

CHRIST ALONE EXALTEDⁱ

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Adapted to modern English with some additional notes by Richard C. Schadleⁱⁱ

SERMON 2

CHRIST THE ONLY WAY Part 2.

“Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)¹

To continue from our pervious sermon: As Christ is the way from sin, he is also the way from wrath. Indeed, he must be the way from wrath, when he is the way from sin; wrath is but the wages of sin, the effect wrought by sin. Take away the cause, and the effect dies; destroy the root, and the branches wither and die themselves. Man's sin is the root of wrath; when sin is destroyed and abolished, wrath must of necessity shrink and perish. Christ is so much the way from wrath, that all that receive him are complexly discharged, both from God's disposition of wrath, (as I may so speak) and from the effects of that disposition of his. Wrath can be considered in in two respects: first, Simply, as the displeasure of God itself; the offence that God takes at it: secondly, In the fruits of this offence, that he manifests in the expression of his indignation and displeasure. Christ is the way, the only way, the effectual and infallible way, from all this wrath, to all that really receive him.

First, From the disposition itself of wrath. Let me tell you, beloved, (I would to God you could receive it according to the manifest evidence of Scripture) God is longer offended or displeased; even though a believer, after he be a believer, sins often², yet, I say, God no longer stands offended

¹ All scriptures are my own translation. I have kept to the King James version for the most part, only changing the old English words to modern English.

² As every believer does sin, and yet God is not offended with him; the meaning is not, that his sin is not offensive to God; it is in its own nature being contrary to the nature of God, as the Doctor in a following page observes, and where he also distinguishes between God's being offended with the sins of believers, and with their persons; and it is in this latter sense he is to be understood here: for God loves them with an everlasting love, and has no fury in him towards them; and besides all their sins are fully satisfied for by Christ who thereby has took away all cause of offence, that is, sin. So, the very learned Witsisus, referring to this passage of the Doctor's, observes, he is to be

and displeased with him, when he has once received Christ; and unto them, says God, "Fury is not in me," Isaiah 27:4. And in Isaiah 53:5, (among many other notable expressions of God's being well-pleased towards poor sinners through Christ) he says, "He was wounded for their transgressions;" you have this admirable expression of the effect of his suffering and death, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:" satisfied, here, is as much as pacified; they mean the same thing. The travail of the soul of Christ makes God so appeased for the sinfulness of believers, that he can no longer stand offended and displeased with them. If God remained offended with them, then they must in some sense have some of their sinfulness remaining to be taken away. As there is no sinfulness this offence also may be taken away. All their sins must be taken away from them, and therefore all offences will be removed from them. But, unless God could be said to be offended, even where there is no cause to be offended, (which is blasphemy so to speak) he will not be offended with believers. For I say he has no cause to be offended with a believer, because he does not find the sin of the believer to be the believer's own sin, but he finds it the sin of Christ³ "He was made sin for us; God laid the iniquities of us all upon him. The blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin: He bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" If Christ bore our sins, he must also bear the displeasure for them; and he did in fact bear the displeasure and the indignation of the Lord. As he did bear the indignation of the Lord; either he bore it all, or else he bore just a part of it. If he did not bear all the indignation of the Lord, then he did not "save to the uttermost those that come to God by him;" as Hebrews 7:25 clearly says he did. I say it could not be to the uttermost, because, if this were true, there are some offences, some indignation that Christ did not bear and for his not taking this indignation upon himself, it therefore falls upon believers. We are left then with two choices: You must say one of two things 1. That Christ is an imperfect Savior, and has left some scattering of wrath behind, that will fall upon the head of the believer. 2. You must say, he is a perfect Savior, that he takes away all the displeasure of God; that there remains none of it upon the person of a believer.

Beloved, for my part, I cannot understand why the judgment of other men is so clouded; It seems to me that there is no truth that is made so abundantly clear, in all the Scriptures, than this one truth; that of the transferring of our sins, and so the offence for them, entirely upon the person of Christ. In this way a poor soul has rest from the indignation of God, as Christ takes the burthen of from his shoulders. There is a twofold burthen; first, In sin itself; and secondly, In the indignation of God for it. Who can bear this indignation of his? Christ alone, and he has borne it.

Yes, but you will say, Is not God offended at the sins of believers, when they do commit them? Has Christ taken away the offence against sin by his death? I answer, No. Therefore, do not let yourselves be mistaken; my meaning may be mistaken if my remarks are not understood because of inattention to my actual words as I delivered them. I have not said; God is not offended with the sins that believers commit; but that God is not offended with the persons (Jonah 4:6. 1 Kings

understood, (respectu plenissimae illius reconciliationis quam impetravit Christu,) in respect of that most full reconciliation which Christ has obtained, and which is adjudged to believers in justification. 12, sect. 7. J. Gill.

³ Being imputed to him, and atoned for by him; and so the offence by it, to the justice of God, is ceased, having an ample satisfaction. So, the above-mentioned judicious professor Witsius gives the sense of the passage. "God is not offended without a cause, there is no cause of offence but sin; Christ has borne and taken away all the sins of believers, and the most just offence of God for them; and not only some part of the offence, but all, all entirely, therefore there remains none that lies upon believers; to these God says, 'Fury is not in me, Isaiah 27:4.'" Ibid.

9:4, 5.) of believers, for the sins committed by them. He has the same everlasting indignation against sin as he always has. And because there is the same repugnance in sin against his nature, so there is the same opposition in God's nature with regard to sin. All opposition in fact has a mutual repugnance towards one another. For example, as water is contrary to fire, so fire is contrary to water; as sin is contrary to the nature of God; so, the nature of God is contrary to sin. There is an abhorrence of God to that sinfulness, but not an offence in God to the person that commits that sin; because the offence of God for that sin has spent itself upon the person of Christ. By being placed upon Christ there remains none of it to fall upon the person of a believer (2 Samuel 2:13). Christ has in fact borne all the offence for sin. And therefore, as I said before, we must either admit that Christ has satisfied the father, that he is pleased in his beloved son, according to Christ's own words or else we must say that Christ has not done all this. In Matthew 3, where Christ is being baptized, a voice is heard from heaven saying "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He does not say, **with whom** I am well pleased, but **in whom** I am well pleased; that is, in whom I am well pleased, with you. Though in our natures, and in the sinfulness of them, there is much to cause displeasure, yet in Christ, in spite of this, God is well pleased with us. And yet God's indignation against sin is fully present but not upon us. He is not offended at all with the believer: for his just indignation has been more fully satisfied in the death of his own Son than it could have been if taken out upon us instead. We would have had to suffer everlastingly before God could have been fully satisfied.

Now, therefore, the payment of a debt, when payed in one payment at once is a better payment than that payed only a penny a year till a thousand years has gone by. In the same way Christ's satisfying the Father at once, by one sacrifice of himself, is a better satisfying of him, than if we should have been infinite days in paying that which his justice requires, and his indignation to sin does demand. So, there is no annulling or destroying the loathsome nature of sin, and the purity of God, and the great offence God takes at sin but only here is the transferring of it from the person of a believer, to the person of Christ himself, that willingly took this upon himself. This was done according to the determinate counsel and purpose of God that he should do it; yes, it is the pleasure of God, "It pleased the Father to bruise Him," Isaiah 53:10. This briefly summarizes the place of wrath, and how much Christ is a way to take away that affection of God's wrath; that is, wrath simple, as it is an offence from him to a believer.

Secondly, Christ is a way to take away the effect of God's displeasure; Christ is the only way to take it away. "Shall I give the fruit of my body," said the prophet Micah, 5:7, "for the sin of my soul? thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil?" No, alas! this will not pay for the remission of one sin. Once we have sinned; all this is too small a price: there must be a better way to take away that wrath; that is, the heavy punishment of God from a believer. I say a better price than this; not a more costly price to us poor men, but yet a clearer and more acceptable price unto God; a price, in its nature, infinite and invaluable; but, of this price, not a penny goes out of our purse; this is the wonder of it all. Christ is a way to take away all wrath, in respect of the heavy hand of God, which is the fruit of man's sin.

In brief, beloved, to put this in simple terms, Christ is so the way from wrath, that God will never punish any believer, after he is a believer, for sin; I say, God does not punish for sin⁴.

This seems to be a harsh proposition to many; but please allow me to carefully explain what I mean; then according to the clear evidence of truth, reject or receive what I am explaining to you. Observe in Isaiah 53:5, (a chapter of great excellence which sets forth the wonderful and incomprehensible benefits of Christ), the following: "He was wounded for our transgressions;" notice, the punishment; "He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and by his stripes we are healed." Now, beloved, I ask just this one question; Are the wounds of Christ only part of the punishment? or, are they the whole of our punishment? The sufferings of Christ, were they only part of the punishment our sins deserved? If they were but part, we must bear the rest ourselves; but then, we must be co-saviors with Christ, co-bearers of indignation and wrath. Isaiah 53:5, "He has trodden the wine-press alone," says the text; "He looked for some that might help, and wondered, and there was none." No creature in the world was able to be a helper with him.

I am speaking about believers only; they do not bear one lash of that deserved wrath, that is poured out for sin, not one lash or stroke; Christ himself bore it all alone. Yes, but you will say unto me, Does not God afflict his children, true believers? All the world sees and knows that he does; therefore, why do you speak as though he did not? Beloved, give me leave to ask you is there not a great deal of difference between God's **afflicting believers**, and **punishing believers** for sin?

Yes, but are not the afflictions of believers for sin?

I answer, No. Afflictions are unto believers **from sin**, but not **for sin**⁵.

You ask: What is the meaning of that? God, in afflicting believers, does not intend to punish them, so as to lay the desert of their sin upon themselves, for that is laid upon Christ; but he does afflict them in part as a help to preserve them from sinning. I say, All afflictions to believers are to help them to avoid sin, rather than punishment upon them for sin. Yet, some will say that, Everybody, in the world who are afflicted, show that sin is the cause of their afflictions. I answer, Yes, some of them have been. The disciples put a question to Christ, when the man was born blind; "Was it because of this man's in, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Christ said to them, "Neither he nor his parents:" not that neither of them had sinned, but that neither he, nor his parents had any sin, as a cause of that affliction or trial that was placed upon him; it was so that the power of God

⁴ Crisps exact words are: "In brief, beloved, the sum plainly is this, Christ is so the way from wrath, that God doth never punish any believer, after he is a believer, for sin; I say, God doth not punish for sin." Gill comments as follows: "The reason is, because the whole punishment, due to his sins, has been borne by Christ, his surety for him; and to inflict punishment twice for the same sins, once upon the surety, and again upon the believer, is contrary to the justice of God, as well as derogatory to the satisfaction of Christ; for either he has borne the whole of punishment, or only a part; if the whole, which is the truth, then none can be laid upon the believer; but, if only a part, Christ's satisfaction is not complete, and then the believer must be a co-bearer and co-savior with Christ, as the Doctor observes; neither of which ought to be said." This same wonderful doctrine is a favorite of James Wells, surfacing in many sermons and writings. RCS.

⁵ That is, they are not punishments for sins, or are in a way of vindictive wrath for them; but they are in love, and for the good of God's people; they are fatherly chastisements for sins, in order to take them away, or purge them from them, or prevent them, or preserve from them, as the Doctor afterwards explains himself.

might be seen in him. So, when God sends affliction upon a believer, this is not because of sin, as if he was afflicted for sin. For my own part, I cannot see how a man can say, Christ bore all the punishment of sin, if we bear any of it ourselves. And, if Christ did not bear it all, I cannot see how Christ can be a sufficient savior, without someone else helping him out, bearing that which he himself did not bear. I am speaking in this way, beloved as sometimes when poor believers are crossed and afflicted in different ways, they are often ready to suspect that God has rejected them because of their sins, that he is angry with them for sinning against him. I say, in fact, with respect to any sin that he has committed, which he blames, that there is not the least drop of displeasure from God, no displeasure stemming from this comes from God. "But every son whom I love, I rebuke and chasten," says the Lord. God sees that afflictions will purge, and because of this he sends them. A father does not give his child something to make him throw up as a punishment, but that it may purge and cleanse that which made the child sick in the first place. The fathers desire is to prevent disease, or for the removal of some disease; that is the father's purpose in purging the child. And this is the reason why God afflicts his people; not for their sins, but to take those very sins away, (Isaiah 27:9). That is, to prevent the hastiness and inconsiderateness of a believer, that he may not be so rash, running headstrong in his own ways, but may be the more considerate for the time to come. It is most certainly true, beloved, that as soon as ever a person is a believer, he is so commented into God and his mercy, and with him, that there is nothing in the world from that instant, given a believer, but mercy. God manages his mercy to us as he sees fit. Sometimes he will use the rod, other times he gives us delicacies; but in whichever way it is all by way of mercy. "All things shall work together for good;" this is God's way with regard to believers. And if only believers could understand and believe this; even when they are as gold cast into the fire. To believe that God, all that time they are in the fire, as the prophet Malachi speaks, sits "as a refiner;" then they would quietly wait in expectation of that purity that will be theirs when they come back out of the fire, in which they shall come forth in God's time. What do you think when you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to throw it away? No, he sits as a refiner; that is, he stands carefully over the fire, and over the gold. He looks unto it, and watches so that not one grain is lost; and when the dross is separated, he will quickly take it out, it shall be no longer there. Even so Christ sits as a refiner; when once his gold shall have its dross separated, then he takes out his gold, and it becomes as gold seven times purified in the fire. But still, I say, as a fruit of wrath, God never does punish, or afflict, or chastise; (which word you may rather use, because it is the ordinary phrase of the gospel) "Every son I love, I rebuke and chasten."

In brief, Christ is the way from wrath, not only in respect of the present, but also in respect of the future; I mean a way from everlasting damnation. Suppose a person who is a believer, one who is truly grounded upon Christ; then anyone who dares to serve a court order of damnation upon that person blasphemes Christ. Suppose even a believer who is overtaken in a gross sin; it is a desperate thing, for any man, to say that such a believer is under damnation. It absolutely frustrates and makes void the mediatorship and savior-ship of Christ, to say that any believer (though he be taken in an infirmity) is in the estate of damnation. (John 5:24, I Thessalonians. 1:10, Romans 8:38, 39)

And I say unto you, yourself, whoever you are, that you are ready to charge damnation upon yourself, when you are overtaken in a fault, you do the greatest injury to the Lord Jesus Christ that can be done. Because in so doing you directly cast aside the fullness of the grace of Christ, and the fullness of the satisfaction of Christ to the Father. Are you a believer, and yet are you in danger of damnation? Why then has Christ suffered? Has he died in vain? If he has not died in vain, but has borne your damnation, how shall he pour forth this damnation upon you again, unless he is unjust? Speaking in this way is blasphemy.

But you object and say that this is presumption; if a man may go on, and do whatever he wants as there is now no fear of damnation: this is the way to take the bridle from men, and make them act out all their sins as the wild asses upon the mountains.

I answer, this would be true, if a man were to be guided by himself, and able to go his own way, according to the pleasure of his own will; but, beloved, you must know, that the same Christ that has borne the wrath of the Father, and the effects of that wrath, also frees poor sinners from damnation. This same Christ exercises strict discipline in order to restrain and keep the spirits of a man, in order to save that man.

Beloved, although a wild ass, being free, runs at random yet this ass may be taken captive, and so tamed, that he may be set as free as he was before: yet because he was tamed, he will not run as wildly as he did before. It is true, our natures themselves are inflamed to excess, and, if they had control, would run wild. You must know, however, that Christ breaks this wildness, and then he is able to let a believer go free to an extent that an unbeliever, a wicked man, would take advantage of in order to sin, were a believer will not: Jeremiah 31:18, 19. Here the Lord speaks about Ephraim; "I have heard Ephraim bemoaning of himself," in this way: "You have chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke:" here is a wild bull, an unruly creature. You may be sure that this is what Ephraim was: God controls Ephraim well enough for all this; "Convert you me, and I shall be converted; so after I was converted, I was ashamed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed and confounded within myself." Look at this I ask you, now let Ephraim loose; alas! Ephraim is ashamed. Ephraim would blush to look at the way he behaved in his sinfulness before God's dealings; he is confounded within himself; he cannot act now as he did before.

Take notice, I ask you, Christ has broken his spirit now, there was much licentiousness in him by nature but now though the power of Christ coming upon him he is changed.

But you answer me and say: Surely hell and damnation must be a restraint (a bridle) to keep men in check.

My answer to that is in what the Psalmist says, Psalm 110:3 "Thy people shall be a willing people." Here you see how obedient the people of Christ are. Your people are a willing people. In what way is that? By fear of damnation? No such thing. But in the day of your power, and in the beauty of holiness, they shall be a willing people. First, the power of Christ comes over a person, that molds his spirit to a willingness and aptness; then comes the beauty of holiness, that wins, persuades, allures, and draws them to willingness; and where there is a willing spirit to walk with Christ, there is no danger of taking liberty. The philosophers observe a rule, that the will is not compelled; a man cannot constrain his will. Let the will of a person but be to the pleasure of Christ, nothing can

constrain him to go beyond Christ; he may unhappily be over-come, and be over-taken, but he will never break loose; he will never run away, even if the gate stands open on every side. The grass and pasture are so sweet that Christ has placed a believer in; that though there be no bounds to keep in such a soul, yet it will never go out of this fat pasture, to feed in a barren track of public land. (I Peter 1:5)

Therefore, in answer to the objectors, who believe this teaching opens a door to such licentiousness, because a believe is no longer under wrath, and that he will therefore, break free, doing all manner of excess; I tell you that the power of Christ restrains him. Thus, I have concluded this second heading, showing from where Christ is the way: he is the way from sin and wrath; wrath in the affection, wrath in the effects of it.

Second: I come now, in the next place, to consider how Christ is the way, not only from sin and wrath, but the way, and the only way, to grace and glory. Grace, in scripture, admits of a double acceptation, proper and improper. We usually take grace for that which is improperly grace; for we commonly call grace those divine qualities and virtues, and holy dispositions and actions, wherewith we are possessed, by which we do improve and employ ourselves in the world. This we usually call grace; and in some sense, it is grace: but that which is most properly grace, is nothing else but merely favor and bounty, and loving kindness itself; and so, consequently, all sanctification is not, so properly grace itself, as the fruit of grace; God first puts his favor and loving-kindness upon a person, then out of his favor flows the several fruits of his loving-kindness; and the fruits are those fruits of the spirit, frequently mentioned by the apostle. Now Christ is a way to grace in both these respects; Christ is a way to favor and loving-kindness in God; Christ is a way to all fruits or graces, as we call them.

He is a way to loving-kindness itself, and the favor of God. This, loving-kindness and favor of God, can be divided into several parts. First, when an alienated creature is willing reconciled to God. A person is then said to be received into grace. For example, a person may be exiled and forbidden to come near; as when princes take a strong dislike to them, they fall out of favor with the court and are put into prison. Then the princes change their minds and the people come under favor once again. They are called in court and accepted back to their position; this is properly grace. So, beloved, after God seems to have rejected a person, and to put him far off from himself, and to remove him out of his sight, to stop him from coming near him; when he will return to him again, and will show him the light of his countenance, that he did formerly hide, this is properly favor. You will find that the apostle expressly mentions this reconciliation of God, and ascribes this grace purely to Christ alone, "You who were sometimes afar off," notice the expression, "has he made nigh by the blood of Christ;" here you see our being reconciled is by the blood of Christ. "God was in Christ," says the apostle, "reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them; in Christ reconciling," and therefore "Christ is the mediator of a better covenant," (as the apostle put it in Hebrews 8) In fact the apostle tells us expressly, he is the only mediator, and there is no other to reconcile men to God, but Christ alone; "There is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." So, we plainly see that there is only one way to be at peace with God, the Lord Jesus Christ alone can make that peace; he himself is the way.

I remember a passage in Job, where it looked like there was a difference between God and him; First Job makes a pitiful statement, "I cannot answer him," says, Job, speaking of God; and why is that? "There is no arbiter that may come in between us, that might lay his hand upon us both:" In other words he is saying that there is no hope of agreement with God, till another puts himself in the middle, in order to be a arbiter; that is, to have power over us both. Such effectual umpires are impartial, holding both parties in order to reach an agreement; to command the one or the other. They can command the creditor to yield, and to prevail with the debtor to pay as much as he is able; and this umpire is Christ alone.

There are many other expressions of God's grace; of his loving-kindness and favor, and it is plain, throughout the whole scripture, that Christ is the only way to access this grace. As to that adoption that the apostle speaks of, (when he breaks out into admiration) saying, "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" "Is it a small matter to you" (says David, speaking to some of the servants of Saul, persuading him to marry the king's daughter) "seems it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?" So, say I to you, "Is it a small matter to you to be the sons of God?" Oh! great love! But this great grace and favor is only by Jesus Christ. In Galatians 4:4, 5, it is plainly shown that it is Christ that brings this grace of adoption, to make us sons; "In the fulness of time, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Here you see, all that Christ does, is to this end; that at length, through what he has done, we might receive the adoption of sons. As Christ is the only way unto the pure grace, and mere favor, and loving-kindness of God; so also, unto all the fruits of grace, all the manifestations of it in the expression of God's loving-kindness in the fruits of the Spirit. To give you some instances:

The first of all these kinds of the grace of God, that he does ever bestow upon a person, is: The opening his eyes to see himself filthy and to see what he is: this is where a relationship with Christ begins, to see a need of him, and to see the importance of his being received. Now if you study this important subject, that of the eyes of a person being opened, you shall find that Christ is the way into it, Isaiah 42:6. There the Father discourses with Christ, and in his discourse he speaks in this way to him, "I will give you for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes." You see in this, that it is Christ who must open the blind eyes of men. Beloved, men are mistaken when they think that the law enables them to see their own vileness; it is only by the work of Christ the we can have a gracious sight of our vileness. The law is like a mirror which is able to represent the filthiness of a person. However, the law as a mirror is useless if placed before a blind man so that he can see his filthiness. He will see nothing of his imperfections, then as if he had none to start with. The mirror may be a good mirror but it cannot of itself give sight to the blind. If the man had sight then the mirror could do its job and show the filthiness. The apostle James compares the law to a mirror, and that is all the law can do; to have a faculty to represent; but it does not give a faculty to see what it does represent: it is Christ alone that can open the eyes of men, to behold their own vileness and filthiness; and when Christ will open the eyes, then only shall he see himself as he truly is.

Secondly, Repentance is a great grace; yet you shall find, beloved, in Acts 5:31, that it is only in Christ is there power to give repentance unto men; God has exalted him to be a prince and a Savior,

to give repentance unto Israel. "It is Christ that grants repentance unto life;" and if ever you will truly repent you must receive that ability from Christ, he must be the way, or you must go without it.

Faith is a grace of graces, the root of all graces to believers, and it is properly Christ, and none but Christ, that works faith in a believer; the apostle speaks expressly of this in Hebrews 12:2, "Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." He is the author, it is he that produces it.

Thirdly; Consider the whole of spiritual life; Christ is the only way to all spiritual life whatsoever. "I live," (says Paul) "yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God." There is no life, but as Christ lives in men. Where is the natural life of man? It is from the soul; the soul once separated from the body, is dead; so long as the soul is united to the body, the man is alive; Christ is the life of every believing soul; Christ is he that regulates and gives life to men. Ephesians 2:1, "You that were dead in trespasses and sins, has he quickened;" he it is that, that quickens men when they are dead in trespasses and sins. And in John 5:25, you have this admirable expression, "That the time is coming, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear his voice shall live." There is no life but by Christ alone; he is the way to all spiritual life whatsoever. So, in brief, beloved, there is not a scrap (as you may say) pertaining to a Christian, but it comes from Christ alone.

Fourthly, God has therefore, filled Christ full of all things, that we might get everything from him. The apostle tells us expressly, "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Saint John, in the first chapter of his gospel, tells us to what purpose he was "full of grace and truth," saying, "And of his fulness we all receive, and grace for grace." The Psalmist, (Psalm 68:18) has this expression, "You have received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them." The apostle, quoting that text, interprets the words in this way: "You have given gifts to men:" it is as much as to say, that God bequeathed as much to Christ, as shall serve for his body; and this he distributes to the body, according to the proportionable need of it. The head is the first principle or cause. It has all the life and vitality in it and from itself it spreads this life force to ever other part of the body which gives motion to the body. So, in the same way, I say, the supply of all the believer's wants concerning grace, in matters of mortification of sin, in the performance of duties of piety, mercy, and justice, or any other want whatsoever, the supply of all these must come from Christ alone. This is as Christ says of himself in Revelation 1:8, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" of all things. "All my springs" (says the Psalmist, Psalm 87:7) "are in thee." He speaks of Christ in the name of God, as if God spoke to Christ his Son; "All my springs are in thee:" therefore, you shall find God always dealing with men, as Pharaoh dealt in Egypt with his own people; they came complaining of their wants to Pharaoh: "Go to Joseph," (said Pharaoh) "hear what he says;" he turns; all over to Joseph. In the same way God deals with men: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear you him," with God the Father: therefore, Christ says, "The Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son:" so that Christ alone is judge. The father has given all authority to the Christ, never examining what Christ does, every act of Christ is signed and sealed equally by the Father. All things are managed by Christ's hand; therefore, Christ says at the end of Matthew: "All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth." The Father made all over to him, everything. The

truth is, beloved, the Godhead is absolutely a being of itself, (Deuteronomy 6:4) but this Godhead was pleased to unite the humanity to itself, and the Godhead having the humanity united to it, is one person⁶.

In this way it pleased Christ to manage all things in the world, not in the Godhead alone, but as the Godhead with the manhood of Christ united to it. Don't misunderstand, and imagine that when God gives the rule and reign to Christ, he then does nothing at all. But the Godhead now has the manhood united to itself; so it is Christ, God and man; that works together; and, by this kind of way, there is nearer and better access for us unto God; because here is a humanity that is of some relation unto us, and so of near acquaintance with us. The Godhead, in its simple nature, is too remote, at too great a distance, for us to come near.

Fifthly, Moreover, he is not only a way to grace, but Christ is also the means of increasing grace to us. The apostle (Colossians 2:10) tells us, that "we are complete in him, who is the head of the body, the head of all principalities;" not only that we have substance and being, but that we are complete in him: and, in the latter end of the chapter, the apostle follows the allusion of the head and body, and faith, that the "parts having nourishment ministered by joints, increase with the increase of God." When the parts are united to the head, and the head, through the veins and nerves conveys nourishment to those parts, then the parts not only live, but increase with the increase of God. The apostle, I Peter 2:4, says, "To whom coming as to a living stone," (speaking to believers,) "you as lively stones are built up a spiritual house:" He does not say, stones that have life, but "lively stones;" they have more than bare life. Not only that but as lively stones are built up" together. There is a growing up by the power of Christ, in coming the living-stone," as the apostle calls him here.

And that is not all neither; we have not only growth by the grace of Christ, but restoration (Psalm 23:3) and recovery in case of relapse. Suppose a believer falls, the same Christ that gave him life, and set him upon his legs, must raise him up again when he is down; "Though I fall, yet shall I not be cast down," says he; that is, I shall not be left, but shall be raised again: "The ransomed of the Lord" (Isaiah 35:10) "shall return unto Sion, they shall rejoice with everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away." They shall return to Sion; they were of Sion before: a man is not said to return, except he where in the place before, and so is coming again; so, the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Sion. How? they are ransomed of the Lord; it is the ransom of Christ, that brings them back from bondage to their Sion again; and when he brings them back, he brings them back "with everlasting joy upon their heads; they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing fly away."

Thus, I have endeavored to declare the main point, in what respects is Christ is a way from a state of sin and wrath, to a state of grace.

⁶ That is the Godhead, as subsisting in the Son of God, is a person of itself, and taking the humanity into union with it, both became one person. (Gill)

I should have further considered what kind of way Christ is, and upon what grounds Christ is become such a way as he is; but I consider the season; I shall not therefore trespass upon your patience, though my fingers itch to be dealing in that which remains. There is still an abundance of excellency that I have not spoken about; Christ is a free way; Christ is a near way; Christ is a way of to quickly rid yourself of all the hindrances that get in the way; Christ is a firm way, there is no fear of sinking; Christ is a satisfying and pleasant way; "All your ways are pleasantness;" Christ is a safe way, there is a continual guard and conduct in that way; Christ is an easy way to find; "Way-faring men, though fools," (says Isaiah) "shall not err therein;" Christ is a spacious way, "You have set my feet in a large room," said David. Now all this is founded upon the good pleasure of God; he will have Christ to be the way: it is founded upon the interest that Christ has in God; it is founded upon the purchase of Christ, that has bought this for man; it is likewise founded upon the conquest of Christ, as he makes his own way, and beats all off that keeps you from finding this way; it is founded, lastly, upon his mercy to the sons of men, that can never pass over the gulph, till he has made himself a bridge for them. These things I should have showed you by setting forth the excellency of this Way. But we will speak more of these of in the future.

ⁱ Why Tobias Crisp and "Christ Alone Exalted". If the reader does not already know it, it may surprise him or her to learn the Crisp was a member of the Established Church of England. In other words, he was an Anglican. Even a very casual reading of James Wells sermons reveals that he had great distain for the Established Church. Equally obvious, if not more obvious is the fact that he also believed that there were good and true Christians within that community. Crisp died in 1643. It was not until 1644 that the Particular Baptists, which then consisted of seven churches, published their first confession of faith. It is impossible to say if Crisp would have ever become a Baptist. I personally think that very unlikely. God is Sovereign, He is free to use any and all means and people to give glory to Himself. One has only to think of that great child of God, William Huntington, who Wells though very highly of. Huntington was a paedobaptist independent preacher. I believed that he allowed baptism in the form of immersion, but the point here is that he is another, among a huge number, who were mightily used of God, yet were not strict Baptists. Wells, and myself as well, was very careful to distance himself from John Calvin. As I stated in the about page of the Surrey Tabernacle Webpage no man, including James Wells is 100% perfect and correct in everything. The church as a whole and myself in particular have benefited immeasurably by John Calvin and a host of non-Baptists. We must however view them as humble servants whom God chose to use for his own glory. Coming back to Tobias Crisp. I would place him, like King David's mighty warriors, at the very top of the list for adherence to the truth as it is in Jesus. One sermon, among many, that shows the close allegiance in what James Wells preached to what Crisp also taught is titled "The Family Sacrifice". It was first preached in 1838 and republished in 1860 as sermon number 84 in volume 2 of James Wells sermons. It can be found at this location: [The Family Sacrifice](#)

ⁱⁱ Tobias Crisp lived from 1600 to 1643 and his sermons were first published in 1643 the year of his death. The edition this translation is based on was published in 1690. In their unedited form these sermons are difficult for anyone not versed in old English to understand, thus limiting their usefulness. I have attempted to keep as much of his original words as possible but at the same time to make this sermon come alive for the modern reader. My edition is entirely my own work and is presented without apology or any form of copyright. The sermons are available on the internet in their original unedited form for no cost. My edition is based on that of John Gill. An 'as originally published' version can be found at: <http://crispchristaloneexalted.com>. Please add "This version by Richard C. Schadle" when quoting from this version.