

~Other Speakers S-Z: Michael Wigglesworth:

[ 101 ]

Nor from true faith, which quencheth wrath,  
 hath your obedience flown:  
 Nor from true love, which wont to move  
 Believers, hath it grown.  
 Your argument shews your intent,  
 in all that you have done:  
 You thought to scale Heav'ns lofty Wall  
 by Ladders of your own.

[ 102 ]

Your blinded spirit, hoping to merit  
 by your own Righteousness,  
 Needed no Saviour, but your behaviour,  
 and blameless carriages;  
 You trusted to what you could do,  
 and in no need you stood:  
 Your haughty pride laid me aside,  
 and trampled on my Blood.  
 Rom 10:3

[ 103 ]

All men have gone astray, and done,  
 that which Gods Laws condemn:  
 But my Purchase and offered Grace  
 all men did not contemn.  
 The Ninevites, and Sodomites,  
 had no such sin as this:  
 Yet as if all your sins were small,  
 you say, All did amiss.  
 Rom 9:30, 32  
 Matt 11:23-24  
 & 12:41

[ 104 ]

Again you thought and mainly sought  
 a name with men t'acquire;  
 Pride bare the Bell, that made you swell,  
 and your own selves admire.  
 Mean fruit it is, and vile, I wiss,  
 that springs from such a root:  
 Vertue divine and genuine  
 wonts not from pride to shoot.  
 Matt 6:5

[ 105 ]

Such deeds as your are worse than poor;  
 they are but sins guilt over  
 With silver dross, whose glistening gloss  
 can them no longer cover.  
 The best of them would you condemn,  
 and ruine you alone,  
 Although you were from faults so clear,  
 that other you had none.  
 Prov 26:23  
 Matt 23:27

[ 106 ]

Your Gold is brass, your silver dross,  
 your righteousness is sin:  
 And think you by such honesty  
 eternal life to win?  
 You much mistake, if for its sake  
 you dream of acceptation;  
 Whereas the same deserveth shame,  
 and meriteth Damnation.

Prov 15:8

Rom 3:20

[ 107 ]

A won'drous Crowd then 'gan aloud,  
 thus for themselves to say,  
 We did intend, Lord to amend,  
 and to reform our way:  
 Our true intent was to repent,  
 and make our peace with thee;  
 But sudden death stopping our breath,  
 left us no libertie.

Those that  
 pretend want of  
 opportunity  
 to repent.

Prov 27:1

James 4:13

[ 108 ]

Short was our time, for in his prime  
 our youthful flow'r was cropt:  
 We dy'd in youth, before full growth,  
 so was our purpose stopt.  
 Let our good will to turn from ill,  
 and sin to have forsaken,  
 Accepted be, O Lord, by thee,  
 and in good part be taken.

[ 109 ]

To whom the Judge: where you alledge  
 the shortness of the space,  
 That from your bith you liv'd on earth,  
 to compass saving Grace:  
 It was Free grace that any space  
 was given you at all  
 To turn from evil, defie the Devil,  
 and upon God to call.

And confuted  
 and Convinced

Eccl 12:1

Rev 2:21

[ 110 ]

One day, one week, wherein to seek  
 God's face with all your hearts,  
 A favour was that far did pass  
 the best of your deserts.  
 You had a season, what was your reason  
 such precious hours to waste?

What could you find, what could you mind  
that was of greater haste?

Luke 13:24

II Cor 6:2

Heb 3:7-9

[ 111 ]

Could you find time for vain pastime,  
for loose licentious mirth?  
For fruitless toys, and fading joys  
that perish in the birth?  
Had you good leasure for carnal Pleasure,  
in dayes of health and youth?  
And yet no space to seek God's face,  
and turn to him in truth?

Eccl 11:9

Luke 14:18-20

[ 112 ]

In younger years, beyond your fears,  
what if you were surprised?  
You put away the evil day,  
and of long life devised.  
You oft were told, and might behold,  
that Death no Age doth spare;  
Why then did you your time foreslow,  
and slight your Souls welfare?  
Amos 6:3-6

Eph 5:16

Luke 19:42

[ 113 ]

Had your intent been to repent,  
and had you it desir'd,  
There would have been endeavours seen,  
before your time expri'd.  
God makes no treasure, nor hath he pleasure,  
in idle purposes:  
Such fair pretences are foul offences,  
and cloaks for wickedness.

Luke 13:24-25

&c.

Phil 2:12

[ 114 ]

The were brought in, and charg'd with sin,  
another Company,  
Who by Petition obtain'd permission,  
to make Apology:  
They argued, We were misled  
as is well known to thee,  
By their Example, that had more ample  
abilities than we:

Some plead

Examples of their  
betters.

Matt 18:7

[ 115 ]

Such as profest they did detest,

and hate each wicked way:  
 Whose seeming grace whilst we did trace,  
 our Souls were led astray.  
 When men of Parts, Learning and Arts,  
 Professing Piety,  
 Did thus and thus, it seem'd to us  
 we might take liberty.  
 John 7:48  
 [ 116 ]

The Judge relies, I gave you eyes,  
 and light to see your way,  
 Which had you lov'd, and well improv'd  
 you had not gone astray.  
 My Word was pure, the Rule was sure,  
 why did you it forsake,  
 Or thereon trample, and mens example  
 your Directory make?  
 Who are told that  
 Examples are  
 no Rules.  
 Ps 19:8, 11  
 Exod 23:2  
 Ps 50:17-18  
 [ 117 ]

This you well knew, that God is true  
 and that most men are liars,  
 In word professing holiness,  
 in deed thereof deniers.  
 O simple fools! that having Rules  
 your lives to regulate,  
 Would then refuse, and rather chuse  
 vile men to imitate.  
 II Tim 3:5  
 [ 118 ]

But Lord, say they, we went astray,  
 and did more wickedlie,  
 By means of those whom thou hast chose  
 Salvation heirs to be.  
 To whom the Judge: What you alledge,  
 doth nothing help the case;  
 But makes appear how vile you were,  
 and rend'reth you more base.  
 They urge that  
 they were misled by  
 godly mens  
 Examples  
 But all their shifts  
 turn to their greater  
 shame.  
 I Cor 11:1  
 [ 119 ]

You understood that what was good,  
 was to be followed,  
 And that you ought that which was naught  
 to have relinquished.  
 Contrariwayes, it was your guise,  
 only to imitate

Good mens defects, and their neglects  
that were regenerate.

Philip 4:8

[ 120 ]

But to express their holiness,  
or imitate their grace,  
You little car'd, nor once prepar'd  
your hearts to seek my face.  
They did repent, and truly rent  
their hearts for all known sin:  
You did offend, but not amend,  
to follow them therein.

Ps 32:5

II Chron 32:26

Matt 26:75

Prov 1:24-25

[ 121 ]

We had thy Word, say some, O Lord,  
but wiser men than we  
Could never yet interpret it,  
but alway disagree.  
How could we fools be led by Rules,  
so far beyond our ken,  
Which to explain did so much pain,  
and puzzle wisest men?

Some plead  
the Scriptures  
darkness. And  
differences amongst  
Interpreters.

II Pet 3:16

[ 122 ]

Was all my word abstruse and hard?  
the Judge then answered:  
It did contain much truth so plain,  
you might have run and read,  
But what was hard you never car'd  
to know nor studied,  
And things that were most plain and clear  
you never practised.

They are confuted.

Prov 14:6

Isa 35:8

Heb 8:12

[ 123 ]

The Mystery of Pietie

God unto Babes reveals,  
When to the wise he it denies,  
and from the world conceals.  
If to fulfil Gods holy will  
had seemed good to you,  
You would have sought light as you ought,  
and done the good you knew.

Matt 11:25

Prov 2:3-5

[ 124 ]

Then came in view another Crew,  
and 'gan to make their pleas.  
Amongst the rest, some of the best  
had such poor shifts as these:  
Thou know'st right well, who all canst tell  
we liv'd amongst thy foes,  
Who the Renate did sorely hate,  
and goodness much oppose.  
Others the fear of  
Persecution.  
Acts 28:22

[ 125 ]

We holiness durst not profess,  
fearing to be forlorn  
Of all our friends, and for amends  
to be the wickeds scron.  
We know their anger would much endanger  
our lives, and our estates:  
Therefore for fear we durst appear  
no better than our mates.  
John 12:42