



Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices

To keep saints sad, doubting, and questioning: Pt. 6

Introduction

Katy and I met and started dating right before my sophomore year in college. I initially saw her at VBS, because I was working as an intern at a Baptist church in her hometown. The secretary introduced us the following week. We were both interested in each other, and our dates became longer and more frequent. By Halloween, we were getting pretty serious and conversations about marriage and future plans were coming up. As sincere as I was in those conversations, I experienced an inner conflict and crisis that led me to break up with her. *(If you're curious, I can tell you later. Although I'm passionate about addressing the issue, it would distract from the main point here!)*

On Halloween, her job always had a booth at the Trunk or Treat Festival, and she had dressed up as Pinterest (it was cute!). She drove to Sterling and brought me a present. While there, I broke up with her. She was crushed, drove away, and ended up not being able to go to the Trunk or Treat. She was close with her bosses, and they left the festival to comfort her! She was house-sitting for a friend in our church, and they brought ice cream to her. During all of this, I was experiencing an even bigger crisis. Breaking up with her didn't help me, it made it worse! I called my dad; he rebuked me, talked sense into me, and then I decided to call Katy. Everyone gave her this advice: "Don't take him back... If you do, make him pay for it! Make him gravel, and work, and come back begging. You need to make him feel it." Thankfully, she didn't take their advice. We met up, and I experienced one of the most profound moments of forgiveness and free grace that I can remember – no strings attached.

We can find ourselves in a similar situation in our relationship with the Lord. Satan will try convincing us that unless we gravel, suffer, wail, and inflict pain to ourselves, we won't be welcomed back by Jesus. He will convince us that we need to prepare and qualify ourselves before approaching him.

Device: "By suggesting to sinners that they must first make preparations before coming to Christ."

Definition: Says Satan, "You are not prepared to entertain Christ; you are not humbled enough, nor are you justified to come into his presence yet. You are not heart-sick of sin; you have not been as overwhelmed by the horrors and terrors of your sin as other true saints have been before they came to Christ; you have not yet stopped sinning! Therefore, you must stay here and remain away until you are prepared and qualified to go into God's presence and receive the Lord Jesus."

***What are some examples of the ways you have felt pressure to 'clean yourself up' – or prepare yourself – before coming/returning to Christ?**

John 4:39-42: Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So, when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the savior of the world."

**According to John's Gospel, what was required for these sinful Samaritans to come to Jesus?*

Remedies

- 1. Consider that many other saints have not been as prepared and qualified as Satan suggests, that have, nonetheless, received Christ, believed in Christ, and been saved by Christ.**

"Matthew was called while sitting at the tax collector's booth, and there was such power in Christ's call that made him immediately follow Christ (Matt. 9:9). We read not of any horrors or terrors that he was under before his being called to Christ. What preparations and qualifications were found in Zacchaeus, Paul, the jailor, and Lydia before their conversion?"

"God is a free agent to work by law or gospel, by smiles or frowns, by presenting hell or heaven to sinner's souls. God thunders from mount Sinai upon some souls and conquers them by thundering. God speaks to others in a still voice, and by that conquers them."

**Were you brought to Christ by the law or gospel? What do you think he means in this distinction?*

"You who are brought to Christ by the law, do not judge and condemn those who are brought to Christ by the gospel; and you who are brought to Christ by the gospel, do not despise those who are brought to Christ by the law. Some are brought to Christ by fire, storms, and tempests; others by more easy and gentle gales of the Spirit. The Spirit is free in the works of conversion, and as with the wind, it blows when, where, and how it pleases."

"Happy are those souls that are brought to Christ, whether it be in winter's night or in summer's day."

**Why is this mindset toxic and dangerous to our spirituality?*

**When people in your life sin against you, how often do you want them 'to be punished' before you receive them and forgive them? What does this reveal about our hearts?*

- 2. The Lord does not, in any portion of scripture, require such preparations and qualifications before people come to, believe in, or embrace the Lord Jesus Christ.**

"Believing in Christ is the great thing that God presses upon sinners throughout the Scriptures, as all know that know anything of Scripture."

"But some will object: 'Does not Christ say, Come to me all who labor and are heaven laden, and I will give you rest?' To this I shall give three answers."

"**First**, though the invitation is to those that 'labor and are heavy laden,' yet the promise of giving rest is made in respond to the 'coming' and 'believing'."

“Second, the only thing this scripture proves is that all who labor under sin as a heavy burden and who are laden with their guilt of sin and their sense of God’s displeasure ought to come to Christ for rest.”

“Poor sinners, when they are under the sense of their sin and the wrath of God, are prone to run from creature to creature, from duty to duty, and from ordinance to ordinance, to find rest... But here, the Lord sweetly invites them; to encourage them, he engages himself to give them rest... I will not show you rest, nor barely tell you of rest – but ‘I will give you rest.’ I am faithfulness itself, and I cannot lie. I – that have the greatest power to give it, the greatest will to give it, and the greatest right to give it – bid you to ‘Come, heavy laden sinners, and I will give you rest.’

“Rest is the most desirable good, the most suitable good, and to you the greatest good... I will give you peace with God and peace with conscience; I will turn your storm into an everlasting calm; I will give you such rest, which the world can neither give to you nor take from you.”

***What do you normally run to for rest? How is Christ’s rest better?**

“Third, no one scripture speaks out the whole mind of God; therefore, compare this one with those several scriptures that say otherwise, and it will clearly appear that regardless of their terrors and horrors, if they come to Christ, they will be received and embraced by the Lord Jesus Christ.”

- 3. Consider that all that trouble, sorrow, shame, and mourning for sin, which is acceptable and delightful to God, flows from faith in Christ, as the stream does from the fountain, as the branch does from the root, as the effect does from the cause.**

Zechariah 12:10: They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him.

“All gospel mourning flows from believing; they shall first look, and then they shall mourn.”

“All who know anything about the gospel, know this, that ‘whatever is not of faith is sin,’ (Rom. 14:33). Until men have faith in Christ, their best services are but splendid sins!”

***How does this shape the way we understand and proclaim the need for repentance?**

Conclusion

***Prayer Requests for the Deaf and Remedies in your lives, as well as in those you know & love.**