

Scarlet sins as white as snow (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Buss, Charles (1913-1997)

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[2 : 59] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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Thank you.

[5 : 13] Thank you.

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[8 : 29] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. And what a condescending, and what a condescending, gracious invitation the Lord gives through the prophet to his people in these words.

Come now, let us reason together, said the Lord. It's an amazing word, really. And when we think of sin and all that sin is and what it has done, the tremendous gulf that has been fixed between sinners and a holy God, apart from his grace, and the holiness and majesty of God.

And yet, how evident is it, and yet, that there is a meeting place. Let us reason together, and let us reason together, said the Lord.

Oh, that we might be helped to consider, to meditate upon this wondrous truth that although sinners wrought such a distance, there is that way of nearness, that way of access.

[10 : 22] We tried to think of the public and his prayer this morning, and how his petition, although he felt to be but a sinner, yet his petition ascended to heaven, there was access to God.

There was a blessing received. The Lord blesses his praying people. And so, in this word before us, when we think of this word together, and all that it implies, and that in the wisdom and mercy and grace of God, a way has been made, whereby there shall be a coming together that is between God, a holy God, and sinners.

Yea, between sinners and a sinner's friend. And this condescending, a gracious invitation, come now.

Surely, the word is full of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the gospel to sinners. Dear friends, if the Lord has been pleased to teach us a little of our sinnership before him.

The gracious invitation of the gospel will be made very precious to us. And surely it should direct us to consider the condescending mercy of God to unworthy people.

[11 : 52] And if you care to read this chapter throughout your leisure, you'll find the very solemn words recorded here. In this vision that God gave Isaiah the prophet.

When he was called of God to prophesy to be the Lord's mouthpiece, as it were, to the people, there were some solemn words.

And we have also a very vivid and solemn description of what sin is. And what a description the word of God gives.

What a solemn description of sin and sinners.

And surely it brings home to us. The sad state of man by nature. And the sinfulness of sin.

[13 : 09] And the solemn effect of it. That there's no soundness in us. And the picture is very vivid, isn't it?

The disease, the wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. What a picture. Setting forth a defilement of sin.

And yet there are many who are totally, totally ignorant of this. They do not feel the malady of their sin.

They do not know what it is to mourn over it. To feel the burden of it. And yet such is sin. But oh what a mercy, dear friends. If like the public, we come to know a little of what it is to feel the burden of sin.

And to have to mourn over this defilement of sin. And also to realise that we're so helpless and undone. We have no ability in ourselves to deliver us from the consequences of sin.

[14 : 13] But oh the mercy of God. But as we come to consider this word this afternoon. Which I hope we might be helped to do so for a little while.

Here's a word to sinners. You see it's not a word to the self-righteous, is it? It's not a word to those who are well satisfied if they can, as it were, keep the outside respectively clean.

No. It is a word to deep-died sinners. And how the text reminds us of the, what sin is and how deep-died sinners are.

Sins are scarlet. Red like crimson. And there is a meaning in this of being double-died as it were.

Double-died. And this crimson, this scarlet, is something which is almost impossible to remove.

[15 : 25] A dye they used in the Old Testament times. And the word crimson has that double effect, that double dye.

And this only goes to remind us of how deep-died sinners are. And it's certainly no ability whatever to deliver themselves from the defilement of sin.

And in the light of all this, oh, to view a little of the manifold mercy of God. The condescends of such sinners.

And that there is the promise of forgiveness. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.

Though they be red like crimson, and they shall be as wool. What a contrast. Deep-died sinners. And no tears can eradicate that dye whatever.

[16 : 37] And yet, through mercy and that wondrous provision the Lord has made for sinners, in the person of his beloved Son, and the virtue of his precious blood, such is the cleansing, such is the forgiveness, as though such is not sinned, white, as the driven snow should be as wool.

But now there is the gracious promise here, and the invitation to these sinners.

And I do feel we do well to take particular notice with regard to the gracious invitations in the gospel, and we have them in this prophecy of Isaiah.

And you notice they are two particular characters. Here is a word to sinners. Yes, and the word to those who are taught to feel their sin, and to know what it is to feel to be in such condition, as the word is described to us, having these wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.

No trace of healing whatever, but the opposite, putrefying. Such is sin.

[18 : 03] And to those who have been taught a little, to feel and to know what they are as sinners, will agree with the truth of it. They will not dispute what the word of God says.

We only have to look into our own hearts, and in the light of God's truth, to realise how defiling sin is. And what a sad condition we are by nature, through the Adam 4.

And yet it is to these sinners. And to these sinners who are taught to mourn over their sins, and to seek the mercy of God, like the publican did.

And here is this invitation to come down. Yes, it is the day of grace, for these poor sinners. It is still a time, when thou mayest be found, as we read in one's psalm.

And these are gracious words, aren't they? You see, when sin first entered into the garden of Eden, the word went forth, as it were, that they were to go.

[19 : 14] But they were turned out of the garden, they could no more enjoy that bliss, that they had enjoyed as creatures, being innocent, with no sin.

There was nothing to bar their communion with their creator, but they lost it. They sinned, and they were turned out of the garden.

There was no word come then, was there? Yet, even in the garden of Eden, there was an indication, a glimpse, as it were, of God's way of grace, his purposes toward his people, that, although the enemy had done such havoc, had wrought such evil, evil, in the seducing Eve, and Adam.

Yet, there was to be a provision made, whereby the serpent's head should be bruised. Yes, in other words, the works of the devil should be destroyed.

And so we read in the scripture, in the epistle to John, in this was manifested, the love of God. Yes, that the dear son of God came down to this world.

[20 : 34] Yes, to destroy the works of the devil. But you see, Adam and Eve had turned out. Then we would think of God's holy law.

There was no word come, was there, from Sinai, but rather, there were the threatening, you see, curses pronounced. There was the command of the law to be kept.

That which was to be done, the law that was to be honoured. Well now, we've transgressed God's holy law. And as such, we're under the condemnation of the broken law.

And while the law, in one sense, proclaims things to be done, we as transgressors have not done. Not done it.

We're guilty. We've transgressed God's holy law. And as such, there is the curse pronounced. But over against that dark background, we have the bright night of the gospel, as it were.

[21 : 48] And this gracious invitation, come down. We find this word, don't we, later on in this same prophecy, to thirsting souls.

Yes. To come, to come to the waters. Oh, the invitation there. And then we think too of the dear Saviour's words of invitation to the needy ones, the burdened ones, the bowed down ones, those who knew what it was to feel the burden of their sin and mourn over it.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. This word, come, belongs to the gospel. But, these invitations, now, who heeds such an invitation as this?

Surely, it will be those who are graciously taught of the Holy Spirit. Those who know something of what it is to feel the defilement of sin.

Those who long to know the blessing of forgiveness and pardon and cleansing. It will be a great word to such. It will be an encouraging word to such.

[23 : 15] And it is upon the ground of this that poor sinners at times are helped to plead before the throne of grace for mercy as sinners. So, God, in his condescending love, thus, speaks to sinners.

And, really, in one sense, I feel we have the essence of the gospel in this word. because the gospel is a gospel of invitation of grace, of mercy to sinners.

And, these are the ones that will heed it. Not the self-righteous, no. Not the self-satisfied. Not those who think by things that they may do, God will, as it were, overlook where they've failed and, in some way or other, be acceptable before God and come right at last.

That is one of the deceits of Satan. And such, you see, have no ear for the gracious invitation. But, oh, where the Lord is pleased to deal with sinners, their ears are open.

How they will hear, hear this word. And, it is indeed a word whereby they can venture, humbly, not presumptuously, but humbly, and plead what the Lord has revealed by his word.

[24 : 52] Come now. Because, the Lord who speaks this gracious invitation to poor, needy sinners, you will not turn them away.

I think of those beautiful words which were expressed by the Lord Jesus Christ. When he said this, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

You see, sometimes, when there's a sense of guilt and sin, Satan may come and bring all sorts of suggestions as it were, to discourage you to venture to the throne of grace, suggesting there's no mercy for such sinners as you may feel to be.

Sins are too deep died, sin. But now there's nothing of this in this word. No, it is a word to those who feel the guiltiest, those who feel the most defiled, those who have been made to realise how utterly helpless they are to deliver themselves from the defilement of sin.

And these words are spoken to these. And surely such sinners will have an ear, God will give an ear, to hear what God the Lord will speak.

[26 : 21] Though they feel if the Lord was to speak according to what they deserve, it must be to cast away forever. It must be in Solomon righteous judgment and to cut them off altogether.

But this is not the word of the gospel. The Lord speaking through his joyous gospel, it is a gracious invitation.

Calm down. But then there's this word here, let us reason together. I know I feel we need much wisdom to rightly consider these words.

because there is a sense of reasoning where it does not come into the vocabulary as it were of Christian experience.

Because things cannot be reasoned out. Faith believes, faith lays hold upon the truth. But they're deep mysteries.

[27 : 27] Therefore, there can be no, as it were, intellectual reasoning about things. But here is this word. Here the Lord is speaking through the prophet.

In this way, come now and let us reason together. How can we understand this? How do we need the Holy Spirit to give us a right understanding of what is meant here?

Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord. Well, surely it does show to us the position, as it were, of a poor sinner before God, before the throne of grace, with his plea.

Yes, I think I quoted those words in Job this morning, where Job said, oh that I knew where I might find him. I might come into his seat, I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth in arguments.

That did not mean that Job, as it were, would argue with the Lord, no, but rather to plead. Yes, as a suppliant. God's mercy.

[28 : 46] And so you see it is upon that ground there is, as it were, this expression, let us reason together. But in particularly I feel it does show us this, how the Lord condescends to his people.

He comes, as it were, right down to where they are. This together. We speak of distance. We speak of the tremendous distance that sinners effected.

But here, here is this word together. Oh, how this does point to the throne of grace. The mercy seat, doesn't it?

God gave Moses the instructions with regard to the building of the tabernacle and the ark and the mercy seat.

God gave Moses that wonderful promise that he said, there will I meet thee. It was there that poor sinners and God could come together, as it were.

[29 : 55] as it were a meeting place. Let us reason that together, saith the Lord, yes, condescension, amazing condescension on the part of the Lord and what a privilege for poor sinners.

And how this points to the Lord Jesus Christ, doesn't it? He who came right down into this earth, death. Yes, and as he took upon himself our nature, he was made sin for us who knew no sin.

You see, the sins of the whole church were laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ. He stood in the sinner's place and said, he suffered the penalty, made a way whereby mercy could flow and a way whereby far off sinners could be brought nigh, even so nigh.

as to be found together with God, as it were. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. In the chapter which we read just now, we have almost a parallel word really, where the Lord speaks to his unworthy people.

And in that chapter where we read it, and as we come to the end of the chapter, there's a word concerning sinners. And there was a word of solemn reproof to Jacob and Israel that they're not caught upon God as they ought to have done.

[31 : 33] They've been weary of him. They had transgressed in so many ways. words. And then the Lord gives this word, and how amazing it is, words to sinners, I, even I, am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

Then there's this word that follows, put me in remembrance, let us plead together. Declare thou that thou mayest be justified.

Now, there's no room there for self-justification, not like the Pharisee, no. But you see, through the condescending mercy of God, he so condescends to his people that he speaks to them thus, put me in remembrance.

And here, come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord. Not that the Lord can forget, no. His people are ever upon his mind and heart.

But he condescends to be reminded, as it were, of his own mercy, and his own promise. Put me in remembrance, and let us plead together.

[32 : 59] Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord. Or that we might be directed by fate of view, the wonder of this, the mercy of this.

Sinners, though so far off, yet made so nigh. I think of that word in the epistle, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh.

Yes, and made nigh by the blood of the cross. That is the blood of Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross. And it is in this way, there's a coming together between an offended God and offending sinners.

And then there is this wonderful word of forgiveness, of pardon, of cleansing. And now we do need that forgiveness, don't we?

We need our sins to be forgiven. You see, defilement, it is solemn. And the word of God tells us that nothing that defiles can enter heaven.

[34 : 15] How then can sinners who are so defiled by sin enter heaven? How can they ever hope to enter heaven? Well, this is the ground of the home. That there's a way whereby sins can be washed away.

That the defilement to be forever removed. And how effectual. And so then as we go through this text, we find these words, though your sins be as scarlet, though they be red like crimson.

You see, though you're such a deep dyed sinner, although sin is such an evil thing, that it is so defiling, that it is that which has died so deep as it were, not just as it were a blot or two, but no, a deep dye.

There's altogether beyond man's ability to eradicate. Though your sins be as scarlet, though they be red like crimson. And sometimes it is one of the wiles of the devil to discourage his dear people, the people of God, I mean.

What he suggests with regard to their sin, it is so bad. They have sinned so grossly. And while he's the author of sin, how he often in his way of temptation, harassment, reminds the Lord's dear people of their failings.

[35 : 57] sin, and as it were, a catalogue of their sins. Was it not Luther saw this in the vision, in his dream? Satan had got a long list of all the sins that Luther had committed.

But Luther was helped to answer the devil, to write at the bottom the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son sendeth all sins. And here is that mercy, and the effectiveness of that cleansing.

Not, as it were, to be partially cleansed, but completely cleansed. So there shall be no spot or stain, or any such thing.

Though your sins be as scarlet, and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow, they shall be as wool. I suppose the whiteness of snow reminds us of the purity, when the snow first descends upon the earth, how pure it is, how white it is.

And whatever white you may compare to the snow, it's not as white as the snow. Now the Holy Spirit uses this expression here through the prophet to set forth the wonderful mercy and the ability of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners, and the virtue of his precious blood.

[37 : 38] It takes it every stain. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as war.

Well, what a word. What a gracious, condescending invitation. And what a mercy, dear friends, if at times there is not within the heart that gracious response.

You have to venture, like the poor public, with all guilt and sin and unworthiness, and to plead with the Lord upon the ground of his mercy.

Well, the Lord spoke for the prophet, it. And it is a part of God's word, and it is written for the encouragement of poor sinners, down to the ages.

And the wonderful mercy is this, dear friends, that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ still atones for sin. Now, it can never lose its power.

[38 : 54] How the writer points that out, doesn't he, the hymns he wrote, until the church of Christ shall be saved to sin no more.

It's so complete. It is so effectual. And you see, such is the cleansing.

You see, there's such a contrast, isn't there? Scarlet, white as snow, crimson as wool, and so deep-dyed, yet, now so pure, so completely cleansed.

And this is set forth, I feel, and I must refer again to that word which we read together. And you will notice there that which reminds us of a precious truth.

And it is beyond our poor minds to really fully grasp, and yet, the mercy of it. I am he that blotted out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins.

[40 : 02] Not remember thy sins. Dear Hezekiah, had a glimpse of this, didn't he? When he said, thou hast put all my sins behind thy bank.

Not to be remembered anymore. Never to be remembered against the sinner. or how we do need faith to lay hold upon these truths.

And again, surely, if we have been taught to feel our need, we should desire to know this blessing. And you see, is the word, not all together for the past, is it?

But for the present, come now. And how true it is that poor sinners have to come, and come again as it were. And now it is a great truth that can never be overturned, and that is that the sins of the whole church have been put away in the sacrifice, by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No more to be brought against the church, but then you see the experience of God's dear people as they journey on through this wilderness world, having a sinful nature, there's still the old man of sin, there's still those sinful workings in the heart by nature, what a provision the Lord has made, that poor sinners can come, and come again, and yet again as it were, come now let us reason together, how the dear psalmist had to realise the value of this, didn't he, when he was so guilty, in the sin which he had committed, and how it was sin that was, and how defiling it was, how God dishonouring it was, how it was something which would cause the enemies to blaspheme, and how he needed

[42 : 15] God's mercy, and how he earnestly pleaded, didn't he, you read Psalm 51, and we think of the ground of his plea here, don't we, he says, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, purge me with the hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, oh that was what the dear man felt to lead, he felt the defilement of sin, he realised that the Lord only through his mercy could put away that sin, and he had that encouraging word from the prophet didn't he, although he had been convinced of his sins with the prophet, yet the Lord hath put away thy sin, and all the magnitude of the mercy, it does remind us of that great word we read in the prophet Micah I think it is, who is a God like unto thee that poundeth iniquity, that passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage, he retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy, and can we not discern here dear friends, how the

Lord does delight in mercy, here is a word spoken to unworthy sinners, he did not in mercy, he retaineth his anger forever, God is angry with the wicked every day we read, and sin angers God, it is against God, it is that which brings just condemnation, but in that wonderful provision that the Lord has made, in the salvation of his people, by his grace for the Lord Jesus Christ, he delighted in mercy, he delighted to bestow these gospel blessings, and that which poor needy sinners so much feel to need, yes, feelings often undone through sin, feelings often defiled through sin, yet there is this cleansing, yes, that way whereby these scarlet sins, these double-dyed sins, double-dyed sinners, shall be washed and made clean, and acceptable before a holy God through the virtue of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus

Christ, and because of that wonderful fountain, his hope of a sin and uncleanness, as expressed in Zechariah's prophecy, come down, and let us reason together as saith the Lord, I feel words will fail to set forth the condescending mercy here, to sinners, and yet, it inspires hope, doesn't it?

Yes, it inspires a humble hope in poor sinners, those who feel to be guilty, those who feel to be defiled by sin, it inspires a hope, it gives them a ground, as it were, to venture with their plea, and so we see again how the dear publican, as he cried unto God for mercy, you see, there was a foundation for that plea, it was as though the poor publican had a glimpse, as it were, of the fullness of God's mercy, although on the one hand he felt so much the burden of his sin, and in such contrast to the holiness of God, yet all the boundless mercy of God, and here it is expressed, the word is full of mercy, it is full of forgiveness, it is full of pity, yes, and it is full of blessing, and surely dear friends, as we try and think of these things, does it not cause a desire to spring up in the heart, oh to feel the blessing of it, to know the mercy of it, yes, to feel it, to feel the virtue of that precious blood, to know what it is, to be cleansed in that fountain, come now, let us reason together, saith the

Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as warm, and how faithful God the Father is to his dear son, yes, in view of that atoning sacrifice, so that we have that word in the epistle of John, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, what a beautiful word, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, forgiveness, and that is, the faithfulness of God to his son, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, that is, faithful and just to his beloved son, seeing that he has accomplished that work of salvation, might aware of forgiveness, shed his precious blood, poured out his blood, yes, for the remission of the sins of all his dear people, and so upon the ground of this, we have this beautiful word, both by way of invitation, and also of a precious promise, come now, and let us reason together, saith the

[48 : 37] Lord, you see, the Lord speaks, it is no imagination, it is not Isaiah's word, Isaiah was the Lord's mouthpiece, although on the one hand, Isaiah had to speak the word of the Lord, by way of reproof and rebuke, and threaten chastings, upon God's people of sinners, yet over against all this, was the mercy of God, and this is a wonderful word to consider, isn't it, in the light of baseback's nightings, come now, as a reason together, saith the Lord, when the prodigal ventured to return to his father's house, what forgiveness was made known to him, and so soon, the wretched son could scarcely confess his faults, as it were, his sins, he was in the embrace of the father, and this signifies the forgiving love of God to his people, yes, and these unworthy prodigals, those baseback sniders, come to him, let his reason together, saith the

Christ is a complete and perfect cleansing. And while we think of the shared blood of the dear Redeemer, how it becomes us to realise the sacredness of this, surely as we try and think of the shared blood of the dear Redeemer, it is as though we tread holy ground, don't we?

There's a way, yes, a way of access to the throne of grace, a way whereby poor sinners can, as it were, in the light of this word here, God and sinners commune together, as it were, and in the light of his mercy, in the hope of forgiveness and in the promise of it.

May the Lord bless to our souls his own word. omnium is This series by seeing hymn number 779, the tune Adoration 608.

[illegible]

[56 : 33] L' universities and top e e a Amen.

Amen.