

THE MOULD OF DIVINE TEACHING

Preached on Thursday Evening, July 11, 1844, at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, London

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." Romans 6:17

The Holy Ghost foresaw what an abuse the depraved heart of man would make of the doctrines of grace. He foresaw that nature would argue, because a man is saved by grace without the works of the law, there was no obligation to perform good works at all; and that because God accepts us in the Beloved "without money and without price," therefore we are discharged from all obedience to his revealed will and word. And not only did the Holy Ghost foresee the consequences that depraved nature would draw from the pure gospel of Jesus; but there were also characters in the apostolic days base enough to carry out these principles into practice. The Apostle alludes to these when he says, "Shall we do evil that good may come? God forbid." There were some that said, we might do evil that good might come; but he says, "whose damnation is just." If we look at the book of Jude, we shall find these base characters most accurately described a "wandering stars, trees twice dead, spots in their feasts of charity;" in a word, practical antinomians, living in sin under a mask of godliness; professing the truth, and doing every thing contrary to it. The Holy Ghost, then, foreseeing the consequences that corrupt nature would draw from the doctrines of grace, inspired the Apostle to write this chapter, which is almost entirely aimed at these perversions. "What shall we say then?" it begins, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" He had said in the preceding chapter, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more

abound." The carnal heart might thence naturally argue, "If this be the case that grace superabounds just in proportion as sin abounds, then the more I sin, the more will the grace of God abound; and therefore, the greater sinners we are, the more will the grace of God be glorified in us." Such would be the reasoning of depraved nature, of man's perverse heart. The Apostle therefore, says, "God forbid" that any who fear the Lord should draw such a conclusion. "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" If, he goes on, we have been buried with Christ in baptism, it is that, according to the power of his resurrection, we should walk in newness of life. If we are delivered from the law, it is that sin should not reign in our mortal body, or that we should obey the lust thereof. And then in a most beautiful and affecting way, which I cannot now enter into, he shows that, so far from being discharged by grace from all obligation to obedience, it only binds us the more closely to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and live w holy conformity to him who died for us. But the main head of what the Apostle sets forth seems summed up in the text, from which I hope, with God's blessing and help, to speak this evening. "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

The Apostle commences by solemnly thanking God. "But God be thanked," he says. Now what was the object of this apostolic thanksgiving? What drew forth that expression of gratitude from his bosom? Not, I believe, that they had been servants of sin. I do not think we can, for a moment, suppose the Apostle to have thanked God because the believers to whom he was writing had been "servants of sin." I am sure my own experience could not bear out that to be the mind of the Holy Ghost. Nor do I believe that your experience, if God the Spirit has touched your consciences

with his finger, would bear you out in the interpretation that Paul could thank God because they had been the "servants of sin." Did you ever on your knees bless God that you had gone to great lengths of wickedness? Did you ever thank him for some act of uncleanness, of drunkenness, or other open and base sin? You may have thanked God that he kept you from falling into sin, or for mercifully pardoning you for it, and delivering you out of it.

But I defy a living soul on his knees to thank God, that there was a time when he was a servant of sin. So that we must understand the apostle to mean here: "But God be thanked, that **though** ye were the servants of sin," yet now the case is altered; you are so no longer; a mighty change has taken place; a blessed revolution has been effected in your hearts, lips, and lives. "God be thanked, though ye were the servants of sin," yet now through the grace of God, it is so no longer, "and ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." In looking, then, at these words, I shall, with God's blessing, endeavour to show,

I. What it is, in our unregenerate state, to be "the servants of sin;"

II. What is the "form of doctrine" delivered us; and,

III. How by "obeying it from the heart" we become servants of God.

I. Let us look, then, at the words, "**Ye were the servants of sin.**" What a picture does this draw of our state, while walking in the darkness and death of unregeneracy! The Holy Ghost here sets forth sin as a hard master, exercising tyrannical dominion over slaves; for the word "servants" means literally "slaves;" there being few domestic servants in

ancient times, and nearly all being slaves, compelled to obey the master's will. How this sets forth our state and condition in the days of unregeneracy—slaves to sin! Just as a master commands his slave to go here and there, imposes on him a task, and has entire and despotic authority over him; so sin had a complete mastery over us, used us at its arbitrary will and pleasure, and drove us hither and thither on its commands. But in this point we differed from slaves naturally, that we did not murmur under our yoke but gladly and cheerfully obeyed all its commands, and were never wearied of doing the most servile drudgery. It is a most certain truth that all men whose hearts have not been touched by God the Spirit, are the "servants of sin." Sin the lord may in some cases be a more refined master than in others; and man the servant may wear a smarter livery in some instances than others. But still, however refined the master may be, or however well-dressed the servant, the master is still the master, and the servant is still the servant. Thus some have had sin as a very vulgar and tyrannical master, who drew them into acts of drunkenness, uncleanness, and profligacy; yea, every thing base and vile. Others perhaps were preserved through education, through the watchfulness and example of parents, or other moral restraints, from going into such open lengths of iniquity; but still sin secretly reigned over them. Pride, worldliness, love of the things of time and sense, hatred to God's holy will, selfishness, stubbornness, in all their various forms, had a complete mastery over them, and kept them in a more refined, though not less real or abject servitude. Whatever sin bade them do, that they did, as implicitly as the most abject slave ever obeyed a tyrannical master's command. What a picture does the Holy Ghost here draw of what man is! Nothing but a slave! and sin, as his master, driving him upon the thick bosses of God's buckler, and then giving him eternal death as his wages!

II. But the Apostle shows how the soul is brought out of this servitude—how it is delivered from this hard bondage, and brought to serve a better master, and from better motives, "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin; **but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**" It was by obeying "from the heart the form of doctrine" which was delivered them, that they were rescued from the miserable servitude and bondage under which they lived in sin, and were made to walk in newness of life.

Let us look, then, at the expression here used—"that form of doctrine which was delivered you." It is in the margin and that is more agreeable to the original,—that form of doctrine "whereunto, or into which, ye were delivered." By the word "form," is meant "mould;" and by "doctrine" is meant, not what we understand by the term as the article of a creed, but **teaching**. This is a frequent meaning of the word "doctrine," in the New Testament. Thus Paul tells Timothy **1Tim 4:13** to give himself unto "doctrine," that is to teaching. Thus we may consider the meaning of the text to be: "God be thanked, though ye were the servants of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart that **mould of teaching** into which ye were cast, or delivered." The figure is this—the impression which a coin takes from the die; or the effect produced upon melted metal run into a mould; the doctrine being the die, and the heart the coin; the teaching being the mould, and the soul the cast. Thus, the "form of doctrine" signifies not so much a creed of sound doctrine which the Apostle in a formal, systematic manner laid before his hearers, but rather the mould of heavenly teaching into which the Holy Ghost delivered their souls.

It is evident, then, if this be a correct interpretation, that the Holy Ghost has a certain mould of teaching, into which he casts and delivers the soul, from which it comes out as money from the Mint, bearing the impression of the die upon it in every point, and as a cast from a mould, showing exactly what the shape of the model is. This "form of doctrine," or mould of teaching, into which they were delivered, was that which the Apostle, through divine instrumentality, had set before them.

Let us see, then, with God's blessing, what was "the form of doctrine," or the mould of divine teaching, into which, through grace, their souls had been cast; for it was by being delivered into it that they were freed from being the servants of sin, and made vessels of honour meet for the Master's use, as well as conformed to the Master's image.

What this form of doctrine was we may gather from what the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, has left on record.

1. He began, then, I believe, by insisting on the **utter ruin and fall of man**, He began from the beginning, and like a "wise master builder," raised up the building by first digging a deep foundation. He knew—as every rightly taught man and minister knows,—that unless a foundation be made by digging deep, the house will not be built upon the rock; that if a knowledge of our utter ruin by nature be not brought into the heart, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, all our religion will be like a house built upon the sand. Thus he tells the Ephesians **Eph 2:1** "But you hath he quickened, who were **dead in trespasses and sins**." How he insists there on man's death in sin! Again, **Ro 5:6**. "When we were **without strength**, in due time Christ died for **the ungodly**." More especially in **Ro 7** does the Apostle describe from his own experience the desperate wickedness of the human heart.

"For I know that in me **that is in my flesh** dwelleth no good thing." "I am carnal, sold under sin." He there sets forth from his own experience the complete fall of man, the entire ruin of the creature, the thorough wickedness of "the carnal mind which is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." This being a part of his ministry and of the inspired Scriptures, into this mould of teaching does God the Spirit deliver the soul. And just in the same way as upon the piece of money you may read the exact lineaments of the original die, so when the heart is delivered into this "form of doctrine" by the Holy Ghost, it comes out of the mould bearing the exact impression. It is thus we are made to feel every line of what the Apostle says of our ruined, undone state—that "in us, that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" that "when we would do good, evil is present with us;" that "the law in our members wars against the law of our mind." And under these feelings, we sigh and groan, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is thus that Paul's experience becomes ours; and we find every line of **Rom 7** engraved upon our hearts, and feel every expression to be as much ours as if it were drawn from the workings of our own mind. No coin bears a greater resemblance to the die, no cast is more the counterpart of the mould, than our experience corresponds to that of the Apostle, as the Holy Ghost delivers us into this mould of divine teaching.

2. But we find, that another part of the Apostle's ministry was to set forth the **holy law of God** in all its strictness and spirituality. He says, **Ro 7:14** "the law is spiritual;" "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God." And describing his own experience. he says, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment

came, sin revived, and I died." And therefore he adds, "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good." He thus sets forth the law in all its purity strictness and spirituality, and shows how when it comes home with power to the conscience, it kills us to all hopes of justification by it. Into this "form of doctrine," or mould of teaching is the soul delivered; and the law being brought into the conscience, as the die at the Mint is brought down upon a piece of gold to produce a coin, its spirituality is then and there revealed, and a deep and lasting impression is made upon the heart to which it is applied.

3. But the apostle Paul, that workman who never needed to be ashamed of his tools or of his work, not merely sets forth man's utter ruin, and the spirituality of God's law, as slaughtering the sinner, and cutting up all his righteousness, root and branch; but his darling subject, his grand theme, was the **mode by which God justifies the ungodly**. What reason have we to bless God that he so instructed his Apostle to set forth how a sinner is justified! For how could we have attained to the knowledge of this mystery without divine revelation? How could we know in what way God could be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly? How could we see all the perfections of God harmonizing in the Person and work of Jesus? his law maintained in all its rigid purity, and strict justice—and yet mercy, grace, and love have full play in a sinner's salvation? But the Spirit of God led Paul deeply into this blessed subject; and especially in the Epistle to the Romans does he trace out this grand foundation truth with that clearness, weight, and power, that the church of God can never be sufficiently thankful for this portion of divine revelation. His grand object is to show how God justifies the ungodly by the blood and obedience of his dear Son; so that "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." He

declares that "the righteousness of God is unto all and upon all them that believe;" and that "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," he pardons the sinner, justifies the ungodly, and views him as righteous in the Son of his love. In opening up this subject the Apostle **Ro 5** traces up this justification to the union of the church with her covenant head; shows us her standing in Christ as well as in Adam; and that all the miseries which she derives from her standing in the latter are overbalanced by the mercies that flow from her standing in the former: winding up all with that heart-reviving truth, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign unto eternal life." This then is a "form of doctrine," or mould of teaching, into which the soul is delivered when it is brought into a heartfelt reception of, and a feeling acquaintance with it; led more or less into the experimental enjoyment of it; and favoured with a solemn acquiescence in, and a filial submission to it, as all its salvation and all its desire. And as the mould impresses its image upon the moist plaster or melted metal poured into it; so the heart, softened and melted by the blessed Spirit's teaching, receives the impress of this glorious truth with holy admiration of it, as the only way in which God can justify an ungodly wretch, not only without sacrificing any one attribute of his holy character, but rather magnifying thereby the purity of his nature and the demands of his unbending justice.

4. But the Apostle not merely sets forth the way in which the sinner is justified, and becomes manifestly righteous, but he also strongly insists upon the **kingdom of God being set up with power in the heart**. He says, **1Co 2:4,5** "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom"—these he discarded—"but in demonstration

of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He was afraid their faith might stand in human wisdom, and not "in the power of God." His desire was that it might be a faith rooted in their hearts by the Spirit of God; that it might not be learnt from man, nor stand in the wisdom of man, but stand wholly and solely in "the power of God." How, again, he holds a rod over the church at Corinth; and says **1Co 4:19** "he will know, not the speech of them that were puffed up"—those gossips and chatterers who could prate loudly about the doctrines, but knew nothing of them as experimentally revealed in the conscience. Against such pretenders he would "come with a red, and use sharpness." He would bring to bear upon their profession some of those "weapons of warfare, which were mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;" and says, "if he came again to Corinth, he would not spare." He was therefore determined to search them, and find their real standing; "to know not the speech, but the power; for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Thus in setting forth the truth before them, he powerfully contended that there must be a vital experience of divine realities in the heart; that truth could only be known by spiritual revelation; **1Co 2:10-13** that "faith was the gift of God;" **Eph 2:8**; that we are "to turn away from those that have the form of godliness but deny the power thereof," **2Ti 3:5** that "bodily exercise profiteth little;" **1Ti 4:8** and that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." **Ro 14:17** Into this mould of divine teaching is the soul, born of God, cast; and thus learns and enters into the nature and blessedness of the internal kingdom of God.

5. Connected with this, he sets forth also **the way in which believers should walk**. This he specially insists upon in this chapter; and doubtless there was much reason for it then, as

there is much reason for it now; for how lamentable are the cases of inconsistency we perpetually hear of, even ministers professing truth falling under the power of besetting sins! The Apostle, therefore, as every rightly taught servant of God must do, insisted upon a life and walk agreeable to the doctrine which is according to godliness. He would give them no warrant for a loose, careless, inconsistent walk; but insisted that grace bound the soul with the cords of love to follow the footsteps of Jesus, and look to him as a pattern and example. In this chapter therefore, he insists strongly upon a godly life; he says, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness; and the end, everlasting life." How strongly he here insists upon their "having their fruit unto holiness!" He shows that if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him; and being by grace delivered from the law, we are under greater obligations to walk as becometh the gospel; adding, as knowing our weakness and helplessness, that promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." So that "the form of doctrine" into which they were delivered was a conformity to Christ, and an obedience to his precepts; a holy desire to please God; a hatred to evil, and a cleaving to that which is good; a longing after more intimate communion with Jesus; and a more earnest wish that his holy example might be made manifest in their lives.

II. But the Apostle says, "**ye have obeyed from the heart** that form of doctrine which was delivered you." A "form of doctrine" was delivered them, or rather they were delivered into it; a mould of divine teaching was set up into which their souls had been cast; and they had come out of this mould

new creatures, so that "old things were passed away, and all things had become new." The effect was that they "obeyed **from the heart** that form of doctrine." There was an Obedience wrought into their conscience, which flowed not from legal principles, not from self-righteous motives, not from the precepts of men, but "from the heart." Their hearts had been so melted by divine operations and their conscience go effectually wrought upon by being cast into the mould of teaching which the Holy Ghost had inwardly set up, that they "obeyed from the heart," because the impression had been made there.

But let us see, with God's blessing, how a man "obeys from the heart" the "form of doctrine" delivered unto him. This will comprehend the whole of the Spirit's work upon the conscience—every lineament and feature of that heavenly mould, so far as the soul has been delivered into it. We will therefore revert to these distinguishing features.

1. I mentioned **first, the utter fall and ruin of man, and the complete helplessness of the creature**, as a branch of divine teaching. A man obeys this form of doctrine when he is completely convinced in his conscience what a poor, helpless creature he is; and, in obedience to it, desists from all self-righteous attempts to please God. He obeys it from his heart when really convinced of his own helplessness and ruin, he falls down before God, and beseeches he would work in him that which is well-pleasing in his sight. And as he is cast into this mould of teaching, he becomes day by day more and more spiritually convinced of his own helplessness and complete ruin, and will daily cry to the Lord to work in him to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Will a knowledge of his sinfulness, a conviction of his helplessness, an acquaintance with his own ruin, lead a man

into sin? I say boldly, No. On the contrary, it will lead him from sin. He will no longer run recklessly and heedlessly forward; but he will go softly and tenderly, begging the Lord to keep him. There are two persons, say, in this congregation; one, ignorant of his own sinfulness, unacquainted with his own helplessness; the other, day by day, deeply and spiritually convinced of the one, and groaning under a sense of the other. Take these two men into the world; place them in the market; send them to traffic in the busy marts of commerce. In whom will you find most consistency of conduct, most tenderness of conscience, most abhorrence of evil? Not in the man ignorant of his own depravity and helplessness; but in the man who carries about with him the deepest sense of his own sinfulness and wretchedness; and who, feeling his helplessness, is perpetually crying to the Lord, "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." As we pass through the streets of this Metropolis, we are continually exposed to temptation; but who is the man most likely to fall into the snares spread for his feet? Not he who feels that he has a roving eye, and a wandering heart, and is crying to the Lord, 'Hold thou me up; let me not fall,' as fearing he shall fall every moment; but he who goes recklessly on, confident he can keep himself. So that to be spiritually cast into this "form of doctrine," so as to be deeply convinced of our sinfulness and helplessness, so far from leading to sin, leads us from it; so far from encouraging the vile depravity of our nature, makes the conscience tender in God's fear, and leads us to hate that which God abhors. There is no greater libel than to confound a knowledge of our sinfulness with "a gloating," as they call it, "over corruption." We are taught our sinfulness that we may hate it, and our helplessness that we may flee to him on whom God has laid help. 2. Again; A **knowledge of the purity and spirituality of God's law** is another feature of divine teaching—another branch of the mould into which the

soul is cast. A man who has never been made to see the purity of God's law, never felt its spirituality, never known its condemnation, never groaned under its bondage, will have very dim and indistinct views of sin. "Blessed is the man," we read, "whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and **teachest him out of thy law.**" In that glass the strict justice of God and all its holy unbending demands are clearly seen.

3. A spiritual reception of, and what the Apostle calls a submission to the righteousness of God Ro 10:3 is another branch of the form of doctrine which produces obedience from the heart. Let a man see what justification is through the imputed righteousness of Christ, and feel what it cost the Son of God to work out a meritorious obedience to the law for his guilty soul, it will not make him think lightly of sin. When delivered by the Spirit's operation into this mould of teaching, and thus brought into a spiritual acquaintance with it, it will make his conscience tender. He will obey, not from natural convictions or hypocritical motives, but from the heart, as penetrated with a sense of mercy, and will desire to be brought into a spiritual acquaintance with it, that he may walk before God in all blamelessness. But if a man, however sound in the doctrine of justification as a creed, has never been cast into the mould of it, so as to receive the impression upon his conscience, and feel it with power in his heart, he will probably be one of those who disgrace it by their lives; because, through want of divine teaching, his conscience is unaffected by the power of the truth he professes. Whence is it that men, and, to their shame be it spoken, ministers who profess the doctrines of grace, often walk so inconsistently and unbecomingly? In doctrine none can be sounder than these men; but had they received by divine teaching the glorious truths of justification through the righteousness of the Son of God—had their hearts been impressed by it, and their souls been cast into this mould,

they would have adorned the doctrine by their life and conversation. But not being delivered into this heavenly mould, and the Spirit never having brought this truth down upon their conscience and stamped its features upon their heart, as the die is brought down upon the coin, they can "continue in sin, that grace may abound." It is only therefore as we are delivered into the mould of this doctrine of justification by Christ's glorious righteousness, that we obey it from the heart. In proportion as we feel our soul in acquiesce in it, and enjoy it—so far from leading us into sin, it will lead us away from it, and enable us to walk in those things which become the gospel.

4. So when, by divine teaching, the soul is delivered into another branch of "the form of doctrine," or mould of divine teaching, viz., **that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power**, gospel obedience will flow from the heart. Just in proportion as this divine truth is stamped upon the conscience, do we feel and find that religion does not consist in a few notions, doctrines, or names, but in the power of the Holy Ghost setting Christ up in the soul. A kingdom in the heart implies that a king reigns there; and if so; the obedience paid to that king will be in and from the heart. This is true gospel obedience; and in proportion as the soul is cast into this mould, it will become a servant unto God. This so far from leading us to obey sin, will make us servants unto God; and so far from causing us "to yield our members servants to uncleanness unto iniquity, will rather make us yield them servants to righteousness unto holiness." If we know any thing, if we feel any thing of the kingdom of God set up with power in the conscience, that knowledge, that feeling, so far as each is spiritual and experimental, will produce an effect. Vital godliness will be more or less worked into our consciences, and will leave, more or less, a deep and abiding impression upon our heart. Our religion will not

consist in merely embracing a sound creed, in talking about ministers and books, attending a certain chapel, hearing certain ministers, or going through certain ordinances. If we have been delivered into this mould of divine teaching that "the kingdom of God is not in word but in power," there will be something higher and deeper, something more lasting and abiding, something more spiritual and supernatural than sound creeds and external performances. It is the glory and beauty of vital godliness, that the soul possessed of it obeys from heart; that the spring of its obedience is spiritual and inward; that it does what it does from noble principles; that as far as a Christian is rightly taught and guided, what he does, he does from his heart; that what he says, he says from his heart; what he prays, he prays from the heart; and if he be a preacher, what he preaches, he preaches from the heart. His very soul is in the matter; and as his conscience lives under the dew and unction of the Spirit, what he does he does unto God, and not unto men.

Now till a man is thus spiritually taught and wrought upon he will be the servant of sin. He may indeed have a very shining profession; but it may be only a mask for the deepest and blackest hypocrisy. He may contend much for spirituality of mind; and yet hide under that profession the basest sins. He may plead much for the doctrines of grace; and yet use them as a cloak for the vilest licentiousness in practice. A man must, in one form or another, be "the servant of sin," till he "obeys from the heart the form of doctrine"—the mould of divine teaching "into which the soul is spiritually delivered." But when the Holy Ghost takes him in hand, and casts him into the mould of divine teaching, so as to bring into his soul the word of God with power, he stamps the truth upon his conscience, and impresses it upon his heart; so that he comes forth with the truth of God stamped upon him, as the cast comes out of the mould, and the coin from the die.

Then, and only then, is he delivered from the service of sin. Sin might indeed not have worn an outward or gross form. The life might have been circumspect, and sin worn in him a very subtle shape. But there is no real deliverance from wearing the yoke of sin, till the mould of heavenly teaching is obeyed "from the heart." This is the fulfilment of that new covenant promise—"I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their heart." And thus inward, spiritual, and vital obedience can alone be produced.

It is then in this way that "the form of doctrine" which we have received in the Spirit, is made to produce an impression upon our hearts and lives. And the More that "the form of doctrine" is brought into our heart, and the more we are moulded by it, the more shall we obey it; and, as the Apostle says, "grow in grace, and in knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." We grow in grace by growing in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and we only grow in the knowledge of Him as we grow in the knowledge of ourselves. Thus to grow in grace is to grow in the knowledge of our own weakness, and of Christ's strength; of our own sinfulness, and of Christ's atoning blood; of our own ignorance, and of Christ's teaching in that ignorance. A sense of daily depravity, and yet seeing God's grace superabounding over it all; a constant fear we shall fall every day and hour, unless God keep us, and yet mercifully feeling his fear springing up in our hearts, as "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death,"—to be cast into this mould of heavenly teaching will deliver us from being "the servants of sin."

Let us, with God's blessing, by way of summing up the whole, look a little into our own conscience. There is then a "form of doctrine," a mould of divine teaching. What evidence have we that we have been delivered into it? What have we

felt, what have we known, of our own ruin by nature? Have we groaned and sighed because we have been and are so vile? Did sin ever lie as a heavy burden upon our conscience, and did we ever see what wretches we are by nature and practice? Have we ever desired deliverance from the bondage and servitude of sin? Have we become tired of our master, of his ways, and of his wages? and have we longed for a better master and better wages? That is the beginning of the breaking off the chain of servitude. The first link of the servile yoke is snapped, when we begin to be discontented with our slavery, and cry and sigh for a better master and a better service.

Again. What do we know, or what have we known of the spirituality of God's law? Now this we must know, in order to feel more keenly our servitude. Not that we can break off the chains of sin through the law, because "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and therefore the law never can deliver us from the power, guilt, and service of sin. But the heavier the yoke, as with the children of Israel in Egypt, the nearer is deliverance from it. And what know we of being cast into the mould of the grand gospel truth of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness? Have our souls ever received this glorious truth with a measure of divine power? This is the first deliverance from sin; the first escape from its servitude, the first striking off of its fetters and chains. And have we felt the kingdom of God set up in the heart? Have we felt a cleaving to the teaching of the Holy Spirit? been convinced in our consciences that the kingdom of God stands only in divine teaching, and that we have no religion but what the Spirit works in us in power? To come to this is to obey the form of doctrine delivered unto us. And then may I not justly ask what effect this has on our lives? What deadness to the world does it produce in our soul? What cleaving to the things of God! What desiring in our conscience to be

conformed to the image of Jesus? Sure I am, that the more the blessed Spirit lets down into our conscience the power of truth, in all its branches; and leads us into a heartfelt reception of, and acquiescence in it, the more shall we get delivered from serving sin, and the more be led to obey from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto us; the more we shall walk in the footsteps of the Lord of life and glory, and have the truth stamped with power on the conscience. And then feeling our own ruin, weakness, and helplessness, we shall learn to give glory to whom glory is due; and to ascribe salvation first, and salvation last to the God of grace and glory; and cast the crown before the throne of God and the Lamb, who with the Holy Ghost is alone worthy of praise and blessing, now and ever.