
ROBBERY
COMMITTED

RESTITUTION
MADE

Ebenezer Erskine
(1680-1754)

ROBBERY COMMITTED – RESTITUTION MADE

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ROBBERY COMMITTED – RESTITUTION MADE

Ebenezer Erskine

“Then I restored that which I took not away.”—Psalm 69:4

IT is abundantly plain, that there are several passages in this psalm applied unto Christ in the Scriptures of the New Testament; particularly that in the 9th verse of the psalm, “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” We find it applied to Christ, John 2:17; and likewise that immediately following, “The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me,” Romans 15:3; so likewise in the 21st verse, “They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink,” applied to Christ, Matthew 27:48, and Mark 15:23. But I need go no further to prove this, than the first word of the verse where my text lies, “They hated me without cause,” Christ applies it to himself, in John 15:25. We find our Lord here, in the verse where my text lies, is complaining of his enemies; he complains of their causeless hatred in the first clause of the verse, “They hate me without a cause;” he complains of their multitude, “They are more than the hairs of mine head;” he complains of their implacable cruelty, “They that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty.” Now our blessed Lord is thus treated by the world, whom he came to save. When there is such a powerful combination of hell and earth against him, one would have been ready to think, that he would have stopped, and

gone no further; but he did not faint, nor was he discouraged, for all the opposition that was made against him; for you see, in the word I have read, what he was doing for lost sinners, when he was meeting with harsh entertainment from them. Then, even then, says he, I restored that which I took not away.

In which words you may notice these following particulars. 1. You have here a robbery disclaimed; a robbery was committed, but it is disclaimed by the Son of God; I took not away. There was something taken from God, and from man; by whom it is not said, but it is easy to say, that surely an enemy did it.

But then, 2. We have a restitution made of that robbery that was committed: I restored, saith Christ, I restored what I took not away. The work of man's redemption is a restitution both unto God and unto man of what was taken away by sin and by Satan. When once the work of redemption is completed, there will be a restitution of all things; for we read, Acts 3:21, of the "restitution of all things."

Again, 3. We have an account of the person restoring. Who made the restitution? It was I, saith the Lord; I restored what I took not away. I who speak in righteousness, and who am mighty to save, I the child born, and the son given to the sons of men, whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace"; I, even I restored what I took not away.

Again, 4. You have the voluntariness and frankness of the deed. No man is obliged to make restitution of what is taken away by another, unless he does it of his own accord. Well, says Christ, though I took it not away, yet I made restitution of the robbery and stealth that was committed; I engaged to do it in the council of peace, "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will," etc.

Again, 5. We have here the time when our glorious Immanuel made this restitution of what he took not away. It was, Then I restored what, etc., when his enemies were destroying him; when they were robbing him of his name, and robbing him of his very life, he restored what was taken away by robbery from men. You will see how low our blessed Lord descended to make this restitution, and when it was; it was, in the first verse, when the waters of God's wrath were coming into his soul, even then, says he, I restored that which I took not away. Now, from the words thus briefly opened, the doctrine that I take notice of is shortly this.

"That it was the great design of the Son of God, when he descended into a state of humiliation here, in this lower world, to make restitution both unto God and unto man, of what he never took away." For as there was a robbery committed upon God and upon man by sin and Satan; so our glorious Redeemer, makes a restitution of the stolen goods, he restores both to God what was his due, and unto man what he had lost.

Now, in the prosecution of this doctrine, if time and strength would allow, the method that I propose is,

I. To premise two or three things for clearing of the way.

II. To inquire into the stolen goods, what it was that was taken away both from God and man.

III. I would make it appear that our glorious Immanuel, makes restitution of what was taken away both from God and man; he restores unto God his due, and unto man his loss.

IV. I would shew when it was that our Lord did this; for it is said here, Then I restored.

V. I would give the reasons why Christ made this restitution, when he was under no manner of obligation to it, but his own free will, And then,

VI. Lastly, I would make some application of the whole.

I. Two or three things for clearing of the way

The first thing proposed is, to premise two or three things for clearing of the way. For clearing of it you would consider,

1. That when God made man, he made him a rich man; he bestowed all manner of goods upon him, that were necessary to make him live comfortably here, and to make him eternally happy hereafter.

2. You would consider, that Satan, by this time, having fallen, like a star, from heaven to earth, when he lighted upon this world, upon this earth, he presently saw man standing and acting in the capacity of God's viceroy, bearing his image, and having the whole creation in subjection to him. This filled the enemy with envy, and therefore he enters into a resolution, if it were possible, to commit a robbery upon man, and to strike at God's sovereignty through man's side and accordingly,

3. Satan prevailed upon our first parents, and beguiled them into an eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had discharged them to eat upon the pain of death; and thereby the pact betwixt God and man (I mean the covenant of works) was broken.

4. The covenant of works being broken, and man having entered into a rebellion against God with the devil, he justly forfeited all the spiritual and temporal goods that God bestowed upon him, and likewise lost

his title to a happy eternity, and became the enemy's vassal; and thus the enemy robbed him of all the goods that God bestowed upon him.

5. Lastly, The eternal Son of God having a delight in the sons of men, and beholding, them in this miserable plight, he enters upon a resolution that he will take on man's nature as a coat of mail, and that he will in man's nature be avenged upon that serpent that hath beguiled our first parents, and spoiled them of their patrimony. And accordingly, in the fullness of time, he comes, and is manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and to recover all the stolen goods; he spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them in his cross, and then divides a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong; and with a view to this, it is said in this text, Then I restored that which I took not away; And so I come to,

II. The robbery that was committed

The second thing I proposed, and that was, to inquire a little into the robbery that was committed by sin and Satan, both upon God and upon man.

And, first, To begin with the robbery that was committed upon God. It was the devil's great aim by tempting man to sin against God, to rob God of his glory. God made all things for his glory, and for his pleasure they are and were created. The whole earth, before sin entered into it, was full of his glory; and whenever Adam opened his eyes, and looked abroad through the creation, he saw the glory of God sparkling, as it were, in every creature he cast his eyes upon. Well, the enemy's design was to despoil and rob God of his glory. There is a question put, Malachi 3:8, "Will a man rob God?" will a creature adventure to rob his Creator? And yet this wickedness is perpetrated.

God is invaded, and his glory is in a great measure taken away, I mean his declarative glory, for it is impossible his essential glory can be invaded.

I will tell you of several things relative to the glory of God, which were attempted to be taken away, and quite obscured and sullied by the sin of man.

1. There was an attempt made to rob God of the glory of his sovereignty as the great Lord and Lawgiver of heaven and earth. Man, when he sinned against God, and broke the law in compliance with the motion of the enemy, what was the language of the deed? It was, "We ourselves are lords, and will come no more unto thee;" we will make our own will a law: "Let the Almighty depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of his way."

2. There was an attempt to rob him of the glory of his wisdom. The wisdom of God was impeached by the sin of man as a piece of folly, namely, in giving a law to man, that was not worthy to be observed. Sirs, depend upon it, every sin you are guilty of, charges God with folly, and exalts the will and wisdom of the creature, above the will and wisdom of God expressed in this holy law. And what a capital crime is it for poor men to charge God with foolishness!

3. By sin there is an attempt to rob him of the glory of his power, in regard the sinner gives a defiance to the Almighty, and, upon the matter, says, he is not able to revenge his quarrel on us, the arm of his power is withered. That is the language of sin. And then,

4. There is a robbery upon God's holiness, which is one of the most orient and bright pearls of his crown. When the holy law is violated and transgressed, the language of that action is, God is like ourselves, he approves of our ways. Again.

5. There was an attack upon his justice, and a denying his rectoral power and equity. God says, "The soul that sinneth shall die, that he will by no means acquit the guilty." Well, but the language of sin is, "God will not require it," or he may be pleased or pacified with this or the other petty atonement.

Not to insist: there was a despising of God's goodness. God gave man a great estate; he gave him the whole earth, and would have given him the heavens also, if he had continued in his integrity; but yet all that goodness of God was trampled under foot by the sin of man.

Also, there was a denial of the faithfulness of God in the threatening that was denounced against the sin of man, "In the day that thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die." But the language of sin is, God is not true to his word, he will not surely do it; said Satan, "Thou shalt not surely die." Thus you see there was an attempt made to rob God of the glory of all his perfections at once.

Secondly, Let us inquire a little into the goods that were stolen from man by sin and Satan. Here we may see a melancholy scene. The glory of the human nature was quite marred by sin. Man was made the top of the creation; but by sin he was brought below the very beasts that perish, so that, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but my people know not me, saith the Lord; and they do not consider" their obligations to me.

Sin, it robbed man of his light and sight. You know what befell Samson when he was taken captive by his enemies, they put out his eyes; and so when we fell into the enemies hands, they put out our eyes, and all mankind have been born blind since that time. Again, sin hath robbed us of our very life, and laid us among the congregation of the dead. All mankind are a

dead and putrefied company, “dead in trespasses and sins,” Ephesians 2:1. And then, sin hath robbed man of his liberty unto any thing that is spiritually good; and ever since we have become captives to the devil, the world, and our lusts.

Again, sin hath robbed us of our wisdom, and brought us to prefer folly to the wisdom of God. Every man by nature is playing the fool. Who but a fool would spend his money upon that which is not bread, and his labour upon that which profiteth not? Sin robbed us of our righteousness, and rendered us a company of guilty criminals before God, and brought us under the sentence of the broken law, condemned already, John 3:18. Sin robbed us of our beauty, of the beautiful image of God, consisting in holiness and conformity to the great Creator, and it hath brought the hue of hell upon all mankind, lying among the pots.

Again, sin has robbed us of our health. Man was a healthy creature both in soul and body before the entry of sin; but sin has robbed us of that, so that, “from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no sound part about us.” Sin has robbed us of our peace, and set us at war with God, with ourselves, with one another, and at war with the whole creation. Sin has robbed us of our beautiful ornaments that God put upon us at our creation, and stript us naked, as it is said of Laodicea, Revelation 3:18. Sin has robbed us of our treasure, insomuch that we are become beggars, poor, and naked. In short, sin has robbed us of our God, so that we are become “without God in the world.” There is a robbery for you that cannot be paralleled! You see what was taken away from God and man, by the sin of man. I might likewise tell you that sin robbed man of that paradise of pleasure in which God set him at his creation. No sooner had man sinned through the instigation of Satan, that old serpent, but

he was turned out of the garden of Eden, Genesis 3:24, and a flaming sword placed, that turned every way, to keep him from having access to the tree of life in the midst of the garden. Sin hath robbed us of heaven, and made us heirs of hell and wrath. In short, sin hath disordered and disjointed the whole creation. Whenever man sinned, there came such a load upon the earth, through the curse of God, that ever since the whole creation hath been crying in pain, seeking deliverance from that dead weight that hath been lying upon it. So that, I say, by the sin of man there is a robbery committed, there are goods stolen from God and man, and the good creatures of God.

III. Our glorious Immanuel makes a restitution

The third thing proposed was, to make it appear that our glorious Immanuel makes a restitution of what was taken away both from God and from man. He restores unto God his due, and restores unto man his loss.

And, 1. He makes restitution of glory to God, and that in the highest measure and degree, as was intimated by the angels, at the nativity of our Lord, Luke 2:14. The first note of the song of the angels is, "Glory to God in the highest," etc. It is just as if they had said, Glory hath been taken away from God, by the sin of the first Adam and his posterity; but now there is a higher revenue of glory to be brought in to the crown of heaven, than the whole creation in innocency could afford. Accordingly, our blessed Lord declares, when his work was finished, after he had gone through his course of humiliation, he comes to his Father, John 17:4, and he says, Now Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth." Observe the phraseology, for there is some-

thing remarkable in it, "I have glorified thee on the earth:" the earth was the theater of rebellion where God was affronted, his law violated, and his sovereignty contemned; but, he says, "I have glorified thee on the earth," where thou wast dishonoured. I ought to go through all the perfections of God, that were injured by the sin of man, and tell how Christ restores glory to every one of them.

He restores glory to the divine sovereignty, bowing his royal neck to take on the yoke of the law which we had broken. He was made of a woman, and made under the law, that he might magnify it, and so maintain the honour of the great Lawgiver. He restores glory likewise to the divine wisdom; for Christ himself, in his person and mediation, is just "the wisdom of God in a mystery," even his "hidden wisdom, the manifold wisdom of God." O Sirs! never were the treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge so much expended as in the person and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then, he restores glory likewise to the divine power; for Christ is "the power of God." And when he went forth to the great work of man's redemption, he went forth armed with infinite power to manage it; therefore he is called "the arm of God, and the man of God's right-hand, whom he hath made strong for the purposes of his glory." How gloriously was the power of God displayed, when he came from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength; spoiling principalities and powers, who had spoiled God in his glory, and man of all that was valuable unto him!

He restores glory to the holiness of God. This attribute, was injured by the sin of man, but its glory is restored by Christ; and there is such a brightness of divine holiness shines in the person and mediation of Christ, that when the Angels look upon him, Isaiah 6,

they are dazzled, they are overwhelmed, not being able to behold it, they cover themselves, and cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

And then, he restores glory to the divine justice; for in the work of man's redemption, justice gets a complete, and full satisfaction, till it cry, It is enough. And the justice of God manifested in the execution of the penalty of the law upon the Surety, is laid as the very foundation of the throne of grace, that we are called to come to for grace and mercy to help in the time of need, Psalm 89:14, "Justice and judgment are the habitation, or establishment, of thy throne," viz.—justice satisfied, and judgment executed upon the glorious Surety.

Again, he restores glory to the divine goodness. God was good to man, but man trampled it under foot: But Christ makes a higher display of the divine goodness than ever was seen by men or angels; for in his person, and mediation, and sufferings, the goodness of God breaks out like an ocean, in amazing streams of love, grace, and mercy. The love of God, O how does it shine in the giving his only begotten Son into the world! "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his own Son to be a propitiation for our sins." And then for grace, grace is made to "reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." And for mercy, it is "built up for ever." Thus I say, there is a restitution of glory to the divine goodness.

And likewise there is a restitution of glory to the divine faithfulness. The faithfulness of God engaged in the penalty, was trode upon by man and the devil; but the faithfulness of God is maintained in the execution of that penalty threatened against man in the person of our glorious Immanuel: and not only so, but the faith-

fulness of God comes to be established in the new covenant “in the very heavens:” for all the promises come to be “yea and amen in Christ, to the glory of God.” Thus you see, that Christ restores what he took not away from his Father; he restores “glory to God in the highest,” which he never took away.

2. Let us see next what restitution he makes to man; for man was robbed of all that was valuable to him, either for time or eternity.

First, The human nature was debased by sin, and sunk below the beasts that perish. Well, but the Son of God comes and takes the human nature into a personal union with himself, and thereby exalts the human nature above the angelical nature: Hebrews 2:16, “Verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” And, chapter 1:5, “Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?” And see what follows, “When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” Thus the glory of the human nature is restored and advanced to a far brighter pinnacle of glory and honour, than when it stood in the first Adam before his fall, adorned with all its embroideries, in a state of innocency. O Sirs, look up and see your nature exalted, taken out of the dunghill, and set on the throne of God. The throne of God is called “the throne of the Lamb,” because our nature is there in a personal union with the great God.

But this is not all: he not only restores the glory of the human nature; but, to all who believe in him, he restores to advantage all the losses we sustain, either by the sin of the First Adam, or our own personal transgression; as will appear by running over the particular losses mentioned upon the former head.

First, then, Did sin rob us of our sight and light, and leave us in darkness? Well, Christ makes a restitution of that; for he comes forth as the bright and morning star, to give light to the darkened world, which may make us all sing and say with Zacharias, Luke 1:78, "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us." Psalm 118:27-29 "God is the Lord, which hath showed us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."

Again, Hath sin robbed us of life, and left us among the congregation of the dead? Christ makes restitution of that; for he is "the resurrection and the life:" and having recovered life by his own death, John 14:19, He keeps it in his hand and heart, and binds up our life with his "Because I live, ye shall live also. Our life is hid with Christ in God."

Again, Did sin rob us of our liberty? Christ makes restitution of that; he buys our liberty at the hand of justice, and then takes the executioner and binds him, and spoils him of his power over the poor captive; and having purchased liberty, he goes forth and "proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening the prison-doors to them that are bound."

Again, Did Satan and sin spoil us of our wisdom, insomuch that ever since we are infatuated, and like fools, spend our money for that which is not bread, and our labour for that which cannot profit us? Well, Christ restores wisdom unto fools and babes; he is "made of God unto us wisdom" and when we are determined to come to him, he makes us wiser than our teachers; wise to know the mysteries of the kingdom that are hid from the wise and prudent of the world,

and revealed unto babes: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," etc.

And then again, Did sin spoil and rob us of our original righteousness? Christ makes restitution of that; for he himself is "the Lord our righteousness, and he was made sin for us, he who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Did sin spoil us of the beautiful image of God? Christ makes restitution of that; for that very moment that a poor sinner looks unto him with the eye of faith, he gets the print of the second Adam drawn again upon his soul, and it is by beholding his glory that we are changed into the same image.

Did Satan and sin rob us of, and take away our health? Well, Christ, comes to make restitution of that: for he is the Physician of value, and there is no disease so obstinate as is able to stand the virtue and healing power of this Physician; so that, if we perish with our diseases, we need not do it with that word in our mouth, "Is there no balm in Gilead, and no physician there?"

Did Satan spoil us of our peace? Well, Christ makes restitution of that: for "he is our peace." Peace on earth was one of the articles of the angels praise, "Peace on earth, and good will towards men." Sin robbed us of our peace with God. Christ restores that; for "God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Did sin rob us of our peace of conscience? Christ restores that; "Peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," etc.

Did sin kindle a fire of war and of strife betwixt man and man? Well, when Christ comes with the sceptre of his power, he makes them beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; he makes the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid.

Did sin rob us of our ornaments? Christ restores these, he makes the King's daughter all glorious within; he brings us a far better garment, even the garment of salvation, and a robe of righteousness to adorn us.

Did sin take away our riches and treasures? Christ opens up a far better treasure, even unsearchable riches; and he tells us, that "riches are with him, yea, durable riches and righteousness."

Did sin rob us of our God, and leave us without God in the World? Christ makes restitution of that; for what is Christ? He is Immanuel. And what is that? He is God with us. That may make our hearts rejoice indeed; our God is come back to us, and is saying, "I am the Lord thy God; I will be their God, and they shall be my people." It is God in Christ that speaks in such a dialect to poor sinners. Thus you see, that Christ restores to man, what he took not away from him. I might enlarge much on this subject.

Sin robbed us of our title and charter to eternal life; whenever the covenant of works was broken, our charter was done. But Christ restores a better charter. Even the covenant of grace; he himself is "given for a covenant to the people." and is the Alpha and Omega of the covenant; all the promises and blessings of it are "in him yea and amen." The covenant of works was a frail covenant, a slippery security; but the covenant of grace, and the charter granted unto us in Christ, it is a lasting charter: Isaiah 54:10. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee."

In short, Christ restores beauty and order again to the whole creation. Whenever man sinned, there fell such a dead weight upon the creation, that the whole

creation was like to crumble to its original chaos; but the thing that prevented it was, the Son of God bought this earth as a theater, on which his love to sinners might be displayed; therefore he will uphold the theater till the scene be acted; and when it is acted, he will commit it to the flames; there is a word to that purpose, Isaiah 49:8, "I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." The theater of this earth was giving way under the weight of the wrath of God; but Christ being given as a covenant of the people, he upholds the earth and all things by the word of his power, as it is, Hebrews 1:3.

Thus much for the third thing, which was, to let you see how Christ makes restitution of these good things which he never took away from God or from man.

IV. The time when Christ restored

The fourth thing proposed was, to inquire into the time when Christ did all this: when did he restore that which he took not away?

I shall not stay upon this; I pointed at it in the explication. I told you that it was in a state of humiliation that he made this restitution. I cannot stand to tell you of the several steps of his humiliation whereby he restored what he took not away. We have a summary description thereof, in that question of the Catechism, "Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?" The answer is, "In his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time." By these steps of his humiliation, he brought about the blessed project of re-

demption. Then was it that he restored what he took not away: Galatians 4:4,5, "In the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." But I do not stay upon this; I hasten forward.

V. The reasons of the doctrine

The fifth thing proposed was, to inquire a little into the reasons of the doctrine. Why was it that our Lord restored what he took not away? Why did he restore these goods that sin and Satan took away both from God and from man? In answer to this, I only suggest these few particulars.

1. Christ made this restitution, because it was his Father's pleasure that he should do it: he did always these things that pleased his Father: "No man taketh my life from me [saith he], but I lay it down of myself. This commandment have I received of my Father."

2. He restored what he took not away, because it contributes very much to enhance his mediatorial glory. Genesis 14, there you read of what Abraham did, he armed his men and went in quest of the five kings that had plundered Sodom; he pursues them, takes them captives, and recovers the spoil, and restores what not he, but the enemy, had taken away: and this was much for Abraham's honour. So it is to the immortal honour of our glorious Immanuel, that he pursued, and spoiled principalities and powers, who had robbed God and man; and then restores unto both what they, not he, had taken away. Upon this account, "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." etc.

3. Christ restored what he took not away, out of regard that he had to the holy law of God. The holy law

was violated, and the sovereignty of God in it was trod down: but Christ had a mind to maintain the dignity of the law, it being an emanation of the holiness of God, therefore he will restore a perfect obedience to the law, and bring in an everlasting righteousness that answers it to the full, that so a foundation may be thereby laid for our legal investiture in the privileges of children we had lost by sin.

4. Because his delights were with the sons of men. Sirs, Christ had a bride. And when he saw her in the devil's clutches, he arms himself with divine power, and rescues the bride: "He loved me, and gave himself for me." And then, Christ restores what he took not away, that so the glory of grace might be exalted in the salvation of lost sinners; and that none glory in themselves, but that they that glory may glory in the Lord. It is not we, but he only, that makes the restitution, and grace reigns to us through that restitution that he made.

5. And lastly, Christ restores what he took not away, that he might "still the enemy and the avenger," as the expression is, Psalm 8:2; "the enemy and the avenger," that is the devil. Sirs, when the devil robbed man, he thought the day was his own, and triumphed as if the world and the glory thereof were his own, and men led as captive prisoners. But Christ stills the enemy, he stills his boasting; for he spoils the spoilers, takes the prey from the mighty, and delivers the captives from the terrible.

VI. Application

The sixth thing proposed was the Application.

1. Is it so, as you have been hearing, that Christ restores what he took not away? Then, hence see, what a generous Kinsman we have of him; he never took

away any thing from us, and yet he restores all to the spoiling of his own soul, and pouring of it out unto death. O! how hath the kindness of God to men appeared! What reason have we to adore the achievements of our renowned Redeemer, who went forth conquering and to conquer!

2. This doctrine serves to let us see into the meaning of that word, Romans 8:3, "He condemned sin." Why, or how did he it? Why, sin is a robber, it committed a robbery on God and man; and is it not just that a robber should be condemned to die? Well, Christ condemns sin, and yet he saves the sinner: the sinner deserved to be condemned; but he manages the matter so dexterously that he kills sin, and preserves the sinner.

3. Hence see what a criminal correspondence it is that the generality of the children of men have with sin. It is dangerous to haunt and harbour robbers; and yet will you keep a robber in your bosom. Sin is a robber; and every time you sin, it is committing robbery upon God and your own souls; therefore do not harbour it. "Stand in awe, and sin not."

4. If sin be such a robber of God and man, then see how reasonable the command is, to crucify sin, and to mortify the deeds of the body, "Mortify the deeds of the body, crucify the flesh, with its affections and lust." Why crucify them? Why kill and destroy them? They are robbers. Therefore let us wage war against all manner of sin, whether within us or without us; let us "resist even unto blood, striving against sin," because sin is a robber and deprives us of all the good you are hearing of.

5. From this doctrine see what way Christ takes in order to carry on his mediatory work of making peace betwixt God and man. There was a robbery committed upon God and man; and unless there was a restitution to both parties, there could be no peace. Well, Christ

restores what he took not away; he restores glory to God, happiness to man; and so he carries on his mediatory work; for when both parties have restitution, then there is peace. Christ makes an end of sin, for he is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." And why takes he it away? It is, that so peace may be restored betwixt God and man, restitution being made to both.

6. From the doctrine we may likewise see, that the believer in Christ is the wisest man in the world, however the world may look upon him as a fool. Why? because he comes to Christ, and gets restitution of all the losses he suffered either by the sin of the first Adam or his own. No wonder he is a thriving man, because he gets his losses made up in Christ; for he comes, and out of his fullness receives grace for grace, and gets wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, from the Lord Jesus.

7. See the folly and madness of the sin of unbelief. The generality of the hearers of the gospel will not come to Christ to get restitution of what they lost by Adam and their own sin; John 5:40, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." O what folly is this! If you had lost any of your worldly goods at the last rebellion, how readily would you seek restitution if it were to be had? And yet such fools are the most part of sinners under the gospel, that though Christ counsels, calls, and beseeches them to come and get restitution of their God, of their life, and all losses, yet they will not hear, Psalm 81:11, "My people would not hearken to my voice," etc.

8. See the folly of the legalist, that goes about to make restitution to God, and to himself, of what was taken away by sin. The legalist, like the proud Pharisee, comes to God with his filthy rags, and thinks to please God with this and that obedience. But, O Sirs!

consider that “by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified;” you will never repair your own losses, nor the dishonour you have done to God, but only by coming to Christ, who is “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

I should next improve the doctrine by an use of Trial. Try whether you have ever come by faith to a second Adam, and found in him a reparation of your losses by the sin and apostasy of the first Adam. They who find Christ himself, they have found all, for “Christ is all, and in all. All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; for ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” They who find him, they find the goodly pearl, a treasure of unsearchable riches; and therefore cannot but reckon all their losses made up to wonderful advantage. And if so, whatever appeared gain to you formerly, will be esteemed loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, you will count all but dung and loss for Christ, that you may know him, win him, and be found in him. You will be dead to the law, and the works of it, being married to a better husband, whose name, is “The Lord our righteousness;” for “in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Again, if you have found reparation in Christ, you will wage a continual war with sin and Satan; you will resist the devil, resist even unto blood, striving against sin. These robbers, they never come but to spoil you of some good, whatever disguise they may appear in. And if you have received any love-tokens from the Lord on this occasion, you may lay your account with an attack; the pirates pursue and attack the ship with the richest cargo. Lastly, whenever the enemy has prevented and stripped you of your comforts, you will fly to Christ for restitution, saying, with David, “Restore

unto me the joy of thy salvation,” for he it is who restores what he took not away.

Exhortation

I close with a word of Exhortation.

Sirs, I have a proclamation to issue forth in the name of the Lord Immanuel. Be it known unto men, by these presents, That whereas two great robbers have entered into the world, namely, sin and Satan, and have stolen away all the valuable goods which once pertained to Adam and his family, whereby they are all reduced to the utmost poverty and misery; it has pleased God the Father, from the love he bears to mankind-sinners, to send his only begotten Son into the world, to repair all their losses, and to restore what he took not away. Accordingly, the eternal Son of God hath come into the world, and having armed himself with the human nature and divine power, he hath gone forth and pursued the robbers, and taken Satan captive, and bruised his head, and destroyed that destroyer of mankind; he hath finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and hath brought in a robe of righteousness, and hath recovered all the goods that the robbers had taken away, all the goods and gear men lost; hath recovered them with wonderful advantage; and the goods are all in his hand, and he hath sent out us, who are his ambassadors, to cause all mankind to see what losses they have sustained; and whoever have lost any thing, their God and their souls, heaven and happiness, he is willing to restore it to mankind, and that without any security; for he will do it without money and without price.

Come, and get your own again; for Christ hath received gifts for men, for the sons of men. O come, come, come, Sirs, and get from the glorious Restorer

what you have lost, what you stand in need of, through time and eternity! O come and get your life, your God, and your souls again for a prey!

Since the rebellion commenced, many a man has lost very much; some have lost their land, some their houses, some their legs, and some their arms, and many their lives. And now, if the Duke of Cumberland, the King's son, should issue forth a proclamation, to every man to come and get his losses repaired, in his father's name, I believe you would not be shy to put in your name, and tell that you have lost this and that. Well, the Son of the King of Heaven, the great Jehovah, he hath all his Father's treasures in his hand, and he hath sent us to tell you to come and get your losses repaired. O Sirs, what are men's temporal losses in comparison with their soul losses! "What is a man profited, though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Well, come and get your souls for a prey from the Son of God.

I might make use of many motives to persuade you. Pray you, consider only the goods you lost are in Christ's hand, and that they are in his hand that they may be restored again to you. He invites you to come, "Incline your ear, and come unto me." etc. He not only invites you, but counsels you, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire," that is, I counsel you to get your losses restored. He not only counsels you, but commands you, "This is his commandment, that ye believe in his Son," etc. He not only commands, but he promises; he gives all manner of security that your losses shall be made up, if you come to him for a reparation, Psalm 72:4, "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy." Come then, poor and needy sinner. He is grieved to the heart when sinners will not come and get their losses repaired; he was grieved when Jerusalem would not be

gathered as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. I will tell you, many a man have got their losses repaired; and innumerable company have got restitution from him, Revelation 7:9, "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Now, when others have come and got reparation, will not ye come and get reparation too?

O Sirs, consider what you are doing. Mind, there is no hope of reparation after death; but if you come for reparation, you must come now to the King's Son; therefore, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

Upon this last day of the feast, I cry to all mankind, if my voice could reach them, to come and get their losses repaired by the Son of God, who restores that which he took not away. Do not say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and stand in need of nothing;" for I can assure you, that he who is infinitely wise, and knows you better than you do yourselves, declares, that you are "poor, miserable, wretched, blind, and naked," through the robbery that sin hath committed.

You say, I cannot get time to come, because of worldly business. But let me tell you, that your worldly business is but mere trifles in comparison with this; therefore make all other business but by-business in comparison with this one thing needful. Another says, I will get time enough afterwards. I will tell you, delays are dangerous; what know you, man, what a day may bring forth? Death may come, and then you are gone for ever through eternity. Another says, I am afraid the time is gone already, and that he will not make a reparation of my losses. No, Sirs, I will tell you, that while

there is life there is hope, and the Son of God is at the back of your heart, crying, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: If any man [out of hell] hear my voice, and open to me, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

But O, you say, I fear my losses are irreparable. I will tell you, poor sinner, as broken a ship has come to land, as we use to say; as great sinners as you have got a reparation of their losses, and a full pardon to the boot. What think you of Manasseh, and Mary Magdalene, and Paul? The same hand that repaired their losses is ready to repair yours; "his hand is not shortened, that it cannot save," etc.

Another says, What if I be not among the number of the elect? I answer, You have nothing a-do with election; for "secret things belong unto the Lord, but that which is revealed unto us and our children." Election does not belong directly and immediately to the business of believing, but only things revealed: and if revealed things belong unto us, then put in your claim: for "the promise is to you and your seed."

You say, I am impotent, and cannot come. I answer, That was one of the losses Christ came to restore; "he gives strength to the weak, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." You say, My will is an iron sinew, it will not answer. Answer. He that restores that which he took not away, offers to restore your good hearts and your will, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ezekiel 36:26, "I will take away the heart of stone, and give the heart of flesh."

Another says, I would fain come to get my losses repaired, but I think when I come to him he will frown me away. Do not think so; for he says, "Whosoever will come to me I will in no wise cast out." When he frowns upon you, and calls you a dog, be as the Syrophenician

woman, do not give over, and you shall prevail. "Truth, Lord, I am a dog, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table;" the Lord repaired her losses, and granted her all the desires of her heart.

I should conclude with a word to believers, who have got their losses repaired by the glorious Immanuel. I only say two or three things to you by way of advice. (1) O sing praises to the blessed Restorer, "O my soul, bless the Lord, who hath redeemed thy life from destruction, and crowned thee with loving kindness and tender mercies," Psalm 103:1-4. (2) Whenever you meet with new losses, come back to the blessed Restorer. Satan will be about with you, he goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and to take away any good you have got on this solemn occasion; but when the enemy has robbed you, I say, come back to Christ by faith, and you will find restitution again. Again, my advice to you is, O love the Lord with your heart, strength, and mind; let him have the strength and flower of your affection, lay nothing in the balance with him; and, as an evidence of your love, keep his commandments, walk worthy of the Lord, to all well pleasing; contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; study, with the church, to cause his name to be remembered to all generations, that the people may praise him for ever and ever, who restored what he took not away.



