

Quotes on Christ

by

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Christ, by thus appearing in mean and low outward circumstances in the world, has poured contempt upon all worldly wealth and glory; and has taught us to despise it. And if it becomes mean men to despise them, how much more did it become the Son of God!

Thus Christ appeared at the same time, and in the same act, as both a lion and a lamb. He appeared as a lamb in the hands of his cruel enemies; as a lamb in the paws, and between the devouring jaws, of a roaring lion; yea, he was a lamb actually slain by this lion: and yet at the same time, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, he conquers and triumphs over Satan; destroying his own destroyer; as Samson did the lion that roared upon him, when he rent him as he would a kid. And in nothing has Christ appeared so much as a lion, in glorious strength destroying his enemies, as when he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. In his greatest weakness he was most strong; and when he suffered most from his enemies, he brought the greatest confusion on his enemies.

In this (*the work of redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ upon the cross*) also Christ appeared gloriously above the guilt of men. For he offered a sacrifice, that was sufficient to do away all the guilt of the whole world. Though the guilt of man was like the great mountains, whose heads are lifted up to the heavens; yet his dying love, and his merits, appeared as a mighty deluge that overflowed the highest mountains; or like a boundless ocean that swallows them up; or like an immense fountain of light, that with the fullness and redundancy of its brightness, swallows up men's greatest sins, as little motes are swallowed up and hidden in the disk of the sun.

Contempt of any person is heinous in proportion to the worthiness and dignity of the person contemned. Though we are but worms of the dust, and very vile, sinful creatures; yet we take it grievously when we are despised. Consider how you yourselves are ready to resent it, when any of your neighbours seem to slight you, and set light by what you say and do, and

to make no account of it, but to treat you as if you were good for nothing, or not worth minding...Are you not ready to look upon it with resentment, to think very ill of it, and to judge that you have great cause to be offended? But if it be such a crime to despise you and set you at nought, what is it to set at nought the eternal infinitely glorious Son of God, in comparison with whom you and all nations are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity? You dislike it much to be condemned by your equals; but you would take it yet more grievously to be despised by your inferiors, by those whom, on every account, you must excel.—What a crime is it then for a vile, sinful worm, to set at nought him who is the brightness of the glory of the King of kings!

Christ appears gloriously above all evil, in his work in the *hearts* of the elect, in their conversion and sanctification. This is what the application of redemption, so far as it is applied in this world, consists in; which is done by the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Christ. In this work of Christ in the hearts of his elect, he appears glorious above Satan. For the strong man armed is overcome, and all his armour, wherein he trusted, is taken from him, and his spoil divided. In this work, the lamb is, by the spiritual David, taken out of the mouth of the lion and bear: the poor captive is delivered from his mighty and cruel enemies. In this Christ appears gloriously above the *corruption* and wickedness of the heart; above its natural darkness in dispelling it, and letting in light; and above its enmity and opposition, by prevailing over it, drawing it powerfully; and irresistibly to himself, and turning a heart of stone into a heart of flesh: above the obstinacy and perverseness of the will, by making them willing in the day of his power. In this he appears above all their lusts. For all sin is mortified in this work, and the soul is delivered from the power and dominion of it.

Hence learn how justly God might for ever refuse to give you an interest in Christ. For why should God give you any part or interest in him whom you set at nought, all whose glory and Excellency you value not in the least, but rather trample it under your feet. Why should God give you any interest in him whom you so despise? seeing you despise him, how justly might you be obliged to go without any interest in him! How justly might you be refused any part in that precious stone, whose preciousness you esteem no more than that of the stones of the street! Is God obliged to cast such a pearl before swine who will trample it under their feet? Is God obliged to make you possessors of his infinitely glorious and dear Son, when at

the same time you count him not worth the having, for the sake of any worth or excellency that there is in him; but merely because you cannot escape hell without him?

There meet in Jesus Christ, infinite justice and infinite grace. As Christ is a divine person, he is infinitely holy and just, hating sin, and disposed to execute condign punishment for sin. He is the Judge of the world, and the infinitely just Judge of it, and will not at all acquit the wicked, or by any means clear the guilty. And yet he is infinitely gracious and merciful. Though his justice be so strict with respect to all sin, and every breach of the law, yet he has grace sufficient for every sinner, and even the chief of sinners.

There do meet in Jesus Christ infinite highness and infinite condescension. Christ, as he is God, is infinitely great and high above all. He is higher than the kings of the earth; for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is higher than the heavens, and higher than the highest angels of heaven. So great is he, that all men, all kings and princes, are as worms of the dust before him; all nations are as the drop of the bucket, and the light dust of the balance; yea, and angels themselves are as nothing before him. He is so high, that he is infinitely above any need of us; above our reach, that we cannot be profitable to him; and above our conceptions, that we cannot comprehend him...Our understandings, if we stretch them never so far, cannot reach up to his divine glory... Christ is the Creator and great Possessor of heaven and earth. He is sovereign Lord of all. He rules over the whole universe, and doth whatsoever pleaseth him. His knowledge is without bound. His wisdom is perfect, and what none can circumvent. His power is infinite, and none can resist Him. His riches are immense and inexhaustible. His majesty is infinitely awful. And yet he is one of infinite condescension. None are so low or inferior, but Christ's condescension is sufficient to take a gracious notice of them.... Such a conjunction of infinite highness and low condescension, in the same person, is admirable. We see, by manifold instances, what a tendency a high station has in men, to make them to be of a quite contrary disposition. If one worm be a little exalted above another, by having more dust, or a bigger dunghill, how much does he make of himself! What a distance does he keep from those that are below him! And a little condescension is what he expects should be made much of, and greatly acknowledged. Christ condescends to wash our feet; but how would great men, (or rather the bigger worms,) account themselves debased by acts of far less condescension!

God is a being infinitely lovely, because he hath infinite Excellency and beauty. To have infinite Excellency and beauty is the same thing as to have infinite loveliness. He is a being of infinite greatness, majesty, and glory; and therefore he is infinitely honourable. He is infinitely exalted above the greatest potentates of the earth, and highest angels in heaven; and therefore he is infinitely more honourable than they. His authority over us is infinite; and the ground of his right to our obedience is infinitely strong; for he is infinitely worthy to be obeyed himself, and we have an absolute, universal, and infinite dependence upon him. So that sin against God, being a violation of infinite obligations, must be a crime infinitely heinous, and so deserving of infinite punishment. Nothing is more agreeable to the common sense of mankind, than that sins committed against any one, must be proportionally heinous to the dignity of the being offended and abused.

That Christ is appointed to be the judge of the world will be for the more abundant *conviction of the ungodly*. It will be for their conviction, that they are judged and condemned by that very person whom they have rejected, by whom they might have been saved, who shed his blood to give them an *opportunity* to be saved, who was wont to offer his righteousness to them, when they were in their state of trial, and who many a time called and invited them to come to him, that they might be saved. How justly will they be condemned by him whose salvation they have rejected, whose blood they have despised, whose many calls they have refused, and whom they have pierced by their sins! How much will it be for their conviction, when they shall hear the sentence of condemnation pronounced, to reflect with themselves, how often hath this same person, who now passes sentence of condemnation upon me, called me, in his word, and by his messengers, to accept of him, and to give myself to him! How often hath he knocked at the door of my heart! and had it not been for my own folly and obstinacy, how might I have had him for my *Saviour*, who is now my incensed *Judge*!

Sin casts contempt upon the authority and law of God: but this, by the contrivance of our redemption, is made the occasion of the greatest honour done to that same authority, and to that very law. It was a greater honour to the law of God that Christ was subject to it, and obeyed it, than if all mankind had obeyed it. It was a greater honour to God's authority that Christ showed such great respect, and such entire subjection to it, than the perfect

obedience of all the angels in heaven. Man by his sin showed his enmity against the holiness of God: but this is made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's holiness. The holiness of God never appeared to so great a degree, as when God executed vengeance upon his own dear Son.

What destruction then will come on them that despise all the glorious Excellency of Christ himself? Consider that you not only have no value for all the glory and Excellency of Christ; but you are enemies to him on that very account. The very ground of that enmity and opposition which there is between your hearts and Jesus Christ, is the glorious perfections and excellencies that there are in Jesus Christ. By being such a holy and excellent Saviour, he is contrary to your lusts and corruptions. If there were a Saviour offered to you that was agreeable to your corrupt nature, such a Saviour you would accept. But Christ being a Saviour of such purity, holiness, and divine perfection, this is the cause why you have no inclination to him, but are offended in him. Instead of being a precious stone in your eyes, he is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to you.

One end why God suffered Satan to do what he did in procuring the fall of man, was that his Son might be glorified in conquering that strong, subtle, and proud spirit, and triumphing over him. How glorious doth Christ Jesus appear in baffling and triumphing over this proud king of darkness, and all the haughty confederate rulers of hell.

He delighted in the thought of God's will being done; and when he went and prayed the second time, he had nothing else to say but, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done;" and so the third time. What are such trials of submission as any of us sometimes have in the afflictions that we suffer in comparison of this? If God does but in his providence signify it to be his will that we should part with a child, how hardly are we brought to yield to it, how ready to be unsubmissive and froward! Or if God lays his hand upon us in some acute pain of body, how ready are we to be discontented and impatient; when the innocent Son of God, who deserved no suffering could quietly submit to sufferings inconceivably great, and say it over and over, God's will be done! When he was brought and set before that dreadful furnace of wrath into which he was to be cast, in order that he might look into it and have a full view of its fierceness, when his flesh shrunk at it,

and his nature was in such a conflict, that his body was all covered with a sweat of blood falling in great drops to the ground, yet his soul quietly yielded that the will of God should be done, rather than the will or inclination of his human nature.

God may save any of the children of men without prejudice to the honour of his majesty. If men have affronted God, and that ever so much, if they have cast ever so much contempt on his authority; yet God can save them, if he pleases, and the honour of his majesty not suffer in the least. If God should save those who have affronted him, without satisfaction, the honour of his majesty would suffer. For when contempt is cast upon infinite majesty, its honour suffers, and the contempt leaves an obscurity upon the honour of the divine majesty, if the injury is not repaired. But the sufferings of Christ do fully repair the injury. Let the contempt be ever so great, yet if so honourable a person as Christ undertakes to be a Mediator for the offender, and in the mediation suffer in his stead, it fully repairs the injury done to the majesty of heaven by the greatest sinner.

When he (Christ) had a full sight given him (in Gethsemane) what that wrath of God was that he was to suffer, the sight was overwhelming to him; it made his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Christ was going to be cast into a dreadful furnace of wrath, and it was not proper that he should plunge himself into it blindfold, as not knowing how dreadful the furnace was. Therefore that he might not do so, God first brought him and set him at the mouth of the furnace, that he might look in, and stand and view its fierce and raging flames, and might see where he was going, and might voluntarily enter into it and bear it for sinners, as knowing what it was. This view Christ had in his agony. Then God brought the cup that he was to drink, and set it down before him, that he might have a full view of it, and see what it was before he took it and drank it.

Sinners despise his Son, and trample him under their feet. But he will see, if he cannot make the glory of his Son appear, with respect to them; that all the earth may know how evil a thing it is to despise the Son of God. God intends that all men and angels, all heaven and all earth, shall see whether he be sufficient to magnify himself upon sinners who now despise him. He intends that the issue of things with respect to them shall be open, that all men may see it. He hath undertaken to subdue impenitent sinners.

There is a great deal of difference between a willingness not to be damned, and a being willing to receive Christ for your Saviour. You have the former; there is no doubt of that: nobody supposes that you love misery so as to choose an eternity of it; and so doubtless you are willing to be saved from eternal misery. But that is a very different thing from being willing to come to Christ: persons very commonly mistake the one for the other, but they are quite two things. You may love the deliverance, but hate the deliverer. You tell of a willingness; but consider what is the object of that willingness. It does not respect Christ; the way of salvation by him is not at all the object of it; but it is wholly terminated on your escape from misery. The inclination of your will goes no further than self, it never reaches Christ. You are willing not to be miserable; that is, you love yourself, and there your will and choice terminate. And it is but a vain pretence and delusion to say or think, that you are willing to accept of Christ.