

# **The Kingdom of God**

by

**George  
Whitefield**

*The Kingdom of GOD.*

A

**SERMON**

Preached on SABBATH Evening,

SEPTEMBER 13th, 1741.

IN THE

*High-Church-Yard*

OF

**GLASGOW,**

Upon ROM. xiv. 17.

BY THE Reverend  
MR. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

*Taken from his own Mouth, and published at the earnest Desire of many of his Hearers.*

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*There is in the Press, and speedily will be published, The Prodigal's Son, a Sermon preached on Friday Afternoon in the High-Church-Yard of Glasgow. By the Reverend Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.*

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*The Kingdom of God.*

A

## SERMON,

ROM. xiv. 17.

*For the Kingdom of God, is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*

THO' we all profess to own one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, tho' *Jesus Christ* never was, and never will be divided in himself; yet the followers of *Jesus Christ* have in all Ages been sadly divided among themselves. And what has rendered the Case the more to be pitied, is that they have generally been divided about the Circumstantials of Religion, they have generally received one another to doubtful Disputation, and imbittered one another's Hearts, by talking about these things they might either do or not do, either know or not know, and yet at the same time be the true followers of the meek

A 2

and

and lowly *Jesus*. I am verily perswaded that this is the great Artifice and Engine of the Devil, he knows if he can divide Christians, he shall get the better of them; and therefore he endeavours to sow the Tares of Division among them, in order to make them a common Prey to their Enemies. And indeed this *God* hath permitted in all Ages of the Church. In Consequence of this, the early Ages of Christianity were not altogether free of it. No, this Text gives us a pregnant and sufficient Proof of it.

It seems the first Converts of Christi-a nity consisted of two sorts of People; either those that were Jews before they commenced Christians, or those who were Heathens, and never had been subject to the Law of *Moses*. but were converted from a State of Gentilism, from a State of heathenish Darkness, and brought

to the marvellous Gospel Light. The first of these knowing that every Rite, every Ceremony of the Law of *Moses*, had a Divine image, a Divine Superscription wrought upon it; they thought themselves obliged, notwithstanding they believed in the *Lord Jesus Christ*, to abstain from such Meats and Drinks which were forbidden, and to submit to such Festivals which were enjoined by the Law. Whereas on the contrary, the

Heathen

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Heathen who never were brought under this Yoke, nay even the Jews themselves who were better instructed in their Christian Liberty, they knowing that every Creature of *God* was now good, if sanctified by the Word of *God* and Prayer; they knowing that *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, were no longer Precepts for those that believed in the *Lord Jesus Christ*, they could not submit to them, they could not submit to the new Moons and Sabbaths, they ate what was set before them and made no Scruple about Meat or Drink. But however, it seems there were two contending Parties, many right Souls no doubt on both Sides. What must then the great Apostle do? Why, like a true follower of the meek and lowly *Jesus*, he preached up to both Sides the golden Rule of Moderation, and endeavours to perswade them to dispute no more about these outward Things.

If we will therefore look to the first Verse of this Chapter, we shall find the Apostle giving them a healing Advice,

*Him*, says he, *that is weak in the Faith*,  
*receive ye*, do not separate from him,  
do not forbid him to come into your  
Christian Fellowship; *receive him*, look  
upon him as a Disciple, receive him  
with open arms into your Communion;

*but*

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6

*but not to doubtful Disputation*, do not fall  
into disputing with him as soon as ever  
he comes into your Church. For says  
he in the second Verse, *One* that is well  
instructed in his Christian Liberty, *be-*  
*lieveth that he may eat all Things*, without  
Scruple: Why, *another that is weak*, and  
hath not got as much Light into the Gos-  
pel Liberty, thinks himself obliged to  
abstain from such Meats as were forbid-  
den by the Law, and therefore for Con-  
science sake *eateth Herbs*. Why then  
says the Apostle in the 3d. Verse, *Let not*  
*him that eateth, despise him that eateth not*,  
tho' he be but a Novice in Grace: On  
the other Hand, *Let not him that eateth*  
*not, judge him that eateth*, as tho' he took  
more Liberty than God Almighty or the  
Rules of the Gospel allowed him, *for*  
*God hath received him*. Tho' he is weak,  
he is a Believer in the *Lord Jesus Christ*,  
*God hath received him into his Favour*,  
and how then dare ye refuse to receive  
him into your Communion?

In order therefore that the Apostle  
might put a Stop to this Spirit of Divisi-  
on and Opposition that was among them,  
he goes on, and tells them, That their  
despising, that their judging and disput-  
ing with one another at this rate, was

taking *Christ's* Prerogative out of his Hand. For says he in the 10th Verse,

*Why*

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*Why dost thou judge thy Brother? On the other Hand, Why does thou set at nought thy Brother? We shall all stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ. And Jesus Christ, who seeth the Springs of our Actions, can bear with us, tho' we cannot bear with one another. For says he, One Man esteemeth one Day above another, another esteemeth every Day alike; let every Man be fully perswaded in his own Mind, That is, Let every Man take the outmost Care to inform his Conscience, according to the Rule of God's Word; and after he has done that, let him bear with other People, tho' they may not follow him in all Things. And then as the most prevailing and most cogent Argument the Apostle could possibly bring, to put an End to their Divisions, he tells them in the Words of the Text, That Religion doth not consist in these Things, For says he, The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. As tho' he had said, My dear Friends, take Care of disputing, take Care of dividing from one another on account of the Circumstantials of Religion, take Care of receiving one another, to doubtful Disputations about Meat or Drink, or observing holy Days: For says he, the Kingdom of God is not Meat*

*and*

8  
*and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace,  
 and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*

This is a short, but when I read it, I think it is one of the most comprehensive Verses in the whole Book of God. And I am sure if it is necessary for a Minister to preach upon such Subjects as these, it must be in the Days wherein we live. For, my Friends, the Devil is getting Advantage over us by manifold Divisions: We have been settled upon our Lees, we have had no outward Persecution; and now God, in his righteous Judgment, has suffered us to divide among ourselves. It is high Time therefore, for Ministers to stand in the Gap, to preach up a Catholick Spirit, to preach out Bigotry, to preach out Prejudice; for we will never be all of one Mind, as long as we are in the World, about Externals in Religion; that is a Priviledge reserved to Heaven, to a future State. But while we have different Degrees of Light, it is absolutely necessary that we should bear with all, that cannot in all Things follow with us. I am by no Means for bringing the Church into a State of Anarchy and Confusion; but that we should bear with one another, we should not divide from one another, so as not to keep fellowship with one another, because we are not of the same

Mind

9  
 Mind in some particular Circumstances. I verily believe *Jesus Christ* suffers us to differ, to teach us that his Kingdom is of

a spiritual Nature, it is not such a legal Dispensation as the Jewish was; and therefore we should not divide about Externals. Besides, by being left thus to differ with one another in our Sentiments about Externals, we learn to exercise our passive Graces. I am sure, there is one good Effect Division has on my own and many other Peoples Heart, it makes us long for Heaven, where we shall be all of one Mind and one Heart. It will be our Perfection in Heaven, to be all of one Heart; and therefore it must be our Imperfection on Earth to be divided.

There are two Things which those that call themselves Christians, want much to be convinced of; namely, What Religion is not. *2dly*, What Religion positively is. Both these are in the Words of the Text plainly taught, and therefore, as God shall enable me, I shall endeavour, *First*, to explain what ye are to understand by *the Kingdom of God*. *Secondly*, I shall endeavour to shew that *the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink*. And *Thirdly*, I shall show you what *the Kingdom of God* positively is, namely, *Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*.

B

*First*,

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*First*, I am to explain to you what ye are to understand by *the Kingdom of God*. By *the Kingdom of God* in some Places of Scripture, you are to understand no more than the outward preaching of the Gospel, as, when the Apostles went out and preached, that *the Kingdom of God* and *the Kingdom of Heaven* was at Hand.

In other Places of Scripture, you are to understand it, as implying that Work of Grace, that inward Holiness that is wrought in the Heart of every Soul, that is truly converted and brought home to God. The *Lord Jesus Christ* is King of his Church, and the *Lord Jesus Christ* has got a Kingdom; and this Kingdom is erected and set up in the Hearts of Sinners when they are brought to subject to the Government of our dear Redeemers Laws. In this Sense, therefore, we are to understand *the Kingdom of God*, when *Jesus Christ* said, *The Kingdom of God is within you*, in your Hearts: And when he tells *Nicodemus*. That *unless a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, he can have no Notion of the inward Life of a Christian. In other Places of Scripture, *the Kingdom of God* not only signifies the Kingdom of Grace but the Kingdom of Grace and of Glory also; as when *Jesus* said, *It is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle,*

*that*

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*than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God*, that is, either to be a true Member of his mystical Church here, or a partaker of the Glory of the Church Triumphant hereafter. We are to take *the Kingdom of God* in the Text, as signifying that inward Work of Grace, that Kingdom which the *Lord Jesus Christ* sets up in the Hearts of all, that are truly brought home to God, so that when the Apostle tells us, *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink*, it's the same, as tho' he had said, My dear Friends, do not

quarrel about outward Things, *for the Kingdom of God*, or true and undefiled Religion, Heart and Soul-religion, *is not Meat and Drink.*

By *Meat and Drink*, if we compare the Text with the Context, we are to understand no more than this, that the Kingdom of God or true Religion doth not consist in abstaining from a particular Meat or Drink. But I shall take the Words in a more comprehensive Sense, and shall endeavour to shew you on this Head, that the Kingdom of God, or true and undefiled Religion, doth not consist in any, no not in all outward Things, put them altogether. And

*First*, The Kingdom of God, or true and undefiled Religion doth not consist in being of this or that particular Sect or

B 2

Communion

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Communion. Perhaps, my dear Friends, were many of you asked what Reason ye can give of the Hope that is in you, what Title ye have to call yourselves Christians. Perhaps ye could say no more for yourselves than this, namely, that ye belong to such a Church, and worship God in the same Way in which your Fathers and Mothers worshipped God before you. And perhaps at the same Time ye are so narrow in your Thoughts, that ye think none can worship God, but those that worship God just in your Way. It is certainly, my dear Friends, a Blessing to be born, as ye are, in a reformed Church, it is certainly a Blessing to have the outward Government and Discipline of the Church

exercised. But then, if you place Religion merely in being of this or that Sect, if you contend to monopolize or confine the Grace of *God* to your particular Party, if you rest in that, you place the Kingdom of *God* in something in which it doth not consist, you had as good place it in Meat and Drink. There are certainly Christians, among all Sects and Communions, that have learned the Truth as it is in *Christ Jesus*. I do not mean that there are Christians among *Arians*, *Socinians*, or those that deny the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*: I am sure the

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 Devil

Devil is Priest of such Congregations as these. But I mean there are Christians among other Sects, that may differ from us in the outward Worship of *God*. Therefore, my dear Friends, learn to be more Catholick, more unconfined in your Notions; for if ye place the Kingdom of *God* merely in a Sect, ye place it in that in which it doth not consist.

Again, As the Kingdom of *God* doth not consist in being of this or that Sect, so neither doth it consist in being baptised when ye were young. Baptism is certainly an Ordinance of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, it ought certainly to be administrate. But then, my dear Friends, take Care that ye do not make a *Christ* of your Baptism; for there are many baptised with Water as ye are, which were never savingly baptised with the Holy Ghost. *Paul* had a great Value for Circumcision, but when he saw the *Jews* resting upon their Circumcision, he told

them, *Circumcision was nothing, and Uncircumcision was nothing, but a New Creature.* And yet most People live, as if they thought it will be sufficient to intitle them to Heaven, to tell *Jesus Christ* their Name was in the Register Book of such and such a Parish. Your Name may be in the Register Book, and yet at the same Time not be in the Book of Life.

*Annanias*

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*Ananias* and *Sapphira* were baptized, *Simon Magus* was baptized. And therefore, if ye place Religion merely in being baptized, in having the outward washing of Water, without receiving the Baptism of the *Holy Ghost*, ye place the Kingdom of God in something in which it doth not consist; in Effect, ye place it in Meat and Drink.

But *further*, As the Kingdom of God and true Religion doth not consist in being baptised; neither doth it consist in being orthodox in our Notions, or being able to talk fluently of the Doctrines of the Gospel. There are a great many that can talk of free Grace, of free Justification, of final Perseverance, of Election, and God's everlasting Love: All these are precious Truths, they are connected in a Chain, take away one Link and you spoil the whole Chain of Gospel Truths. But then, I am perswaded that there are many that talk of these Truths, that preach up these Truths, and yet at the same Time never, never felt the Power of these Truths upon their Heart. It is a good thing to have a Form of sound Words, and I think you have got a Form

of sound Words in your *Larger and Lesser Catechisms*: But you may have orthodox Heads, and yet you may have the Devil in your Heart; ye may have clear Heads,

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ye

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ye may be able to speak as it were with the Tongues of Men and Angels the Doctrines of the Gospel, but yet at the same time ye may never have felt them upon your own Souls. And if ye have never felt the Power of them upon your Heart, your Talk of *Christ* and free Justification, and having rational Convictions of these Truths, will but increase your Condemnation, and ye will only go to Hell with so much more Solemnity. Take Care, therefore, of resting in a Form of Knowledge, it is dangerous; if ye do, ye place the Kingdom of *God* in Meat and Drink.

*Again,* As the Kingdom of *God* doth not consist in orthodox Notions, much less doth it consist in being sincere. I know not what sort of Religion we have got among us. I fear many Ministers as well as People, they want to recommend themselves to *God* by their Sincerity; they think if we do all we can, if we are but sincere, *Jesus Christ* will have Mercy upon us. But pray what is there in our Sincerity to recommend us to *God*? There is no natural Man in the World sincere, till *God* make us new Creatures in *Jesus Christ*. And therefore if ye depend upon your Sincerity for your Salvation, your sincerity will damn you.

*Further,*

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*Further, As the Kingdom of God doth not consist merely in Sincerity, (for nothing will recommend us to God, but the Righteousness of Jesus Christ) neither doth it consist in being negatively good. And yet, I believe, my dear Friends, if many of you were to be visited by a Minister when you are upon a Death-bed, and if he were to ask you, How ye hope to be saved. Why, ye would say, Yes, ye hoped to be saved ye never did Man, Woman or Child any Harm in your Life, ye have done no Body Harm; And indeed I do not find that the unprofitable Servant did any one Harm; no, the poor Man he only innocently wrapt up his Talent in a Napkin: And when his Lord came to call him to Account he thought he should be applauded by his Lord; and therefore introduces himself with the Word, *Lo, Lo there thou hast that is thine.* But what says *Jesus Christ? Cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* Suppose it to be true that ye had done no Body Harm, yet it will not avail you to Salvation: If ye bring forth only the Fig-leaves of an outward Profession, and bring not forth good Fruit, it will not send you to Heaven, it will send you to Hell.*

dom

17

*Again, Some of you perhaps may think I have not reached you yet; therefore I go on further to shew you, that the Kingdom of God doth not consist in a dry life-*

less Morality. I am not speaking against Morality, it is a blessed Thing when *Jesus Christ* is laid as the Foundation of it. And I could heartily wish that ye, moral Gentlemen, that are for talking so much of your Morality, I wish we could see a little more of your Morality than we do. I do not cry down Morality, but so far as this, that ye do not rest in your Morality, that ye do think ye are Christians because ye are not vicious, because ye now and then do some good Action. Why, Sell-love will carry a Man to perform all moral Actions. A Man perhaps will not get drunk for Fear of making his Head ake, a Man may be honest, because it would spoil his Reputation to steal. And so Man that has not the Love of God in his Heart, may do moral Actions. But if ye depend on Morality if ye make a Christ of it, and go about to establish a Righteousness of your own, and think your Morality will recommend you to *God*; my dear Friends, ye are building upon a rotten Foundation, ye will find yourselves mistaken, and that the Kingdom of *God* is not in your Hearts.

C

*Again*

*Again*, As the Kingdom of *God* doth not consist in doing no Body Hurt, not in doing moral Actions; neither doth it consist in attending upon all outward Ordinances whatsoever. A great many of you may think that ye go to Church, and receive the Sacrament once or twice a Year, (tho' I do think that is too seldom by a great deal to have it administrated)

ye may read your Bibles, ye may have Family Worship, ye may say your Prayers in your Closets; and yet at the same time, my dear Friends, know nothing of the Lord Jesus Christ in your Heart: Ye may have a Token, and receive the Sacrament, and perhaps at the same time be eating and drinking your own Damnation. I speak this, because it is a most fatal Snare that poor Professors are exposed to; we stop our Consciences by our Duties. Many of you perhaps lead a lukewarm loose Life, ye are *Gallio* like; yet ye will be very good the Sacrament Week, ye will attend all the Sermons, and come to the Sacament, ye will be very good for sometime after that, and then afterwards go on in your former usual way till the next Sacrament. Ye are resting on the Means of Grace all the while, and placing Religion in that which is only a Means of Religion. I speak from mine own Ex-

perience.

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perience. I know how much I was deceived with a Form of Godliness. I made Conscience of fasting twice a Week, I made Conscience of praying sometimes nine Times a Day, and received the Sacrament every Sabbath Day; and yet knew nothing of inward Religion in my Heart, till God was pleased to dart a Ray of Light into my Soul, and shew me I must be a new Creature, or be damned for evermore. Being therefore, so long deceived myself, I speak with the more Sympathy to you, who are resting on a round of Duties and Model of Per-

formances. And now, my Friends, if your Hearts were to be searched, and you were to speak your Minds, I appeal to your own Heart whether ye are not thinking within yourselves, tho' you may have so much Charity as to think I mean well, yet I verily believe many of you think I have carried Matters a little too far. And why is this, but because I come close to some of your Case, the Pride of your Heart does not care to admit of Conviction; therefore ye would fain retort on the Preacher, and say, he is wrong, whereas it is your Heart that is wrong all the while.

Others again perhaps may be saying, Well, if a Man may go this far and not a Christian, as I am sure he may, and

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great deal further; ye will be apt to cry out, Who then can be saved? And O that I could hear you asking this Question in earnest. For, my Friends, I am obliged, where ever I go, to endeavour to plow up People's fallow Ground, to bring them off their Duties, and making a Christ of them: There are so many Shadows in Religion, if ye do not take Care, ye will grasp at the Shadow, and lose the Substance. The Devil has so ordered the Affairs of the Church now, and our Hearts are so desperately deceitful, if we do not take a great deal of Care, we shall come short of true Religion, of the true Kingdom of God in the Soul. The great Question then is, Whether any of you are convinced of what has been said? Does

Power come with the Word? When I was reading a Book called, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and reading that a Man may read, pray, and go to Church, and be constant in the Duties of the Sabbath, and yet not be a Christian: I wondered what the Man would be at, I was ready to throw it from me, till at last he told me, that Religion was an Union of the Soul with God, the Image of God wrought upon the Heart, or *Christ Jesus* formed in us. Then God was pleased with these Words to cast a Ray of Light

into

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into my Soul, with the Light there came a Power; and from that very Moment I knew I must be a new Creature. This perhaps may be your Case, my dear hearers, May be many of you may be loving, good natured People, and attend the Duties of Religion; but take Care for *Christ's* Sake that ye do not rest on these Things.

I think I cannot sum up what has been said better, than to give you the Character of the Apostle Paul. Are you a Christian, do you think, because ye are of this or that particular Sect? *Paul* was a *Jew* and a *Pharisee*. Are you a Christian because ye are baptized, and enjoy Christian Priviledges? Then *Paul* was circumcised. Are ye a Christian because ye do no Body Hurt, and are sincere? *Paul* was blameless before his Conversion, and was not a *Gallio* in Religion, as many of us are, he was so zealous for God, that he persecuted the Church of *Christ*. But yet when God was pleased

to reveal his Son in him, when God was pleased to strike him to the Ground, and let him see what Heart Religion was; then *Paul* dropt his false Confidence immediately; these things which he counted Gain, which he depended on before, he now counted Loss, that he might win *Christ*, and be found in him, not having

his

22

his own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that Righteousness which is by Faith in *Christ Jesus*. It is Time, my dear Friends, to proceed to

The next Thing proposed, namely, To shew you what the *Kingdom of God* or true Religion positively is. I have told you what it is not, I shall now proceed to shew you what it is. It is *Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*. But before I proceed to this, I must, make a little Digression. Perhaps Curiosity has brought many here, that have perhaps neither Regard to God nor Man. A Man may be a Member of purest Church, a Man may be baptised, do no Body Harm, do a great deal of Good, attend on all the Ordinances of Christianity; and yet at the same time may be a Child of the Devil. If a Man may go this far, and yet at the same time miss of Salvation. What will become of you that do not keep up a Form of Religion, that scarce know the Time when ye have been at Church and attending Sermons, unless Curiosity brought you to hear a particular Stranger? What will become of you, who instead of believing the Gospel and reading the Bible, set up

your corrupt Religion in opposition to  
 divine Revelation? What will become  
 of you, who count it your Pleasure to

riot

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riot in the Day-time, to spend Time in  
 rioting and Wantonness; who are sitting  
 in the Scorners Chair and joining with  
 your hellish Companions, who love to  
 dress the Children of God in Bear Skins?  
 What will become of you that live in  
 Acts of Uncleanness, Drunkenness, A-  
 dultery, Sabbath-breaking, and that  
 keep Misses? Surely without Repentance  
 ye will be lost, your Damnation slumber-  
 eth not. God may bear with you long,  
 but he will not forbear always: The  
 Time will come when he will ease him-  
 self of his Adversaries, and then ye will  
 be undone for evermore, unless ye come  
 to him as poor lost Sinners.

But I now go on to shew you what  
 true Religion positively is, It is *Righte-  
 ousness, it is Peace, it is Joy in the Holy  
 Ghost.* And

*First,* The Kingdom of God is *Righteous-  
 ness.* By *Righteousness* we are here to un-  
 derst and the compleat, perfect and alsuf-  
 ficient *Righteousness* of the *Lord Jesus  
 Christ,* as including both his Active and  
 his Passive Obedience. My dear Friends,  
 we have no *Righteousness* of our own;  
 our best *Righteousness,* take them altoge-  
 ther, are but as so many filthy Rags;  
 we can only be accepted for the Sake of  
 the *Righteousness* of our *Lord Jesus  
 Christ.* This *Righteousness* must be im-

puted

<sup>24</sup>  
 put and made over to us, and applied to our Hearts: And till we get this Righteousness brought home to our Souls, we are in a State of Death and Damnation, the Wrath of God abideth on us.

Before I go further, I would endeavour to apply this. Give me Leave to put this Question to your Heart. You call yourselves Christians, and would count me uncharitable to call it in Question: But I exhort you to let Conscience speak out, do not bribe it any longer. Did ye ever see yourselves damned Sinners? Did Conviction ever fasten upon your Heart? And after ye had been made to see your want of *Christ*, and made to hunger and thirst after Righteousness, did ye lay hold on *Christ* by Faith? Did ye ever close with *Christ*? Was *Christ's* Righteousness ever put upon your naked Souls? Was ever a feeling Application of his Righteousness made to your Heart? Was it, or was it not? If not, ye are in a damnable State, ye are out of *Christ*; for the Apostle says here, *The Kingdom of God is Righteousness*, that is, the Righteousness of *Christ* applied and brought home to the Heart.

It follows, Peace. *The Kingdom of God is Righteousness, and Peace.* By Peace I do not understand that false Peace or rather

carnal

<sup>25</sup>  
 carnal Security, into which so many are fallen. There are thousands speak Peace to themselves, when there is no Peace; thousands have got a

Peace of the Devil's making, the strong Man armed has got Possession of their Heart, and therefore their Goods are all in Peace. But the Peace here spoken of is a Peace that follows after a great deal of Soul Trouble; it is like that Calm which the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the Wind, *Peace be still, and immediately there was a great Calm*; it is like that Peace which Christ spoke to his Disciples, when he came and said, *Peace be unto you, My Peace I leave with you*. It's a Peace of God's making, it's a Peace of God's giving, it's a Peace that the World cannot give, it's a Peace that can be felt, it's a Peace that passeth humane Understanding, it's a Peace that results from a Sense of having Christ's Righteousness brought home to the Soul. For, a poor Soul before this is full of Trouble, Christ makes Application of his Righteousness to his Heart; and then the poor Creature being justified by Faith, hath Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. My dear Friends, I am now talking of Heart Religion, of an inward Work of God, an inward Kingdom in your heart, which

D

ye

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ye must have, or ye shall never sit with Jesus Christ in his Kingdom. The most of you may have Peace, but for Christ's Sake examine upon what this Peace is founded, see if Christ be brought home to your Soul, if you have had a feeling Application of the Merits of Christ brought home to your Soul. Is God at Peace with you? Did Jesus Christ ever say, *Peace be to you, Be of good cheer, Go thy*

*way, thy Sins are forgiven thee. My Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you? Did God ever bring a comfortable Promise with Power to your Soul? And after ye have been praying, and fearing ye be damned, did ye ever feel Peace flow in like River upon your Soul? So that ye could say, Now I know that God is my Friend, now I know that Jesus is my Saviour, now I can call him My Lord and my God; now I know that Christ hath not only died for others, but I know that Jesus hath died for me in particular, O my dear Friends, it is impossible to tell you the Comfort of this Peace, and I am astonished, (only Man's Heart is desperately wicked) how ye can have Peace one Moment, and yet not know that God is at Peace with you. How can ye go to Bed this Night without this Peace?*

It

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It is a blessed Thing to know when Sin is forgiven, Would you not be glad if an Angel were to come, and tell you so this Night?

But there is something more, There is *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. I have often thought, if the Apostle *Paul* were to come and preach now, he would be reckoned one of the greatest *Enthusiasts* on Earth, he talked of the Holy Ghost, of feeling the Holy Ghost; and so we must all feel it, all experience it, all receive it; or we can never see a Holy God with Comfort. We are no to receive the *Holy Ghost*, so as to enable us to work Miracles, for, *Many will say in that Day we have cast out Devils in thy Name, and in*

*thy Name done many wonderful Works:* But we must receive the Holy Ghost to sanctify our Nature, to purify our Heart, and make us meet for Heaven. Unless we are born again and have the Holy Ghost in our Heart, if we were in Heaven, we could take no Pleasure there. The Apostle not only supposes we must have the Holy Ghost, but he supposes as a necessary Ingredient to make up the Kingdom of God in a Believer's Heart, that he must have *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. There are a great many, I believe, think Religion is a poor melancholly Thing, and

they

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they are afraid to be Christians. But my dear Friends, there is no true Joy, till ye can Joy in God and Christ. I know wicked Men and Men of Pleasure will have a little Laughter; but what is it, but like the crackling of a few Thorns under a Pot, it makes a Blaze, and soon goes out. I know what it is to take Pleasure in Sin, but I always found the Smart that followed, was ten thousand Times more hurtful, than any Gratification I could receive. But they that Joy in God, have a joy that Strangers intermedle not with, it's a Joy that no Man can take from them; it amounts to a full Assurance of Faith, that the Soul is reconciled to God through *Christ*, that *Jesus* dwells in the Heart; and when the Soul reflects on itself, it magnifies the *Lord*, and it's Spirit rejoyses in God its Saviour. Thus we are told that *Zachheus received Christ joyfully, that the Eunuch went on his Way rejoicing, and the*

*Jaylor* rejoiced in God with all his House,  
 O my Friends, what Joy have they that  
 know their Sins are forgiven them?  
 What a blessed thing is it for a Man to  
 look forward, and see an endless Eter-  
 nity of Happiness before him, knowing  
 that every Thing shall work together  
 for his Good, it is Joy unspeakable and

full

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full of Glory. O may God make you  
 all Partakers of it.

Here then, we will put the *Kingdom of  
 God* together. It is *Righteousness*, it is  
*Peace*, it is *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. When  
 this is placed in the Heart, God there  
 reigns, God there dwells and walks,  
 the Creature is a Son or Daughter of the  
 Almighty. But my Friends, how few  
 are there here, that have been made  
 Partakers of this Kingdom? Perhaps  
 the Kingdom of the Devil, instead of the  
 Kingdom of God, is in most of our  
 Hearts. This has been a Place much  
 favoured of God, may I hope some of  
 you can go alongst with me, and say,  
 Blessed be God we have got Righte-  
 ousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy  
 Ghost. Have ye so? Then, ye are  
 Kings, tho' Beggars; ye are happy a-  
 bove all Men in the World, ye have  
 got Heaven in your Heart; and when  
 the Crust of your Bodies drops, your  
 Souls will meet with God, your Souls  
 will enter into the World of Peace,  
 and ye shall be happy with God forever-  
 more. I hope there is none of you will  
 fear Death fy for Shame, if ye are;  
 what, afraid to go to Jesus, to your

Lord; ye may cry out, O Death, where  
is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy

Victory

30

Victory? Ye may go on your Way  
rejoycing, knowing that God is your  
Friend; die when ye will, Angels will  
carry you safe to Heaven.

But O how many are here in this  
Church-Yard, that will be laid in some  
Grave ere long, that are entire Strangers  
to this Work of God upon their Soul?  
My dear Friends, I think this is an aw-  
ful Sight, here are many Thousands of  
Souls, that must shortly appear with me,  
a poor Creature, in the General Assem-  
bly of all Mankind before God in Judg-  
ment. God Almighty knows whether  
some of you may drop down dead, be-  
fore ye go out of the Church-Yard; and  
yet perhaps most are Strangers to the  
Lord Jesus Christ in their Heart. Per-  
haps Curiosity has brought you out to  
hear a poor Babler preach: But my  
Friends, I hope I came our of a better  
Principle, If I know any Thing of my  
Heart, I came to promote God's Glory;  
and if the Lord should make use of such  
a worthless Worm, such a wretched Crea-  
ture, as I am, to do your precious Souls  
Good, nothing would rejoice me more  
than to hear, that God makes Fool-  
ishness of Preaching a Means of making  
many believe. I was long deceived my-  
self with a Form of Godliness, and I

know

<sup>31</sup> know what it is to be a Factor for the Devil, to be led captive by the Devil at his Will, to have the Kingdom of the Devil in my Heart; and I hope I can say through free Grace, I know what it is to have the Kingdom of God erected in me. It is God's Goodness that such a poor Wretch as I, am converted; tho' sometimes when I am speaking of God's Goodness, I am afraid he strike me down dead. Let me draw out my Soul and Heart to you, my dear Friends, my dear guilty Friends, poor bleeding Souls, that must shortly take your last Farewel, and fly into endless Eternity: Let me intreat you to say these Things seriously to Heart this Night. Now when the Sabbath is over, and the Evening is drawing near, me thinks the very Sight is awful, I could almost weep over you, as our Lord did over *Jerusalem*, to think in how short a Time every Soul of you must die, some, of you to go to Heaven, and others to go to the Devil forevermore.

O my, dear Friends, these are Matters of eternal Moment. I did, not come to tickle your Ears, if I had a Mind to do so, I would play the Orator; no, but I came, if God should be pleased, to touch your Hearts. What shall I say to you?

Open

<sup>32</sup> Open the Door of your Heart, that the King of Glory, the blessed *Jesus*, may come in and erect his Kingdom in your Soul. Make Room for *Christ*, the *Lord*

*Jesus* desires to sup with you to Night, *Christ* is willing to come into any of your Hearts, that will be pleased to open and receive him. Are there any of you made willing *Lidia's*? There are many Women here, but how many *Lidia's* are there here? Does Power go with the Word to open your Heart? And find ye a sweet melting in your Soul? Are ye willing? Then *Christ Jesus* is willing to come to you. But ye may say, Will *Christ* come to my wicked, polluted Heart? Yes, tho' ye have a Load of Devils in your Heart, *Christ* will come and erect his Throne there; tho' the Devil be in your Heart, the *Lord Jesus* will scourge out a Legion of Devils, and his Throne shall be exalted in thy Soul. Sinners, be what ye will, come to *Christ*, ye shall have Righteousness and Peace. If ye have got no Peace, come to *Christ*, and he will give you Peace. When ye come to *Christ*, ye shall feel such Joy, that it is impossible for you to tell. O may God pity you all. I hope this shall be a Night of Salvation to some of your

Souls.

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Souls. My dear Friends, I would preach with all my Heart to Midnight, to do you Good, till I could preach no more. O that this Body might hold out to speak more for my dear Redeemer; had I a thousand Lives, had I a thousand Tongues, they should be employed in inviting Sinners to come to *Jesus Christ*. Come then, let me prevail with some of you to come along

with me. Come poor, lost, undone Sinners, come just as ye are to *Christ*, and say, If I be damned, I will perish at the Feet of *Jesus Christ*, where never one perished ye. He will receive you with open Arms, the dear Redeemer is willing to receive you all. Fly then for your Lives. The Devil is in you while unconverted, and will ye go with the Devil in your Heart to Bed this Night. God Almighty knows if ever ye and I shall see another again: In one or two Days more I must go, and I will never see you again, till I meet you at the Judgment Day. O my dear Friends, think of that solemn Meeting, think of that important Hour, when the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, when the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, when the Sea and the Graves shall be giving up their

E

dead

34

dead, and all shall be summoned to appear before the Great God, What will ye do then, it the the Kingdom of God is not erected in your Heart? Ye must go to the Devil, like must go to like. If ye are not converted, Christ hath asserted it in the strongest manner, *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, except a Man be born again ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Who can dwell with devouring Fire? Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings. O my Heart is melting with Love to you, surely God intends to do Good to your poor Souls. Will one be perswaded to accept of Christ. If these that

are settled Pharisees will not come, I desire to speak to you that are Drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, Cursers and Swearers, will ye come to Christ. I know many of you come here out Curiosity, tho' ye came only to see the Congregation, yet if ye come to Jesus Christ, Christ will accept of you. Are there any curling swearing Souldiers here, will ye come to Jesus Christ, and list ourselves under the Banner of the dear Redeemer? Ye are all welcome to Christ. Is there any little Boys or little Girls here? Come to Christ, and he will erect his Kingdom in you.

There

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There are many little Children God is working on, both at home and abroad. O if some of the little Lambs would come to Christ, they shall have Peace and Joy in the Day that the Redeemer shall set up his Kingdom in their Heart. Parents, tell them that Jesus Christ will take them in his Arms, that he will dandle them on his Knees. All of you, old and young, ye that are old and gray headed, come to Jesus Christ, and ye shall be Kings and Priests to your God, the Lord will abundantly pardon you at the eleventh Hour. *Ho every one of you that thirsteth,* if there be any of you ambitious of Honour, do ye want a Crown, a Scepter? Come to Christ, and the Lord Jesus Christ will give you a Kingdom, that no Man shall take from you.

**FINIS.**