

Wash make you clean

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[0 : 0 0] against us mind not form a sense thy tender mercies show let them prevent us speedily for we are brought very low for thy name's glory help us and we would bless thy name that thou hast given this argument unto thy note to use when nothing else could be used even thy name's glory and we beseech of thee to teach us that we may in some measure apprehend the meaning of this the meaning of thy name's glory on account of which thy people in all ages besought thy hand may we be enabled by thy grace to base our petitions and to be strengthened in heart on account of thy name's glory and to this end blessed one enlighten us in the knowledge of him in whom thy name is revealed revealed in such a way as to be a firm and immovable ground for those who plead with thee may we be enlightened may we be enlightened in the knowledge of him who is the brightness of thy glory and the express image of thy person who did say and does say

I have revealed thy name to the men thou gavest me out of the world thine they were and thou gavest them me and they have kept thy word may the blessed spirit whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto such as we may he take of these things this day and show them unto us glorifying Christ in us taking away the veil from our heart and giving us to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ we would acknowledge how that the unworthiness of such a privilege we would confess our sins our iniquities we would confess the fact that we have ample evidence to show that whatever thou wilt give us we will but abuse it unless thyself will take care of it and we would bless thee for this provision of the covenant of grace that there are certain things that are beyond man's abuse certain things that cannot be destroyed certain things that are made sure and certain in the immutable counsel of the most kind hence it is written ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God this cannot be destroyed this cannot be destroyed

O blessed one we would exalt thy name for the benefits of the covenant of grace for its superiority over the first covenant in the first covenant of grace in the first covenant of grace in the second in the second it cannot it is hid with Christ in God may our soul take courage from this and may we be enabled by a holy boldness to draw near unto thee as thou art seated on a throne of grace inviting and commanding us to come as we are that we may experience the blessedness of the man whom thou dost choose the man whom thou makest to draw near unto thee bless us each one we pray thou knowest the condition of each one of us the secret lies of the heart are not hidden from thee thou searchest the heart thou tryest the reins of the children of man thou knowest blessed one what our needs are and thou art able to supply them all according to thy riches in glory through Christ Jesus may we have a true consciousness of our needs being supplied this day supplied out of the unsearchable riches of Christ even the riches of thy grace and glory bless thy word to us to this end blessed whoever is proclaimed this day may it go forth as a powerful word a word accompanied by by

God's authority a word witnessing in the conscience and the hearts of many thou knowest blessed one what our condition is not only as individuals not as only as a congregation but as a generation to the ends of the earth may it please in this dark and cloudy day to make known what thou canst do as the God of all grace be with us now and be with all whom we should commit unto thee remember those who are denied our privileges those known to us and those unknown to us do thou bless them where they are comforting their heart in the grace which is in Christ Jesus lift upon us the light of thy countenance take away sin and accept of us in the beloved in whom thou shalt have the praise amen where we may now for a little consider as we shall be enabled words you will find in the chapter we read together the book of the prophet

Isaiah chapter 1 and we may read again at verse 16 Isaiah chapter 1 at verse 16 wash you make you clean put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes cease to do evil learn to do well seek judgment relieve the oppressed judge the fatherless plead for the widow come now and let us

reason together saith the Lord though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wood if he be willing and obedient he shall eat the good of the land but if he refuse and rebelled he shall be devoured with the sword for the mouth of the Lord have spoken it in view of the context in which these words appear they are of more than ordinary interest

[10 : 57] God brings certain definite charges against Israel and they are grave charges they are accused of ingratitude and repent I have nourished saith God I have nourished and brought up children and what did they do they rebelled against me and not only was this bad considered in itself but it was aggravated by the fact that it was of long continued duration the Lord had dealt with them to bring them back from their wanderings to bring them under his own subjection but alas it now looks as if all these chastisement all this care had gone for nothing why should he be smitten anymore for it would seem that the effect of this mighty as well as of the manifestation of God's goodness are one and the same why should he be smitten anymore he will be more more and more this is a very serious comment on our nature as such this brings to light the ingrained ungodliness of the human heart the enmity of the human mind against

God even despite the lavish manifestation of God's goodness upon man the heart is still unenmity with God not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be now the question arises if the goodness of God had not the effect on these people of bringing them ingratitude to God and of keeping them in the way of obedience to his will and if God's chastisement for disobedience had failed to produce the desired result what could do it then is the case absolutely without the rest is there anything that can so touch and transform the heart of man has to bring him into willing obedience to

God if he be willing and obedient that is the end to which God's dealings with his people pointed if he be willing and obedient if he will render willing obedience then he shall eat the good of the land but if he refuse and rebel as he have been doing he shall be consumed by the sword for the mouth of the Lord have spoken it now these are the two alternatives and that exhausts the whole plane of thought in this connection there is nothing else left if he be willing and obedient on the one hand or on the other if he refuse and rebel and one of these schemes you must do one or other of these two attitudes you must take out and you must do it now of course he have always been doing it there can be no hiatus in the doing of this it is being done all the time by everyone without a single exception we are either willing and obedient or else we refuse and revenge is there can there be anything to bring us all from a position of being rebellious and of refusing what

God has to say to a position of willing obedience now it is in answer to this that we have God's gracious invitation to his people here come now and let us reason now the words in particular which were before my mind are these let us reason let us reason together it is the almighty who is speaking the one who is bringing these definite and grave charges against this people it is he who says come and let us reason let us reason together and the special thoughts that occur to me in connection with this may be grouped under two heads first in what this reasoning does not consist God commands people and invites them graciously to come and reason that doesn't mean to say that they can reason any way they please it does not mean to say that they may reason with certain ends in you certain ends in you they must have but these ends are set by God not by them and secondly what this reasoning consists in first and the negative aspect of the question let us reason together they were not to reason in order to try and change God's presence they are not invited to reason in this way yet this is expressly prohibited now we mention that because this is the only reasoning that the human heart knows of the only mode of reasoning it can adopt in relation to [20 : 45] God have not noticed in yourself that there is a strong tendency in your being to reason with God but not in the way that God requires and commands a strong tendency to reason with him that he might change his purpose a strong tendency shall we say to make God compromise on certain questions of course it is not presented to the mind in that light it may have a very possible appearance but this is the very nature of it this is the essence of it that man would like to reason with

God so that God himself would change a bit here and a bit there this is the only type of confidence that is known to men in the world see when men who differ come together as they do often nowadays they try to find a solution as they say to certain problems they try to reason out their difficulties to iron them out to find some point on which they can agree but there are disagreements only to appearance now they conferred with one another in order to find some ground of agreement

but how do they do that well the usual way is the only way is that one party will compromise a bit here the other party will compromise a bit there so by cutting your rough corners makes I at last to come to a basis of agreement but don't you see that this is aligned at by compromise on both sides now that is the type of conference that is known in politics and last it is the type of conference that is known in the church and has been known in the church from the beginning conference to compromise and compromise is the root of all you can never arrive at truth in that way you are only sacrificing the truth one party sacrifice a bit here that it has room that it is the truth to begin with the other party have been there and so the confidence goes on and if at last they arrive at some sort of agreement it is hailed as being a special manifestation of God's kindness to them when it has been arrived at by sacrifice of the truth now such a confidence is good for nothing because it's worth nothing though that type of confidence is not permitted with God it is not a compromise in which compromise place any part whatsoever it is not permitted to man to come and say to God now if this were changed if that were changed I could see things better I could accept things more wholeheartedly if this little bit was taken out here that little bit taken out there oh no no when when God calls man to reason he calls him to reason on God's grounds and on northern ground whatsoever and that incidentally is what is very often forgotten although God graciously condescends to reason with man he doesn't reason with man on equal terms as it were as if man had a right to bring forward his terms and commend them to God although this must be done from beginning to end on God's terms and that is the very meaning of the covenant under which or on the basis of which God invites man to him God commands man to come there may be some mistaken ideas in our mind in connection with the meaning of a covenant what does it actually mean it means agreement yes it means that two parties have come to terms by which they promise to abide yes but among men the parties are of e for safety if [26 : 49] I make a covenant with you I make it with you as you reap one if you make a covenant with me you make it with me as my reap one you have the right to suggest what the covenant should be what his term should be and I have the right to suggest what his term should be but it is not so with God when God comes to make covenant with man he doesn't say to man now do you think that's all right or shall we change it here and change it there no it is imposed upon man imposed upon him by superior authority not by one of equal status not by one with whom we can say this that and the next to whom we can bring our own suggestions no the word covenant never meant that it means

God's terms reveal to man to which man must settle if he is to be a beneficiary of this covenant he must settle it man they are God's terms know when God commands man to come and reason he commands man to reason on God's terms and it is nothing short of blasphemy to entertain the idea of reasoning with God on any other terms on any other terms but that is precisely what you find man doing he takes what suits him at least this is what it has to do he takes what suits him of God's terms and ignores the rest rest now you remember that we are told of Israel that at a certain time when he slew them then they showed a desire to seek him they sought him early they remembered that God was the rock to him they came but they were unfaithful unsteadfast and perhigilous they in his covenant were they were not faithful in the covenant they were not sincere in other words they tried to take part of

God's turn some of them and leave others that's the height of ungodliness as it is the height of insincerity let us reason but reason on my terms not of use it does not conflict in an attempt to compromise with God this reasoning does not mean and cannot mean that God is to change one iota from what he is and what he has revealed neither does it mean that the charges are to be ignored or minimized now that is something to learn it is much to learn the charges are not to be ignored what

God has said must stand they were rebellious they were ungrateful they were companions of thieves and none of that is to be set aside none of it to be ignored none of it to be minimized the charges have to be faced in all their gravity they must be faced the reasoning with God does not consist in trying to show that things are not as bad as they look that things are not as bad as God's charges would make them out to be God will not reason with anyone with that in view they have to be faced in all their magnitude in all their enormity in all their guilt they have to be faced and the very attempt to sidetrack or to minimize

[32 : 37] God's charges against us is itself proof positive that we are not sincere in no reasoning with God it shows the hollowness of our confessions the insincerity of our action the first sign and

the first essential sign of being sincere with God in reasoning with him is to acknowledge God's charges against us to acknowledge them for what they are in as far as we are capable of understanding them let us reason but not to explain away what has already been said not to show that the case is not as black as it looks it is unspeakably black more more more hairs than words than words can make it the case of

God against you is such that it leaves you on your side no ground whatsoever on which you can open your mouth why was the law given it was given because of translation that every mouth might be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God and the Lord does that not once or twice he does that always God's charges against man as a sinner are such that they leave no room for man to open his mouth every mouth is stopped the whole world becomes guilty before

God the whole world brought in guilty before God hence on this ground there is no room to speak we cannot start arguing or reasoning with God and say things are not as bad as they say they are much worse than they say now the positive side let us reason on what ground how are they going to reason at all well the first ground is the obvious one that God commands it come and let us reason reason this has all the authority of

God's word it is God who speaks it is he who says come and let us reason let us reason it is he in other words who gives the guilty permission to speak he is the judge it it is his peregry to rule in court and when man is brought in guilty his first plea is or should be may I speak may I be permitted to speak and what does the judge say yes come and let us reason that is the very reason that this conference has been called at all that you may be permitted to speak what have you to say oh well he can well repeat the words of another

I have perverted that which is good and it has not profited me I have that to say yes I have perverted that which is good it has not profited me and what is that it is whole hearted agreement with God's terms with God's own burden it hasn't profited me it is not only an evil thing but it is also a bitter thing to sin against God looking at it from that angle what have you to sin it is a bitter thing to sin against God but it is more than that and it is not that first it is a bitter thing it is a bitter thing because it is an evil thing it is an evil thing it shows ingratitude to to the kindest benefact it shows ingratitude to

[39 : 15] God it shows a perverse will it shows a mind at enmity with God let us reason now your reason in here consists in being in being brought to see the righteousness the justice of God's charges against you may I be permitted to speak in other words to justify God to show forth us justice in the charges he has brought against there is no denial in the soul that is taught of God no denial of what

God has to say against him but secondly he he is permitted to say this not only to acknowledge his guilt but he is permitted to reason thus my guilt may be so great that there can't be no hope in this case at all that there can't be no hope for me see the church in another place argued like that we have loved we have we have loved idols and after them we will go why because there is no hope now that is how the church argued at one time but that was false argument it was sophistry God says the case is indeed bad your sins witnessed against you your iniquities like the wind have carried you away nevertheless do your sins be scarlet that's God speaking in the confidence speaking to the one who says guilt may have mounted up to such a height that there is no no hope though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow and there are many things that suggest themselves to to many things there is the enormity of guilt there are special aggravations in connection with it but when man has said all he can say about his guilt the word still comes forth from

God though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow though they be red like crimson and that to them all the aggravations conceive but that doesn't change the world of the eternal God of the Holy One of Israel but perhaps the greatest aggravation of all is this the very common one namely our unconsciousness of our sins will

God forgive sin but has attached to them this particular aggravation a hardness of heart a dullness of understanding a lack of truth concern about it and what is more a lack of true sorrow on account of it that is indeed a great aggravation about sin perhaps the greatest of all our unconsciousness our concern but then where shall we get concerned where shall conscience be made tender where shall we get the right attitude of mind towards those sins come now and let us reason together it is the height of insanity to think that your heart may be prepared first and then you will come to

[45 : 08] God as he says as he commands the coming and the preparation are simultaneous you cannot get a prepared heart away from God nor can you get a tender conscience nor can you get an enlightened understanding all these are gifts of God and they are given in connection with communion let us reason let us reason on my terms let us reason with you conscious of what you are saying in your reasoning and all that I give and I give freely on these grounds that you come to me come now come now you see make you clean cease to do evil learn to do well if he be willing and obedient he shall eat the good of the land but between these we have this come now come now not come then not when you have washed and made clean not when you have become willing and obedient not come then it's come now this is the prerequisite to it all come now and then other things will be looked after but nothing can be looked after nothing can be taken care of until first you come and we reason together though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow though they be as crimson they shall be like poor it doesn't matter what they are it doesn't matter what aggravation is at hand sin will be pardoned and

God God will pardon all who come to him without a single exception him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out I will pardon sin I will purge away unrighteousness in fact I will make all who come meet or suitable suited to communion with myself come and let us reason you can see from here the force of Job complained when he said oh that I knew where I might find him I would come unto his seat

I would fill my mouth with arguments he wouldn't put me away from him yeah but he would strengthen me come now let us reason you and I that's what God says you and I we shall reason this point and a blessed confidence this is a blessed man he is to whom the Lord leads to the conference who hears him speaking from above the mercy go go thy sins be forgiven go in peace let us pray oh Lord be merciful unto us grant us thy fame grant us thy blessing the blessing of the man whose sins are forgiven and whose iniquities are pardoned the man to whom the Lord doth not impute his sin and grant us the blessing of those who are renewed in the spirit of their mind the blessing of those who are justified adopted and sanctified who are indeed being made made for the enjoyment of God to all eternity accept of us for giving us all our sins for the Redeemer's sake Amen