

“YOU ARE NOW THE BLESSED OF THE LORD”
NO. 2238

A SERMON
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“You are now the blessed of the Lord.”
Genesis 26:29.

THESE words truly describe the position of many whom I address at this time. There are hundreds here upon whom my eyes can rest and to any one of whom I might point with this finger, or rather, to whom I might extend this hand to give a hearty shake, and say, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” I need not say it in the same spirit, nor for the same reason that the Philistines did. They had behaved basely towards Isaac and now that he had prospered, they urged him to forget the past. They meant, “This is why we trust that you will deal kindly with us and overlook our harsh conduct, for in spite of all, God has so blessed you that you need not be fretful and pettish and remember what we have done.” I am glad that I am under no necessity to strive to make up a quarrel in this way. These many years we have dwelt in peace and have enjoyed sweet fellowship together. You have often borne with my weaknesses and bestowed upon me a wealth of affection which I am sure I do not deserve. So, though I use the language of Abimelech and his friends, my motive is a very different one. Yet the truth is the same concerning many a one here—“You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

There is, however, much force in the argument which these Philistines used. If God has richly blessed us, notwithstanding all our faults and failures, surely we should learn to forgive many injuries done to ourselves. If the Lord forgives us our debt of 10,000 talents, we must be willing to forgive our fellow servant his debt of 100 pence. Child of God, if you are now the blessed of the Lord, you will often turn a blind eye towards the offenses of your fellow men. You will say, “God has so blessed me that I can well overlook any wrongs that you have inflicted; any harsh words that you have said. I am now blessed of the Lord, so let bygones be bygones.” May you have grace given to you to do that now, if any of you have had a little squabble with any other! If there have been any difficulties between any of you, I would hope that before I really get into my subject—while with my finger I point you out and say to each one of you—“You are now the blessed of the Lord,” you will immediately say, “As surely as that is true, I do, from my very heart, forgive all who have offended me, whether Philistine, or Israelite, or Gentile. How can I do otherwise who myself have received such grace while so unworthy?”

Remember that that this was spoken by the Philistine king as a reason why he wished to have Isaac for a friend. In your choice of friends, choose those who are the friends of God. If you would have a blessing upon your friendship, select a man whom God has blessed. Look out for one who is a disciple of Christ and say, “You are now the blessed of the Lord; therefore I seek your acquaintance. Come under my roof; you will bring a blessing with you. Speak to me in the street; your morning word will be a benediction to me.” It was the old custom with apostolic men to say as they entered a house, “Peace be unto this house.” We have given up all idea of blessing our fellow men in that way. But why have we done so? Is it from a lack of love, or lack of faith in our own prayers that God would make it so? For my part, I value a good man’s blessing. As I drove up a hill, in the country, some time ago, a poor man and his wife were walking down the hill. I had never seen them before, but the woman pulled the husband by his coat. They both stood and looked at me and at last, she said quite loudly, “It’s him, God bless him!” And although her greeting was not quite grammatical, it evidently came from her heart—and I felt happier for it as I went on my way. I saw her afterwards, and asked her the reason of her words. “Why,” she said, “I have read your sermons for many a year and I could not help saying, ‘God bless him!’ when I

saw you, for you have been a blessing to me.” Thus that humble woman, being blessed of the Lord, became a blessing to me. And we, all of us, even the most obscure, who know the grace of God, might daily be like a great benediction in the midst of the people. When you think of your minister, say, sometimes, “God bless him!” It will do him good to hear it. Say to your friend, “God bless you!” Say to your children, “God bless you, my dear boy! The Lord bless you, my dear girl!” They will be the better for it if you yourself are the blessed of the Lord. You, grandparents, lay your hands on the children’s heads and bless them—they will not forget it when they grow up. It may be that you have done much more for them than you have thought. Concerning His flock, the Lord says, “I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing.” God’s people are blessed that they may bless. Therefore, for the sake of others, as well as for your own, seek that my text may be abundantly true of you. May this be your prayer—

*“Lord, I hear of showers of blessings
You are scattering full and free.
Showers, the thirsty land refreshing,
Let some droppings fall on me,
Even me.”*

It was for this reason that the Philistines sought the friendship of Isaac, because they could truly say to him, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

I want not so much to preach from this text as to ask every believer in Christ to feel that it is personally true. Once you were condemned, but being in Christ Jesus, “There is therefore now no condemnation.” “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Once you were at enmity against God, but now, being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, you are His friend—“You are now the blessed of the Lord.” “You were sometimes in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” How great the change for the man or woman to whom we can say, “You are now the blessed of the Lord!”

There was a day when I was cursed and there was a day when I loved sin and opposed God’s will—but now I love sin no longer and I find my highest delight in doing the will of my Father in heaven. My soul, if this is true, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” You are a miracle of mercy. You are a prodigy of grace and truly, “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Sit still in your pews, you people of God, and roll this sweet morsel under your tongue! Once, because you believed not, the wrath of God was resting upon you, but now you can say, “O Lord! I will praise You: though You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away and You comforted me.” Surely then, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” You are poor, perhaps, in this world’s goods, but being an heir of the “inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you,” why, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Or, perhaps, you are weak and ill, and scarcely able to be in your place. But though your flesh and strength fail, “You are now the blessed of the Lord,” for by His grace you will triumph over all. Though you are oppressed with many a fear and many a care still “You are now the blessed of the Lord,” and on Him you can cast your care—and from Him receive deliverance from all your fears. Whatever your distresses, this overwhelms them all as with a flood of joy. You can join with one who, though in a very humble station of life, says—

*“O joy! ‘Tis mine, this life divine,
Life hid with Christ in God.
Once sin-defiled, now reconciled,
And washed in Jesus’ blood.
Oft far astray from Christ the Way,
I went with willful feet.
From hopeless track, love brought me back,
With words of welcome sweet.”*

If you can truly sing this sweet song, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” You are not yet perfect—you are not yet taken out of the body to be with your Lord in bliss—you are not yet risen from the dead to stand before the throne of God in your body of resurrection glory. But yet you are now, even now, the blessed of the Lord. Will you let the flavor of this sweet truth be in your mouth and in your heart while I seek to open this subject to you?

I. I would remark upon it, first, that in the case of Isaac, THIS WAS THE TESTIMONY OF ENEMIES. It was the Philistines who said, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” There are some of God’s

people who are so evidently favored of heaven that even those who despise and oppose them cannot help saying of them, “They are the blessed of the Lord.” I wish that we were all such—so distinguished by piety, so marked out by strength of faith, and prevalence of prayer, that even our Abimelechs might be forced to say to each of us, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” What caused this heathen king and his companions to use such an expression about Isaac? In seeking the reasons which led them to see the bounty of the Lord in the case of Abraham’s son, we may find some signs of the blessing of God upon ourselves and upon our children.

I think, first, that *they saw it in his amazing prosperity*. We read in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth verses, “Then Isaac sowed in the land, and received in the same year a hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: for he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and great store of servants.” Prosperity is not always a token of blessing. It may be proof of the Lord’s favor, but it may not be. God sometimes gives most to those on earth who will have nothing in heaven—as if, seeing that He cannot bless them in eternity, He would let them enjoy the poor sweets of time. I have heard it said that prosperity was the blessing of the old covenant and adversity the blessing of the new. Nevertheless, it is true that worldly prosperity may be sent and has been sent to the children of God as a token of divine favor. It is not always when we eat the quails that they make us ill—God can send them in such a way that we may enjoy them and be strengthened by them. He can give riches as well as poverty. That was the Philistines’ reason, and it is a Philistine’s reason. It is not a very satisfactory one, but it has some force, for the Lord Jesus Himself gave the sign of blessing upon the meek, saying, “They shall inherit the earth.” And in the same memorable discourse upon the mount, He uttered the exhortation and promise, “Seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things”—the things which the Gentiles seek after—“shall be added unto you.” So we may fairly construe the “mercies of God” as a sign of His blessing.

These Philistines had a further reason for thinking that Isaac was blessed of God—*they felt it by divine impression*. A secret spirit whispered to the king, “Touch not My anointed, and do My prophets no harm.” God always has a way of making men feel “how awful goodness is.” They may jest and jeer against a Christian, but his life vanquishes them. They cannot help it. They must do homage to the supremacy of grace. The promise is still true, “When a man’s ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.” God will impress upon the minds of even unbelievers this fact that such a man, such a woman, is one whom God has blessed. Do you not know some believers who have such an air of other-worldliness about them, that though they mix freely with the people among whom they dwell, men instinctively acknowledge that, “They have been with Jesus” and have been blessed by Him? I do not care to see pictures of the saints of old with a nimbus of light round their heads, even though they have been painted by the old masters—yet there is a something about one who lives a saintly life, a brightness encircling him—like the symbol of God’s presence which separates him from those around him, and leads us to say to him, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Further, before the Philistines bore this testimony to Isaac, no doubt *they remarked his gentleness*. I believe that there is nothing that has such power over ungodly men as meekness of spirit, quietness of behavior, patience of character, and the continual conquest over an evil temper. If you grow angry when people are angry with you, you will have lost your position. But if you can be patient under persecution; if you can smile when they ridicule you; if you can yield your rights; if you can bear and continue to bear, you are greater than the man who has taken a city. Remember the blessing promised to the disciples of Christ who are peacemakers? They are not only the children of God, but, “*They shall be called the children of God.*” People will say, “If any man is a true Christian, he is one.” They will have no doubt about it. When long-suffering, gentleness, and meekness are in the life, men begin to say to such a one, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” As the gentleness of the Lord makes us great, the gentleness of the saints brings to God great glory. Anger has a temporary sovereignty that melts in the heat of the sun. Quietness of spirit is king over all the land. If you can rule yourself, you can rule the world. Isaac conquered by his meekness, for when Abimelech saw that he yielded well after well rather than keep up a quarrel, he said to him, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Some of you do not understand this. “What!” you ask, “are we not to stick up for ourselves?” That depends upon whose you are—if you are your own, take care of yourselves—but if you are Christ’s, let Him take care of you. “But,” you say, “if you tread on a worm, it will turn.” Surely you will not make a worm your pattern? No, but let the meek

and lowly Christ be your example. Seek to be a partaker of His Spirit. He prayed even for His murderers, “Father, forgive them,” and He always sought to return good for evil. I pray you to do the same—cultivate a gentle spirit and even worldlings will say to you—“You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Now, while these Philistines saw that God blessed Isaac, *they nevertheless envied him*, as we read in the 14th verse. How strange it is that men who do not care to be blessed of God themselves envy them who are blessed of Him! I heard one say, “It is not just that God should have a chosen people.” Sir, do you want to be one of God’s people? These blessings which God gives to them—do you want to have them? You may have them, if you will. If you will not have them, I pray you do not quarrel with God because He chooses to give to whom He wills. There are two great truths which from this platform I have proclaimed for many years. The first is that salvation is free to every man who will have it. The second is that God gives salvation to a people whom He has chosen. And these truths are not in conflict with one another in the least degree. If you want the blessing of the Lord, have it even now, for my commission as an ambassador of Christ is to beseech men to be reconciled to God. If you do not want it, do not quarrel with God for giving it to His own chosen. It was so with those Philistines—they wanted not Jehovah’s blessing and yet they envied Isaac, who had it.

But while they envied him, *they feared him and courted his favor*. Do I speak to some young believer who has gone into a house of business, or some Christian woman who has been placed in a family where her religion exposes her to opposition? Let me counsel you to go straight on, taking no notice of the hindrances thrown in your way. You will first be envied. After that, you will be feared. And after that, you will be sought after and your company will be desired. If you can only stay as firm as Isaac did, never losing your temper, but always being gentle, meek, and kind, you will conquer. And you who are today despised will yet come to be honored, even as Isaac was by the very Abimelech who had, just a little while before, asked him to go away.

A man of God, who was bearing testimony for the faith, on one occasion, was pushed into the gutter by a person passing by who said, as he thrust him in, “There, take that, John Bunyan.” He took off his hat and said, “I will take anything if you give me the name of John Bunyan. I count it such an honor to have that title that you may do anything that you like with me.” To be identified with those who have been blessed of the Lord is worth more than all the favors of the world. We are in good company. If men despise you, it matters little when God has blessed you. If they push you into the gutter for being a Christian, take your hat off and thank them, for it is worthwhile to bear any scorn that you may have the honor to be numbered with the followers of Christ. Rest assured that if you will count it a privilege, even to be mocked for your faith, those who persecute you today will acknowledge your high position tomorrow. It is a grand thing when any of us thus gets the testimony of our enemies, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

II. Now, secondly, not only did his enemies thus bear witness to Isaac, saying, “You are now the blessed of the Lord,” but THIS WAS ALSO THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD. It was because he had the witness of God that he was able to behave as to secure the favorable verdict of the Philistines. Like Enoch before his translation, Isaac “had this testimony, that he pleased God” and was thus meekly able to bear the displeasure of the world. When they drove him from one well, he dug another, yet all the time he with joy drew “water out of the wells of salvation.” He might almost have sat for the picture which Jeremiah drew of the blessed man centuries afterwards, when he said, “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when the heat comes, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”

Let us see, then, how Isaac had the testimony of God as to his blessedness.

First, this was the Lord’s testimony to him *in promises founded upon the covenant* which He had made with Abraham, his father. God said to Isaac, “I will be with you and will bless you.” In the third verse of this chapter, the promise is made doubly sure to Isaac when God says, “I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham your father.” And in the 24th verse of the chapter, where the promise is renewed, it is still on the ground of the covenant—“I am with you and I will bless you, and multiply your seed for My servant Abraham’s sake.” Now, do you know anything of the covenant relationship between God and His people? The bulk of Christians nowadays are wholly ignorant on this subject. The preachers have forgotten it, yet the covenant is the top and bottom of all theology. He that is the master

of the knowledge of the covenants has the key of true divinity. But the doctrine has gone out of date except with a few old-fashioned people who are supposed to know no better, but who in spite of all the taunts of their opponents, cling to the doctrines of grace and find in them the very marrow and fatness of the truth of God. I love the promises of God because they are covenant promises. God has engaged to keep His word with His people in the person of His dear Son. He has bound Himself by covenant with Christ and will not, cannot go back from His word—and Christ has fulfilled the conditions of the covenant and He who has “brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” will certainly, “make you perfect to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ.” The promise is a double promise when it is confirmed in Jesus. Though we are poor and worthless creatures, yet we can say with David, “Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.” Twice God says by Isaiah, “I have given Him for a covenant to the people.” Thrice happy are they who receive what God has given and who in Christ enter into that blessed bond. Beloved, if God has laid the promise home to you by the Spirit and let you see it as a covenant promise, then God has borne this testimony to you—“You are now the blessed of the Lord.” You are blessed now. You shall be blessed all your life long on earth—

*“And when, through Jordan’s flood,
Your God shall bid you go,
His arm shall defend you,
And vanquish every foe.
And in this covenant you shall view
Sufficient strength to bear you through.”*

Further, the Lord bore testimony to Isaac *in secret manifestation*. He came to him in the watches of the night and spoke with him face to face. None but those who are the blessed of the Lord have such communion with Him. “How is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world?” asked Judas, not Iscariot at the supper table before the Lord’s betrayal. Ah, Judas! It is simply because you are not Iscariot, but a true disciple otherwise had you never known intimately the presence of Christ. If He manifests Himself to us in this choice manner, it is because He has blessed us in a way in which He would not bless the ungodly world. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.” Do you ever get manifestations of Christ? Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit which is given to you? Then you have a divine attestation that “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Isaac also found this testimony, I think, *in divine acceptance of his worship*. We find that “he built an altar” and then he “pitched his tent.” Keep up the altar of God in your home and keep to the right order—the altar first, and the tent second. When God accepts you there, and makes your family altar to be a place of refreshment and delight to you, you will feel that in thus doing, He is giving you the sweet assurance that you are now the blessed of the Lord. It is a pity that there are so many houses nowadays without roofs—I mean houses of Christian people without family prayer. What are some of you at? If your children turn out ungodly, do you wonder at it, seeing that there is no morning and evening prayer, no reading of the Word of God in your home? In every home where the grace of God is known, there should be an altar from which should rise the incense of praise and at which the one sacrifice for sin should be pleaded before God day by day. In the midst of such family piety, which I fear is almost dying out in many quarters, you will get the witness, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Isaac had another proof that he was blessed of God *in swift chastisement for sin*. He told a lie—he said that Rebekah was his sister, whereas she was his wife. Although that might seem to prove that he was not blessed of the Lord, the proof of his blessedness was that he was discovered and became ashamed of it. Worldly people may do wrong and very likely get off scot-free, but if a Christian goes off the straight line, he will have an accident in his roguery and be found out, while other men may do 10 times as badly and never be suspected. Rascals who know not God and who despise the ordinary morality of honest men may speculate on the Stock Exchange with other peoples’ money and never be found out. But if you who really love God only do it once, and say, “Well, I feel driven to it,” you will be caught as surely as you live. It is one mark of a child of God that when he does wrong, he gets a whipping. If I were in the street and saw strange boys breaking windows, I would say, “Go home, or I will

find a policeman for you.” But if it were my own boy, I would chastise him myself. I would not meddle with the other boys, but with my own I would. So it is with God who says, by the mouth of Amos, to His people, “You only have I known of all of the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” It is a mark of God’s blessing a man that if the man does wrong, he cannot do it with impunity. Whenever your sins make you smart, thank God, for it is better to smart than it is to sin—and better that the smart should wean you from sin than that something sweet should come in to make you the slave of that sin forever.

Well, I will not dwell further on this. God testified to Isaac’s heart, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” May He testify that to each one of you who know His name and have received His covenant promises! May the words come to you like a benediction from the throne of God and send you out to testify of His goodness and to bless Him who has blessed us, saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ!”

III. Now, in the third place, I must draw your attention to the fact that though Isaac was the blessed of the Lord, THIS DID NOT SECURE HIM FROM TRIBULATION. Already I have approached this part of my subject by speaking of the speedy discovery of his sin, but in addition to this, there were other sorrows not directly resulting from his own conduct, but permitted by God in order that he, who was now blessed, should be still further enriched in character and conduct.

Even before Abimelech saw the source of Isaac’s grace, he was “the blessed of the Lord,” yet *he still had to move about*. He was a pilgrim and a stranger, as was his father, and he lived as an alien in the land. He was without any inheritance in the country and though his flocks and herds increased, he dwelt but in tents, while others reared for themselves stately houses and palaces. But God had prepared some better thing for him and “he looked for a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.” Thus, this trial became a means of blessing to him, as trials always do when sanctified by the Spirit of God. If these words reach any child of God whose nest on earth has been disturbed, whose house has been broken up, I would seek to cheer you by the thought of the “continuing city” which shall soon be your portion. If you have, through Christ, an assurance of an abundant entrance there, though you never have a house of your own on earth and roam from place to place a stranger, seeming to be very often in the way of other people, yet remember—“You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Daily He does load you with benefits and you can even now have your home in His love—

*“He loves, He knows, He cares.
Nothing that truth can dim.
He gives the very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.”*

In spite of the position of blessedness in which Isaac was placed, *he had enemies to meet*. It is true that at last his foes became his friends, but the blessing of the Lord did not begin with their friendship—they then discovered and confessed the fact—but Isaac had been “the blessed of the Lord” all along. When Abimelech sent him away and when “the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac’s herdsmen,” he was not shut out from God’s favor. Jehovah never bade him depart, nor took from him His good Spirit. So, tried Heart, when foes press around you and one thing after another seems to go wrong, do not begin to write bitter things against yourself, as though God had forsaken you. Remember that it is of the Lord that you are blessed—not of men. He will never forsake you and His deliverance shall soon make your heart glad. Even in the midst of the trial, “You are now the blessed of the Lord” and like Isaac, after you have drunk of the waters of “contention” and “hatred,” you will be brought to Rehoboth where you shall have “room,” yes, even to Beer-Sheba, “the well of the oath,” or “the seventh well,” “the well of satiety,” where your enemies shall seek your favor and glorify your Lord.

Isaac had especially one trial that ate into his very soul—*he had domestic sorrow*. Esau’s double marriage with Hittite women was a grief to his father and to his mother. And I mention this because there may be some of God’s people who are suffering in the same way. I saw one, some days ago, who said, “I am like the Spartan who carried a fox in his bosom, that ate even to his heart, for I have a thankless, ungrateful child.” And as he spoke to me, I saw the heart-break of the man. Ah! It may be that some of you are in that condition. If any young man or young woman here is causing that grief to a parent, I pray him or pray her to think of it. You are not heartless, I hope. You have not forgotten your mother’s prayers or your father’s care of you. Do not kill those who gave you being or insult and vex

those to whom you owe so much. But oh, dear brother or sister, if you have come here broken-hearted about your Esau and all that he is doing, I want to take you by the hand and say, “But still you are blessed of the Lord. Let this console you.” What if Abraham has his Ishmael? Yet God blessed him. Bear bravely this trial. Take it to the Lord in prayer. Give God no rest, day or night, till He save your boy and bring back your girl. But still, be not despairing. Be not cast down, for it is true of you—and drink in, I pray you, this cup of consolation—that “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Let me speak two or three earnest words in closing. “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” “*Now.*” Beloved, do labor to get a hold of a present blessing. If you are indeed saved, do not be always thinking of what you are to enjoy in heaven, but seek to be the blessed of the Lord now. Why not have two heavens—a heaven here and a heaven there? What is the difference between a believer’s life here and a believer’s life there? Only this—here Christ is with us—and there we are with Christ. If we live up to our privileges, this is the only difference we need to know. Try to be “now the blessed of the Lord.” I have heard of a traveler who was followed by a beggar in Ireland, who very persistently asked for alms. As long as there seemed a chance of getting anything, the old woman kept saying, “May the blessing of God follow Your Honor all through your life.” But when all hope of a gift was vanished, she bitterly added, “And never overtake you.” But the blessings which God has for His chosen are not of that slow-footed kind which never catch us up. It is written, “All these blessings shall come on you and *overtake you*, if you shall hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God.” I beseech you, then, to lay hold of this overtaking blessing. Let it not pass by unheeded. “You are *now* the blessed of the Lord.”

Next, be very grateful that you are in this position of grace. You might have been in the drink-shop, you might have been speaking infidelity, you might have been in prison, you might have been in hell. But “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Wherefore, praise the Lord, whose mercy endures forever. If you do not lift up your voice, yet lift up your heart and bless Him for the grace which has made you to differ from other people.

Again, tell others about it. If “You are now the blessed of the Lord,” communicate to others the sacred secret that has been the means of bringing such joy to you. Are we earnest enough about the souls of others? Christian men and women, do you love your fellow creatures or do you not? How few there are of us who make it our business to be constantly telling others the sweet story of Jesus and His love! I read, the other day, of a chaplain in the Northern army in the lamentable war in the United States, who while he lay wounded on the battlefield, heard a man not far off utter an oath. Though he himself was so badly wounded that he could not stand, yet he wished to reach the swearer to speak a Gospel message to him—and he thought, “I can get to him if I roll over.” So, though bleeding profusely, he kept rolling over and over till he got to the side of the poor blasphemer—and on the lone battlefield he preached Jesus to him. Some other men came along and he said to them, “Can you carry me? I fear that I am dying, but I do not want to be taken off the field. I should like you, if you would, to carry me from one dying man to another, all the night long, that I might tell them of a Savior.” What a splendid deed was this! A bleeding man talking to those who were full of sin about a Savior’s bleeding wounds! Oh, you who have no wound, who can walk and possess all the faculties to fit you for service, how often you miss opportunities and refuse to speak of Jesus! “You are now the blessed of the Lord” and at this moment I would have you think that the blessed Lord lays His pierced hand on you saying, “Go and tell others what I have done for you.” Never cease to tell the divine story, as opportunity is given, until your voice is lost in death. Then your spirit shall begin to utter the story in the loftier sphere.

You are coming to the Lord’s table and I invite you, beloved, to come here with much love. Do not come with doubts and fears, with a cold or lukewarm heart. Remember, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” Come, eat His flesh and drink His blood. There, on the table you will see nothing but the emblems of His flesh and blood. But if you believe, Christ will feed you spiritually upon Himself and as you eat that bread of heaven and drink that wine of life, you may well hear a voice saying, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.”

Well do I remember the time when I would have given away my eyes to be as a dog under the table—to have eaten only the crumbs which fell as others feasted. And now, for 41 years today, I have sat as a child at the table, blessed be His name!

As I told our friends this morning, this day is an anniversary of peculiar interest to me. Forty-one years ago I went down into the river and was baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—

*“Yet have been upheld till now.
Who could hold me up but Thou?”*

May you, each of you, as you come to the table, hear a voice saying in your heart, “Now a believer; now justified; now quickened; now regenerate; now in Christ; now dear to the heart of God. ‘You are now the blessed of the Lord.’”

Oh, that some who came in here without the blessing would get it before they go! He that believes in Jesus has all the blessing which Jesus can give to him—forgiveness for the past, grace for the present, and glory for the future. “Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed,” is the word of the Lord to you, you doubter. He was made a curse for you that He might redeem you from the curse of the broken law of God, for it is written, “Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.” He hung on a tree for guilty man. Believe in Him and as you believe eternal joys shall come streaming down into your dry and desolate heart, and it shall be said to you, “You are now the blessed of the Lord.” You shall be blessed now and blessed forevermore! God grant it, for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE THE SERMON—GENESIS 26.
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—758, 757, 786.**

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON:

DEAR FRIENDS—I have received letters from readers who speak of reading *with interest* the notes at the end of the sermons. I feared that these jottings had become monotonous and therefore I am amazed that they should interest so many. I am not able, like Paganini, to discourse sweet music on a single string and therefore I impute the *interest* spoken of to the love of the reader rather than to the genius of the writer. We are always interested in the smallest details of the lives of those we greatly love.

This present note may record the fact that on the last evening of 1891, and in the morning of New Year’s Day, 1892, I gave two short addresses to about a dozen friends in this hotel. My silence of more than half a year is ending. The chirping of the first spring birds is heard in my land. It is true that I sat down and talked my little piece and that I felt glad when it came to an end, but still it has been done, and he that was almost numbered with the dead is now beginning to speak in the ears of the living.

These two little talks, only of interest to my own friends, will probably be preserved in *The Sword and the Trowel* for February, for Mr. Harrald took them down in shorthand. You will all guess how happy I am, for I have now some signs and tokens of returning strength. And I am praising God with all my heart for such a wonderful restoration.

To friends who have lovingly kept up the funds for the various institutions, I send my heartiest thanks, and to all well-wishers, my kindest regards.

Yours to serve till death,

C. H. Spurgeon,

Hotel Beau Rivage, Mentone, January 2, 1892.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

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