

IV. For convincing a man of sin, righteousness, and judgment, by the gospel.

As for convincing a man of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, by the gospel, or covenant of grace, he must understand three things: 1. That not believing in Jesus Christ, or refusing of the covenant of grace offered in him, is a greater and more dangerous sin than all other sins against the law; because the hearers of the gospel, not believing in Christ, do reject God's mercy in Christ, the only way of freedom from sin and wrath, and will not yield to be reconciled to God. 2. Next, he must understand, that perfect remission of sin, and true righteousness, is to be had only by faith in Jesus; because God requireth no other conditions but faith; and testifies from heaven, that he is well pleased to justify sinners upon this condition, 3. He must understand, that upon righteousness received by faith, judgment shall follow, on the one hand, to the destroying of the works of the devil in the believer, and to the perfecting of the work of sanctification in him, with power: and that, upon refusing to take righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ, judgment shall follow, on the other hand, to the condemnation of the misbeliever, and destroying of him with Satan and his servants for ever.

For this end, let these passages of Scripture, among many others, serve to make the greatness of the sin of not believing in Christ appear; or, to make the greatness of the sin of refusing of the covenant of grace offered to us in the offering of Christ unto us appear; let the fair offer of grace be looked upon as it is made, Isa. lv. 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me, (saith the Lord:) hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* That is, If ye will believe me, and be reconciled to me, I will, by covenant, give unto you Christ, and all saving graces in him: repeated Acts xiii. 34.

Again, consider, that this general offer in substance is equivalent to a special offer made to every one in particular; as appeareth by the apostle's making use of it, Acts xvi. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* The reason of which offer is given, John iii. 16. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Seeing then this great salvation is offered in the Lord Jesus, whosoever believeth not in him, but looks for happiness some other way, what doth he else but *observe lying vanities, and forsake his own mercy*, which he might have had in Christ? Jonah ii. 8, 9. What doth he else but blaspheme God in his heart? as it is said, 1 John v. 10, 11. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.* And that no sin against the law is like unto this sin, Christ testifies, John xv. 23. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.* This may convince a man of the greatness of this sin of not, believing in Christ.