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## Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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### A True Map of Man's Miserable Estate by Nature

by Christopher Love  
Edited by Don Kistler

[Christopher Love, minister of St. Laurence-Jewry in London, was beheaded at the age of 29 for treason during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. Thomas Manton preached his funeral sermon. Among others accused, but not convicted or executed, were Thomas Watson and several other prominent London ministers. Love declared his innocence to the very end. The letters written between Christopher and his wife Mary, as he sat in the Tower of London awaiting his death in August, 1651, are full of love and poignant affection. If it pleases God to allow it, Soli Deo Gloria will begin work shortly be reprinting some of Love's writings. This abridgment is from the 1806 edition.]

I will show you the eight particular properties of a man without Christ.

1. Every man without Jesus Christ is a base man.
2. He is a bondman.
3. He is a beggarly man.
4. He is a blind man.
5. He is a deformed man.
6. He is a disconsolate man.
7. He is a dead man; and
8. He is a damned man.

These are the eight properties of a man without Jesus Christ. First, every man without Jesus Christ is a base man. Though you are born of the blood of nobles, and though you are of the offspring of princes, yet if you have not the royal blood of Jesus Christ running in your veins, you are a base man.

In Daniel 11:21 and Psalm 15:4, you read of vile persons. Such is every man without Christ, and he must be so, because it is only Christ who can take off that baseness wherein every one is by nature. In Isaiah 43:4, God says, *Since thou wast precious in Mine eyes, thou becamest honorable.* And, in I Peter 2:7, *Unto you who believe, Christ is precious.* It is Jesus Christ who puts a diamond of honor and glory upon men. They are all base men who are out of Jesus Christ, and that in these three respects:

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1. They come from a base origin.
  2. They commit base actions; and
  3. They aim at base ends.

Every man who is out of Christ comes from a base origin. He does not have his origin from the Spirit, but from the flesh. He does not proceed from God who is the Father of lights, but from the devil who is the prince of darkness.

He is base because he commits base actions. All the actions and services of a Christ-less man, at best, are but as filthy rags and dead works. A man, in his unconverted state, is the slave and drudge of the devil, a worker of wickedness, still fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, being given over to vile affections.

He is a base man who is without Christ because he aims at base ends in whatever he does, and that two ways. (1) In this world he aims at base ends in his hearing, reading, praying, and profession of religion. He minds himself and his own ends in all that he does. (2) All his actions tend to base ends in another world. As the actions of a man in Christ tend to salvation, so the actions of a Christ-less man tend to damnation.

Second, a man without Christ is not only a base man, but a bondman. This Christ tells you in John 8:36, *If the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed*, intimating that if you do not have an interest in Christ to free you from the slavery of sin and Satan, you are slaves indeed. This bondage and slavery, likewise, consists in three particulars: 1. they are slaves to sin; 2. to the devil, and 3. to the law.

1. Every Christ-less man is a slave to sin. In John 8:34, Jesus says, *Verily I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*, and in 2 Peter 2:19, *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are servants of corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage*. Every man, by nature, is a slave to his lusts, a slave to sin, and to the creatures. God made man over all the creatures, but man has made himself servant to all the creatures.

2. He is not only in bondage and slavery to sin, but to the devil, too. The last two verses of 2 Timothy 2 say, *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will*.

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3. He is in bondage to the law, that is, he does nothing in obedience to the law; and this is the great misery of a man without Christ. He is bound to keep the whole law of God. There is a very strange expression in Revelation 18:13. Saint John tells there that all those who did *worship the beast shall cry, 'Woe and alas,' for Babylon is fallen, and shall cry for the slaves and souls of men.* All wicked men are slaves to antichrist, to sin and to the law, and this is the great misery of an unregenerate man.

Third, you are not only a base and a bondman, but a beggarly man, too, without Jesus Christ; for all the treasures of grace and mercy are hid and locked up in Christ as in a common magazine or storehouse. Colossians 2:13, *In Him are hid all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge.* If you are out of Christ, you have nothing. As it says in Revelation 4:17, *Thou sayest thou art rich and increased in goods, and hast need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked.* You will grant that he is a poor and beggarly man that lacks these four things: meat for his belly, clothes for his back, money for his purse, and a house to put his head in. Why, in all these respects, every man who is out of Christ is a beggarly man.

1. A beggarly man is one who has no meat to put in his belly, and all you who have no interest in Jesus Christ are beggarly, in this regard, because you do not feed upon that bread of life, nor drink of the water of life, the Lord Christ, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, without which your souls will starve for hunger.

2. You will say he is a poor man who has no clothes to put upon his back, Thus every man out of Christ is not only poor, but naked, Revelation 3:17, *Thou knewest not that thou wert poor and miserable, and blind and naked.* That man who is not clothed with the long robes of Christ's righteousness is a naked man, and is exposed to the wrath and vengeance of Almighty God. Those men have a cloak to cover their sinful nakedness and shame who are clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness. It is said of Jacob that he obtained the blessing from his father by being clad in the garments of his eldest brother, and so we are only blessed by God our Father as we are clothed with the robes of our elder brother Jesus Christ.

3. That man is a beggarly man who has no money in his purse. So, though your purses are full of gold, if your hearts are not full of grace, you are very beggarly men, Luke 16:11. Grace is the only true riches. All the durable riches are bound up in Christ.

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4. And lastly, he is a beggarly man who does not have a house to put his head in, who is destitute of a house to lodge in and a bed to lie on. So, you who have no interest in Christ, when your days are expired and death comes, you do not know what to do nor where to go. You cannot say with the godly man that when death takes you from here that you shall be received into everlasting habitations. You cannot say that Christ has gone before to prepare a place for you in heaven.

So, then, in these four particulars you see that a Christ-less man is a very beggarly man, having neither food for his body, nor clothes for his back, nor money for his purse, nor a house to put his head in, unless it is a dungeon of darkness with devils and damned spirits.

Fourthly, another property of a man without Christ is that he is a blind man. Revelation 3:17, *And knewest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Hence it is that wicked men, during their unregeneracy, are called “darkness.” Ephesians 5:8, *You were sometime darkness, but now are you light in the Lord, walk as children of the light.* So light is come into the world, and yet men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

Jesus Christ is to the soul that which the sun is to the earth. Take away the sun from the earth and it is nothing but a dungeon of darkness. So take away Christ from the soul and it is nothing but a dungeon of the devil. Though there is a Christ in the world, if the heart is shut and Jesus Christ is not in you, you are in a state of darkness and blindness.

Fifth, every man without Christ is a deformed man, as you may read in Ezekiel 16:3-14. *Thus saith the Lord God, ‘Thy nativity is in the land of Canaan, thy father was an Amorite, and then, in the 6th verse, When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee, ‘Live,’ yea I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, ‘live.’* When a poor child lies weltering in its blood, not swaddled, nor washed, nor looked after, what a sad condition is it in? And thus were you, says God. But then read on in the 7th verse, *I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great. Then in the 14th verse, Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through My comeliness that I had put upon thee,* said the Lord, intimating that, before Christ looks upon a soul, he lies weltering in his own blood and not able to help himself, but he becomes comely through Christ’s comeliness that is cast upon him. If you lack Christ, you lack your best ornament.

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A man without Christ is like a body full of sores and blotches. He is like a dark house without light and a body without a head, and such a man must be a deformed man.

Sixth, another property of a Christ-less man is that he is a disconsolate man. Christ is the only spring of comfort and the fountain of all joy and consolation. Take away Christ from the soul and it is as if you took the sun away from the firmament. If a man has all the blessings in the world and lacks Christ, he lacks that which should sweeten all the rest of his discomforts. In Exodus 15:23-25, you read of the waters of Marah. They were so bitter that none could drink of them, but then the Lord showed Moses a tree which, when he had cast into the waters, made the waters sweet. Why, Jesus Christ is this tree. He sweetens the bitterness of any outward affliction and he can make all your sorrows to flee away. There is nothing in the world that sweetens the comforts and gives us joy in the possession of the things of this world more than having an interest in Jesus Christ.

It is not, beloved, having much of the creature in your house, but having Christ in your hearts that makes you live comfortably. All the bread you eat will be bread of sorrow if you do not feed upon the body of Jesus Christ; and all your drink will be but wine of astonishment if you do not drink of the blood of Jesus Christ. Without an interest in Christ, all your comforts are but crosses, and all your mercies are but miseries, as in Job 20:22, *In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits*. Though you have abundance of the things of this life, though you have more than enough, yet if you do not have an interest in Christ, you have nothing.

Seventh, another property of a man out of Christ is that he is a dead man. You know that common place in I John 5:12, *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life*. Hence we read in Ephesians 2:1 that unregenerate men are *dead in trespasses and sins*, and the reason is that Christ is a believer's life. Colossians 3:3, *Our life is hid with Christ in God*. Take away Christ from a man and you take away his life, and take away life from a man and he is a dead lump of flesh. Unregenerate men are termed strangers to the life of godliness and, therefore, must be dead in their sins. Though they do not enjoy the life of a man, yet if the life that he lives is not by faith in the Son of God, he is spiritually dead. For example, you know a dead man feels nothing. Do what you will to him, he does not feel it. So a man who is spiritually dead does not feel the

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weight of his sins, though they are a heavy burden pressing him down into the pit of hell. He is a stranger to the life of godliness, past feeling, given over to a reprobate sense, so that he does not feel the weight and burden of all his sins.

A dead man has a title to nothing here in this life. Though he was ever so rich, yet he loses his title to all, and his riches go from him to another. So, being spiritually dead, you can lay claim to nothing, neither to grace, nor mercy, heaven, or happiness by Jesus Christ.

A dead man is still rotting and returning to the dust from whence he came; and so a man who is spiritually dead falls from iniquity to iniquity, and from one sin to another, until at last he drops down into hell fire.

Eighth, the last property of a Christ-less man is that he is a damned man. If he lives and dies without Christ, he is a damned man. So says John 3:18, He that believeth not, he is condemned already. He is as surely damned as if he were in hell already. He who is without Jesus Christ must go without heaven, for heaven and glory and happiness are entailed upon him. Heaven is given to none but those who are heirs together with Christ, and therefore, you who are without Christ must be without heaven, and consequently without happiness and salvation, and therefore you must be damned.

So that you see in these eight particular properties, in what a sad and miserable condition every Christ-less man is in, and oh! that what has now been declared concerning the wretchedness of a Christ-less man might provoke every soul among you to a holy eagerness and earnestness of spirit, above all your gettings to labor to get Jesus Christ.

[This abridged sermon is reprinted from Sola Scriptura, a magazine formerly published by Soli Deo Gloria Ministries, by the permission of the editor. For further information about books by Love, or other Puritan books, contact Don Kistler at:

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