Lord said unto the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Cursed is the ground for your sake, in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life!"

Sin and the curse are so linked together — that Christ alone, who can take away the sin, can remove the curse: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Galatians 3.13. If curses are heavy — then sin cannot be light. If the curses are great which are due to sin — then the sin that procures them cannot be so small a matter as the most make of it.

Would you flee from the curse — and yet run into sin?

Would you escape the curse — and yet live in sin?

What is this, but as if you would drink poison, and hope you shall live? That you would run into the fire — and imagine you shall not be

burnt? Do you cry out under the curse as a grievous pain — and yet look upon sin as the greatest pleasure? Is the curse dreadful — and do you look upon sin as delightful? Is the curse intolerable — and can sin be profitable? O learn to look upon sin through the curse — and then sin will appear to be a cursed thing indeed.

3. Sin crosses and thwarts the natural principles which are engraved by the finger of God upon the hearts of all men. If you ask whether sin is now in man's lapsed state, according to the nature of man? I answer, with this distinction, there is the corruption of nature, and so sin is according to our nature — it is as natural for man to sin, as it is for heavy things to descend. Yet there are still principles of self-preservation left in corrupt nature — and so sin is still against nature. There are yet remaining principles which beget an aversion from misery — and an inclination for the obtaining of happiness; desires to avoid the curse — and to procure blessedness. But sin is thwarting of both these — so that you cannot sin, but you go against the very principles left in corrupted nature, as preservatives to keep down the corruption of nature.

All have an innate desire to escape the curse of the great God! Or can you desire to be accursed by him? Who is among you that has not innate desires to be happy and blessed forever? Or can you fling away, or shake off all desires of being blessed? Then you might as soon cast off the nature of men. A profane Esau cried out for a blessing: "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father: Bless me, even me also, O my father! Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" Genesis 27.34, 36.

O then say: Begone, O cursed sin! Begone! I will banish you out of my heart — for you are not only contrary to the nature of the blessed

God, nor only contrary to innocent nature, but even also to my human nature, though corrupted. You are not only opposite to a principle of grace implanted in the new creature, but to the principles which God in mercy has left in my corrupt nature — that cursed sin might be opposed, striven against, and forever abandoned by me! I would be blessed — but you will make me cursed! I would avoid the curse — but you will bring it upon me! If I cannot be a willful sinner, but I must be a cursed creature — then I would rather cease to be such a sinner, than remain forever such a cursed creature. If I cannot have the blessing of God, and my sins too — then I had better be without my own sins, than be without God's blessings.

4. Men will be the most miserable, or the most happy, of all the visible works of God. For among these, man alone is capable of proper blessings, or proper curses. For those alone are capable of penal evils — that are capable of moral evils.

1. To show what man has done. "To Adam he said: Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it' — Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return!" Genesis 3:17-19. The barrenness with which the earth is cursed, in not bringing forth good fruit, and its abounding with briars and thorns — are both as rods for the scourging of sinful man.

So also is that catalogue of curses in Deuteronomy 28.15-20. "However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not

carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today — then all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out. The LORD will send on you curses, confusion and rebuke in everything you put your hand to — until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin because of the evil you have done in forsaking him!"

2. To show what man should do. Christ cursed the barren fig-tree, to teach man the duty of fruitfulness to the glory of God, or the duty of having faith in the power of God. For upon the disciples observing how the fig-tree was withered away, Christ said to them, "Have faith in God!"

The creatures without reason have no knowledge of God — and the senseless creatures cannot feel the power of God. Therefore these, as they cannot be properly blessed — so they cannot be accursed.

But man has understanding to know God, and has sense to feel the power of his anger. Therefore among all God's visible works — man is alone the subject of proper blessings, and proper curses. He will of all creatures — be the most happy, or the most miserable. If he obtains the blessings of God — then he will be the most happy. If he is under the curses of God — then he will be the most miserable. Those who get the blessing — shall dwell, and live, and reign with the blessed God, with blessed Jesus, and with his blessed angels. But those who lie under the curse — must be tormented with cursed spirits, cursed men with cursed devils, forever!

So then, unless you love Christ — it would have been better that you had been a toad, a dog, a serpent — as these will not be in so bad a case as you will be. In a natural sense — it is better to be a man than a beast; but in a supernatural sense — it is better to be a beast than a man who will never love the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Sins of omission expose men to the wrath and curse of God, and to eternal damnation — as well as sins of commission. For it is for not loving Christ, that a man is declared to be Anathema! And when the curse shall be openly and publicly pronounced, and by Christ be thundered out against men at the last day — the reason given is sins of omission: "Then shall the King say unto them on the left hand: Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry — and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty — and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger — and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes — and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison — and you did not look after me!" Matthew 25:41-43

These are charged, not with taking away their food, but with not giving their food; not with casting them out, and banishing Christ in his members — but with not taking them in; not with putting them in prison — but with not visiting them when they were there! And for this, they are declared to be accursed, and sentenced to depart from God — and go to cursed devils!

What a sandy foundation then is the hope of multitudes built upon — that because they are not openly profane, they bless themselves, and make no question but God will bless them too! Like the pharisee, "God, I thank you that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican!" Luke 18.11.

You proud pharisee! What if you are neither extortioners, or unjust, or adulterers — yet you are no lover of Christ, and for that you shall be eternally accursed!

You blind pharisee! What if you are no persecutor of Christ — yet you are no lover of Christ — and for this you shall be accursed.

You self-deluding pharisee! What if you are no blasphemer of his sacred name, no opposer of his holy ways, no drunkard, no adulterer, no thief nor robber — yet you are not a Christ-lover, and for this you shall be Anathema!

What if you are not as bad as other men are — while you are not what you ought to be? What if you are not as bad as this publican — while you are not as this man who loves Christ? The blessing of God does not belong to you — but the curse of God, and his wrath shall overtake you. O look about you, and search and see what sins of omission you are guilty of — repent and mourn for them, or else you will be cursed and damned for them forever!

6. It is an easy thing for a man to fall under the curse of God! It is but forbearing to love Christ — and how easy a thing is that! It is but denying Christ your heart, your hearty love — and the curse is your own — and how easy a thing is that!

To obtain the blessing is hard — exceedingly difficult; for there must be weaning of our love from the world, and getting that under our feet, which was supreme in our hearts — and how hard a task is this! There must be calling off the love of the heart from sin, which is as dear as our right eye or right hand unto us — and how difficult a work is this! There must be a loving of Jesus above all — whom we once hated more than all! There must be a hating above all — what

we loved most of all! And thus to turn the stream of a man's affections is exceedingly difficult.

There must be striving to an agony, Luke 13.24, 25. There must be wrestling with devils, Ephesians 6.12. There must be wrestling with God himself, so as not to let him go, unless he bless us, Genesis 32.24-26. There must be fighting, and watching, and maintaining our spiritual warfare, 2 Timothy 4:7. There must be running as for life, 1 Corinthians 9.24. All of this is needed to get the blessing, when the Lord shall come! All of this is hard and laborious.

It is the easiest thing in the world to come under the curse and wrath of God — yes, it is hard not to have the curse come upon us. What do the most of men mean, by taking so much pains to bring the curse of God upon them? See what great need you are at — and so much labor to undo yourselves?

What do you mean, by such swearing and sweating in a way of sin, as if you were striving to get to Hell? As if you thought you could not go thither fast enough — nor get thither soon enough?

What do you mean, by railing at the people of Christ, and reviling the ways of Christ, and rending and tearing his holy name with your profane, polluted mouth? Hell might be had with less pains! If cursed you will be — then cursed you may be, without wearying yourselves in committing gross iniquities! Why must you run into Hell. Do nothing — and you will soon be there. It is but ignoring faith, and repentance, and Christ; it is but forbearing what you ought to do — and the curse will fall upon your soul, and stick fast to you forever!

It is easy to do what you should not — to love the world more than Christ. It is easier not to do what you should — not to love Christ;

and for the easier of these you may be as sure of Hell, as if you were there already! Therefore hold your hands, and tongue, and feet, from sinning so fast, from making such speed and haste, from committing sin with all your might and power! For if not loving Christ, not believing on him, not repenting for sin — exposes you to the wrath and curse of God — then how easy a thing is it to be overtaken with it!

7. Must such as lack love to Christ be thus accursed? Then what great care and effort should ministers have to preach the Lord Jesus Christ unto the people with that plainness and power — that Christ might have their love, and they might have the blessings of Christ? If cursed must the people be who do not love Jesus Christ — then cursed must the preacher be who preaches himself, and not Christ, and studies to display his own gifts and abilities, that men might admire him . . .

for his eloquent oratory,

for his lofty style,

for his fruitful lively imagination,

for his fine English,

or for being a profound philosopher,

or for being a great theologian —

while, by his starched sentences, seraphic notions, and needless pulpit oratory, and manner of expressions — he soars aloft above the people's capacities, and casts a veil upon their eyes, as if he studied, in preaching Christ, to hide Christ from their understandings! If while he preaches to instruct them in the knowledge of Christ — he clouds the doctrine of Christ, and makes the plain necessary truths to be obscure, that, after his polite discourse — poor ignorant souls remain as ignorant as before! As if he stood among a thousand people that must be damned, and cursed with everlasting curses, if they do not love Christ — to display his oratorical abilities, or to get the name of a great scholar — in making easy things hard, and hard

more hard — when the true use of great learning is to make hard things easy, and to bring things sublime and lofty, down to the capacity of the lowest in the congregation, who has a soul which must be damned or saved.

Alas! it would make a serious man tremble, when he thinks all these people stand upon the brink of eternity, and if death but gives them a jog — they will fall and enter into it! And when he hears the preacher speak with lofty rhetorical strains, great swelling words, as if he were making an oration in the academies — not considering the ignorance, the weak capacity, of hundreds of his auditors. Can he think that servants who have precious souls, and many ignorant and unlearned tradesmen, who are taken up with the matters of the world all the week — can be profited on the Lord's day with such a style, or manner of expressing the great things of God? Though it is their mother-tongue, he transcends their apprehension almost as much as if he spoke in an unknown language — and so indeed he is no better than an English barbarian to the people.

What cursed pride is this — to seek applause from men — when he should be gaining sinners to Christ! To seek to have their perishing breath — when he should seek to save their immortal souls! What cursed doing is this, to stand in Christ's stead, and commend himself — instead of commending Christ! What though Christ is the subject of his discourse — when his discourse is so managed, that it glides away from Christ unto himself, both as the subject, and the end!

What cursed preaching is this, wherein dying self is sought to be advanced in the esteem of dying people; when blessed Jesus should be so set forth, that he might be magnified in the hearts of all, be loved by all, be received by all; and immortal souls so loving, and receiving him — might be forever saved and blessed by him!

And what is the end of all this? That the preacher might be revered for his abilities, extolled for his profound adorned language, and have the common approval as a man of great wisdom — and through his wisdom, ignorant souls are perishing! A wise man! and by his preaching with the enticing words of man's wisdom, even by the preaching of the only Savior, in the words which man's wisdom teaches, and not the Holy Spirit — the devil goes away with, and makes a prey of the hearer's souls, who, in hearing, do not hear, neither do they understand; not because the hearers are such fools — but because the preacher is so wise.

Let him pass for a wise man in his own conceit; let him be esteemed a wise man by those who admire him, because they do not understand him, nor the worth of souls, nor the weighty work and end of preaching. But with me he shall never pass for a wise preacher! I had rather be a fool for Christ, than wise for myself; for in such a place and work in being wise for myself — I would be found an detestable fool.

He who preaches so that no man can rationally despise him, and yet every man understand him, and thereby wins souls to set their love on Christ — is a wise man, and a learned preacher.

Those who preach so that few or none of the lower mental capacities, which are the greater number of people, can understand him — so that the people perish for lack of knowledge, under the sound of profoundest knowledge, shall have little thanks from such people at the judgment day; and what reward he shall have from Christ, when he comes to take an account of ministers for preaching, and people for hearing! Let him take into his serious thoughts, and learn of learned Paul, who has left a pattern of the wisest preaching: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves

your servants for Jesus' sake," 2 Corinthians 4:5 lest not preaching Jesus the Lord, but himself, as if he were more than a servant, and Jesus not Lord — he finds, when preaching and hearing are ended and cease, Maranatha and Anathema be joined together in his sorry case.

8. Must they be cursed who do not love Christ? Then know that worldly prosperity may co-exist with the curse of God. A man might be prospering in this world — and cursed in the world to come.

Do you see many whose lives declare they have no sincere love to Christ in their hearts — thrive and abound in outward enjoyments?

They do not love Christ — and yet are strong and healthy!

They do not love Christ, and yet are rich!

They do not love Christ — and yet are honored!

What then? Might not a man be in health — and be a cursed man? Nay, the more strength he has, the more able he is to serve the devil — and so his strength is a curse unto him. The more worldly trinkets a man has to love — the more he enjoys of the world — and the more he loves it. And so his enjoyments are a curse unto him, when they keep him from placing his love upon Jesus Christ.

Have you not read, that men's blessings are cursed: "If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name," says the LORD Almighty — then "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me!" Malachi 2:2. God threatens to curse wicked men's blessings: "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them."

Many are apt to call the proud — happy, "But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape!" Malachi 3:15. The rich, though evil — are thought by many to be blessed. This is a great mistake! All men can see their outward blessings — but they have no eyes to behold the inward curses which lie under those outward blessings.

Is it not a curse to have riches without saving grace?

Is it not a curse to have our portion and blessings — all in this life?

Is it not a curse to prosper in the world — and to be every moment in danger of falling into Hell?

Do you look upon it to be happiness — to have all for the body, and nothing for the soul? to have much of earth — and nothing of Heaven?

You read of some who "have their portion in this life" — and you read that their portion on earth is a cursed portion! It was so with the rich man spoken of in the gospel — who while on earth had his "purple robes, and fine linen, and sumptuous costly dishes every day."

Oh, happy man! But wait until you hear the end. He died — and where then? To Hell! Where is now your happy man? What is his condition there? What! There he finds more pain — than all the fleeting pleasures he had while on earth! There he feels more torment and terror — than he had pleasure and delight all his days on earth! "Abraham said: Son, remember that in your life-time you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and you are tormented!" Luke 16:25.

Remember that your pleasures were short and sweet — but Hell is long and bitter!

Remember that Lazarus is blessed — and you are cursed!

Remember that he is eternally happy — and you are eternally miserable!

Behold the change! The world's blessed man — is now God's cursed man! And he who was the miserable man in the esteem of the world — is now the blessed man!

Therefore, do not judge of blessedness or misery by the prosperity or poverty of this world — but by the graces of the Spirit, or lack of them, in your hearts; particularly by your love, or lack of love, to Jesus Christ. For it is not said, "Let him who is poor, be Anathema" — but "Let him who does not love Christ, be Anathema, Maranatha."

9. Must all who do not sincerely love Christ be cursed? Then tremble at the thoughts of the great number who shall be cursed!

"If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — let him be Anathema! (or accursed)." 1 Corinthians 16:22. There are comparatively few who have sincere love to Christ — therefore but few comparatively that shall be blessed by entering into eternal blessed life. "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction — and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life — and only a few find it!" Matthew 7:13-14

Many, for lack of love to Christ, will not bear his cross — but all who lack this love finally, shall bear his curse. The number of the curse-

bearers, and non-lovers of Christ — shall be an equal number; so many — and no more.

Consider then what multitudes there are, who love other things more than Christ — and see what vast numbers of men shall be accursed!

1. How many are lovers of pleasures — more than lovers of Christ! 2 Timothy 3:4.

2. How many are lovers of money — more than lovers of Christ! They prize their silver above the Savior — and part with Him to keep that! Luke 16:14, 2 Timothy 3:2.

3. How many are lovers of honors — more than lovers of Christ! John 5:42,44. and 12:43.

4. How many are lovers of themselves — more than lovers of Christ! 2 Timothy 3:2. Indeed sinful self-love is the very heart and core of the carnal man, and the great idol of all unconverted sinners! Principles of selfishness are the cause of all their actions — and self is the end and scope at which they aim in all they do. And so they set up self — in the place of Christ; and love carnal self — when they should love Christ. And so shall lie under the curse of Christ!

Few love Christ — and few are blessed by Christ. Most are void of love unto Him — and most shall be accursed at His coming. Is it a hard saying? Though it is hard — yet it is true. Is it a hard saying? It will be harder feeling — when the curse shall be fully inflicted!

10. Shall every one that does not love Christ be Anathema when Maranatha — accursed when the Lord shall come? Then the day of Christ's coming will be a doleful day to the non-lovers of Christ.

Then all the world shall be divided into only two classes: cursed ones — and blessed ones. You do not love Christ — and yet bless yourself; but I pray you consider Maranatha — the Lord comes! You glory in your estate, though Christ has not your heart; but I beg of you, that you would remember Maranatha. You put the curse, and the evil day, far from you; but I beseech you to let Maranatha sound in your ears.

Then! Oh then — you shall curse the day that ever you were born! You shall curse the time that you lived under the gospel, and heard of Christ, but did not love him. You shall curse yourself for your wickedness, madness, and folly — that so lovely a Christ was set before you, and you had not a heart to set your love upon him! You will say, Oh cursed heart — that would love the world, and not love yonder glorious Christ! Oh cursed will — which chose the vanities of the world before the Son of God! Oh cursed was that love which I gave unto the creature — and denied to Christ! How can I hold up my head now to behold that Christ, whom I never had a heart to love? How can I hear that voice — and yet it is so great, so thundering, and so loud, that I cannot but hear it, commanding me to depart like a cursed wretch — when I never did, and never would hearken to his voice, calling to me to love him, and to give my heart and affections to him?"

"Woe is me! Now Maranatha — and now I am Anathema. Woe is me! The Lord has come, and with him wrath has come, and banishment from Heaven has come! Woe, woe, woe is me! The Lord has come, and I feel that fear and trembling which has come! Ten thousand woes to me — for the Lord has come, and now complete damnation comes! The Lord has come — and I must depart. I, poor wretch, must depart. Depart! Where must I depart? To a cursed place! To whom must I depart? Alas! to cursed company. Woe is me! Like a cursed wretch — I am cursed most bitterly! I am cursed finally, totally, body

and soul, and all eternally — for I had no love for Christ, and now Christ has no blessing for me!

When it is said throughout the world, Maranatha! — then the world will ring with this cry, "Everyone who does not love Christ, is now Anathema!"

## **Chapter 8.**

### **Twenty Aggravations of lack of Love to Christ.**

The second use brings a charge and an accusation against you, for not loving the Lord Jesus Christ. Some openly declare by their actions and manner of conduct — that they do not love him. Some openly pretend love to Christ, but really have no love unto him. "My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to listen to your words — but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion — but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain." Ezekiel 33:31

Love to Christ is in their mouth — but love to the world is in their heart. Some say they love him — but God knows they do not: "But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you!" John 5.42. No!

Do you know how great a sin this is? Why then do you make so light of it? Why then are you no more ashamed, that you lack this love? Would you not be ashamed if a report was circulated about you — that you did not love your wife and your children? And is it not an incomparably greater sin and shame, that you do not love the Lord Jesus — the only Son of God, the only Savior of lost sinners! How is it

that you do so seldom or never bewail the lack of love to Christ, in your prayers; or scarcely put it in among the confession of your sins? What! Do you love your gold — and not your God? Or do you make your gold your God — and then love your gold, instead of loving the true God? Can you love your silver — and not the precious Savior?

You are bound to love your very enemies — and yet you have no love to Him who would be your surest, greatest, and most faithful Friend! What shall I say? Good Lord, I am ashamed, and blush to say, which yet is true of too many men — that they love their very beasts, their dog, their horse, and all their cattle — and yet will not be prevailed upon to love your Son, your only Son, your beloved Son!

Nay, what shall I say? You love your heinous lusts and filthy sins, which will destroy and damn you forever — and yet no love for the Lord Jesus, who would save you from your sins, and from Hell forever.

What can I say? You do not love Christ — because you love your sin so much!

Oh horrid shame! You love deformity — and not beauty! Where are your eyes? Surely your love to sin is blind.

Oh monstrous iniquity! You love that which is worst of all — and not Him who is best of all! Where is your reason? Has sin bereaved you of your wits? Oh madness and folly! Are you so fond of sin — as to be damned for it? Are you so foolishly fond of this world, that you choose to be hated by God, and banished out of His glorious presence forever? Is your soul so clogged with flesh, and sunk so deep into it — that it can rise no higher than to love sensual, earthly, and fleshly delights and pleasures?

Will this love be so sweet in the review — as you think it is in the present taste thereof? Is this so vile a thing, such base and sordid love, which sets you below the rank of men — not to be reprov'd? For this, are you not justly blamed? Blamed yes, and justly reckoned Anathema — you who have such an incomparable object as Christ propounded to him — and yet will not love him! His excellencies are set forth plainly before you — and yet you see no beauty in him!

There is nothing in the world so suitable to a sinner, as Christ — and yet you will be so perverse as to imagine, and your heart maintain, that riches are more suitable, and pleasures are more suitable — and Christ, and the things of Christ, are the only inconvenient things for you. If you do not think so, why do you behave so as you do, in denying him your love? Are you not to be blamed, that when yet you might have Christ, and are not past a possibility of having Christ and all his benefits and good by him — that you do not turn your love unto him? Are you not to be blamed, when you thus vilify that blessed Lord whom none can over-value? Will not you pass for a sinful wretch with God, that you have such strong desires for the world, and for the empty vanities of this life — but no desire or will for Christ, for a full, and all-sufficient Christ? You prefer the fading enjoyments of a transitory life — before a durable good in eternal life!

Tell me, I beseech you, is not he deservedly a wretch, whom neither the excellencies of Christ himself, nor all the benefits he might have by him — will move him to set his heart upon Jesus? What do you think? What do you say? Have you done well or ill in not loving Christ? You dare not say, "Well." You are reluctant to say, "Ill" — because, by so saying, you will condemn yourself. What then? You condemn yourself, because you have not loved him, and do not love

him now. You are condemned by God, and cursed by Christ, for not loving him at all!

But because the lack of love to Christ is such a horrid, loathsome sin, and yet lamented but by a few, as if it were in our days almost accounted for no sin at all — I shall endeavor to show the heinousness thereof in twenty particulars, propounded to you by way of questions. Let me entreat you to weigh them with a serious mind, and when right reason shall dictate a true answer — then seek out some secret place, where you can weep bitterly for this odious sin — lack of love to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. What! Not love Christ! What is this, but a crossing of the end of God in making you a man — in setting you above the beasts of the field — in giving you a more noble and more excellent soul, than he has given to creatures without reason! Has not God given you a soul capable of knowing Jesus Christ? Is there any profit in this — if you do not love him? Has not God given you a will to go forth in its actings upon the most sweet and suitable objects? And what is that, but Christ? Has he not put such an affection as love into your heart? And do you think that this is that you might love the world — and not his Son? Or that you may love yourself — and not his Son? That you may love yourself — in opposition to his Son? That you may love your sin — and not his Son? Can you imagine that God made you a man, and not a beast — that you might love him no more than beasts can love him?

Then it had been enough, if God had made you a beast, and not a man. Or do you repent that God has given you the nature, the reason, and the love of a man — that you will not place it upon himself, for which end he made you a man? If you are nothing better than a beast — then choose the love and pleasures of a beast; and refuse the love

and pleasures of a rational man, and which as a man you are capable of. If not, why do you not answer the end of your creation?

Do you not see that all the visible works of God do that for which they were made? Did not God make the sun to give light unto this world? And do you not see what haste it makes to set — and in the morning you perceive that it kept its course, and hastened to rise to give its light to this our hemisphere again? Did not God make this earth to bring forth fruit for the comfort of man — and do you not daily eat thereof? Did not God make other creatures for the use and service of man — and do they not do so? And has not God made you, and made it your duty to love him? Why then do you not do it?

Oh monstrous perverting of the creation of God — and that in the best of his visible works, man. If the like were done by other creatures — how soon would you be weary of your life! If the sun should withhold its light — what a dungeon would this world be! If the earth should bring forth nothing but briars and thorns — then it would yield you nothing but vexation and sorrow. If the creatures should use their power and strength against you, as they do in serving you — then you would judge it better to lack them, than to have them. And shall all that was made for man answer their end — and not man, who was made more immediately for God himself? But a man who lacks love to Christ, has become worse than the beasts that perish! Better that you never had the heart of a man — if Christ has not your heart.

II. What! Not love Christ! What is this, but a thwarting the end of all Christ's undertaking for you, as your Redeemer! When man had sinned away the holy image of God, and turned his heart and affections from God to the creature — man might have feared him, but never have loved him: "I heard your voice in the garden, and I

was afraid." Genesis 3:10. Sin had brought such an aversion in the heart of man from God and all good, that without Christ's undertakings for man — man could have loved him no more than devils.

Why did the Son of God become the Son of man?

Why did he shed his blood, and lay down his life?

Why did he suffer, sweat, bleed, and die?

Why did he bear our punishment, satisfy Divine justice, endure the wrath of God and the rage of men and devils — but to bring man back again to God, from whom he had departed — and that the stream of man's affections might be turned again into its right channel. Could you not have loved the world, and self — if Christ had never died? Could you not have loved your pleasures and your sins — if Christ had never died? Has he come from Heaven to gain your love — and shall he not have it? Has he given himself as a ransom to deliver you from your captivity, and paid your debt, for which you should have gone to the prison of Hell, to gain your love — and shall he not have it? Has he given his life for yours, his soul for yours, in dying when you should have died — and all this to gain your love — and shall he not have it?

What do you think — was Christ weary of the bosom of his Father? Was it more honorable for him to dwell in flesh on earth — than with the Father of spirits in Heaven? Was it not infinite condescension, for his Deity to be veiled with the rags of our humanity? Was Christ wasteful of his blood, or weary of his life? Did he love and choose such cruel scourgings, such contempt and scorn, such a cursed, shameful, painful death for himself?

Surely all this was for some great and noble end; which end you do, as much as in you lies, by your not loving him — frustrate, and render unattainable. For if all men should deny him their love, as you do, where would be the reconciliation between God and man, remission of sins, or salvation of souls, which Christ died to procure? Will God be reconciled to that man who does not love him! Or can that man who does not love him, be reconciled unto God? Or does not the reconciliation, without renewals of love, sound like a contradiction? Or shall remission and salvation be given to those who never love him? Behold then the greatness of this sin — in its thwarting the wonderful undertakings of Christ for man's redemption.

III. What! Not love Christ! What is this, but an opposing and withstanding all the operations of the Spirit!

For does not all tend to this — that you should love the Lord Jesus? What do all convictions tend to, in showing you your lost estate, the vanity of the world, the emptiness of the creature, the impossibility of salvation by any other — but that you might look after Jesus, and make him the object of your love? What does the illumination of the Spirit mean, in enlightening your mind in the knowledge of Christ, to see and discern . . .

the fullness and sufficiency of Christ;  
the fitness and suitableness of Christ;  
the freeness and the willingness of Christ  
— but that you should fix your love upon him?

What do all the persuasions, strivings, and wooings of the Spirit tend to — but love to Christ? Was ever any more solicitous for the love of another, than the Spirit has been, that Christ might have your love? And shall all, and your only answer, be, "I cannot love him, I will not

love him!" No! Why not? Can you better place your love? Can you find, in Heaven or earth, a more suitable object? Yet are you resolved to give no other answer, but, "I have loved strangers — and after them will I go!" Jeremiah 2:25.

I have loved the world — and I will love it!

I have loved my pleasures — and I will continue to love them!

I have loved my sin — and so I will still.

Why so resolved, poor sinner — why so resolute? Should not the world be a stranger to you — and you to the world? Should not sin be a stranger to you — and you to sin? What, though I have loved these strangers — and after them my heart and love shall go. Indeed! Then let God judge.

IV. What! Not love Jesus! What is this, but fearful sinning against the most gracious attributes of God!

1. Was it not love in God, to give his Son to be the Savior? And will you sin against this love, in not loving him — who by love was given for you? Was not God's love so infinite, so great, so wonderful — that no mortal man can comprehend it? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," John 3:16. Is it not such manifest love, that all the devils in Hell cannot deny it to be love? "In this the love of God was manifested towards us — because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him!" 1 John 4:9. Was it not great love in God to give his Son for you — before you gave, or could give, your love to him? "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins!" 1 John 4:10.

And is it not a great sin against such great love, and a manifest sin against such manifest love — not to love him with a reciprocal love, who so far loved you with a first love?

2. Was it not infinite wisdom in God, to find out such a way, that justice might be fully satisfied, and free mercy might be richly manifested? That sin might be punished to the uttermost — and yet the sinner saved to the uttermost? That sin might be sin punished — and the sinner pardoned? If all the angels in Heaven who excel in wisdom and knowledge, had been called to counsel — they could never have thought of this way for fallen man's recovery, which is the product of the infinite wisdom of God! What greater folly then can there be, than to sin against such wisdom?

3. Was it not goodness in God, to accept of Christ's sufferings — for your sinnings? Of Christ's death — instead of your damnation — if you would believe on him, and love him? And will you slight this goodness, by withholding your love from him?

4. Was it not patience in God, to wait so long for your love? Might He not have damned you for your first refusal? Might He not have taken your first denial, for your final answer? Might He not have scorned your love, after you had so long given it to the world and sin, and denied it unto his Son? And when in your wicked heart you said, "I will not love him!" — God in his righteous judgment might have said, "I have your answer, and for this, you shall be eternally accursed!" If God had been thus quick and short with you, who has been so slow to love his Son — then what a deplorable condition would your soul have been in this day, and to all eternity? But if God has waited so many years, and still waits — if perhaps you will change your mind, return unto your senses, and give a wiser answer! Will you still abuse his patience, by persisting in the denial of your love to Christ? Take

heed lest his patience towards you should end — before your love to Christ begin! For then, when your punishment for not loving him once begins — it shall never end. The longest patience will be turned into wrath — and you shall find the longest and the hottest wrath, and most fiery indignation!

5. What! Not love Jesus! What is this but an utter subverting of the whole design of the gospel, and refusing life and salvation by the covenant of grace!

God gave to innocent man a law and covenant of works — but he quickly transgressed that law, and thereby happiness became impossible to man. After that, God gave a law and covenant of grace to fallen man, and established the same in the blood of his Son. Will you also refuse life and happiness, by going on in your sin of not loving Christ? For hereby

1. The Conditions of the Gospel are Neglected.
2. The Threatenings of the Gospel are Slighted.
3. The Commands of the Gospel are Disobeyed.
4. The Promises of the Gospel are Undervalued.

1. In not loving Christ — the conditions of the gospel and covenant of grace are neglected. The great article, the sum and summary whereof is, "I will be your God — and you shall be my people," Hebrews 8.10.

I will love you — and you shall love me!

My heart shall be towards you — and your heart shall be towards me.

I will love none like you — and you shall love none like me.

How is this done? Can you love him — while you despise him? Has Christ your hearts — while the world and sin have your hearts?

"I will be a Father unto you — and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty," 2 Corinthians 6.18. That is, I will pity you as a father, and love you as a father does his children, and much more — and you shall love me as sons and daughters love their father, and much more. A son — and not love! A daughter — and not love! Such sons and daughters are bitterness to their parents — and so are you to Christ.

2. In not loving Christ — the threatenings of the gospel are slighted by you. It is dreadful to lie under the curses of the law — but it is more terrible to fall under the curses of the gospel. It might make your heart shake within you, to have the curse and not the blessing of your Maker. It would make your heart sink within you, to have the curse and not the blessing of the Redeemer.

What else does he do in the words of the text? What else is it but a curse — to be judged, accounted, declared to be unworthy of Christ! It is to be unworthy to be pardoned by him, and saved by him! It is to be unfit to be saved by Christ, nor fit to be delivered from Hell, or taken up to Heaven: "He who loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me!" Matthew 10.37.

Or will you bless yourself, though you hear this curse? Like the man in Deuteronomy 29.19, "Those who hear the warnings of this curse should not congratulate themselves, thinking, 'I am safe, even though I am following the desires of my own stubborn heart.' This would lead to utter ruin!"

So you say: "Though I love the world, and sin, and self, more than Christ — I shall have peace, and pardon, and eternal life!" Shall you? How will you come by it? From whom will you have it? Will God spare such a man? Shall not his anger smoke against him — and the fire of his indignation burn him up until he is consumed! Or burn him, though by burning he shall never be consumed.

If it were a man, you might say, "Let him curse!" Psalm 109.28. But will you say of God, of Christ: "Let him curse — who cares? Let him curse — who fears his curse?"

You careless sinner! God will make you care! If you do not fear him, God will make you feel the weight of his anger! When you shall feel what now you do not fear — you shall not make so light a matter of it! "Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to you!" Psalm 90:11

3. The great command of God is disobeyed — by not loving him. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment," Matthew 22.37,38. The Lord Jesus is a great King, a great Savior. The command to love him is a great command, which if you do not obey — upon this account you are a great sinner. If one is a great swearer, then you say that such a one is a great sinner. If one is a great drunkard — he is therefore a great sinner. But

though you are no drunkard, no swearer — yet not a lover of Christ — for this I say: "You are a great sinner — for you live in daily disobedience to the great command!"

4. By not loving Christ — the promises of the gospel are undervalued. If you would love him — he promises you a crown of life, James 1.12. He promises you all the good that you need or can desire. He

promises you . . .  
the pardon of all your sin,  
the eternal favor of God,  
deliverance from an awful Hell, and  
the happiness of a glorious Heaven!

Oh what inducements of love are these! What motives to love Jesus!  
Oh! What incentives to love Jesus! What madness to lose all these for  
the love of the world — or the love of a vile lust!

Will you still say, "All these shall never gain my love to Christ — nor  
move me to set my heart upon him! Rather than love Christ — I will  
never be pardoned! Rather than love Christ — I will go without the  
favor of God, and without the joys of Heaven! I will be damned and  
go to Hell, rather than I will love Christ! When I am in Hell, and  
damned there — I shall still never love him!"

Is the love of Christ so grievous to you?

6. What! Not love Christ! What is this but odious ingratitude — for  
the greatest kindness! Suppose you were in debt, and unable to pay,  
therefore must be cast into prison. If one discharges your debt,  
would you not love him? If not, would not all say that you an  
unthankful wretch!

Suppose yourself to be in Islamic slavery, and one redeems you —  
would you not love him? Suppose you are condemned to die, and one  
procures your pardon — would you not love him? You were in debt to  
God — and had nothing to pay; you were in slavery to sin and Satan;  
you were at enmity with God, condemned to die, in danger of Hell,  
unfit for Heaven; the justice of God flamed against you; the wrath of  
God lay upon you; Hell and devils waited for you!

None could help you, but Christ!

None could satisfy for you, but Christ!

None could purchase your pardon, but Christ!

None could save you from Hell, and bring you to Heaven, but Christ by his . . .

suffering, bleeding, sweating, dying;  
bearing the punishment of your sins,  
giving his soul for yours, his life for yours!

And after all this, are not you an thankless wretch — if you will not so much as love him? What! Not love Jesus! Let the heavens be astonished, and the earth amazed, and all the creation of God blush, and be ashamed at the unthankfulness of sinful men! who hear, that for their sakes . . .

Christ was scourged, buffeted, crowned with thorns,  
his side were pierced with a spear,  
nails were driven through his hands and feet!

Christ was arraigned, accused, condemned, and crucified — and yet will not love . . .

a scourged Christ,  
a Christ groaning under the burden of their sin,  
a Christ sweating under the heavy load of the wrath of God! What!  
Will you not love a weeping, bleeding, crucified Christ — when all this was endured in place and stead of unworthy sinners!

7. What! Not love Christ! Is not this a damnable despising of him! Is it not a valuating him as worthless? It is spoken of Christ, that he is, "a reproach of men, and despised of the people," Psalm 22.6. And "He is despised and rejected by men. He was despised, and we

esteemed him not," Isaiah 53:3. "And Herod with his soldiers despised and mocked him," Luke 23:11. "This is the stone which was despised by the builders," Acts 4:11.

What we greatly love — we highly value. What we do not love at all — we value not at all, and despise. And is it not sin enough to despise the people of God — but will you also despise the Son of God? Is it not enough to despise the word and ways of God, but you will despise the only begotten Son of God? Not to love, and to despise — is all one.

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other," Matthew 6:24. Is this no evil in your eyes? Is Christ, who is honored by the Father — disdained by you? Is he the joy of angels, the delight of saints — and is he thus set as worthless by you? Is he the pearl of great price — and do you look upon him to be of no worth? Is he the chief of ten thousands — and do you thus disdain and vilify him, as if he were the meanest of ten thousands? Can you value your riches, and love them — and not Christ? Can you value your relations, and love them — and not Christ?

Behold, in comparison of riches, children, life — you despise Christ; when you should despise these, in comparison of Christ!

"He who despises the word, shall be destroyed," Proverbs 13:13

"He who despises his neighbor, sins," Proverbs 14:21

"He who despises his father's instruction, is a fool," Proverbs 15:5

"He who despises his mother, the ravens shall pick out his eyes," Proverbs 30:17

What then is he, and what shall be done to him — who despises the Lord Jesus Christ?

8. What! Not a lover of Christ! What are you then, but a hater of him! There is no neutral ground between these two. Love him you must — or you hate him, "He will hate the one — and love the other," Matthew 6.24. "He who is not with me — is against me," Matthew 12.30. He who does not so love Christ, as to have him rule him, hates him: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a messenger after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us," Luke 19.14.

You should hate your lusts — and love the Lord! But you love your lusts — and hate the Lord! I entreat you to tell me:, What has Jesus done unto you, that you should hate him?

As Christ reasoned with those who so hated him, that they stoned him: "Jesus answered them, saying: Many good works have I showed you from my Father — for which of those works do you stone me?" John 10.32. So let me reason with you: Many a good work has Christ done for you — for which of these do you hate him? Has he not come from Heaven for you? Was he not wounded, beaten, scourged, and suffered death for you? For which of all these do you hate him? Has he not made salvation possible for you — do you hate him for that? Has not he purchased a conditional pardon for you — do you hate him for that? Has not he entreated you to consider your own soul, and to prevent your own damnation — do you hate him for that? Has he given you any other cause to hate him? You have many reasons to love him — but no cause to hate him; as Christ himself asserts: "They hated me without a cause," John 15.25. They shall not be punished without cause — but for that hatred of Jesus!

9. What! Not love Christ! Are you not herein a confederate with the devil, against God and Christ! Do you join with the devil, against

Christ? In this, you obey the destroyer — rather than the Savior of your soul. Christ calls: Give me your love — but you do not. Satan persuades you to withhold your love from Christ — and so you do. Christ says, "Give me your heart," Proverbs 23.26 — but you do not. Satan says: Let the world have your heart — and so it has. Can you displease Christ more than to deny him your love? Or can you please the devil better? What does this perverseness of your heart mean? What do these cross and crooked dealings mean — as if Christ were your enemy, and the devil your friend? As if your loving Christ would be your ruin — and listening to the devil were the way to happiness.

Poor sinner! Will the devil save you? Christ would! Will the devil help you into the favor of God, or up to Heaven? Tell me, what do you in your conscience think — that Christ or the devil most desires your real good? Did the devil suffer for you? Christ did. Did the devil die for you? Christ has. Has the devil any love to you? Christ had so much as to shed his blood, that if you will hearken to him, you might be saved by him. Why then, when Christ, the world, and Satan, are striving for your heart and love — do you open your heart to the world and Satan, and shut it against the Lord Jesus Christ?

10. What! Not love Christ! Do you not herein bear the image of the devil, and look more like a devil than a man! Has the devil no love to Christ? Neither have you! Oh what a thing is this, that a man on earth should love Christ no more than the devils in Hell? And is the likeness of the devil your glory? Is his image your beauty? Is conformity to Satan your dignity? Or can you be saved more than the devil himself — if you love Christ no more than he? Oh, when the accusation at the last day shall be brought against you: This man hated Christ like a devil! Away with him now unto the devils. And, That man's heart was no more towards Christ than the devils! Then let that man and devils go together, and be damned together!

11. What! Not love Christ! Do you not behave worse towards Christ, than the devils do! And is not your not loving Christ, worse in you than it is in devils? Because the greater love and kindness that Christ has shown to you than ever he did to devils; and the more he has done for you than he has for them — the worse is lack of love to Christ in you than in them. Did Christ die for devils — as he has for sinful men? Did he bear the punishment of their sin — as he has for sinful men? Did he ever make salvation possible to them — as he has to sinful men? Did he ever offer pardon to them — as he has to sinful men? Or did he ever solicit them for their love — as he has done with sinful men?

Might not devils say: "We have not that cause nor reason to love Christ as men have?" And might not we suppose, if the devils in Hell were set in the same circumstances as men on earth — that some of the devils might love him, when most men will not? However, when we consider the texts that speak of fallen angels, and how they are irrecoverably cast into blackness and darkness, and of fallen men who are savable — it is sufficient foundation for this conclusion, that lack of love to Christ is worse in men than it is in devils!

Concerning God's just dealing with sinning angels, we read, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment!" 2 Peter 2.4. "And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home — these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day!" Jude 6.

There is not a word of a Savior for them — but of mankind the scripture speaks of abundance of love and mercy: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on

him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16. "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared — he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy!" Titus 3:4-5. "For truly he did not take upon him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham," Hebrews 2:16. Has he done that for you — which he has not done for devils! Is not then lack of love in you to him, a greater evil than it is in devils? Let this shame you, that you are not lovers of Christ!

12. What! Not love Christ! What do you make of this, but the beginning of Hell? By the same reason as love to Christ, is the beginning of Heaven. Love to Christ is the employment of the saints in glory — and to be without love to Christ, is the state of the damned in misery. So much of hatred to Christ as is in you — so much of Hell is in you, before you are in Hell.

13. What! Not love Christ! Is not this the daughter and the offspring, of many foul abominations that are reigning in your heart? Does it not suppose the predominance of many other sins, such as:

1. Does it not suppose ignorance of . . .

your misery,

sin's deformity, and

Christ's beauty, excellence, and necessity?

2. Does it not suppose preceding infidelity? You do not believe what God says concerning Christ, nor what shall be your portion, and your everlasting miserable condition, without Christ?

3. Does it not suppose a conceit of your own righteousness, which if you saw to be insufficient — Christ would not be thus slighted and disregarded by you?

4. Does it not suppose self-will? You will love what you will love, and not him you should love — come what will. Is it not plain stubborn willfulness, when you can give no reason why you will not love Christ, but because you will not?

5. Does it not suppose predominance of sinful self-love? You will love carnal self — and because this is inconsistent with the love of Christ, you omit the loving of him.

6. Does it not suppose fearlessness of God, and of his wrath? If this awed you — could Christ be thus neglected by you?

7. Does it not suppose forgetfulness of death and judgment — of Heaven and Hell? Could you, without horror, think of dying without love to Christ — when, to so die, would be to be damned forever? Could you think of judgment without trembling — when for lack of love to Christ you shall certainly be condemned, whenever you appear at his judgment-bar? Can you think of Heaven — when you must never enter into it? Can you think of Hell — when you must certainly be cast into it for lack of love to Christ?

8. Does it not suppose great carelessness of your own soul? For can you love your soul, and not love Christ, the Savior of the soul? Can you take care of the salvation of your soul, and take no care to love him who is the purchaser and the giver of eternal salvation? There is such a litter of sins in the heart void of the love of Christ — and will you, after this, make so light a matter of it?

14. What! Not love Christ! Is it not the mother of many horrid transgressions — and the nurse, maintainer, and fomentor of them? Love to Christ shuts the door of the heart against . . .  
the temptations of Satan,

the enticements of sinners,  
and the allurements of the world!

But the lack of love to Christ, sets the heart open to all these heinous things. Love to Christ would be a dam to the stream of sin, but the lack of it is the plucking up the flood-gates thereof, that sin might run out of the heart into the life with a swift current!

Is not the absence of love to Christ, the cause of many commissions of evil? Would not love to Christ . . .

bridle your tongue,  
restrain your hands,  
shut your eyes,  
stop your ears, and

keep all these from being defiled with sinful actings upon sinful objects?

Is not love to Christ the cause of the omission of good — of praying, hearing, meditation, holy discourse? What goes before, and what follows after the lack of love to Christ, as flowing and proceeding from it, makes it a sin exceedingly sinful.

15. What! Not love Christ! Have not then all the ordinances of God been ineffectual as to you? Have not ministers preached in vain, and spent their labor for nothing? Have not you heard in vain — and followed the means of grace in vain? When, by all the means, you have not got this grace of love to Jesus? What though you have obtained knowledge; is not that knowledge, without love to Christ — mere vain knowledge? What though you are able to discourse of God, and Christ, and Heaven, and the workings of the Spirit; without love to Christ, is it not, though concerning such great and weighty matters — yet vain discourse? Have not all . . .

the calls of mercy,

the workings of conscience,  
the wooings of grace,  
the pleadings of ministers,  
the entreaties of love,  
the knockings of Christ,  
the strivings of the Spirit,  
the waitings of patience —

been all slighted and disregarded by you? Are not all your prayers lost, and will not all your profession come to nothing, and your hopes of Heaven perish — when, for lack of love to Christ, your soul shall never enter into Heaven, but perish everlastingly!

16. What! Not love Christ! Is it not a mark and brand of a graceless man? Is not the absence of love to Christ inconsistent with the presence of any other saving grace? "O love the Lord, all you his saints!" Psalm 31.23. No love — no saint. No saint — no Heaven for you. If you do not love Jesus — then you are altogether graceless; for then,

1. If you do not love Jesus — then you are faithless; for, did you believe on him, you would have sincere love unto him, for where there is faith, it "works by love," Galatians 5.6.

2. If you do not love Jesus — then you are fearless of God. Love and fear of God sweetly concur. Love to Christ is afraid to offend him.

3. If you do not love Jesus — then you are sorrowless; that is, as to any holy, godly sorrow. Love to Christ would make you sorrow for your sin, for the absence of Christ — and love would cause you to sorrow that you love no more.

4. If you do not love Jesus — then you are also hopeless; for there can be no solid ground of hope in Christ, when there is no love unto him.

He who hopes for Heaven by the merits of Christ, without love to the person of Christ — his hope is a fabric without a foundation, the fool's paradise. It is hope without a warrant, and in the end, when he misses the end of his expectation — will be found to be no better than rash confidence, bold and damnable presumption. For the greatest professor, without love to Christ — is a self-deluding hypocrite, whose hope shall be cut off, and prove as weak, though spun as fine as a spider's web, Job 8.14. And is the lack of all grace no evil in your eyes — when it brings punishment that shall be endless, easeless, and remediless — upon all that were totally and finally graceless.

17. What! Not love Christ — God's own Son! How then is God your Father? "Jesus said unto them: If God were your Father, you would love me!" John 8.42. If you are his creatures, and not love him — it is an aggravation of your sin, not to have love to him who gave being to you. But though you are his creatures without love to him — yet you are not his children. It would have been better never had been his creatures, if not his children, for though you should every day, with great confidence, say, "Our Father," without love to Christ — God will never own you as children, nor give you children's portions.

18. What! Not love Christ! How can you then excuse all the love you have to other things, from being sinful love? So that the more you love other things — the more you sin — because your love to others is not subordinate to the love of Christ. To love other things and people in subordination to the love of Christ — is a duty. To love other things and people, and not Christ, or more than Christ — is a sin. Thus, the love of your estates, is sinful love. And the love of husband, wife, children, and of yourselves — is therefore sinful love, because it is above the love of Christ, for these should be loved in Christ and for Christ — but you love them without Christ, and more than Christ! Therefore all your love, without love to Christ, though materially

good, is sinful love. "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me!" Matthew 10:37

19. What! Not love Christ! Are you not all this while treasuring up terrible accusations in conscience against the hour of death, and day of judgment? The time will come, and is at hand — when you, and all that you love, besides Christ, must be separated.

You have loved the world — and you must leave it.

You have loved your pleasures — and you must bid adieu to them.

You have loved your relations — and you must take your farewell of them!

And then, oh then, if conscience is awakened, if you do not go blindfold, and hoodwinked by the devil, out of this world — you will, in the bitterness of your soul, lament your woeful case, and say, "Oh! What have I done! What is this that I have done! I have loved what I must leave! I loved my riches — and now death will take me from them. I have set my heart more upon my earthly relations than upon Christ — and now death is come to tear and carry me away from them! I have loved my life more than Christ — and now death will put an end to my life. All the things which I have loved — I now must lose! Oh! had I loved Christ as I have loved them — Christ would not have left me. Death could not have separated him from me, but would have moved me nearer to him. But I did not love Christ — woe is me that I never did! Now all my love proves vexatious love, to think and find that all I have loved all my life — in one moment I have forever lost!"

20. What! Not love Christ! Does not this make damnation unavoidable — and the escaping of Hell to be impossible? For when you die, where would you have your soul to go? To one whom you never loved? While you lived, you did not, and would not love Christ — and after death, you can not love him! Is Heaven a place for those who cannot love Christ? Heaven is a place of love; the employment of Heaven is to love, and praise Him whom they love. Without love to Christ — you would not find enjoyment there. The life of Heaven will be no idle life. All in Heaven shall live and love, and love as long as they shall live. Therefore such as do not now, and hereafter cannot love — shall never enter to live in that world of love.

Now, sirs, what do you think? Is the lack of love to Christ so small a sin as you have hitherto supposed it to be — when you have spent and past the greatest part of your lives without love to Christ, and without sorrow for lack of that love? What! do you mean to cease to live — before you begin to love him? You lived for in mirth and pleasure — when the love of Christ has not lived nor reigned in your hearts. Let conscience be judge between God and you; but if conscience is dead, and will not give its judgment — then let God himself be Judge: Have you done well, to love that which you should have hated — and hate him whom you should have loved?

Done well! God knows you have not well done, and devils themselves know you have not well done; and you yourselves, sooner or later, (God grant before it is too late!) shall know that you have not done well.

Done well! No, you have done foolishly — you have done wickedly! Nay, you have done devilishly!

Call to mind the things which have been said, ponder them in your hearts, weigh them in the balance of right reason, and they will tell

you that you have done abominably in not loving Christ. God forbid that we should live without love to Christ — we think it is a pity that man should live, who does not love Christ.

This supposed love to Christ, I fear, will keep you off from repenting for lack of real love to Christ, and make you set light by all these aggravations of this sin — because you think and hope that you love Christ. Some are so ignorant of their sinful state by nature, and so vainly confident of the goodness of their hearts — that they bless God that they have loved Christ ever since they were born, and will be ready to spit in that man's face who shall question their love to Christ. Come then, you who are so confident that you love him — come to the trial, bring it to the touchstone of the Word of God, and try of what mettle your love is.

What if it should prove but counterfeit, instead of real? Or suppose it should not be sincere and saving love to Christ? For the discovery whereof I shall next proceed to the third use.

.

## **Chapter 9.**

**Ten Questions, by way of conviction, that many, very many, have no sincere Love to Christ. Also, the characteristics of sincere love to him. By the right resolving of these questions — our love might be tried, whether sincere or counterfeit.**

Must a man who does not love Christ sincerely, be Anathema, accursed — Maranatha, when Christ shall come? Must he love Christ — or be cursed if he does not? Then, as Christ put the question to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah — do you love me?" John 21. Just so, put this question to yourself, O my soul! Do you love the Lord Jesus? And when your heart may forwardly return an answer, ask it the second time, O my soul! are you not mistaken? Do you indeed love the Lord Jesus? And because the matter is of everlasting consequence, put the question a third time, and so often, until to this question, O my soul! Do you sincerely love the Lord Jesus? Do you have such proof out of the scripture, as will hold trial, when this shall be in question at the great day of judgment.

But, alas! what great grounds of question are there, that the love of many is but supposed love to Christ — who think they do, who hope they do, but indeed do not! I shall desire them to give a serious answer to the following questions, as trials of the sincerity of their love.

1. Do you love Christ sincerely — and live in willful disobedience to the known commands of Christ? Do you know his will, and willingly every day act contrary to it — and yet pretend to love him? Do you slight his commands — and love his person? Does Christ command you to put your sins to death — and you allow them to live and rule, and yet love him? Does Christ command you to pray continually, and you neglect it continually — and yet have the face to say that you love Christ? Does Christ command you not to swear profanely at all, nor to take God's name in vain — and do you do this often in a day, and yet defy that man who calls into question your love to Christ?

But whatever is your confidence — I declare to your face, that it is a great and soul-damning mistake! For as love and obedience are

conjoined in the scripture — so they are never parted in the true and sincere lover of Christ.

Weigh these scriptures, and you will find your pretended love, without obedience, to be so light, that it will be driven away by the evidence of the Word, like chaff before the wind: "And showing mercy unto thousands of those who love me, and keep my commandments!" Exod. 20.6. The same words repeated: "Know therefore that the Lord your God, he is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy with those who love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations!" Deuteronomy 5.10. 7.9. "It shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto my commandments, which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul," Deuteronomy 11.13. "I beseech you, O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God, that keeps covenant and mercy for those who love him, and observe his commandments," Nehemiah 1.5. "If you love me — keep my commandments. He who has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is," yes, that is the man, "who loves me!" "If a man loves me — he will keep my words — He who loves me not, keeps not my sayings," John 14.15, 21, 23, 24.

Do you see how in all these texts, obedience is joined with love? If love goes before — obedience follows after. The obedience is a proof of the love.

Then the man among you, who is not openly profane, but of a moral conduct, and moreover a professor, will say as Saul did to Samuel, "Blessed are you of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord!" 1 Samuel 15.13. But Samuel replied, "What does this bleating of the sheep in my ears mean — and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" verse 16.

So you say, We love the Lord. How do you prove it? Why, we have performed the commandments of the Lord. Have you really? What does the neglect of prayer in your families mean then? What does your idling away the Lord's day, or polluting it by worldly discourse mean then? What does this mean — the allowed dead praying, and dull performances, not striven against, nor lamented for? But if you would not deceive yourself, mind that the obedience which proves sincerity of love to Christ must be:

1. Obedience, which is a proof of love, must be UNIVERSAL — all the commandments of God. Our obedience must include those commandments which are more hard — as well as those that are more easy. Those commandments which cross and condemn your best-beloved sin — as well as those you could more easily and readily part with. Those commands which respect the inward man — as well as the outward man; and enjoin the manner as well as the matter of your duties. "Then I shall not be ashamed, when I have respect to all your commandments!" Psalm 119.6

Universal in regard of the subject, that your obedience is done with the whole heart: "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul!" Deuteronomy 10.12.

2. Obedience, which is a proof of love, must be CHEERFUL — for love obeys with delight. It is not a burden to pray — but a pleasure. Hard duties become easy to love — and the time seems not long nor tedious. As Jacob, for the love of Rachel: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but as one day — for the love he had unto her!" Genesis 29.20. Seven years to love, seem but as one day. Seven years of duty to Christ, seem to pass away sooner,

and with more delight — than one day spent in flesh-displeasing duties, where there is no love to take off the tediousness of it to the flesh.

On the other hand, one day in a holy duty, to one who lacks love — seems as seven days, if not as seven years!

3. Such obedience must be the CHOICEST. Sincere lovers of Christ will serve him with the best they have, and in the best manner they can. Love thinks nothing too good for God and Christ — else it is but deceitful and pretended love: "You say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously! When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices — should I accept them from your hands? — says the LORD." Malachi 1:13

You bring prayers — but they are sleepy prayers. You pray, but with your minds roving — because of the prevailing habitual love you have unto the world. Could sincere love find no better service, give no better duties — than such for which a man is a deceiver, and accursed? "Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations!" verse 14.

It is strange, then, that it should be no more dreadful among people who pretend to love him — that they are not afraid to bring and offer such duties to him as so much provoke him, and are so greatly displeasing to him; who give him only words, when they have (a male in their flock) a heart in their breast to give him!

4. Such obedience as is a proof of love, must be PERSEVERING to the end, expressed not by stepping into God's ways — but by walking in them. One who does not love Christ, might step into a good way —

but he who loves walks therein: "You must love the LORD your God and obey all his requirements, decrees, regulations, and commands!" Deuteronomy 11:1. "If you shall keep all these commandments to do them, which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to walk ever in his ways," Deuteronomy 19:9.

Such then as have made great shows of love to Christ, and now are revolted, and have forsaken his holy commandments. By this we might judge what kind of love it was to Christ, that they once made profession of; and more, by their partial, irksome, and scrap obedience — might be convinced, that their love to Christ is unsound, and only supposed love.

2. Do you love Christ — while you maintain the love of sin in your heart? Can the love of sin, and the love of Christ, dwell together in highest degrees? Can supreme love be carried out to two contrary objects at the same time? And is there anything in the world more contrary than Christ — and sin? Is there more opposition between light and darkness; extremely sweet and extremely sour? Can you love Christ — and yet love what he hates? Can you love Christ — and delight in sin, which crucified your Lord? Could you carry that knife continually in your bosom with delight, which was the instrument of death unto your dearest friend? You might as soon look down upon the earth, and up unto the heavens, at the same instant — as thus love sin and Christ together: "You who love the Lord — hate evil!" Psalm 97:10. That hatred to sin, which proves to be sincere love to Christ, must be,

1. Hatred to sin must be UNIVERSAL — to the darling sin as well as others; to the sin which has been to you as your right hand, or right eye. Hatred is to the kind — he who hates a toad, it is not this one or that toad, in particular — but all toads. He who loves Christ sincerely,

hates sin as a man hates a toad, not only as to the degree, but also as to the extent, all and every one: "I hate every false way!" Psalm 119.104.

2. Hatred to sin must be IMPLACABLE. Anger might be pacified — but hatred planted in the nature is irreconcilable. Antipathy cannot be rooted out, nor turned into love. A man who loves not Christ might once be angry at sin — but be friends again. He might turn from it, and afterwards return unto it later. But the hatred to sin implanted in the new creature is implacably bent against sin, that the words might have some place here by way of allusion, relating the love and hatred of Amnon to Tamar: "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, (Hebrew is, with great hatred greatly,) so that the hatred with which he hated her, was greater than the love with which he had loved her! And Amnon said unto her, Arise, begone!" 2 Samuel 13.15. With like detestation will the lover of Christ send away his sin, "Arise, begone!" with greater hatred than before he loved it!

3. Therefore true hatred to sin must be mortal and destructive to sin — that is the object of it. Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand — then will I slay my brother Jacob!" Genesis 27.41. So the lover of Christ, who hates sin, is resolved to be the destruction of it. Shall not I aim at the death of that cursed sin — which was the death of my blessed Lord? Shall I allow that sin to live in my heart — which would not allow Christ to live in the world? Did sin shed my Savior's blood — and shall not I be avenged on my sin? Did sin make my Savior groan, and sweat in a bloody agony — and shall I take delight therein? My sins were . . .  
the nails that fastened him to the cross;  
the spear that pierced his blessed side; and  
the thorns that crowned his sacred head!

And shall I lodge sin in my bosom? Did Christ in love unto my soul — die for my sin; and shall not I, in love unto my Lord — cause sin to die in me?

3. Do you love Christ sincerely — when the things of this world have the supreme degrees of your affections? As sin is not to be loved at all by those who love Christ — so things which are good, must not be loved above Christ, "If any man loves father or mother more than me — he is not worthy of me!" Matthew 10.37. Does that woman love her husband with a sincere conjugal love, who, though she loves him truly — yet loves another more than him?

Do you love riches, pleasures, honors, relations, self, life, more than Christ — and yet sincerely love Christ? As he is better than all, greater than all, more suitable, more durable, more sweet, more satisfying, than all other good things — so he must be loved above and more than all things. "Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world! If any man loves the world — the love of the Father is not in him!" 1 John 2.15. "You adulterers and adulteresses! Don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God!" James 4:4

Though one who is sincere in his love to Christ might not love Christ more than some other people love him — yet he loves Christ more than he loves other people or things! But do you love Christ more than you love other things? And yet:

1. Do you love Christ more than other things — when your thoughts are habitually set upon, and actually run out upon, other things more than upon Christ? Can you think on the world with delight — but not on Christ? Do you have a thousand thoughts on other things — for one thought

of Christ? It is a pleasure to you to think on your pleasures, your profits, your children — but a burden to you to think of Christ, and keep your thoughts upon him. Are not the thoughts much upon the object of love? "When I awake — I am still with you!" Psalm 139.18. But if you cannot sleep in the

night — your head is full of the thoughts of the world, because your heart is full of the love of the world. Is it not a sign that the world, and not Christ — is loved as your treasure? for "Where the treasure is — there the heart will be also," Matthew 6.20, 21.

2. Do you love Christ more than other things — when your labor is more for other things than for Christ? Did you ever take that effort, that care, to get a saving interest in Christ — as you have done for the riches of this life? If you had, might you not have had him — whereas now you are without him? You sweat for the world — and you are cold in your praying for Christ! You lay out your strength in working for the world! You are slothful in endeavoring after Christ — and you are lively in your counting-house! With might and main you act in your shop — but you are dull in your closet upon your knees, if you at any time are there so employed. Is this your love to Christ, more than to other things? Or,

3. Do you love Christ more than other things — when your care is more to keep other things, than that Christ you think you love? You let Christ go to keep your outward possessions — and yet you say that you love Christ more! Christ does not believe what you say! Will not a man who loves his child more than his gold and all his goods — if his house were on fire, lose all to save his child? So would you for Christ, if you loved him more than all.

4. Do you love Christ sincerely — and never grieve, nor groan, nor repent for the sin whereby you have dishonored him? Can there be

love to any in person, without grieving for the unkindness that you have done unto him? Does a child love as a child, who is not grieved because he offended his father? If your heart burned in love to Christ — would not your eyes flow with tears?

If the fire of love to Christ were kindled in your bosom — would not the waters of sorrow run down your cheeks, and make you say: "Oh! What have I done — that I so long have slighted my loving Lord? Oh! What did I mean — to stop my ears against His calls of love and mercy? That I let Him stand outside my heart — when the world and Satan were admitted in? Did my Lord Jesus suffer for my sins — should I then have sinned thus against my suffering Lord? Was He nailed to the tree for my sake — and must I yet wound Him more? Oh! that I could not behold my bleeding Lord without a weeping eye! I am grieved, dear Savior, I am grieved — to remember how I slighted You, and trampled Your royal commands under my feet. O Lord, I blush and am ashamed, that I spurned Your tender compassion, that I undervalued Your invaluable love — and preferred the dung of this poor world, before such an incomparable Savior!"

Can you daily sin — and your soul not sigh, nor sob, nor grieve, nor groan? You can sin, and rejoice at the thoughts of it: "When you do evil — then you rejoice!" Jeremiah 11.15. You can sin — and make a sport at it, like a fool: "Fools make a mock at sin!" Proverbs 14.9.

Oh you loveless sinner! Did Christ bleed for sin — and do you laugh at it? Was Christ serious, and his soul sorrowful even to the death for sin — and do you make a sport of it? Have you a sea of sin — and not a drop of sorrow for it? Surely you are the man who has not one ounce of sincere love to Jesus Christ.

5. Do you love Christ sincerely — and live without communion with him? When he is absent from your soul — are never troubled at it? Does not love desire sweet converse, and familiar fellowship, with the person that is the object of your love? Can lovers be long asunder, and not desire a meeting? Do you account the presence of the beloved object a burden to you? Do you think that he loves you — who is weary of your company, or never desirous of it; or shuns the place where you are accustomed to be.

If you indeed love Christ — then you could be content to be without anything, rather than without him. You could better be without your health, than without Christ. You could better without your dearest friend, than without Christ, who is to you the dearest of all, if you sincerely love him. You could better be without your necessary food — than without Christ.

How is it, then, that you can be content without praying, and without hearing — or with these, without Christ in them? Is it not for lack of love? Lovers have their fainting fits, ready to faint and die away when the object cannot be enjoyed: "Sustain me with cakes of raisins. Refresh me with apples — for I am lovesick!" "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loves! I sought him — but I found him not! I will arise and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loves! I sought him, but I found him not. I asked the watchmen: 'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?' It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loves! I held him, and would not let him go!" Song of Songs

The soul in love with Christ is restless in his absence — and never stops seeking him, until it finds him. And, having found him, holds him fast by faith and love, and will not let him go. The soul that loves

— longs, thirsts, breathes and pants, after the beloved object! And though a gracious heart finds delight and rest in love to Christ — yet if Christ is not enjoyed — love cannot rest, but moves, in desiring of him, like David: "As the deer pants after the water-brooks — so my soul pants after God! My soul thirsts for God, for the living God! When shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm 42.1, 2.

Love is early and earnest in seeking after him. Every full condition — to him is empty. Every fruitful state, to him is barren. He sees weakness and disgrace in all worldly strength and honor, until he is filled and made fruitful by the enjoyment of Christ, and sees his power and his glory in his ordinances. "O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you!" Psalm 63:1-3

6. Do you love Christ sincerely — and yet hate what he loves?

Do you love Christ — and hate his word? Did not David, who loved God, esteem his word, for the sweetness of it, more than "honey?" Psalm 119.103. And for the worth of it, more than "gold?" Psalm 119.72.

Do you love Christ the Lord — and take no delight in the Lord's day, which is set apart for the commemoration of the wonderful work of man's redemption, and filling us with joy at the remembrance of his resurrection? Can you idle away this day? Can you spend it in pleasures, and profane it with your vain discourse and worldly talk — when you should be delighting yourself with the thoughts of the great things which Christ suffered; and by suffering, procure for his people? Do not those who love and honor an earthly king, delight themselves, and show their joy, on his day of coronation? I cannot be

induced to believe that any man loves Christ, who takes no care, and makes no conscience, of the holy observations of the Lord's day.

Do you love the Lord Jesus — and yet hate his people? You cannot endure a real, holy, humble sin-fearing Christian — and yet impudently say you are a lover of Christ? Can you revile them — and magnify Christ? Do you love Christ — and hate such as are like him? Has a woman love her husband — who tears his picture with indignation? In this, God himself declares you to be a liar, when you do this, and then say that you are a Christ-lover: "If any man says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother — he is a liar! He who does not love his brother, whom he has seen — how can he love God, whom he has not seen?" "And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God — must love his brother also!" 1 John 4:20, 21. " Everyone who loves the father — loves his child as well." 1 John 5:1

Did not Christ show his love unto his people — by laying down his life for them? And do you show your love to Christ, in persecuting those who love him, because out of love unto him they will not, dare not sin against him as you do? True love to Christ and them, in due circumstances, will cause a man, who is a sincere lover, to lay down his life for them, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him — how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth!" 1 John 3:16-18

Did you love God and Christ, you would have a free heart and an open hand, to receive his people in their need and necessities. And do you love God and Christ, when you can find both heart and hand to rob them of their goods, and thereby bring them into poverty and

want? Is it a certain sign of lack of love to Christ — when you do not according to your power supply their needs? And is it not then a certain sign of hatred to Christ — when you take away their supplies, and bring them, drive them into poverty? "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need, but has no pity on him — how can the love of God be in him?" How indeed? Who can tell or conceive how it could be?

7. Do you love Christ sincerely — when you had rather sin against him, than suffer for him? Is that your love to Christ — when you had rather forsake him, than in danger follow him? When you had rather deny him — than die for him? And though you do as Peter did, you do not repent, and weep bitterly, as Peter did! Did not love move Christ to suffer and die for us? Was not love the chain which fastened him to the cross? If you loved Christ — would the waters of affliction and persecution quench your love? You love him — but you cannot suffer for him? Is this worthy love to Christ?

The martyrs loved Christ, when they went to prison for him, and to the stake, and were burned into ashes for him. I think it is a true saying — a martyr is either actually so, or intentionally so. It is the purpose and resolution of the heart, to die for Christ's sake — if called to it. A Christian is one who dies for Christ, or is ready, willing, and by the help of grace is resolved — to lose his life, rather than leave Christ. It is safe to say, that he who loves his life more than Christ, and will part with Christ rather than his life — has no sincere love to Christ. "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Matthew 10:37-38

And this was the resolution and disposition of Paul's heart, before he was actually put to death. "Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus!" Acts 21:13

8. Do you love Christ sincerely — who never were convinced of your need of Christ — of your undone and lost estate — of your deplorable condition without Christ? Are you ignorant of your malady — and can you then value the remedy? Does not the soul, first feeling its wounds by sin — inquire how to be saved? And then, upon the sight of the power of Christ, that he is able to save, and of the freeness of Christ, that he is willing to save — the soul is drawn to love him, and to set his heart upon him. Blessed Lord! will you help me out of my misery? When no other can deliver me — will you? I am undone! Will you support me? I am lost! Will you save me? "Why, poor sinner," says Christ, "I pity you! My affections yearn over you! I will keep you! I will save you both from sin and Hell."

Will you do so, dear Lord? Then you shall have my heart — my love shall be to you!

9. Do you love Christ sincerely — and yet will not submit to him in all his offices? When you say that you love Christ — whom do you mean? In what respect do you consider him? As a Priest only — who died for your sins? As a Jesus — to deliver you from Hell torments? Did you ever know a drunkard, a swearer, or the vilest debauched wretch, who has heard of Hell and Christ — but was willing and desirous, on his own terms, but not on Christ's — to be saved from Hell torments? Will you say that this man, continuing in his open sins — loves Christ?

But Christ, in this one respect considered only — is not that Christ who is preached, and offered to you in the gospel — but also Christ as Prophet to teach you, and King to rule you. Is this then your love to him — to divide him? Is this your love to him — to dethrone him from his kingly office? No — it is plain hatred to him! "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying: 'We will not have this man to reign over us!' But those enemies of mine, who would not have me reign over them — bring them here, and slay them before me!" Luke 19.14,27.

10. Do you love Christ sincerely — yet do not care if he ever comes again? Nay, you could be glad that you might never leave this world — if you might have your pleasures and enjoyments in it! You have no desire that Christ should come to you by death, or at judgment — but you sorrow at the thoughts thereof. Does that woman love her husband who has gone a journey — and the tidings of his coming back is sorrowful news to her? The loving of the coming of Christ, is a character of such as shall be crowned when he comes: "Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing!" 2 Timothy 4:8.

And the spouse who was inflamed with love, concludes that song of love with this request: "Make haste, my Beloved, and be like a young deer upon the mountains of spices!" Song of Songs 8.14. And when in the last words of all the book of God, Christ promises his last and speedy coming — the church, who loves Christ, catches the promise out of his mouth, and turns it into a prayer: "He who testifies to these things says: "Yes, I am coming soon!" "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" Revelation 22:20

But your heart says rather, "O not so, Lord Jesus!" professing great love in the mean time in your heart. Yet one who truly loves Christ might be sometimes filled with fear at the thoughts of Christ's coming, not because he does not love and desire it, but because he thinks he is not prepared for his coming, lest Christ should find him unfitted and unready, at his coming, to enter with him into his glory. But while he defers his coming, the loving soul is hastening in his preparations for it. As a woman who is told her suitor is coming, is greatly troubled — not because he is coming, but because she fears he might come before she is adorned as she desires.

What say you now, sirs! Do you love Christ — or do you not? Upon laying these things to your heart, by examination of your heart by them — can you, upon mature deliberation, say that you find the love of Christ there? Then I shall show, in the close of this subject, what cause of joy in God you have — what comfort for the present — and what ground of expectation of better, greater things for the future, and forever — this love to Christ might be unto you.

But is this the case of all of you in this congregation? I wish it were — but I fear that it is not! Is love to Christ in every heart among you? I wish it were — but I fear that it is not! I hope some of you love Christ — but can I hope so of you all? If I were ever so optimistic, I cannot — while some are ignorant, and some are profane, and too many are excluded by the former characters of love, from having, for the present, the grace of love.

O that I myself had more love to Christ — that I might grieve more, that blessed Jesus is not loved by more among you! O that for Jesus' sake I had more love to your souls, that I could weep abundantly over you — who neither for Jesus' sake, nor your own, have hitherto loved the Lord Jesus!

What then? Have you not loved Jesus? Good God — pardon it. Will you not love Jesus? Good God — forbid it! What shall I do? Yes, I have proved that many of you do not love the Lord Jesus. And oh! how bitter are these thoughts to me — that so many of you do not love the sweetest Jesus! Shall I take it for granted that you will not? This were enough, if my heart were not a stone — to break it to pieces! Shall I let you alone without this love? I dare not. Shall I try to gain your love to my Lord? I am afraid you will deny me. Deny me! In this, which is of everlasting concernment to your souls — shall I take a denial and be gone? At your first denial I will not be gone! I know that you must have love unto him — or be eternally cursed by him! How then can I acquiesce in a denial from you?

I know the sinner does not know what he says, when he denies to give Christ his love — and therefore, in hopes that he might come to a better understanding of himself, and what makes for his own eternal good, I will proceed to the fourth use, by which I hope God will change some of your hearts and minds, and win the love of some of you for Christ — that all you who yet do not love him, will not give this as your final answer: That you will not love him.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **The Fourth Use is an attempt to gain Sinner's Consent to love Christ — a serious wish for good success.**

O then be persuaded . . .  
as you love your souls,  
as you would escape the damnation of Hell,  
as you would obtain the happiness of Heaven,

as you would avoid the punishment of devils,  
as you would die in a good condition, and  
after death give a good account of the wooings of grace this day, and  
not be Anathema, accursed, Maranatha, when Christ shall come — be  
persuaded to set your hearts and love upon Jesus Christ, for he must  
be loved by you — or you must be eternally cursed by him.

Abraham sent his servant, bound with an oath, to seek a wife for his son Isaac, with this proviso, "If the woman would not be willing — he would be clear from his oath." Genesis 24.1-19. The servant prepares to go on this message, and prays, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray you send me good speed this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham," verse 10-12. He meets with Rebekah by the well of water, inquires whose daughter she was, and whether there were room in her father's house for him to lodge. He is invited by her brother Laban, saying, "Come in, you blessed of the Lord — why stand outside?" to verse 31. There was food set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told my errand," verse 33. And he was desired to speak on, and he said, "I am Abraham's servant, and the Lord has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great — and he has a son, and he has given him all that he has, and my master made me swear, saying: You shall go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son," verse 34-38. "And now, if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceeds from the Lord — we cannot speak unto you bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the Lord has spoken," verse 49-51. "And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. And they said to Rebekah: Will you go with this man? And she said: I will go!" verse 53-58.

O that I might have such success with souls this day! The Lord, my Master, has sent me, bound with the obligation of a woe, to seek the love and consent of lost souls to become the spouse of his Son Jesus; with this relief, that if sinners are not willing, nor will accept the motion — then I shall be released from the woe. I have made preparation, though less and weaker than such a weighty matter requires, and have prayed, "that the Lord God would send me good speed this day."

And now! I am standing by the well of the water of life, and some of the city have come to draw water out of the well of salvation. My message is so important, that I can willingly forbear to eat until I have told my errand; and therefore in your audience I desire to speak on, saying, "I am the Lord's servant, who is great and blessed above all, and over all forever! The earth, and all that therein is, is his; the sea, and all therein, is his; the heavens, and all therein, are also his. And he has a Son, one only Son, Jesus, and he has given him all that he has — even all power in Heaven and in earth; and has set him at his own right hand, far above all principalities and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come, and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things, the Judge of all the world.

This great Lord has sent me to ask and beg your hearts and love, in order to an indissoluble marriage to his own only Son. And now if you will deal truly with my Master — tell me; if not — tell me. Oh now, who says: The thing is of the Lord, and proceeds from his grace and mercy; we cannot dispute, we will not refuse, this message.

And when you are asked who will have this Jesus? Who will love this Jesus? Methinks one would say, "I will!" Another would say, "And I

will!" One and another! What, no more? Methinks every one should say, "I will!" There should not be one who should say, "But I will not."

No! Why? Because no better a servant is sent to gain your consent — or manage this great affair with more zeal and skill? Pray for the pardon of my weakness and folly — and I will pray that you might have more wisdom to discern when a good proposal is made unto you. Just so long as you would but have regard to Jesus Christ, and to your own immortal soul. If you despise me — then do not despise my Master, nor his Son, for though I am not so good as Abraham's servant — yet my Lord and Master is better, infinitely better, and greater, than Abraham. And my Master's Son, Jesus, is better, incomparably better, than Isaac, Abraham's son — and would certainly prove a richer match to your soul, than Isaac was to Rebekah.

Consider therefore again, before you again deny him your love — for have you not denied him your heart long enough already, but will you do so still? Has not your love run waste upon the creature to this day? And shall it do so still? Are you not weary yet in loving the world? Are you not yet tired in setting your heart upon vanity? Has it answered your expectation? Have you found that sweetness in the creature which you looked for, when you first set your heart and love upon it? You have tried the love of the creature — now try the love of Christ; and if you do not find it better, if you do not find it sweeter, than all your former love, (provided you love him sincerely) — then return to it again.

Behold, whose cause do I plead this day? Christ's — or my own? For whom do I ask your love? For myself — or for Christ? Slight me as you will — but do not slight Christ. Vilify me — but do not

undervalue Christ. Count me unworthy of your love — but not the blessed Son of the most glorious God. You may say that I am not fit to be regarded — I bless God, I have learned to bear it; but I beseech you not to say so of Christ. Revile and hate me if you will — if you will but love that Jesus, who out of love died for you; if you would but love him, who then would certainly save you, and bring you to eternal glory and happiness forever.

If you love the world ever so much — can the world do so much for you as Christ? If you love your honors, your pleasures, your relations, ever so much — can they bless you as Christ will bless you? Nay, the more you love them — the more miserable they will make you. Should I call you to love the world — you would do it; or your pleasures, self, or sin — you would do it! Nay, when I have called to you, to wean your love from these — yet still you cleave to them in love.

What! is Christ the only unlovely object in your eyes? Can you find love for anything, but Christ? What is it in Christ that displeases you? What do you see in him that is offensive to you? Either love him — or give a reason why you will not.

Do you blame me for my importunity? I thought that you refused, because I was not urgent enough with you. You will not love, unless you are entreated. If you would love Christ after much entreating — then I would study night and day to think how I might entreat you, and what arguments to use to prevail, and obtain your love for Christ.

But why should you look for such long entreaties? Do you know who it is that entreats you? Is it I — or God himself by me? I beg you, view one text, and then let him who entreats you, wait no longer for your answer. What place is that? It is 2 Corinthians 5.20. "Now then we

are ambassadors for Christ, as though God beseeched you by us — we beg you, in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God." What do you say now? I from God, and God by me, beseech you. A minister of God stands among you in Christ's stead — to beg, entreat, beseech — that from you, which, if Christ stood in this place this day, he would preach to you, and desire, and command from you — that you would be reconciled to God; and after the enmity to him — you would love him. God, Christ, by his servant, beseeches, entreats, begs you to love him!

Oh, the astonishing condescension of the holy God — that he will entreat! Oh, the amazing stupidity and folly of the sinful sinner — that he will not be entreated! Surely the infinite distance that there is between God and man, might fill us with wonder that God should become a suitor to man for his love — when there is not so much distance between man and nothing, as there is between God and man. Yet he is pleased to stoop so low, to urge us to consent to him — that we might be advanced as high as Heaven, who else must be plunged into the depths of Hell.

Oh, what is this — that the Creator should seek to be loved by the creature! That the Lord should seek to be loved by the servant! That the King of saints should seek to be loved by the subjects of sin — that he might have our heart and love! Whereas if we considered that our strictest service to him — would be our largest liberty; our having him — would be our only happiness; our missing him — would be our greatest misery — we would know it to be our best interest to prostrate ourselves at his feet with prayers and tears, with cries and calls, with grief and groans; to make it our daily suit to him, that he would love us, and give us a heart to love him.

Man was first in departing from God, and in removing that love which at first there was between God and man. Yet God is first in seeking the renewing of love — else man would always hate, and never love him. And that God should seek to man for his love, and be denied — might be astonishment to the angels in Heaven; and make matter of joy, if they are capable of any joy, to the devils in Hell — that men who may love Christ, and will not, might be as miserable as themselves, to whom he is not offered as an object of faith, love, or hope.

But whether you will love, or not love him — God has commanded me, and all of his ministers, to press hard at you for your love. He has given us a commission to make a proposal of love between Christ and you, in order to your eternal matching with him, Matthew 22.2-4. he has committed to us the word of reconciliation, and made it our work to woo you for your love to his Son, and to try to gain your consent, 2 Corinthians 5.18-20. And if you will love him — to espouse you to him, 2 Corinthians 11.2. This is my message, and for this end have I come this day. If I do not ask you — then I hazard my soul. If you deny him — then you lose your soul! May God therefore grant, that I might so ask, that you may not deny — that both your souls and mine might love, and so be saved.

For the gaining of your love for Christ, I shall use these following arguments, propounded by way of question. And when you have given a right answer to them — I trust that Christ will have a good answer from you.

## **Chapter 11.**

## **Motives or Pleas, that Christ might have the Love of your Hearts.**

1. Can you find a more excellent object for your love than Jesus? If you search through the whole creation, could you find any like him? Are riches, honors, pleasures, or other relationships comparable to Jesus, whom you ought to love supremely? Should not the highest good be the best object of your love? Can you love lesser things, and not the greatest good? Is not all the goodness in the creature but as a drop to the sea, as a candle to the sun, as a speck of sand to a mountain — when compared to the goodness that is in Jesus? If David were worth ten thousand other men, is not Jesus, David's Lord, better than all the world?

2. Is not Jesus the most SUITABLE good for you? Is liberty so suitable to a captive man, or bread to a hungry man, or health to a sick man, or ease to a suffering man, as Jesus is to a sinful man? Were you not lost, undone and in danger to be damned? Jesus was your Savior, your keeper and your redeemer. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost," (Luke 19:10). "Therefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him..." (Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is "Mighty to save!"

Were you not ignorant, dark, and blind, not knowing the way to Heaven and eternal happiness? Didn't you weary yourself trying to find the gate of life, and yet missed it when you had done all you could? Jesus became your Teacher and your Guide, to infallibly direct you to heaven. He anointed your eyes with his eye-salve, even though you were born blind, and then he gave you spiritual sight. Now you are able to see your lost estate, the beauty of Jesus, and the way of salvation.

Were you not sick, and full of spiritual diseases? abounding with soul-ailments? even sick unto death? near to eternal death? Jesus was your able and skillful Physician. None whom he has undertaken to cure has ever yet died under his hands. For rather than you justly die of your soul's disease, he made a potion for you, out of his own blood, which, when you drank it, you were made totally well. Therefore he came to be your soul-physician, that he might cure desperate sinners like yourself.

Were you not indebted to God? Didn't you owe millions to him, yet did not have a penny to pay? If God were to demand payment from you, would it not have proven your damnation? If his justice were to pursue you, and death arrest you, would not the demons have seized your soul, and thrown it into the prison of Hell, from where you should never have been delivered, until you had paid the last penny you owe, which would never be? But now that Jesus has loved you, he has become your Surety, made payment for your debt, and given you freedom.

Were you not spiritually polluted and unclean? Had not the leprosy of sin spread over your understanding, your will, your conscience, your memory and all your affections? So that you were defiled all over, and lay wallowing in your blood, cast out because you were so loathsome to God? And in this filthy state, you could never enter into the holy kingdom of God. But Jesus loved you, took away your filthy rags, and gave you a change of clothing made of his righteousness. You said to him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." He in love said to you, "I will, be clean". He bathed you in his own blood, and cleansed you from all your sins (1 John 1:7). Yes, though your sins were as scarlet, they became as white as snow; though they were red like crimson, they became as white as wool.

Were you not a captive to Satan and to sin? Drudging elbow deep in the loathsome service of sin? Was not your bondage worse than that of the Israelites in Egypt? And were not Satan and sin as cruel and tyrannical as Pharaoh and his task-masters? Didn't you love your chains of sin? Weren't you at ease in your shackles? Do you remember how Jesus released you from your fetters? Jesus became your Redeemer, and made you free — and then you were free indeed!

Were you not an enemy to God? You were born his enemy, and then continued to live as his adversary. Had you died in this condition, your soul would have been alienated from God forever. But now Jesus has become your blessed peacemaker, and by the blood of his cross he reconciled you to God. Were you not spiritually dead? Had you not lost the holy image of God? Though you were dead, Jesus gave you spiritual life and eternal glory.

Now, if this was your desperate condition, and Jesus helped you in every respect — then how suitable is he to you? Is not his suitability to you a foundation for love, and a motive to love him? What an argument is this to win your heart to Jesus! You were lost, but Jesus saved you! You were ignorant, but Jesus taught you! You were sick, but Jesus healed you! You were polluted, but Jesus cleansed you! You were a captive to sin and Satan, and Jesus freed you! You were an enemy of God, and Jesus reconciled you! You were dead, and Jesus gave you spiritual life! Oh, you never found one so suitable for you! Now, even now, he should be loved by you. O, Jesus is the most excellent object for your love, and you should no longer withhold your devotion from him.

3. Is not Jesus the most SATISFYING good to you? You were destitute, and he supplied you. You were empty, and he filled you. You were poor, and he enriched you. O to love such a Savior!

4. Is not Jesus the most DURABLE good to you? When your riches, pleasures, honors and friends shall fail you — Jesus will never fail you. "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever!" Psalm 73:26

5. Is not Jesus a SPECIAL good to you? He was given by special love, to a particular people, and brings with him incredible privileges! All other things you might love are as common to lost people, as well as to the saved. Though a worldly man, whose heart and hands and house, are full of the world, might say, 'Riches are mine' — yet he cannot truly say, 'Jesus is mine'. Let Jesus have the best of your love, because you are the object of his special, electing, redemptive love!

6. Is not Jesus the most NECESSARY good to you? Do you need food so much when you are hungry, or liberty so much when you are in prison, or medicine so much when you are sick — as much as Jesus when you are a sinner? You could never have been truly happy, pardoned, reconciled, and forever saved without Jesus. Jesus is needful, because without him, your sin-sick soul would have no cure. He gave you the choicest and the richest cordial. And when you die, he will secure your departing soul. And after death, he will be your forever friend. When all worldly things shall leave you at your grave, Jesus will be yours forever.

7. Is not Jesus the most PROFITABLE good to you? For when you have him, you have all. Then God is yours, and the Spirit is yours, and the promises are yours, and all the privileges of the bible are yours, and Heaven itself shall be forever yours.

8. Is not Jesus the most DELIGHTFUL good? Some people delight in what they see, some in what they hear, some in what they taste, and some in recreation or amusements. But the delight of knowing Jesus surpasses them all! He is altogether and supremely delightful.

9. Is not Jesus a SURE good? Other things God may give, and afterwards call for them back again — "Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen..." Hosea 2:9. But God never said, 'I gave such a man my Jesus, but I will take him away.' God may take riches out of your hand, but if you once receive the Lord Jesus, God will never take Jesus out of your heart.

10. Has not Jesus DESERVED your love, by what he has suffered, done, given, purchased, promised and prepared for you? Behold the wounds which he has endured for you! Behold the crown of thorns on his head, that there may be a crown of glory upon your head! Behold him dying, that you might live! Behold him suffering, that you may be saved! Behold him poor, that you may be made rich with the best, surest and most durable of riches. Behold him condemned, that you may be absolved! Behold him in an agony, that you might have rest and ease in glory. Behold him bearing the cross, and the cross bearing him — that you might not bear the curse! Behold him bearing the Father's wrath — that you might be made the subject of his grace, and the object of his love.

And now tell me — does not this Jesus deserve your love? Should you love any other like him, when none other has done so much for you like he has done? Does the small kindness of a fellow creature draw out your love, and shall not all these great things that Jesus has done for you, kindle a fire of love towards him? How can you bear not to love him?

11. Is not the love of Jesus the BEST love you can attain? It is a pity, that any other object should have your greatest love.

12. Love to Jesus is the SWEETEST love. The one that loves other things, instead of Jesus, loves nothing but vanity — and to love

vanity will prove troublesome. He that loves riches has disturbing sorrow with this love, fretting fears, and perplexing, anxious cares.

So without love to Jesus, love to other things will always be a bitter love. Oh now, how sorry I am that ever I loved the world as I have done — my pleasures, my sin as I have done. But you will never have cause to say, I am sorry that ever I loved Jesus. Never was such a word ever heard. Those who never repent of their love to the world and sin — their worldly love will certainly end in sorrow, and with bitterness of soul be sadly lamented in Hell. But what contentment, satisfaction, delight, comfort and joy is there in the loving of Jesus! None can tell so well as you who love him.

13. Love to Jesus is the SAFEST love. You cannot sin in loving Jesus, except it be in the smallness of it, and not loving him more. You might have fear and trembling in loving other things, and say, 'Do not I sin in this?' But you can never love Jesus too much.

14. Love to Jesus is the SUREST love. Love to other things is often turned into hatred — love today, and hate tomorrow. But love to Jesus remains firm. Jesus is the surest object of your love — neither men, nor death, nor demons, can take him away from you. Though others might keep us from reading his Word, none can keep us from loving Jesus.

15. Love to Jesus is the NOBLEST love. Love to pleasures, to the world and to sin — are base and polluted loves. Love to Jesus is most sublime and lofty love. Love to Jesus carries the soul in its thoughts and meditations after him, into the highest heavens. It has delight in the highest degree — and shall have the highest reward forever! Jesus is the most noble object for your love.

16. Love to Jesus is the most ENDURING love. It is a love that shall never end. Before long, everyone will be done with loving this poor world — even those who love it most and have their hearts most set upon it. Those who now have their hearts full of earth, shall soon have their mouths full of earth, when their bodies lie rotting in the earth — then they will be done loving it. Death, which ends their life in this world, shall end their love to this world.

But you, the true lover of Jesus, shall never be done loving him. It is sweet to love Jesus, but this makes it even more sweet — to think you shall ALWAYS love him — love him in life, love him in death and love him after death. Oh blessed love, that shall never be lost, but last forever!

While I was contemplating this, it came into my mind to consider, what those who never love Jesus in this world can love in the next world — and I could not imagine anything which damned souls in hell can love. I thought, can they love God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, angels or believers? No, their hatred to all these is, and shall be, more deeply rooted in them, than it ever was while upon earth. Can they love their 'location' in hell? No, they will wish they never had come there. Can they love the 'pains' of hell? No, they grieve and groan under these torments, and are weary to bear them. Can they love the 'devils' in Hell? No, they curse them for tempting them to the sin which brought them to their place in Hell. Can they love their 'companions' in Hell? No, they are an aggravation of one another's misery. Can they love their 'sin' in Hell? Alas! all that was pleasurable in sin is gone, and only the pain and sting of sin remain. Can they love their 'being' in Hell? They had rather die than live, and cease to be at all, than to continue to be in Hell. I do not know what it is that they can love in Hell. Oh loathsome place, where there is, and can be, no love!

But Oh how lovely is Heaven to us! Heaven is where love reigns and where love lives! Our life shall be forever a life of love!

Dear Lord! save me from Hell, because in Hell there is no love to you, nor to anything that is good. Sweet Savior! lead me in the way to Heaven — and bring me there, where love to you shall live and last forever.

17. Is it not great folly, to love other things — and not love Jesus?

Everyone will love something. There is such a thing as love in all your hearts, and something it will be set upon in this world. Now if Christ does not have your love — the world will; if Christ does not have your love — sin will. And do you act as rational creatures, as men endued with reason — to deny your love to Christ, and give it to the world and sin? Set one over against the other, and then tell me,

1. Is it not great folly to love that which is worse than yourselves — and not that which is infinitely better? Do you think that your silver and your gold is better than yourselves — as much as you love it? Do you think that your houses and your lands, are better than yourselves? But I hope you will say and acknowledge that Christ is better.

2. Is it not great folly to love that which cannot love you back — and not him who would? You love your gold — but that cannot love you again. You love the clothes upon your back, and the furniture in your houses — but these can make no returns of love. You give your love to them — but you receive no love from them. Are you not vexed, when you

love a man who does not love you back — nor return love for love? And why are you so well pleased, and so well contented, in placing

the very strength of your love on worldly things — where the return of love is impossible?

But would you love Christ — you would have more love from him than you give unto him, even if you strive with all your might to love him with the utmost love you can, John 14.21, 23. Proverbs 8.17.

3. Is it not great folly to love that which can never satisfy you — and not him who would satisfy your souls forever? Did these things you love, ever fill your desires? Did they ever give you full contentment? How could they? When God has made your souls capable of the enjoyment of an infinite good — how can that which is finite fill them? It is only an infinite good, and not finite good — which can satisfy your souls, though they be finite. All the creatures cannot fill one soul. For though the soul in itself, because it is a creature, is finite and limited — yet it is capable of making choice of God for its chief good, who is infinite and unlimited.

God has put into the hearts of men, desires after good that is eternal, for they desire to be eternally happy. But God has not put this eternal goodness in any, in all the things of this world, for they are all transitory. Therefore when you look for satisfaction in the creatures which you love, or in the loving of them — you look for that which God never put into them, and nothing can give more than it has, and nothing has more than God has given it. Therefore to look for more from the creature than God by making it has put into it — may yield you vexation enough, but no satisfaction at all! "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless." Ecclesiastes 5.10.

4. Is it not great folly to love that which you must shortly part with — and not him whom you might enjoy forever? Though you have your heart full of love to other earthly things — you shall not carry a

handful of them to the eternal world. " Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand!" Ecclesiastes 5.15. "We brought nothing into this world — and it is certain we can carry nothing out!" 1 Timothy 6.7. But death, which carries the lovers of the world quite away from the things they love — shall set the soul of a lover of Christ nearer to him. "I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far!" Philippians 1.23. The soul that loves Christ, when, by death, it is absent from the body — it shall be present with the Lord! 2 Corinthians 5.8.

5. Is it not great folly to love that which might leave you while you live — and not Christ who would never leave you, nor ever forsake you? As you are sure these things which you love will be none of yours after death — so you are not sure they shall be yours while you live. Might you not be rich today — and poor tomorrow? Might you not be well today — and sick tomorrow? Might you not be in honor today — and in disgrace tomorrow? Was it not so with Haman?

When you have riches and love them, you are not sure to hold them: "Will you set your eyes," your heart and love, "upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards Heaven!" Proverbs 23.5. The Hebrew text is, "Will you cause your eyes to fly upon that which is not?" Riches fly away — and the worldly man's heart and love fly after them! And though his heart and love are swift in their motion after riches — yet sometimes riches fly so swiftly, that their lover cannot overtake them!

The pleasures of sin, and so the profits of the world — are but for a season, Hebrews 11.25; and when the season is over, they are gone! But Christ would never leave you, nor ever forsake you, Hebrews 13.5.

6. Is it not great folly to love that which may prove a hindrance to your everlasting happiness — and not Him who is the purchaser and the promoter of it? Is it not great folly, to love that which is often hurtful to the owners, and always hurtful to the over-lovers of it — and not him who never did his lover any harm, but only good? "There is a great evil which I have seen under the sun — namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt!" Ecclesiastes 5.13. This Solomon had seen, and many have seen. But that Christ should hurt any man who has him for his own — was never seen!

Riches are thick clay and clogs to the minds of men, and keep them pinned down to earth, that they cannot rise to Heaven, nor get so high while they live, nor their souls when their bodies die — that they make salvation exceedingly difficult! "Then Jesus said to his disciples: I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God!" Matthew 19.23,24.

To love riches, and not Christ — does not make salvation only hard, but impossible! But the love of Christ makes salvation not only possible — but certain and easy.

7. Is it not great folly to love that which cannot comfort you at death — and not love Christ, who both can and would? Love what you will besides Christ, and not Christ — it cannot be a support to your departing souls. Where will you look at death for comfort — at your riches? Why, you are leaving them, with a heart full of love to them! To love them and yet must leave them, to leave them in loving of them — this will torment and vex you, not support and comfort you.

Where will you look at death for comfort — to pleasures that you loved? When you lie dying, they have fled and gone!

Where will you look at death for comfort — to your friends? When you are dying, you are taking your last leave of them.

Where will you look at death for comfort — to Christ? Alas! You never loved him — and the thoughts of that will be a sting more painful than the sting of death!

18. Can you do anything less than love Jesus — and can you do anything more? Jesus has done such great things for you, is it not a small thing that Jesus should have your love in return? If Jesus had asked you to lay down your life for him, had he called you to give your bodies to be burned for him, should you not have done it? How much more when he says, "just let your hearts but burn in love unto me" -when that burning will not be painful, but delightful!

When Naaman came to the prophet to be cleansed of his leprosy, being directed to go and wash in the Jordan, that he should be clean, in anger he went away. But his servant came to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather, then, when he says unto you — wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings 5:13). If Jesus had required some great thing, that you might escape great torments, and be partaker of his great salvation, would you not have gladly done it? How much rather, then, when he says, 'Love me — and be saved!'

When you have received a great kindness from a friend whom you cannot repay, don't you say, 'I cannot do less than love him'. Yet this small thing of loving Jesus is of greater value to him than all else. You pray to him, but to love him is better. A heart full of love means more to Jesus than a thousand prayers, full of the most eloquent expressions, without love. You hear his word, but to love him is better. You might suffer for him, but to love to him is better. Should you give all your goods to the poor, and your body to the fire for him

— yet to give your heart and to love him is still better. And, indeed, except all the former things proceed from love, and are accompanied with love, they are not pleasing to Jesus.

19. Will you love worldly things, which you might easily love too much — and not Jesus whom you can never love too much? You might love your riches, your relations, your pleasures, yourself, your liberty and your life too much. In these things your love might easily be too much, and transgress the lawful bounds. And indeed, so much love as you give to these things, more than to Jesus, is too much love. But if you were able to bear it, and could you love Jesus with as much love as all the angels in heaven love him, it would not be too much love for him. Many have complained they loved Christ too little, but no one ever said that Jesus had too much of their love. God blames you, and your conscience accuses you, for your inordinate love to things on earth. But neither God nor conscience will condemn you for the highest degrees of love to Jesus, and things that are above.

20. To truly love yourselves — you must love Jesus supremely! Does that man truly love himself, who does not regard the salvation of his soul? who ruins himself, and damns himself, and shuts himself out of Heaven? Does that man truly love himself, who exposes himself to the wrath of God, to the damnation of Hell, and to banishment from the glorious presence of the blessed God? All these things a man brings upon himself for lack of love to Jesus. If then you desire to truly love yourself, you must love Jesus supremely.

21. Are not all the duties of religion sometimes tedious to you, for lack of love to Jesus? Do you find it a burden to pray? Do you find it a burden to hear or read the word of God? Is it a burden to you to meditate upon God and Christ, and things above? It is all because of

smallness of love to Jesus. For love makes hard things easy, and heavy labor to be light.

22. Does anything make you more like to God — than to love Christ? Do you not in this, most resemble God? Do you believe in Christ? God does not. Do you trust in Christ for life and salvation? God does not. Do you obey the commandments of Christ? God has no superior to command him. But do you love Christ? So does God: "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hands!" John 3.35; 5.20.

23. Might you return to God and Christ like for like — in anything but in love? If God be angry with you — might you be angry with God? If God withdraws comfort from you — might you withhold duty from God? If he rebukes you — might you rebuke him? If he is displeased with you — might you be displeased with him? Would not all this be your sin, and perverseness of heart towards him? But if he loves you — you may and ought to love him. If he has set his heart upon you — your duty is to set your heart on him.

24. Can you hope for salvation by him — without sincere affection to him? Who bids you hope for any such thing? Can you have the face to expect such great things by, through, and from Christ — as pardon of all your sins, deliverance from Hell, the happiness of Heaven — and yet not love him? Do you hope for eternal life by Christ? I know you do — might not Christ then expect love from you, when you expect life by Christ? As you would have life by Christ — let Christ have love from you, or else your expectation of life will be disappointed, and end in eternal death without hope.

25. Dare you die without love to Christ? Dare you, can you leave this world with a quiet mind — if you do not love Christ? No, surely, except you die as blind in sin as you were born. What do you think

when you come to be sick, and when you come to die — will it not be a cut to your heart, to think, "I have lived twenty, forty years — but I never loved Christ! Now must I go to appear before him whom I never loved!"

Why not love him while you live in health, as well as wish you had loved him when health is gone, and sickness has come — when life is going as fast as death is coming?

26. Does not Jesus deserve your love? Do you not owe it to him? Is it not due to him by virtue of creation? Did not he give your being to you?

By virtue of preservation, has not Jesus kept you out of the grave and Hell until this day? Justice would have hewn you down, and wrath would have condemned you long ago. And who has procured a pardon for you but Christ? That you are on this side the torments of the damned, not beyond praying, and hearing, and hoping, is all through Christ's securing for you longer time. Except by virtue of Jesus' provision for you, you would not have had a rag for your back, nor a morsel for your mouth, nor sleep for your eyes. By virtue of redemption, when you were worse than nothing — did not he lay down his soul, his life, his blood, as a ransom price for you?

If your love is due to him in so many ways, what injustice will it be for you to deny Jesus that which is his due? Are you not careful to give to everyone what you owe them? And does it not ease your mind, that though you are not rich, yet you have given every one his due? Do you not work, and care, and save to give to all what you owe them — and shall Jesus be the only one to whom you will be unjust? If you have not enough to satisfy all your creditors, yet if there is one, whom you love and bear more respect unto — how sure you will be to repay that one first. You should say, "Though I cannot do as much as

I would like — yet Jesus shall not be a loser by me. He shall have my heart and love.'

27. Is it not great condescension in Jesus — that he will so kindly accept your love? One so great, accept of the love of one so inferior? One so holy, accept the love of one that is so sinful? One so glorious, accept the love of one so vile? Do great men value the love of beggars? Do princes value the love of peasants? Would a man of noble birth and wealth allow one clothed in rags to love and marry him? Or would he not scorn and reject her love? I think, considering what Jesus is, and what you are — that you should say, 'If Jesus will allow me, I will love him.' Allow you! Not only so, but he gives you a command to love him, and that upon pain and peril of everlasting damnation. He does not allow you to live without love to him, though for your long refusal he might have justly left you to live without love to him.

28. You should never have any cause or reason to be ashamed to love Jesus. Is not the time coming, and the day hastening, when covetous men shall be ashamed of loving the world, and voluptuous men ashamed of loving their pleasures, and ambitious men ashamed of loving their honors? For is it not a horrid shame, that a rational creature should be such a sot as to love sin which is most loathsome — and not to love Jesus who is most lovely? It is a horrid shame, to love deformity — and not beauty!

Oh shame, shame! It is a shame that sin should have such esteem, and Jesus such great contempt put upon him. But shame shall before long confound these now shameless wretches, when they shall cry out, "We are ashamed that we loved profits, and not Jesus — houses, lands, lusts, and not Jesus. This is the confusion of our faces, and shame covers us — that we should be so foolish, and so blind, that we

had not sense, nor reason, to distinguish between sin, which is the greatest and most odious evil, and Jesus who is the greatest and most lovely good." But the time will never come, the day will never be, that a gracious soul shall be ashamed of his sincere love to Jesus Christ.

29. Is there any love so PROFITABLE as love to Jesus? "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26). By loving Jesus you shall have such a gain that no man can value, that no mind can estimate, that no mathematician, by all his numbers and figures, can compute — even pardon of innumerable sins, the favor of an infinite and holy God, deliverance from inconceivable torments, possession of endless bliss, and more than I, or any man, can describe or comprehend.

30. Is there any love so universally NECESSARY as love to Jesus? One man loves one thing, and a second another, and a third another. But there is no necessity that all men should love any one thing except for Jesus, and things pertaining to our having and enjoying him. Love to Jesus is absolutely necessary for poor and rich, for great and small, for noble and lowborn, for learned and unlearned, for slave and free.

31. Love to Jesus is the one great HELP against the temptations of Satan. Is not Satan your enemy? Is not your heart sometimes anxious to yield to him? But love to Jesus would garrison your hearts, fortify your souls, and make you courageous and resolute against all the batteries of Satan and the assaults of sin. It would make you watchful against the allurements and amusements of the world, so that you would say, 'Shall I offend my dearest Lord? Shall I displease him who has done me such good, such everlasting good? Oh! how can I do this

great evil, and sin against him whom I love!' Do you not find that love forbids, and exceedingly restrains, from grieving, offending or wronging the one whom you entirely love?

32. Love to Jesus will help us to persevere in the Christian race.

When trials come — will not such as have no saving love to Christ, turn their backs upon him? Will those who love riches, ease, liberty, honors, life, or anything, more than Christ — leave, lose, lay down, these for Christ? What you love most — will you not endeavor to keep longest? These must be harbored — but Christ then shall be abandoned, Matthew 19.21, 22. But if you have not that love which will keep you steadfast and constant in suffering for Christ on earth — for lack of that love, you shall suffer eternally in Hell!

When trials, suffering and persecution come — only those who truly love Jesus will be able to endure to the end.

33. Is it not possible for you to set your love upon Christ? Is it not attainable? Devils cannot love him — but you can. Damned souls cannot love him — but you can if you would. For have you not the means to help you to love him? Is not he preached to you? Is not the Spirit striving with you? Will you say you cannot love him — though you would! That I utterly deny — for if you were really willing to love him, you could love him. Nay, if you sincerely will to love him — you do love him, for what is willing but loving? And what hinders you from loving — but your not willing to love him?

Will you say that you lack power? What power do you mean? The natural faculty or power of the will? That you have — how else do you will anything you do? Will you say you lack a power of willing to love Christ? What is that — but that you are unwilling to love him? And if you cannot, because you will not — the more you plead your cannot,

the more you aggravate your will not. If you lie under a moral impotency, that is your sin; and what is this moral impotency — but the averseness of the will from Christ?

Therefore, though without the powerful workings of the grace and Spirit of God, you cannot love Christ sincerely — yet this cannot is your will not; for if by the grace of God you were enabled to will, you could; and if you were as willing to love Christ, as some now are, who once were as unwilling as now you are — you could love him as well as they. Why should you stand off, and say, "If it were possible for me to love Christ, I would?" What! Possible! What! Is there no difference between you and a devil? Is there no difference between you and the damned in Hell? You can love the world! You can love yourself! Yes, and I suppose you can love sin too — can you not? To our grief and your shame, we find it so. But why can you love the world, and self, and sin? Is it not because you will? Do you do it against your will? I wish you did, then there might be more hopes you would be persuaded to love Christ. You can and do love sin — because you are willing. If you had but as great willingness to love Christ, as the world and sin — then it may be said that you can love Christ.

However, though I am no assertor of the liberty and power of the will in things supernatural, nor an opposer of the necessity of the workings of the Spirit, to enable a sinner to love Christ — yet it is most manifest that your unwillingness is the hindrance of such love; and this unwillingness is your sin.

Are you at length convinced of the necessity of love to Christ? Are you at length persuaded to seek it, and willing to get love to him? I shall then next proceed to the directions, whereby you might, through grace, fall in love with Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION. What shall I say to advance Jesus in your esteem, that you might love him? Is he not a COMPREHENSIVE good? Eminently all? There is no goodness in the creature, but it is formally, or virtually, in Jesus. Is there wisdom in the creature? There is more in Jesus. Is there beauty or power in the creature? There is much more in Jesus. "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell" (Colossians 5:19). Jesus is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This is the One whom I beg you to love. This is he who is altogether lovely and desirable. Consider now, I plead with you — can you ever imagine a better offer than Jesus? Can you find a better match for your soul? Can you say all this, the one half of this, any one of all these things, concerning the objects you have loved previous to Jesus? Oh then say, 'I never understood the loveliness of Christ before this!' How has sin fooled me! How has the world bewitched me! And how has my foolish wicked heart deceived me, that I have lavished my love upon the creature, and sin, when there was a Christ to love! Such a Christ to love! Such a good as is not to be found in all the world! Now he alone shall have my love, my heart — my all!

## **Chapter 12.**

### **Ten Directions to get sincere Love to Christ, showing the way of Love to him.**

1. Clearly understand, and be thoroughly convinced of your lost estate, and miserable condition! Conviction, sight, and sense of sin, and of our lost estate thereby — usually go before the setting of the heart and love upon Jesus Christ. This is true, though God does not deal with all sinners, in all circumstances, alike, in working and begetting in them consent and love unto his Son. In divers people the

measure of conviction is different. Some God deals with more gently — and with some more roughly. Some he melts like wax — and some he hews like knotty wood. Some he carries by the gates of Hell, to the door of Heaven — and some he brings to Christ, and leads to Heaven with lesser terrors.

To gain your love to Christ, he expressly threatens a damnation that is so great, that it cannot be fully expressed. God lets the sinner know, that he must love Christ supremely — or be damned eternally. He lets in such light into the mind, that the soul sees there is no way to escape the darkness of Hell — than by consenting to love Christ, who came from Heaven.

Christ presses hard upon the conscience of the sinner, whom he woos for his love, saying, "Poor sinner! Do you mean to be damned — rather than to have me for your Savior? Do you mean to go to Hell with your lusts — than to Heaven with me? What will you do? Shall I have your love — or not? Will you at last consent — or will you still refuse? I tell you plainly, if I and you part — Hell and you must meet! I have been wooing long, and waiting long — but now it is come to a closing point, and it is time for you to come to a resolution. This is the case: Deny my suit — and God will damn your soul! If you do not listen to me — you shall howl in Hell. If I leave you — then God will leave you, and mercy will leave you — and all misery will come upon you. Poor sinner! Consider the outcome of your final refusal of me, and of denying your love to me!"

A. If you do not sincerely love Christ — you will be cast into PAINS of greatest extremity! And how will you bear it? If God does but touch you with his finger — you sigh and sob, you cry and roar, and cannot rest. O how will you rest, when God shall lay on blows with his almighty arm? If pain in your head, or sickness at your heart, or

gnawings in your stomach, make you cry out like a distracted man — then what will you do to bear the wrath of God in a place prepared on purpose to show his indignation against Christ-refusing sinners? When the sorest affliction in this life is but as the pricking of a pin compared to the piercing of a sword — if compared to the torments of the damned?

B. If you do not sincerely love Christ — you will be joined to MISERY for an endless eternity! And had you rather bear pains, extreme and eternal too — than love me, who would deliver you from them? Does not a small affliction make one day or night seem long — and much more if it is heavy? Then in the night you ask: "Is it not yet day?" You count the clock, you number the hours, and think that time passes slowly on. "Would it were but break of day — that I might rise!" But all the time between the creation and the dissolution of the world — is but a moment to eternity; where there is no striking of clocks, no counting of hours, no returns of night and day — but always night, and never day; never shall be break of day.

A million years shall pass — and never the less to come. Nay, nothing past, and nothing to come — and yet more to come than is already past; an everlasting today! Now there is hope — and yet you will not give me your love and heart. Then there will be no hope — and that will ever break your heart! Besides,

C. If you do not sincerely love Christ — you will be joined to UNIVERSAL misery for an endless eternity! Misery all over — and no part free! Here, if you are pained in your head — then your heart may not be sick. Or you may be pained in several parts — yet not in all. But then you will be tormented all over!

Your understanding will torment you, when you shall know the God, the Heaven, the happiness you have lost — and all for lack of love to

Christ. You shall clearly understand the eternal misery which you have found.

Your memory will increase the vexation of your heart, in calling to mind your opportunities upon earth, how mercy entreated you, how grace wooed you, how God called, how the Spirit strived, and patience long waited for your love — and yet you would not love Christ.

Your conscience will sting and gnaw you saying, "Did not I tell you this would be the end of your refusals? Did not I forewarn you? Did not I say it would be your wisest, only way, to hearken to Christ, and to set your love upon him? But you would not — you did not hearken to my voice, nor to the voice of Christ entreating of you for your love!"

At the resurrection, your body will be the sharer of punishment with your soul — and all your senses will be tormented with afflicting objects:

your ears will be tormented in hearing doleful lamentations;

your eyes will be tormented in seeing a cursed crew of damned creatures;

your smell will be tormented with the stench of burning brimstone;

your taste will be tormented in continual drinking of the cup of wrath, full of dregs, without any mixture of mercy;

your touch will be tormented in feeling the fire burning, but never consuming you!

It was a wonder to Moses, that the bush burned — and was not consumed. And these brambles shall burn in Hell, and not be consumed, which will be a greater wonder.

"Now tell me, poor sinner!" says Christ, "What is your answer? Had you rather endure all this — than love me? Had you rather love the world and your present pleasures — and hereafter lie in these extreme, eternal, and universal pains — than love me, and be delivered from them? One of these must be — be wise therefore in your choice."

As Christ takes this course to gain your love — so you must join in with Christ by serious consideration for your own conviction, that you may give your love to him. Urge yourself, and work it on your heart — that you are under the curse and threatenings of God, which are true, terrible, intolerable, and eternal! You are the man who are threatened by God with the sorest punishments, plagues, and judgments in the life to come! You are the man whom both law and gospel will condemn, if you finally deny your love to Christ. Think seriously with yourself, that you are under the wrath of God . . .

which is great wrath, Jeremiah 21.5;

whole treasures of it, Romans 2.5;

abiding wrath, John 3:36;

tearing and destroying wrath, Amos 1.11; Psalm 50.22; Ezekiel 43.8;

intolerable wrath, Nahum 1.6;

the wrath to come — ever coming, Matthew 3:7;

and eternal wrath, Revelation 14.10, 11.

Endeavor to get your heart affected, that while you do not love Christ — you have . . .

no title to Heaven,

no real hope of Heaven,

no promise of Heaven,

no pledge, no plea, no interest, no warrant to expect Heaven!

Remember that Hell is your due — and eternal torments are your desert! Hell is appointed for your lodging — your eternal dwelling place. The place is prepared, the fire is kindled, devils are waiting, and all Hell is anxious to meet you at your coming there! Oh think what Hell really is — and that you are every moment in danger going there forever! It is a hot, long, large, dark, deep, a restless, and remediless Hell. When you have got a sight and sense of your sin, and that you are lost in yourself — then,

2. Consider that there is no help for you in any mere creature among all the creation of God. None such can . . .  
prevent your damnation,  
or set you in God's favor,  
or bring you to his kingdom.

If you look upwards — angels neither can nor will help you.

If you look downwards — devils neither can nor will help you.

If you look round about you — all creatures say: "There is no help in us, for wrath must be pacified, and that cannot be until justice is satisfied. And how shall any mere finite creature satisfy infinite offended justice?"

Tears, prayers, reformation, cannot satisfy God, so that as all other creatures cannot give relief to you — so you yourself can not help yourself! Then,

3. By serious thoughts dwell upon your own mortality, and on the consideration of judgment, Heaven, and Hell. Ponder upon the certainty and the nearness of approaching death! You might die this year! You might die this week, this day, this hour! Say, "Oh what will become of me then? Where shall I be then? What shall I do then?"

Nay, what shall I suffer then? I am under the curse — and death at my back! God is angry with me — and death is at my heels! I have no title to Heaven, no reason to hope for it — and yet I do not know how soon death might come to me! I am in danger of Hell — and might drop into it any day in the week, any hour in the day! Oh, woeful case that I am in! Wrath is over my head — and Hell is under my feet! Wrath is ready to fall upon me — and I am in danger of falling into Hell! I never thought that my heart, for lack of love to Christ, was so bad! I never thought that my danger was so great, my soul was so black — and myself was so near to Hell torments! Woe is me, that all my life I have loved loathsome sin! I have loved a monster — even sin, which is . . .

a provocation to the majesty of God,  
a contradiction to the will of God,  
an opposition to the nature of God,  
a rejection of the Son of God,  
a vexation to the Spirit of God,  
and damnation to my own soul!

Surely this love was blind.

Oh! Will God bear such slightings of his Son?

Will God bear such abusings of his grace?

Will God bear such despising of his mercy?

Woe is me! Can I be saved without a Savior? Oh, what shall I do? Where can I obtain help? By whom may I be saved? Oh, in this distress that I am in, if I could but hear of one who could, and would, relieve and save me — of one who could take off the curse, and make me blessed — of one who could turn away God's wrath, and reconcile

me to him — of one who would save me from Hell, and bring me to Heaven — then . . ."

What then, distressed soul? "Oh then, I would love Christ. Yes, I would love him with all my heart, with all my soul. Love him! Did I know such a one, his very name would be precious unto my soul — it would be engraved on my heart, and I could never love such a one enough!"

Say you so, sinner? I will tell you that there is one, and but one, who can, and who is full, and fit, and free, to help you, and to save and support you, in this distress that you are in.

"O good sir, what is his name — that I may apply myself unto him, and place all my love upon him?"

His name is the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus Christ!

"O blessed Lord! O sweetest Jesus! O loving lovely Christ! Lord Jesus Christ! Methinks the sound of his name is . . .

melody to my ears,

honey to my taste,

light unto my eyes,

a sweet perfume of precious ointment,

balm to my wounded conscience,

a reviving cordial to my sinking spirit, to my fainting soul!

I love to have his name in my mouth, and upon my tongue. The Lord Jesus Christ will help me — the Lord Jesus Christ will save me — if I love him; if I love him who is Lord, and Jesus, and Christ. Oh, if the very hearing of his name has given me this hope — then gladly I would know more of him. For surely the more I know of him — the

more my love will be set upon him. O that some would tell me more what he is, and what I may do that I may love him!"

4. Get the knowledge of Christ, what he is, and what he will be to you — and dwell on those thoughts, until you find your heart to glow, to burn, to flame in love to him! And to this purpose consider,

1. His name, Lord, Jesus, and Christ.
2. His relation to God — yet given for man.
3. His own excellencies — and undertaking for you.
4. His affection — and what he will be to you.
5. His benefits that he will confer upon you.

1. The consideration of his name has much in it to attract and draw your love! For he is,

(1.) Lord. Even Lord of lords, and King of kings, the blessed and only potentate! 1 Timothy 6.15. He is Lord by virtue of creation — he gave you your being, brought you out of nothing, and made you a man. He gave you understanding, will, and affections. Now will you love your father and your mother — and not love your Maker? He is Lord by right of redemption; when you were in your sin worse than nothing, in bondage to Satan and sin — he bought you with his own blood, Acts 20.28, by giving his soul for yours, Isaiah 53.10, his life for yours, Matthew 20.28, himself for you, 1 Timothy 2.6.

Let the thought, how dearly he paid for your good — draw your love to him.

He is Lord by universal jurisdiction, given by the Father: "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth!" Matthew 28.18. "The

Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son. And has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man!" John 5.22, 27. "As you have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him," John 17.2. "For this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived — that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," Romans 14.9.

Behold, there is no Lord like this, who has power to judge and execute, to condemn and save. This should beget both fear and love to him.

(2.) Jesus. A gracious name, a Savior. "You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins," Matthew 1.21. His very name tells you what you might expect by him. Jesus!

Jesus! It is a glorious name: "Therefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name — that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," Philippians 2.9, 10 — all be subject unto him.

Jesus! It is a precious name! Song of Songs 1.3. This name is a sweet perfume, more than all precious ointments.

Jesus! a miraculous name. In this name . . .  
the lame have been made to walk,  
the blind have been made to see,  
the deaf have been made to hear,  
the guilty are justified,  
the polluted are cleansed,  
the aliens are reconciled,  
and sinners are saved!

(3.) Christ — Anointed. "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows!" Psalm 45.7. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings," Isaiah 61.1. If he has

been anointed to be a Savior to lost sinners — then should not this be an attractive of your love?

2. To gain your love to Christ, consider him in his relation to the Father, who yet gave him for you. All beings have some relation to God, but none are nearer to him than Christ, who is God's own Son, and that in a sense beyond all angels who are the sons of God by creation, Job 38.7; and believers, who are the sons of God by adoption, John 1.12; Galatians 3.26.

But Christ is the son of God by eternal generation, Psalm 2.7. Christ, God's only begotten Son. God had but one only begotten Son — and yet this only begotten Son was given for you!

Oh, where is your love? Is not this enough to kindle it in your hearts? Christ was God's dear Son, his very darling, his daily delight, Proverbs 8.30, the Son of his love, Colossians 1.13. And shall he not be the object of your highest love? Behold, the Son of his love was given — and came for the children of wrath. And is not he to be beloved on that account, and for that very reason?

Do men love the sons of princes — and will not you love the Son of God? Do you love your own children, your own sons and daughters — and will you not love the Son of God? He did not say, "Father, since I am your Son — why should I suffer and die for your enemies? Father, I am your only Son, and you have not another in Heaven or earth as I am — why then should I be crowned with thorns, that sinners might have a crown of glory?"

But this only Son died for rebels. The Son of God's bosom, lay in the bosom of the earth. Dear Savior! You are worthy of every man's bosom-love.

3. To attract and draw your love — consider how wonderful Christ is in himself, and in his undertakings for you, and then love him with wonderful love! If you then will not love him — it would be most astonishing. "His name shall be called Wonderful," Isaiah 9.6.

(1.) Christ is wonderful in his conception and BIRTH. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel — God with us!" Isaiah 7.14. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; therefore also that holy One who shall be born of you, shall be called the Son of God!" Luke 1.35. Behold, Mary a mother — and yet a virgin. Wonderful! Mary who bore Jesus was a sinner — and yet Jesus born of her was without sin or spot. All this is wonderful!

(2.) Christ is wonderful in his PERSON. He was fully man — and yet he was fully God. He was God — and yet he was man! 1 Timothy 3.16. This is wonderful!

(3.) Christ is wonderful in his WORKS and operations. He healed the sick without medicines!

He opened the eyes of a man born blind!

He cast out devils with a word!

He calmed the raging sea!

All this is wonderful!

(4.) Christ is wonderful in his DEATH and SUFFERINGS. "And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life!" Matthew 27.50-52. And before, verse 45. "From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour." All this is wonderful!

(5.) Christ is wonderful in his RESURRECTION. John 10.18. The dead were raised by him, and he being dead was raised by himself. All this is wonderful!

(6.) Christ is wonderful in his ASCENSION. Acts 1.9-11. The disciples stood gazing and looking and wondering at his going up to Heaven.

Now, this wonderful Jesus was . . .  
born in such a wonderful manner,  
lived doing wonders,  
died with wonders,  
rose by a wonder, and  
wonderfully ascended into glory — and all this for the sake and  
salvation of lost sinners!

If you will not love him — then will it not be the wonder of angels, of devils, and all the creation of God? Might not angels wonder at you, and devils wonder at you, and the saints at his coming wonder at you? Behold, so many of you as will not love this wonderful Jesus — you shall be the wonder of world at the last day!

(7.) Nay — yet more! He was the Ancient of Days from all eternity — and yet he became a babe for you! John 8.58 and 17.5, Proverbs 8.22,

(8.) He was clothed with majesty — and yet for your sakes subjected himself to greatest ignominy! Hebrews 1.3, Isaiah 1.6.

(9.) He was eminent for beauty above all men — and yet for you his countenance was marred more than any man's! Psalm 45.2, Isaiah 52.14.

(10.) He was mighty in power! By his word he . . .  
commanded devils,  
stilled the sea,  
supported the world —  
yet for sinners he died like a weak man.

(11.) He was perfect in holiness, without spot or deceit — and yet standing in your place, he was greatly accused of blasphemy.

(12.) He was full of wisdom — yet he was derided and laughed to scorn for you. Colossians 2.3.

(13.) He is Judge of all the world — and yet for you he was condemned at the bar of men, to take away your sins, and, if you would love him, to prevent your being condemned at the bar of God.

All this is most wonderful — and yet that such a wonderful person so wonderfully condescended, and after all this should not be beloved by you — will be and is an astonishing shame.

4. To draw your love to Christ, consider what he will be to you — for relation produces affection. The love of Christ to you — should beget love in you to Christ. What will he be to you — if you will love him supremely?

He will be your Bridegroom and your Husband — the richest match that can be offered or motioned to you!

He will be your Shepherd, and gather your soul to his fold, and save you from the destroying wolf!

He will be your Redeemer — by price to buy you out of the hands of revenging justice, and by power to rescue you out of the jaws of the roaring lion!

He will be your Priest and Substitute — to pay your sin-debt, and reconcile you to God!

He will be your Advocate to plead your cause against Satan your accuser, and will continually appear before the Father for you! 1 John 2.1.

He will be your King and Captain — to conquer your enemies, and trample them under his feet!

Is there nothing in all these relations to gain your love, to woo and win your heart to this blessed Jesus? How can you deny him? Can you go out of this place this day, and not give him your love? O say, "This is he whom I will love!"

5. Moreover, let this powerfully draw your love to Christ — what BENEFITS you may have by him, in respect of deliverance from evil. He would then deliver you . . .

from the guilt and power of sin, Matthew 1.21;

from the tyranny of Satan, Luke 11.22; Hebrews 2:14;

from the curse of the law, Galatians 4:4;

from the wrath to come, 1 Thessalonians 1.10. Romans 5.10; and

from the sting of death and damnation of Hell! 1 Corinthians 15.54-56.

In respect of the acquisition of good — he will . . .  
reconcile you to God,  
bring you into the adoption of children,  
purge your heart,  
justify your person,  
procure audience of your prayers,  
stand by you at death,  
and save you forever!

Now poor sinner! What do you think of this Lord Jesus Christ — who makes a motion for your affection? Tell me, as before God — would not your love be better bestowed upon this Christ, than upon the world and sin? You dare not say otherwise with your mouth. O say so also sincerely in your heart, and give it him as you say — and I have my end of preaching this lovely Jesus to you, and Christ will have the end of his dying for you, and you will have that good by hearing, which was not in your heart to aim at when you came within these doors.

You came here as a hater of Christ — but you can go away as a lover of Christ! You came here with a heart cleaving in love to the world and sin — but you can return with the love of sin turned out, and with the love of Christ entered into your heart. This will make you say, "Oh blessed change! How much is this new love to Christ — better than my old to sin and the world! Oh blessed word, that it ever sounded in my ears — and God brought it to my heart! Oh blessed day! The day of days! The best day I ever had! This day shall be recorded by me, for this day Christ and I were eternally united in love! Some come to a sermon, and by their wandering eyes and roving hearts fall in love with a creature. But I came, I confess I know not why nor how — and God has been in mercy pleased to change my

heart and love, which is the best change I ever made — for this is the sweetest love I ever found!"

But it may be that this is not yet the happy case of some others; therefore to such I add,

5. When you have got this knowledge of Christ — willingly entertain him, and heartily receive him as offered in the gospel, and resign yourself to him. And when he possesses you, and you possess him — love will arise in your heart to him. Faith is the root — and love is the flower that grows upon it. Faith thus implanted, will quickly work by love, Galatians 5.6. When by faith he is your Christ, and your Lord and Savior — he will certainly be the beloved of your soul.

The foundation of love is laid in the relation to the person who is the object of love. You love that which is your own, because it is your own — your children, your wife, your husband, above all others. And you will love Christ, when once by faith he is your own, "I am my beloved's — and my beloved is mine!" Song of Songs 2:16. Then all other things, which now are highly valued by you, will be accounted as dross: "Yes, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord!" Philippians 3:8.

6. Pray much to God to work this love in your hearts to Christ. It is the fruit of the Spirit, and wrought by him. It is your duty — but it is God's gift. It is by your act — but it is God's work: "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ," Ephesians 6.23. Not only peace is from God, who is the God of peace, and faith from him the worker of it — but love is from God, who is the God of love. Love to Christ must be had from God and Christ — or you will never have it. For this the apostle prayed for others: "May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and

into the steadfastness of Christ," 2 Thessalonians 3.5. And you may be the more encouraged to ask for this, because such a petition is pleasing to God — that you beg for a heart to love his Son, rather than for riches, and honors, and length of life in this world, as in that of Solomon's, in asking for wisdom! 1 Kings 3.9, 10. And in your praying be earnest for love to Christ, more than for your life. For love to him will be unto you everlasting life. Take that promise and turn it into a prayer, and then most likely to be effectual: "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live!" Deuteronomy 30.6.

7. Improve the principle of self-love to the promoting of love to Jesus Christ. Say, Do not I love myself? Have I not so much love to my own soul, as to wish it well forever? Would I have myself miserable and accursed forever? If I am sick — do not I love myself so far as to desire health? If I am in pain — do not I love myself so far as to desire ease? If I am in poverty — do not I love myself so far as to seek supply? And is there any way for me to procure good, everlasting good — but by Jesus Christ?

I might love myself, to please myself in sinful delights, to destroy myself, and damn myself — without loving Christ. But such self-love at last will prove self-hatred; and is that the best love I have for myself? Surely, if I do not love Christ, I hate myself!

8. Make use of the sense of natural and friendly love, to raise in you love to Jesus Christ.

You have some experience of the sweetness and delight there is in loving a friend — Oh then, what will be the delight of love to Christ! You feel what it is to love your parents, to love your children, your wife, your husband — if you meet with troubles, love makes them

light. Is there so much sweetness in the love of a creature — and will there not be much more in the love of the Savior? If the streams are so sweet — then is not the fountain much more? I have found comfort and pleasure in the love of relations — I will now try what is to be found in love to Christ the Lord.

9. Improve the vanity and vexation of the creature, and all your disappointments and afflictions — to raise and promote in you the love of Christ. You have let out your love upon the world — how has it proved? What has it afforded you? Have you not found it to be a wearisome empty world — a world of care, and grief and pain? You have looked for ease — and behold trouble! You have looked for contentment — and behold vexation! You have looked for satisfaction — and behold emptiness! Is this poor world to be loved more than Christ? Is not its sweetness, sour? Is not its mirth, sorrow? Is not its riches, poor? Oh then I must love Christ — or have nothing to love but vanity and deceit!

When this love is not wrought by the Word — God might effect it by the rod. When you are deaf to all instructions — God can open your ear and heart by some affliction, and shake you over the grave, if thereby he might shake the love of the world and sin out of your heart! By threatening you by sickness, that you shall be no longer room in the world — make room for the love of Christ in your heart. By threatening to separate your soul and body — he might part your soul and the love of sin. By some sickness he brings you to the brink of the grave — and bids you look where you must shortly lodge! Then he brings you to the borders of Hell — and bids you look where you must lie forever, if you will not hearken to his Son. He lays you on your weary bed, and shows you a sight of the eternal world, and your nearness to it — and threatens a divorce of soul and body, that you

may be willing that your sin might be divorced from your soul, that your soul might love and be married to his Son!

Many have had such good experience, that they can say, "This was healthful sickness to me! The view of death — was the means of love and life!

If I had not been sick in body — I would not have been well in soul!

If God had not shown me death — I would never have seen life.

If I had not been filled with these fears — I would have passed my days without hope!

If I had not been brought into these straits — I would never have been set at liberty!

If I had not been poor — I would never have been rich.

If I had not been empty — I would never have been filled.

If I had not been driven to feed on husks — I would never have been feasted in my Father's house!

If I had not found bitterness in the love of the creature — I would never have never tasted the sweetness of the love of Christ!"

10. Improve all the mercies you receive from God — and look upon them as love-tokens sent to gain your love. Love-tokens often take our love — and such silent gifts are very rhetorical. The clothes upon your back, your food and drink, your bed, your health, your ease from pain — bespeak the love of your heart for Christ. By sin you have deserved that . . .

no food should be put into your mouth;

sleep should depart from your eyes;  
your bed should be filled with thorns;  
your body should be filled with diseases;  
your conscience should be filled with horror;  
your heart should be filled with fears;  
your soul should be filled with sorrows;  
your life should be filled with bitterness!

But Christ has bought good things for you by his blood, and has given them to you from his bounty. And by all these he pleads with you — that you would not deny your love to him, who is so kind to you. Nay, that . . .

your very being on God's earth,  
your breathing in his air,  
your body is above ground,  
your soul on this side of Hell,  
you are not silent among the dead,  
you are not crying out among the damned —  
all of this is a great love-token indeed!

For justice would have cut you down long ago! Sin, these twenty, forty, sixty years — has cried to Heaven that you may be sent to Hell. Devils have long desired the day of your death — hoping it will prove the day of your damnation!

But this has been Christ's love to you, to beg for you longer time, even time unto this day. But for how much longer he might ask on your behalf, is more than is known to you or me, or any man.

And is not the love of Christ, the cause of all this good to you? And should not your love to Christ, be the fruit and return of all this good from Christ to you? As the goodness and long-suffering of God should lead us to repentance for sin — so also to love unto his Son.

Does not the kindness of one man shown to another — beget love from him who receives it, to him who confers it? And shall not the kindness God for Christ's sake shown to you, far surpassing the kindness of men — allure and draw your love to him?

Do you ask, "What shall I return to Christ, who died to satisfy God's justice, to make salvation possible to me?" I answer, "Love!" And what, for the offers of mercy, and the offers of grace — made to me? I answer, "Love!" And what must I return for his patient bearing with me, that I am not dead and damned? I answer, "Love, love, love!" And what must I return to Christ for my hopes of Heaven, or eternal happiness? Or if I have not well-grounded actual hope, that yet I am not past hope — but live in hope, that by the use of means I may have a living hope of an incorruptible crown? I answer still, "Love! — sincere love, sincere and hearty love!" So love — and then hope. Love strongly — and then your hope will be lively. Love him thus — and then in the next and last use, I will tell you what comfort and joy this love may bring into your heart.

## **Chapter 13.**

### **Ten Springs of Spiritual Comfort flowing into the Hearts of the Lovers of Christ.**

Do you love the Lord Jesus? Then you are a blessed soul!

Do you love Christ? Then you are a happy man!

Do you love him who is Lord, and Jesus, and Christ? Then rejoice in your love. For great is the difference between . . .  
the lovers of pleasures — and the lovers of Christ;

the lovers of the world — and the lovers of Christ;  
the lovers of sin — and the lovers of Christ.

The lovers of pleasure shall be filled with pain — when their pleasures are gone! But not so to the lovers of Christ — for their eternal love to Christ will be eternal pleasure to them.

The lovers of the world shall lose all that they love! Though they do not love to lose — yet they shall certainly lose all they love! But not so to the lovers of Christ — for they love and long to see him; and in seeing him forever, shall have and love him forever.

The lovers of sin shall be condemned for their love — and must go to their lodgings in Hell, where love is forever a stranger! But not so to the lovers of Christ — they shall be taken up to their mansions in Heaven, and shall dwell in light, and life, and love forever — where love shall shine and sparkle in light and life for evermore.

Now we believe, but do not see Christ — for we walk by faith, and not by sight. Though we have not seen him — yet believing, we love him! Believing and loving without seeing — brings rejoicing, unspeakable and full of glory. Oh, what will that joy then be, when believing shall be turned into seeing; when we shall not believe and love — but see and love! That joy which now proceeds from believing and loving is unspeakable — but that joy which shall flow from seeing and loving is inconceivable: "Whom having not seen you love, in whom, though now you see him not — yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!" 1 Peter 1.8.

I promised to show you the comfort, the blessings and the joy, which love to Christ will bring unto you. But I confess plainly that I am perplexed. It is above my shallow understanding!

Here is a depth which I cannot sound it!

Here is a height which I cannot reach it!

Here is a length and breadth which I cannot compass.

As in the love of Christ unto the believing soul — so in the love and joy that proceeds from the love of the believing soul to Christ; the one is without measure — and the other is above measure. How shall I speak that which is unspeakable? How shall I utter that which is unutterable? Will you excuse me then, if I do not accomplish what I did purpose to do? And will you loose me from my promise, when what I promised, I find, upon the attempt of performance — it is above my power? Or will you hold me to do, because I promised, what I am not able?

If so, will you pardon my weakness, wherein I shall come short, if I tell you a way whereby you yourselves shall be able to supply my defect? That is, "Do you so believe and love — that you might feel what I cannot speak; and find that by experience — that which cannot be uttered by expressions; and taste that in yourselves — which I cannot declare with my tongue.

The tongue is the instrument of taste, as well as of speech; and if you would know the sweetness of honey, you might do it better with the tasting of your own tongue than by the telling of mine. But yet, that you may see my will to attempt where I lack power — I will not be altogether silent concerning these unspeakable things. For as we should labor to know the love of Christ to us, which surpasses knowledge, Ephesians 3.19 — so we may endeavor to declare things that are unspeakable! To speak things that are unspeakable is impossible; but to speak something of things unspeakable, (wherein I must acquiesce) — is feasible. Though I do not undertake to bring

you all things speakable concerning these unspeakable things — but these few things which follow:

1. Love to Christ is an evidence of the sincerity of your hearts, and of the truth of your conversion.

He who loves the world most — is a worldly man.

He who loves his pleasure most — is a voluptuous man.

And he who loves Christ with a supreme love — is a gracious, upright man! "The upright love you!" Song of Songs 1.4. Such love to the second Adam is not found in any man who is still growing upon the old stock of the first Adam. This love to Christ was not born with us — but wrought in us when we were born again. This new love only is in the new creature — love to Christ is an evidence of your saving interest in Christ. Such supreme love to the Lord Jesus — was never found in any heart which is only carnal. The proof therefore of this supreme affection — will be a demonstration of your spiritual renovation. Christ sifting Peter concerning his sincerity after his fall, when sifted by Satan — inquires after his love to him, John 21.15-17. Romans 8.28.

2. All the promises of the covenant of grace shall be made good to all those who sincerely love the Lord Jesus. These promises are so many, so great, so precious — and all are sure to the lovers of Christ. God in the covenant of grace, has promised that he will be your God — and all that is contained in that promise is unspeakable; for it is more, than that he will be your Friend, your Father, or your bountiful Benefactor. God has promised . . .

the pardon of all our sins,

that he will justify us,

that he take away the old heart, and give us a new one. He will take

away the hard and stony heart — and give us a soft and fleshy heart, that he will give us his Holy Spirit — to help, to quicken, to guide, to comfort us, that he will give us persevering grace, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts — that they shall not depart from me!" Jeremiah 32.40

If God neither turns away from his sincere people, nor they from God — then their perseverance is sure. All is secured by the promise of God. Now these promises concern the lovers of God and Christ, and to them shall be performed: "O Lord God of Heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and mercy for those who love him, and observe his commandments" Nehemiah 1.5.

There are promises to those who love God and Christ — and there are promises for the performance of those promises to such: "Know therefore, that the Lord your God, he is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy with those who love him, and keep his commandments!" Deuteronomy 7.9. He did, he does — but how long will he do so? "To a thousand generations!"

But what will he do to them that do hate him? What? Read and tremble, you who are haters of God and Christ! "He repays those who hate him to their face, to destroy them!" verse 10. He will not be slack to him who hates him — he will repay him to his face!

3. Supreme and sincere love to Christ, is an evidence of God's special and sincere love to you. How gladly would you know that God loves you — and Christ loves you! Then you say that you would not care, though all the wicked in the world should hate you!

If I knew that God loved me — it would . . .  
resolve my doubts,  
expel my fears,  
lighten my burdens,  
sweeten my mercies,  
make me cheerful under all crosses,  
be a cordial to me in sickness, and  
be life to me in the gates of death!

Can you prove you sincerely and supremely love Christ? Then I can prove that both God and Christ love you; for your love to God and Christ — is the fruit and effect of God's and Christ's love to you. God loved you first — or you had never have loved him at all. God loves us with a first love; never any went before God and Christ in love. We love with a following love. "We love him — because he first loved us!" 1 John 4:19.

And now what spiritual comfort — what heavenly joy — what ravishing delights — might a lover of Christ take in this, that Christ is a lover of him, because his love is such that is above all expression, and beyond all conception, and above all comparison! "May you have the power to understand, as all God's people should — how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is! May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully." Ephesians 3:18, 19.

The properties of Christ's love will make your joy to be abundant.

1. Christ loves his lovers with a FREE love. You had motives to love Christ — his beauty, his wisdom, his fullness. The necessity you had of him, the good you expected by him — were attractives of your love to him. But what was in you to move Christ to love you — when you were spiritually deformed, polluted, guilty, condemned, poor, full of

running sores, and wallowing in your blood? "And when I passed by you, and saw you polluted in your own blood — I said unto you, when you were in your blood, Live! Yes, I said unto you, when you were in your blood, Live!" "And when I passed by again, I saw that you were old enough for love. So I wrapped my cloak around you to cover your nakedness and declared my marriage vows. I made a covenant with you, says the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine!" Ezekiel 16:8

As he has mercy — because he will have mercy; so he loves — because he will love: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people — but because the Lord loved you!" Deuteronomy 7.7, 8.

2. Christ loves his lovers with a PURE love. The love of most people is selfish love — loving others for their own selfish ends. And, indeed, there was something of self in your loving Christ, that you might be pardoned by him, and justified, and saved by him. But what can Christ gain by loving you? What advantage redounds to him? What profit has he thereby?

3. Christ loves his lovers with an UNPARALLELED, MATCHLESS love. Great was the love of Jonathan and David, great is the love of tender parents to their children; but Christ's love is greater than all! "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends!" John 15.13.

4. Christ loves his lovers with a CONSTANT, ABIDING love — for it is eternal and unchangeable. The love of creatures is fickle and wavering love. It sometimes fades and fails while they live. It dies with them when they die. But the love of Christ is without end — he lives forever, and he will love forever! Neither our love to him, nor his love to us — dies when we die. After death we love him more than

ever, and he manifests his love to us more than ever: "I have loved you with an everlasting love!" Jeremiah 31.3.

4. Christ makes the hearts of his lovers — the seat and place of his special residence. Lovers love to dwell together — and Christ has prepared mansions for us that we might dwell with him hereafter. But Christ, through the greatness of his love, being impatient of so long absence until we come to be present with him in Heaven — makes our hearts a mansion for himself, that he might dwell with us on earth, until we are lodged with him in glory! "If a man loves me, he will keep my words — and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him!" John 14.23. Oh blessed change!

When you did not love Christ — then Satan, the world, and reigning sin, had their abode in you. These were the lodgers in your heart, and had the best room, and chief seat in your affections. While you were in the world, and not in Christ — the world was in you, and not Christ. While you were in your sin, your sin was in you, as lord and ruler. But now you have changed your love. You have changed not only the lodgers, but the governors and rulers of your heart — for now the Father has come, and the Son has come, and the Holy Spirit has come, and have taken up their abode in you. Will God dwell in hearts of clay? Yes, if love to him dwells there!

5. Christ will manifest himself unto his lovers! He will reveal his love, and that in the worst condition you can be in.

While you are in prosperity — many may manifest much love to you. But when you are afflicted, distressed, and stand most in need of their help and love — they will withhold their love from you!

But Christ, who dwells in the hearts of his lovers, is to them a bosom Friend — that he makes the time of their greatest troubles and distresses, to be the time of the discoveries and manifestations of his love! "In all their afflictions, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old," Isaiah 40.9.

And if he withdraws, and for a time conceals his love — it is to make them more earnest in seeking after him, and for fuller discoveries of his love to them afterwards, "All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves! I looked for him but did not find him. I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares; I will search for the one my heart loves. So I looked for him but did not find him. The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. "Have you seen the one my heart loves?" Song of Songs 3:1-3

6. All things shall work together for the good of those who love God, and Jesus Christ. Nothing shall befall them, but first or last shall further them in their way to Heaven, and tend to their advantage. Many things seem to be against you — but all shall work for you. If you are in prison for righteousness sake — then your heart shall be more enlarged. If you lose the things of the world — then your heart shall be the more set on the things of Heaven. If you are sick and weakly — it shall quicken you, and stir you up to make more haste to get ripe for Heaven. If you are poor in the world — it shall further your riches in grace. Whatever your cross is — it shall increase the weight of your crown! "We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8.28

7. Sincere love to Christ is a mighty help against apostasy. If a man is a professor — and a lover of the world; a professor — and a lover of

pleasure, of his own ease, and life, more than of Christ; when these come in danger, to keep them, he parts with Christ. But he who loves Christ above all, will part with all to cleave to Christ. Love to Christ has carried his people through great difficulties and dangers! Out of love to Christ — they have despised the allurements, and laughed at the affrightments of this world! They have gone through shame and reproach, endured stripes and imprisonments, bonds and bondage, and death itself! "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation — will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!" Romans 8:35-39

If any leave Christ — it is for lack of love to Christ; for so far as love prevails — we shall, in greatest troubles and sufferings for him — cleave unto him.

8. The lovers of Christ shall be always under his eye for good. He will be looking upon them, in order to the showing mercy unto them. He looks upon the lovers of the world and sin — with an eye of judgment and indignation. He looks and takes notice of their sinful love. He looks, and is angry with them for such love.

But he looks upon his lovers with an eye of compassion, to pity and to care for them: "Look upon me, and be merciful unto me, as you do unto those that love your name," Psalm 119.132. God does so — it is his way, his manner and custom of dealing so, with such as love him. It is not a strange thing to God, nor a thing that he does but now and then — but it is his daily custom to look upon his lovers, and show

them mercy: "The Lord preserves all those who love him — but the wicked (those who do not love him) will he destroy!" Psalm 145.20.

9. The lovers of Christ have great preparations made by God himself, for their happiness in the eternal world. For all the lovers of the world, and sin, and vanity — wrath and Hell are prepared! But for the lovers of Christ, such things are prepared as transcend . . .

the most refined mind to conceive,  
the most eloquent tongue to express,  
or the ablest pen to describe!

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined — what God has prepared for those who love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9.

1. The eye of man has seen admirable things, coasts of pearl, golden mines, stately monuments, kingly palaces, costly raiments — but never has eye seen such things as God has prepared for them that love him.

2. The ear has heard of more than the eye has seen. Many hear of the joys of Heaven, whose eyes shall never see them.

3. The mind of man can conceive more than the eye has seen, or the ear has heard. It can imagine . . .

all pebbles to be pearls,  
all the earth to be a silver heap,  
the sea to be liquid gold,  
the air transparent crystal,  
every candle to be a star!

And if all these were so, they would be but as . . .

a grain of sand, compared to a mountain,  
a beam of light, compared to the sun,

a drop, compared to the ocean,  
a grain, compared to a golden mine —  
when compared with the things that are prepared for such as love  
God and Christ! For those things are . . .  
so great — that they cannot be measured;  
so many — that they cannot be numbered;  
so precious — that they cannot be valued;  
so durable and lasting — that they will never be ended!

They exceed our faith! They are beyond our hope — and above our  
desires! They might be possessed hereafter — but they cannot be  
comprehended here, because . . .  
for sublimity — they are incomprehensible,  
for transcendence — they are inexplicable,  
for glory — they are unutterable,  
for sweetness — they are inconceivable,  
for sureness — they are unquestionable,  
for fullness — they are immeasurable,  
for firmness — they are unmovable,  
for lastingness — they are unchangeable!

(1.) For God has prepared and promised an eternal KINGDOM to  
those who love him! "Hearken, my beloved brethren, has not God  
chosen the poor of this world — to be rich in faith, and heirs of the  
kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?" James 2:5.  
A kingdom is the top of worldly honor! When those who love Christ  
shall be in Heaven — they shall be in their kingdom, far surpassing  
all other kingdoms, for it is the kingdom of God!

Other kingdoms are but the kingdoms of men — but theirs is the  
kingdom of Heaven! Other kingdoms are but the kingdoms of this  
world — but theirs is an everlasting kingdom! Other kingdoms in

their greatest flourishing — are near to withering, and that which lasts longest will have an end.

(2.) God has prepared a CROWN OF LIFE for his lovers! "Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised for those who love him!" James 1.12. It is a crown of glory! 1 Peter 5.4. It is a crown of righteousness! "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all who love his appearing!" 2 Timothy 4:8.

(3.) God has prepared an ETERNAL INHERITANCE for his lovers! All Christ-lovers are heirs, and their inheritance is incorruptible and everlasting! There is no end of it — and they shall live to enjoy it for ever. It is undefiled — there is no spot nor stain in it — there is no sin nor sorrow, no grief nor groans, no troubles nor terrors, to molest and disquiet them. It is unfading — it is always in the flower — it always blossoms. There is summer, without winter; spring, without autumn. It is safe in itself, it is reserved in a sure hand, in God's own keeping. It is sure to us — we are kept by the power of God! The inheritance is reserved for us! We are preserved by God, that no force nor fraud shall make his sincere lovers come short of it!

The place where an inheritance lies, adds to the valuation of it — it is in Heaven! There is no place like Heaven, and there is no inheritance like that which lies in Heaven.

(4.) God has prepared glory for the lovers of his Son! Glory which now is a mystery — and is to be revealed, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us!" Romans 8:18.

It is eternal glory! 1 Peter 5:10.

It is an eternal weight of glory! 2 Corinthians 4:13.

10. The grace of God shall be with the sincere lovers of Christ. Grace signifies sometimes the favor of God — and sometimes the good things which proceed from his grace and favor; so that both the good-will and kindness of God, and all manner of good that is the fruit of God's special favor, necessary to the life of grace and glory — shall be to the lovers of Christ: "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." Ephesians 6.24.

## **Chapter 14.**

### **The CONCLUSION.**

And now, beloved hearers — what is the outcome of all that I have said, and you have heard, upon this subject? Have I gained any of your love to Christ? Or are you still in love with the world — and the pleasures, and profits, and honors thereof? Are you in love with sin and self more than with Christ — after all the arguments and pleadings of grace and mercy for your hearts? Did you love sin — and will you love it still? Did you love the world — and will you do so still? Did you not love Christ — and do you not yet, and will you not?

Is this the answer I must return to him who sent me? "Lord, I cannot gain their love unto your Son. Gladly I would — but I cannot. I have begged them in your name — but they will not come. I have studied for this purpose, and prayed and preached for this purpose — but I have studied in vain, and my labor with so many is lost labor. I have delivered my message — but they will not hearken. I have entreated for their love for your Son — but many will not consent."

Why, sirs, did I find you full of love to self, and sin, and world — and after all, must I leave you so? I found you void of the love of Christ — and must I leave you so? Why then did I preach — and why did you hear? Did you come day after day resolved, say what I could — that you would do what you desired? Shall that blessed Jesus, who has been set forth before you — be still despised, and set down as worthless by you? Did I find the Anathema upon you — and must I leave it upon you, until Maranatha? What if God should say, "He who, after all these entreaties, calls, invitations, to love Christ, yet still loves the world — let him love the world! He who loves sin — let him love his sin! He who loves his pleasures — let him love what he will, since he will not be persuaded to love whom he should?"

Oh, dreadful curse! Oh, heavy wrath! Oh, sad presage of the curse which shall fall upon such souls when Christ shall come, and after that lie and abide upon them forever!

Speak therefore in your heart, sinner, and return your answer, for it may be that this may be to you the last time of asking: Will you give Christ your love — or will you not? Will you give him your sincere love — and not your pretended love? Will you consent and promise, before you stir out of this place — to love Christ more than all, beyond all, and above all? Or will you deny him such love, and keep it for, and place it still upon, your old beloved sinful objects?

What! Must I, to my sorrow and your woe — end as I began? I had hoped I might have bid you to rejoice in your new love, and matchless match, in your consenting to love and accept of this blessed Jesus for your Lord and husband! But if you will not, I must say what I would rather not say. Lord, I am reluctant to say it — but it is what you say, and I cannot alter it. Yet, if I must say it — let it be with a pained and a sorrowful heart; and as my mouth shall drop the

word — let my eye drop so many tears, while at your command I must pronounce, "If any man do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha!"

But must this be the sentence I must leave upon you all who, at the beginning of this text, had no love to Jesus Christ? What! Is there not one among you all, one who can say, "Before I loved my pleasures — but now I love Christ! I loved my sin — but now I love my Lord and Savior! My love is turned into another channel! I have found another object for my love! I would not for a thousand worlds have died before I had sincere love to Christ!"

Not only one, but many of you can say so — or else you have basely dissembled both with God and this congregation. Many of you who did not love the Lord Jesus Christ — now do. Or you have been wretched hypocrites, while you have been hearers of these sermons. For what did you mean by all those letters that you sent in, day after day, ten or twenty in a day, acknowledging your former sin, until now — in loving other things and not Christ? Why did you say that you never were convinced of the necessity of loving Christ before? I beseech you, why have so many of you, and so often, with such earnest requests, even for Jesus' sake, and as we had any love for your soul — desire me and the congregation to beg with importunity, that God would give you such a heart now, that you might love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, above all, with a superlative love, with a supreme love, with all your heart, and with all your soul — that you might not be Anathema when Maranatha? That you might not be accursed when the Lord shall come.

Were not these your own words? Did not the congregation hear them read? When I reviewed your letters at home, did not I find these words, and such like, whereby you expressed the former condition,

and the present desires, of your souls? Tell me then: Were you in good earnest, or did you jest with God and men, in desiring prayers that you might so love the Lord Jesus? If so, repent of your hypocrisy — lament your double-dealings — bitterly bewail such cursed dissemblings.

If you were in earnest, and your hearts as well as your hands guided your pens in writing such desires — and you have indeed changed your love; or rather, God has turned your love from sin unto his Son, from the world unto himself — then I shall have cause to bless God that I preached, and you heard, what was spoken of this subject! Then are you my joy, and crown, and rejoicing — both now and at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And to you who have this love wrought in your hearts so lately, and to all the rest who had love to him before — I wish all the blessings that are contained in that prayer of the apostle, with which he concludes his epistle, and I this subject, "Grace be with all those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Amen." Ephesians 6.24.

### The Blessing to the Lovers of Christ

What more can I say? What more do you expect? The blessing? What! All of you? What! Whether you love Christ, or not? Alas! If God curses you — then how can I bless you? I have, day after day, set life and death, a blessing and a curse, before you. It must be with you according to your own choice. If you will be blessed indeed — you must love Christ. If you will not love Christ, the curse, and not a blessing, waits for you, though you here wait for the blessing.

If you would not go without the pronouncing of the blessing, from hence to your homes — then love Christ! O love Christ! O at last be

persuaded to love Christ, that you may not go from Christ's judgment — to the flames of Hell (without his blessing) forever.

I am done for this time and text, when I have said the words of my text, "If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ — let him be Anathema Maranatha!" And let all the people who dare, (lest they should wish a curse upon themselves,) say — Amen.

And for you who has set your hearts on Christ above all, I beg from the Father of mercies, that grace may "be with all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! Let all the people say — Amen.

## **Table of Contents**

[The Epistle to Non-lovers of Christ, Lamenting Their Sin and Misery.](#)

[The Introduction](#)

[The Explanation of Anathema, and Maranatha](#)

[A Division and Paraphrase of the Text](#)

[The Doctrine and Method](#)

[-- The nature, requisites, and the description of this Love to Christ](#)

[-- The Second Requisite of this Love.](#)

[-- The Third Requisite.](#)

-- The Fourth Requisite of this Love.

-- The Fifth Requisite of Love to Christ.

-- The Sixth Requisite of Love to Christ.

-- The Seventh Requisite of Love to Christ — the SINCERITY of it.

-- The Eighth Requisite in Love to Christ - This love chooses Christ for himself

-- The Ninth Requisite in Love to Christ - Sincere love to Jesus Christ respects him

-- The Tenth Requisite to Love to Christ — or the Worker of it.

-- The Eleventh Thing required in it - a resignation of a man's self to Christ

The Workings of this Love, as it is delighting, desiring, or mourning Love.

The Description of Love to Christ.

Ten Arguments that prove the Necessity of this love to Christ, for the avoiding of the Curse.

Ten Properties of the Curse upon Non-Lovers of Christ.

Eight reasons why Christ must be loved — or the sinner accursed.

The APPLICATION of the Doctrine.

Under the first use, we might learn these lessons — or deduce these ten corollaries

Twenty Aggravations of lack of Love to Christ.

Ten Questions, by way of conviction, that many, very many, have no sincere Love to Christ.

The Fourth Use is an attempt to gain Sinner's Consent to love Christ — a serious wish for good success.

Motives or Pleas, that Christ might have the Love of your Hearts.

Ten Directions to get sincere Love to Christ, showing the way of Love to him.

Ten Springs of Spiritual Comfort flowing into the Hearts of the Lovers of Christ

The Conclusion