

110. Of Sin.

Sin is the transgression of the Law. *1 John 3, 4.*

Many think that God has given His Law that we should be justified by fulfilment of it, by perfectly obeying all its commandments. But this is not so, although it seems to be self-evident. Of course, God wants to have us keep His commandments; but He knows better than we do ourselves that in our natural state we are not able to keep them at all as He wants us to keep them, and that even when we have been born again and have become new creatures, we can keep them only imperfectly. Yet the Law is very important. We should always thank God for giving us His holy Law; for "by the Law is the knowledge of sin."

The Law is a clean mirror, which shows us our sins and transgressions! If we honestly examine our hearts and our lives in the mirror of God's holy Law, we shall see innumerable sins staring at us and condemning us. Who among us can truthfully say that he is unpolluted by sin?

Have you seen your true image in the mirror of God's holy Law? Has the picture made you tremble? Have you come to a realization of the awfulness of sin? Moses, the man of God, says in the Ninetieth Psalm: "We are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Oh, what an awful day will that great Last Day be for the sinner when he must give account of every idle word, when his whole life, with all evil thoughts, sinful desires, and works, even the secret sins, will be revealed! Or do you imagine that God will overlook this sin and that because, though you broke only one commandment, as you think, you tried to keep the rest? Listen! The Ten Commandments are but as ten links in a chain. Break but one, and you have violated the whole Law, and the divine curse rests upon you. "Whosoever shall keep the whole Law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." If you have no substitute to avert the wrath of God, you are doomed. For the Law only reveals our sins; it cannot save us from them. It shows us our disease, but gives no cure. Have you come to a conviction of your sins? Do you tremblingly ask, "Is there no help?"

Prayer.

Holy and almighty God, Thy Law is a mirror wherein we behold our sinful image. But the mirror cannot cleanse us; it damns us; it causes us to cry out, "I am lost!" We therefore flee from the Law to Thy mercy, which is revealed in the Gospel, and pray Thee: O Thou merciful God, who forgivest iniquity and transgression to all who truly repent, create in us a broken and contrite heart that we may sincerely lament our sins and flee to Thee in order to obtain from Thee full remission of our sins through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, our only Mediator and Substitute. Amen.

There's no atonement but His cross,
All earthly means are death and loss:
And through that cross my soul shall stand
Among the just at God's right hand.

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