

**To the Servants of the Most High God at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday,
January 18, 2026**

Hold That Fast Which Thou Hast, That No Man Take Thy Crown - Part 4

Adapted from *Saints Everlasting Rest*, Richard Baxter

I beseech you – earnestly – to thoughtfully consider why you should pursue the Godly and spiritual labor now and not delay and to not let anyone take your crown. Consider these reasons, not by the sheer number of them, but by the weight and importance of them.

27. The Judgment Seat of Christ

2Co 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Rev. 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Contemplate the process of the judgment of the Great Day. Consider seeing the Judgment Seat of Christ not as something ethereal or possible, but as something practical and REAL. THE Judgment Seat is where justice and condemnation is rendered. This is where YOU stand before THE Judge and receive your sentence for the crimes and sins YOU committed. Consider the actual books opened, and the majority of mankind standing naked in only their sin trembling on the left hand of the

Judge. Christ himself will accuse them in excruciating detail of their rebellion and neglect, and remind them of all of their former slighting of His grace and gross sin, and at last condemning them to eternal and perpetual perdition. Contemplate the godly standing on the right hand, and Jesus Christ acknowledging their faith and thanks for the robe of obedience received by our Lord Jesus Christ, and adjudicating them to the possession of the joy of their Lord: what manner of persons must you be after such a sight as this? We shall one day see this sight, as sure as we live if we continue on the strait and narrow way. And why then should not the foreknowledge of such a day, awake us to our duty today?

28. The Everlasting Punishment of the Damned

Isaiah 66:22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. 23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses (corpses) of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

2 Thes. 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Contemplate seeing all hell open and on display. It will be a sight with billions and billions of carcasses laid out in agony and pain. See all the damned there in their eternal, endless torments and hear their cries. Hear their cries of desperation in the day of their visitation and wishing that they had but another life to live, and that God would but try them once again. Hear their bemoaning of their murders, adulteries, fornications, sodomy, idolatry, covetousness, thefts, lies, blasphemies, their neglect of their duty to God, and their loitering and trifling and words (think X/Twitter) and the warnings they so quickly dismissed. Consider the unthinkable, that you lay

in hell one year, one month, one day, one hour and feel all the awful torments. Would you not gladly seek to go back and spend your time seeking and praising God, praying without ceasing, and pursuing godliness as the elect so you might but escape the torment? How seriously then would you speak of hell, and pray, hear, read, watch, and obey! How earnestly would you admonish the careless to take heed and look to their souls with an eye to prevent utter ruin! And will you not take God's word for the truth of this, except you feel it? Is it not your wisdom to do as much now to prevent it, as you would do to remove it when it is too late? Is it not more wisdom to spend this life in laboring for heaven, while ye have it, than to lie in torment, wishing for more time in vain? THE only way to mitigate hell is to avoid it by pursuing and loving God *with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength* (Mark 12:30).

29. The Everlasting Rest of the Elect

Isaiah 64:4 *For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.*

1 Cor. 2:9 *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Rev. 3:12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

Rev. 3:21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

Contemplate, one year, one month, one day, one hour in the glory of heaven, and there joined with the saints and angels in the beholding of God, and singing his praise, and afterwards should be turned into the world again, what a life would you lead? What pains would you take rather than to be deprived of such incomparable glory! Would you think any cost too great, or diligence too much? If one of those that

are now in heaven, should come to live on the earth again, what persons would they be; what a stir would they make; how seriously would they drive on the business of the LORD! The country would ring of their exceeding holy and strict conversations. Before they would lose that blessed estate, they would follow God with cries both day and night, and throw away all, and suffer every day a death. And should we not do as much to obtain it?

30. What Manner of People Should We Be...

- **Whom God hath chosen out to be vessels of mercy, and hath given them the very cream and quintessence (the most perfect example of a quality or class) of His blessings**, when the rest of the world are passed by, and put off with common, and temporal, and left-hand mercies? They who have the blood of Christ given them, and the Spirit for sanctification, consolation, and preservation, and the pardon of sins, and adoption to sonship, and the guard of angels, and the mediation of the Son of God, and the special love of the Father, and the promise and seal of everlasting rest! Consider with all sobrieties, what manner of lives these people should live?
- **Who have felt the pain of their own negligence so much as the godly have felt it?** In the new birth, in their several wounds and trouble of conscience, in their doubts and fears, in their sharp afflictions on body and state. They have groaned and cried out so oft, under the sense and effects of their negligence, and are likely enough to feel it again, if they will not be reformed. Surely, one would think that as the Lord would show us how we ought to behave ourselves that we would have no more light regard for our duty.
- **Who have been so long convinced of their depravity and laziness towards the things of God;** and have confessed it on their knees, a hundred and a hundred more times, and have told God in prayer how inexcusably they have therein offended and begged for the grant of repentance. One would think they would be motivated to please Him who called him to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2

Tim. 2:3). *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

- **Who have bound themselves to God by so many covenants as we have done,** and have resolved and prayed that we be ever faithful in His service. We have on many days of humiliation and thanksgiving; in most of our deep distresses and dangerous sicknesses? We are still ready to bewail our neglects, and to engage ourselves, if God will but permit and allow us once again, how diligent and laborious we will be, and how we will improve our time, and reprove offenders, and watch over ourselves, and ply our work; and be more faithful in service today than we formerly did in a week. The Lord pardon our perfidious (deceit and untrustworthiness) covenant-breaking; and grant that our work may not condemn us.

1Jo 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

2 Tim 2:13 *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

- **Who are so near to God as we, who are His children, in His family,** still under his eye; the objects of his greatest jealousy, as well as love? Nadab and Abihu show that the flames of jealousy are hottest about his altar: (Lev. 10:1, 2:) and Uzza, and the "fifty thousand and seventy Bethshemites, (1 Sam. 6:19,) though dead, show that justice, as well as mercy, was most active about the ark of the covenant. And Ananias and his wife show that profession is no cover for transgression and lies to Him. (Acts 5:4-5) Judgment begins at the house of God:

(1 Pet. 4:17:) and the destroying angel doth begin at the sanctuary. (Ezek. 9:5, 6.). God demands loyalty and obedience and does He not deserve it?

- **Who have received so much encouragement and kindness from Him.** We have tasted such sweetnesses from God, above all men. We who have had so many admirable personal deliverances upon urgent seeking; and have received almost all our solid comforts in a way of close and constant duty: how should we, above all men, ply our work that we be not unprofitable servants. 1Pe 2:3 *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

Isaiah 5:1 *Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: 2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. 4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? 5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* Knowing all this, shall not we seek to be a vineyard full of ripe, pleasant and good fruit?

- **Considering we represent our King every day in this earth.** Men judge the father by the children, and of the master by the servants. We bear His image; and therefore men will measure Him by His representation. He is nowhere in the world so lively represented as in His saints: and shall they set Him forth as a patron of viciousness or idleness! All the world is not capable of honoring or dishonoring God so much as we: and the least of this honor is of more worth than

all our lives. I say all this while we are on the apostle's string; (2 Pet. 3:11;) and now lets give it one last thought. Seeing, then, that all these things forementioned are so, I implore you dear friends, that are following Christ as a Christian, in our Master's name, to consider and resolve the question, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? We must let our life answer the question as well as our tongue.

Conclusion:

I like this conclusion as Baxter delivers it: I have been larger upon this use than at first I intended. This is part because the doctrine of free grace is misrepresented so as to justify sloth and security and part because many eminent men judge that to labor for life and salvation is mercenary and dangerous. They that seek not shall not find, and they that strive not to enter shall be shut out, and they that labor not shall not be crowned.

I love you all amen.

The Lord's Supper - The Sufferings of Christ, The Just One

Adapted from John Brown's expositions.

“Christ, the just One, suffered; being put to death in the flesh.” The exalted personage to whom these appellations belong, existed from before all ages in a state of the most perfect blessedness: “He was in the beginning with God,” “in the bosom of the Father,” enjoying glory with him before the foundation of the world, delighting in him, and was delighted in by him. A state of suffering was not, then, his original condition. (John 1:1, 18 and 17:5).

But when, in order to gain the great objects of his eternal appointment, he, in the fulness of times, took on him the nature of men in its present humbled state, a state resulting from their violation of the divine law, “the likeness of sinful flesh,” he, of course, became a sufferer: for “man born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he comes forth as a flower, and is cut down; he flees as a shadow,

and continues not.” He is “born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” (Romans 8:3; Job 5:7.

It is obvious, however, that by divine appointment, Christ, the Just One, was a sufferer far beyond the ordinary lot of mankind. His sufferings commenced with his birth. Unfurnished with the accommodations which the humblest ordinarily enjoy in entering life, his birthplace was a stable, his cradle a manger. While yet an infant, his life was endangered by the unprincipled and cruel jealousy of a tyrant; and he was exposed to the hazards and fatigues of a hurried flight into a foreign country. At an early age he felt the pressure of the “primal curse,” “In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread,” and engaged in the toilsome labors of mechanical industry. We have no reason to believe that our Lord was ever affected by disease, but he experienced all the other sinless infirmities of our nature. He was hungry, and thirsty, and weary; felt the inconveniences of the extremes of cold and heat; and was no stranger to disappointment, vexation, and sorrow, and the pangs of unrequited kindness and violated friendship. Destitute of the conveniences and comforts, he was but scantily and precariously furnished with the necessaries of life. He seems often to have been indebted for a supply of these to the hospitality of others; and while “the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, he had not where to lay his head.” (Matthew 8:20; Luke 4:13) Though followed and admired by multitudes, he was the object of the contempt and hatred of by far the greater part of his countrymen of all classes. He was the butt of the great man’s scorn, and the poor man’s contumely (*insolent* or *insulting* language or treatment). He was represented as a mover of sedition and a speaker of blasphemy, an impostor or a madman, a glutton and a drunkard, an emissary of Satan, a friend and companion of the basest of men.

Nor were his sufferings limited to those inflicted by his fellowmen. He was exposed to temptations to sin from malignant spiritual beings, which to his holy mind must have been productive of the most poignant anguish. On one occasion, for forty successive days, in a desolate wilderness, he was subjected to these attacks; and we read that when his infernal tormentor left him, he did so only “for

a season.” We know that, in the time of the deepest complication of the Savior’s sufferings, Satan returned. That was the hour when “the power of darkness” especially exerted itself. (Luke 4:1-13; Luke 22:53) The degree of suffering occasioned to a being so holy and so benignant, by witnessing the empire of the evil one in the depravity and wretchedness of mankind, can be very inadequately conceived of by even the holiest and most benevolent of imperfect men. If “just Lot” was vexed by their filthy conversation, what must it have been for our dear Lord? 2Pe 2:7 *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:* Heb 12:3 *For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

The severest of all his sufferings, however, were those which came immediately from the hand of God as the manifestation of the divine righteous displeasure at the sins of those in whose room he stood. These sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings. There is something in the inspired description of them, that excites amazement rather than communicates definite information: “A horror of a great darkness” comes over his mind; “he begins to be sorrowful, and to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;” he “becomes suddenly possessed with fear, horror, and amazement; encompassed with grief and overwhelmed with sorrow; pressed down with consternation and dejection of mind; tormented with anxiety and disquietude of spirit.” Under his intolerable load of anguish, he pours out his heart in supplication to his Father: “And, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Again and again, he, with strong crying and tears, repeats the same prayer, and an angel is sent to strengthen him. He was “poured out like water, his heart was like wax; it was melted in the midst of his bowels. And more!” (Luke 22:44; Ps 22:14-21)

But the sufferings of Christ, the just One, were not yet completed. The awful solemnities of Gethsemane, its preternatural or extraordinary sufferings and consolations, were broken in on by a band of ruffians led on by a traitor disciple. Deserted by his friends, who had lately assured him of inviolable fidelity, he was

dragged as a felon before the tribunal of the high priest, and there accused of the foulest crimes, and subjected to the vilest indignities. He was reviled and insulted in all the forms which wanton vulgar malignity could invent. They spat in his face, and buffeted him with the palms of their hands. And while thus abused by his enemies, he was basely denied with oaths and execrations by one of his followers, who had lately drawn his sword in his defense, and declared that, though he should die with him, he would never deny him. With an impious mockery of justice under the form of law, he was condemned as worthy of death for imposture and blasphemy. Hurried before the judgment-seat of the Jewish procurator (an agent representing others in a court of law in countries that retained Roman civil law – it might be along the order of an *amicus curiae* or friend of the court in our system), he was then accused of the state crimes of sedition and treason; and though declared innocent of them, his dastardly judge delivered him up to the will of his inveterate foes sentencing him first to the scourge and then to the cross. The barbarous soldiery who were entrusted with carrying the unrighteous sentence into execution, robed him in the garments of mock royalty, and wreathed a garland of thorns round his temples, in savage mockery of his claims to be a king. On his lacerated, bleeding, enfeebled body, he bore the ponderous instrument of torture and death toward the place of execution; and, stripped of his raiment, he was there affixed to the cross, amid the sarcasms of the chief priests and the shouts of the populace. To add to his ignominy, two notorious malefactors were crucified along with him, and the middle cross assigned to him as the vilest criminal of the three. While hanging on the cross in agony, his enemies continued to insult him by their contemptuous speeches; then, instead of water to quench his thirst, they offered him vinegar mixed with gall. To crown his sufferings, a dark cloud was interposed between him and his Father: the comforts of sensible intercourse with HIM, the source of his happiness, were withdrawn; and those words so big with anguish, came forth from a breaking heart, “My God, my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?” Such were some of the sufferings of Christ, the just One.