

DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS

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A SERMON

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“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Colossians 1:13

DARKNESS is used in Scripture to express a great many things. Sometimes it represents *sorrow*. “A night of weeping” is a common expression among us. We speak, too, of “walking in darkness, and seeing no light.” We commonly say to one another that our minds are in a dark and gloomy state when we are surrounded by the fogs and mists of sorrow.

Taking it in this sense, how often might we say of our heavenly Father, that He “hath delivered us from the power of darkness”? He has helped us in our temporal difficulties and circumstances, or He has whispered, “As thy days so shall thy strength be,” and He has turned our night of weeping into a morning of gladness, put away the sackcloth and ashes, and given us the oil of joy. Blessed be His name for all this! Let us not be ungrateful, nor forget the many times when He has turned our mourning into dancing, and our sackcloth into scarlet and fine linen.

But darkness frequently signifies, too, in Scripture *ignorance*. We were once so in darkness that we were ourselves blinded. “The God of this world” has blinded our eyes, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine in upon us. “We who were sometimes darkness, are now light in the Lord.” Christ’s mission had for one of its many gracious purposes and ends the taking away of the darkness of human ignorance and the pouring of light upon the intellect of man.

I thank God that many of us, though we know comparatively little, do know that, whereas we were once blind, now we see. We do know something of ourselves, so as to be humbled, and we know, too, something of the gracious God, so as to rejoice that we are saved by Him. God has, therefore, delivered us, in that sense, from the power of darkness. Let us be thankful for that.

Pant for more knowledge, but oh! believer, be grateful for what you have. Remember that the little you already know of saving truth is inestimably precious, for to know Jesus Christ is eternal life. And if, on this side of the grave, you never learn any more, yet you know that which should set your tongue eternally in holy motion with a rapturous song of thankfulness to Him who has taught you such priceless truth. Yes, “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Darkness, too, frequently represents *Satan and the mysterious spiritual influence which he exerts upon the human mind*. He is called “the prince of darkness.” Darkness seems to be his element. God is the “Father of Lights,” but Satan seems to be the father of the gloom and the dark.

Two elements are now at war in this lower world—Christ, the Light, the true Light, and Satan—sin—thick darkness, a darkness which may be felt—the Egyptian darkness in which we are naturally born and out of which we are not delivered, except by the supernatural power of God, exhibited through the plan of salvation by His grace.

Beloved, we still are tempted by Satan, but we are not under his power. We have to fight with him, but we are not his slaves. He is not our king. He has no rights over us. We do not obey him—we will not listen to his temptations. By the grace of God, we mean, notwithstanding all his opposition, to fight in his very teeth and to win our way to heaven. He “hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Oh! what a mercy this is—that man, such a poor creature as he is, should be able to escape from the power of that master-spirit Diabolus, Satan, the destroyer! That was a wonderful moment when,

according to Bunyan's description, Hopeful and Christian found that the key was turned in the lock and that they could get out of Giant Despair's castle.

That was a wonderful moment, I say, when, according to Master Bunyan, the key turned in the great lock which locked the iron gate. To use John Bunyan's own words, he says, "That lock went damnable hard." In all the new editions of "Pilgrim's Progress," it is put, "That lock went desperately hard." That is the more refined way of putting it, but John Bunyan meant just what he said, and implied that there was a sense of the wrath of God upon the soul of man on account of sin, so that he felt as if he were even near to perdition itself.

And yet, at such a time, the key did turn in the lock, and the iron gate was opened. You recollect that just at the moment, old Giant Despair woke up, and was going to pursue the pilgrims, and lay hold upon them, when he was seized with one of his fainting fits. Oh! what an escape from Giant Despair! And yet this is little compared with escaping from Satan!

Satan is the prince of the power of the air, and human despair is but one of his servants, one of the black officers in his infernal regiment. To escape from Satan himself!—oh! let it be sung in heaven! Let angels who have never fallen help us to sing in triumph over those fallen spirits from whom we have been rescued by divine grace. "He hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of God's dear Son."

I prefer, however, tonight, as we cannot talk about all these things, and the field is so very wide, to consider the word "darkness" here, in the restricted meaning of sin. Sin is a tremendous moral and spiritual darkness, which has spread over the human mind, but we are told in the text, and we have felt it in our personal experience, that "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

Let us speak, first, of *the power of darkness, from which we are delivered*. Secondly, upon *the statement here made concerning it*. And thirdly, of *the inferences which inevitably flow from the statement*.

First, then, let us speak a little upon—

I. THE POWER OF SIN, FROM WHICH WE HAVE BEEN DELIVERED, as it is here set forth, under the suggestive image of "the power of darkness."

What is "*the power*" of darkness? I suppose everyone will admit that it is *a power which tends towards slumber*. It is a composing power. God has given us the night in which to sleep. Whether or not there is any absolute power in darkness to engender sleep, I do not know, but I do know this, that it is much easier, when reclining on your bed, to sleep in the dark than it is to sleep in the full glare of the sun. There seems to be some sedative influence about darkness, something which assists a man to fall into a state of inaction, which we call, "sleep."

Now, beloved, look upon the race of men. They are under the power of darkness and in consequence they sleep. Does not the apostle say to us who are delivered from that power, "Let us not sleep as do others"? "They that sleep," says he, "sleep in the night," that being the proper time for sleep—the night with its raven-wing seeming to engender sleep—"but let us that are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of love."

If you look abroad in the world, I say, you will see men, under the soporific influence of sin, given to slumber. Do you believe that men would go on to sin as they do, if it were not that sin stultifies them, prevents their using their reason, drowns their conscience, and will not permit them really to judge accurately concerning things that differ?

Why, can you imagine that a man would run the risk of everlasting misery for the sake of a few days of carnal delight, if he were not, by some means or other, besotted and made a fool of, by sin? Can you conceive that a man would hear the tidings of pardoning mercy through Jesus Christ and be solemnly assured that if he turned from the error of his ways, God would accept and receive him—and that then he would treat that message with levity and go his way, even to ridicule it, if it were not that sin has made him so unreasonable, even in these matters, and made him, if not an idiot, a madman, so that he will not think?

He willfully chooses his own mischief, ruins himself, and that with a sort of Satanic malice against himself, as well as against God, choosing rather to inherit eternal misery than to give up the poor delights of time, choosing rather to feast upon the empty husks of this world, than to come and sit down at the table of mercy, and eat and drink of the grace which God has provided.

So, then, it is very clear—observation shows it to us, and we also have felt it in ourselves—that sin has a soporific, a drowsing, a sleep-giving power. It makes men careless and indifferent. Makes them say, “I’ll chance it! I do not care what the future may bring.” It makes a man go right to the very edge of perdition, with his eyes blindfolded, and his heart like Nabal’s heart, which was turned to stone—careless even of the “terrors of the LORD” and of “the wrath to come”.

But blessed be His holy name! “He hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” I hope we do not sleep. “Oh, Christian! If you are careless, if you are asleep, if tonight your heart is heavy and dull, I should like to come and whisper this right into your soul, “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” We are now to be active, earnest, zealous, and full of devoted life.

If they sleep who are unconverted, they only act according to nature. They are in the dark. They, therefore, sleep. What can they do otherwise? But you are in the light, you know that you are saved, you rejoice in Jesus Christ. Oh! sleep not, my brethren, but seeing that there are but a few hours in your day, work while the day lasts, and make it your pleasure and your delight to spend and to be spent in the service of Him. “who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

A second power of darkness lies in *concealment*. It is the power of darkness to hide things. What a darkness we had last night! Trying to get home from ministering abroad, I thought I never should be able to find my way. One could hardly see one’s hand in that dense fog, which encompassed one. Houses and trees that one would have known in a moment, and that would have told one where one was, were all concealed. One could see nothing.

It would be a very small world, indeed, if it were no larger than what could then be seen. Darkness hides things. No matter how glorious yonder landscape may be as you stand upon the mountain’s brow—if the sun has gone down and if night has spread its wings over the whole, you can see nothing. It may be very well for the guide to tell you that yonder is a silver lake, and there the Black Forest, and that far away are the brows of mountains covered with their eternal snows, but you can see nothing—night has effectually blotted it all out.

Now, the power of sin is just like that. It hides from the human mind what that mind ought to see. The man is lost, but he does not know it—he cannot see the rocks that are just ahead. The man has soon to stand before the bar of God and receive his sentence, but he does not know it. I mean his heart does not know it. He trifles on, caring for none of these things.

As for the plague that is in him in his ruined state, he does not believe it. He hears the truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, but he is indifferent to it, and as to the dear and precious things of the covenant of grace, he does not care for them. No matter how rich may be the mercy, nor how pure the consolation, he knows nothing at all about them, for he is in the dark. It is all dark, dark, dark with him, amid the blaze of noon.

I think I may honestly and humbly say that I do try to speak as plainly as any man can speak—and care nothing about mighty fine words—and yet I do not doubt but that scores come into this house and go out of it, saying, “Well, I do not understand it!” How could they? They are under the power of sin, which makes the plainest truth perplexing and hides from their eyes that which the merest babe in grace can plainly see.

But beloved, “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” Now we can see, blessed be His name! The first sight we had so alarmed us that we almost wished we could not see. It was a sight so terrible, but when, afterwards, we looked to Jesus upon the cross, and found there was life for that look at the Crucified One, and when since then we have learned to look continually to Him, and to find in His wounds our healing, and in His death our life—oh! I hope we are thanking God every moment of our existence that “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Now we can see in Him our Father, who was once to us, “the unknown God.” Now we can see in Jesus, to whom we were once strangers, our own dear Elder Brother. Now we can look at the river of death without being alarmed at it, for beyond it we can see the turrets and pinnacles of the new Jerusalem, glittering with jasper and with carbuncle, and we are anticipating the happy day when we shall sing with the saints above. Sweet thought is it that, with these eyes of ours, we shall see our Savior! Yes, He hath delivered us from the concealing power of darkness.

In the third place, darkness has a *depressing and an afflicting power*. Are you not all conscious, if you are shut up in a dark room, that your mind seems to sink in the dark? Why, our little children, who are the simplest specimens of humanity—and let us know the truth at once—can hardly be punished more severely (though I hope we never do so punish them, for it would be very wicked to do so) than by being shut up in the dark.

They cannot bear it, cannot endure it, and at first when the little one even goes to bed in the chamber alone in the dark, it feels afraid. What must not those persons have suffered who were shut up in the dungeons at Venice—dungeons below the watermark of the canal, where not a ray of light, perhaps, ever did come, except by the warder’s candle—shut in there, hour after hour, unable to know the day from the night, but finding it one long and dreary night! The cruel oppressor would not have thought of it unless he had known that the darkness was so uncongenial to us, that it depresses our spirits.

Now, when some men have eyes given to them, and are made really to see, sin is like darkness to them. Of course, it is not to some of you. A blind man sees as well in the dark as he does in the light, but as soon as ever you get eyes, God begins to deal with you till you feel that sin is a darkness to you. Oh! what a darkness is this!

Well do some of us remember when we walked in the darkness of our sin. We tried to kindle a fire and to light ourselves with the sparks of our own good works, but we failed in every attempt and we would have been in the thick Egyptian night even now, if it had not been that He delivered us from the power of darkness. Now, we know that we still, alas! sin, but it does not fill us with despair because there is an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous.

Now, we come to our Father every night, and bowing low in reverence before Him, we mourn that we have sinned during another day, but we do not mourn with a hopeless sorrow, for we remember that—

*“There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”*

We know that when we were plunged into that fountain, our foulest stains were cleansed right away, and now we give thanks unto the Father, who has delivered us from the depressing power of sin.

Oh! Christian, if you are downcast tonight about this, if you cannot say the text in this sense, go to your heavenly Father, pray to Him, and ask Him to enable you to look to Christ, just as you did at first. Perhaps you have too many good works of which to boast, and that is why you are so depressed. Throw them all away and come now, as a poor, empty-handed sinner, having nothing to which to trust, but the finished work of Christ. You may depend upon it, that doing this, your peace will yet be like a river, because your righteousness, being Christ’s imparted to you, will be like the waves of the sea. Then shall you sing, “Thanks be to Him who has delivered us from the depressing power of darkness.”

I cannot dwell upon these points, though they are all interesting, but must now notice, fourthly, that there is what I may call *the fascinating power of darkness*. It is strange, but it is true, that there are many who love darkness. I said just now that this was contrary to nature, and so it is in one sense. Unfallen nature could not bear darkness, but fallen nature loves it.

Hear what God says about it, “Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.” Night is the time of the world’s merriment. Then the thief steals out to do his deeds of ill. “They that be

drunken, be drunken in the night,” and then is the time for “wantonness and chambering.” As the apostle says, it is the hour of evil.

Darkness seems to be attractive to some men. Strange is it, but it is so. The fascinating power of sin is just like the fascinating power of darkness. I have sometimes thought that sin might well be compared to those serpents which fascinate their prey. It may be some poor little animal—the snake looks and looks, and the little creature, instead of running away, looks at those bright, sparkling eyes, till the poor hare, or rabbit, or whatever it may be, instead of escaping, stands as though it were a statue, perfectly tranquil and fascinated with the glare of the serpent’s eyes, and then in a moment the snake darts at it and devours its prey.

So is it with sin, and there are some here, perhaps, who are under its fascinating power tonight. They know, for they have often been told, that sin is their deadly enemy, and yet it is so pleasant, it is so enchanting, so enticing. As they picture the wizard as being able to strike men into stone, or able to make them do his will, so does sin seem to do, and then at last it destroys the man who once found pleasure in it.

It is a cupbearer to you and comes with smiling face, and holds out the sparkling goblet and says, “Drink, my Lord! See the beaded bubbles sparkling on the rim! Drink! for it moves itself aright and sparkles. Drink! and it shall put a flush into your veins, and make your blood tingle and leap, and let you know a thrill and a joy you have never known before.”

And when you get the cup to your lips, you may not be able to take it away again, though, as you drink, it will scald the lips and throat, and burn the very vitals. And as you drink on, especially if you drink of the cup of lust, you shall feel another thrill that shall make the very bones rot, and the very marrow to decay, till you wish you had never been born and curse bitterly the day in which you came into this world, to be partaker of a poison so terrible, so loathsome, so like an ante-past of hell.

Oh! my God! grant that if there be any young man here who has already drunk of that cup, that by God’s help he may dash it down, once and forever. But it is fascinating, fearfully fascinating, and when once a man begins to drink of it, it is seldom that he stops, until he drains the very dregs of eternal ruin. But thanks be unto God, for “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

It cannot fascinate us now. I know you! you fair witch! I know you, you painted harlot! Though you might have deceived me once, but I know you now! My Savior has shown me superior charms. He has taught me the mischief that comes from loving the world and the things thereof, and now you tempt me in vain! I hope there are many here who can say, “He hath delivered us from the fascinating power of sin, from the power of darkness.”

I cannot stop on this point, however, but must notice the fifth thing. There is about darkness *an emboldening power* to some men. Darkness makes the child afraid, but it makes the bad man bold. It is in the dark that the lion comes out after his prey, and all the beasts of the field go forth to get their food. The sun would frighten them, but boldness comes to them with the darkness.

And oh! there is a wonderfully emboldening power to some men in sin. Perhaps, my dear friend, you have come in here tonight, but you have said this afternoon that which you would not have said ten years ago! Ah! young woman, you have already done that which you would have shuddered to have done only twelve months ago! Ah! merchant, you have already entered into a doubtful transaction which you would have scorned some months back.

You see, you did wrong by little, and as you did one wrong, you got courage to do another, and another, and another. There is the darkness of sin over your minds—you have grown more bold in sin, but that is a poor courage which depends upon the darkness—it is, in fact, the darkness of Satan. It is because of his supreme darkness of mind and spirit, that Satan is the boldest of all spirits in contending with the God of heaven and earth.

Beware of the brow of brass! It is a grand thing for a Christian to be like a pillar of iron against evil, but it is a mark of reprobation to become like an iron pillar against God and against truth—and some men do become such. They sin until habitude engenders a second nature.

At first, when sin catches us in its net, it is with the tiniest spider's cobwebs, that can scarce be seen. And they seem as though you could break from them in a moment. Then they become silken bonds—then firmer still, until a man seems to be enveloped in a tangle of cables—and every cable hardens and becomes as iron or triple steel until at last there is no escaping, for sin gathers daily force until it gets a monstrous power over men.

Men will now say and laugh at a thing which once made them shudder, and do an action and then wipe their mouths and say, "Aha! Aha!" An action which once he would no more have thought of doing than trying to mount without wings above the skies. Hazael said, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" And yet, dog or not, he did the very thing he thought it impossible for him to do.

Now, I do trust, if we have been delivered from the power of sin in this respect, that we are no longer to be found doing wrong—and that if we have done wrong, we are humbled on account of it. Then should we be contrite and broken in spirit, and instead of boasting, snapping our fingers, and saying, "It is nothing"—we should go to our beds ashamed, or go to our Father's face blushing, and mourning, and weeping, and saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

What a blessed thing it is to have a broken heart! Thank God for a tender conscience, and if you have one, never tamper with it. Oh! young man, never tamper with a tender conscience! It is such a blessing to have it. Oh! cultivate it, and pray the Lord to make your heart more and more tender concerning sin, that you may hate it with a perfect hatred. He hath delivered us from the power of sin.

Once more, and I shall leave this point. Darkness seems to have about it a kind of *prophetic* power. If we were not warned by our astronomers when an eclipse was coming, I have no doubt that half the world would be dreadfully frightened as soon as the sun became darkened. People would say to one another, "The judgment is coming." That is their general thought.

If the day gets unusually dark, they think something horrible is going to happen, and they want to know whether this is not the time when the judgment may be expected, and so on. Darkness seems to be a prognostication of evil.

Such is sin. My dear hearer, if you hear the voice of sin, it tells you in your sober moments—it cannot help telling you—that there is a judgment to come. "Be sure your sin will find you out." "God will bring every work into judgment." For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account at the last day.

But the Christian knows that to him the darkness of sin prognosticates nothing of the kind. He stands beneath the cross of Christ, and he knows that sin spent itself upon Jesus upon that cross, so that it might not touch for a single moment the soul that believes in Jesus. Now, notwithstanding everything, the Christian can say, "I am forgiven. I am a monument of grace. I am a sinner saved by blood. I rejoice that for me sin has been put away, and I am, therefore, saved." Thus, "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

Now, I shall want your attention for a little upon the second truth found here, which is—

II. THE STATEMENT HERE MADE CONCERNING THE POWER OF DARKNESS.

Observe that, in the first place, it is *a statement full of assurance*. "He hath delivered us." Paul does not say he hopes so, but definitely asserts, "Who *hath* delivered us." Brethren and sisters, can we speak in the same positive manner? Let us not be content unless we can, for if we have believed in Him, "he *hath* delivered us." If, indeed, our trust is in His finished work and perfect righteousness, then He hath delivered us. It is not a matter of argument, or a thing about which to raise a debate—it is so—it must be so, for every soul that is in Christ, He hath delivered from the power of darkness and translated into His own kingdom.

Observe, again, it is a statement *full of intelligence*. The person who uttered it knew what he was saying. He was a sound divine, for he says, "*Who* hath delivered us." He does not say, "We have got out of it somehow," but "*He* hath delivered us." I wish some persons could have much clearer notions than they have about who it is that saves. If salvation comes of man—well, say so, and if sinners save

themselves by all manner of means, give them the credit, the glory, the praise of it, but if it be God who saves, then let Him have the sole and perfect honor for it. “Salvation is of the LORD.”

Sinner, you should not try to save yourself. You cannot do it. If you could, why did Christ come to save you? Your salvation does not rest in your hands. “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” All the matter of salvation rests with the Eternal Father, through Jesus Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega of our salvation. The person who wrote this verse, then, it seems, was a sound divine, for he ascribes the glory where it ought to be ascribed. “Who hath delivered us.”

Then, next, it is *a statement full of gratitude*. If you look at the connection, you find it says, “Giving thanks unto the Father.” What a delightful grace gratitude is. It is such a heavenly thing to be thankful. I wish we spent a little more time about it, being dissolved by God’s goodness, looking at all that He has done for us, and at all our demerit, which renders that love the more wonderful.

What joy is there in gratitude—to fall speechless at the foot of the cross and feel the thanks we cannot speak, or to stand up and sing, “Blessed be His name,” or to tell others the loving kindness of the Lord and to say, “He has dealt graciously with me and He will deal graciously with me.” Brethren, be much in the sacred and holy palace of gratitude. You cannot have anything that will more strengthen you for service than holy thankfulness to God for His favors.

We might have said a good deal more upon that last point, but we leave you to say it to yourselves and so we will close with the third truth that shines here, namely—

III. THE INFERENCES THAT MAY BE DRAWN FROM THIS STATEMENT.

The first inference is a *doctrinal one*, but as I have already touched on this, I only briefly hint and then leave it. Here it is. Deliverance from the power of sin is as much the work of God as deliverance from the guilt of sin. Where we look for justification, there also must we look for sanctification, for as we are justified through Jesus Christ, we must expect to receive sanctification from a heavenly source also. We cannot receive the one blessing through the spirit and the other through the flesh. We would infer from the text, speaking doctrinally, that in order to our sanctification, and our deliverance from the power of sin, we must look to our heavenly Father, altogether and alone.

The next evidence is *experiential*. “He hath delivered us.” Now, then, I ought to feel in my soul that I am so delivered—and if I do not so feel—I ought to be wretched until I do feel it, because this has been the experience of every true Christian sooner or later. He hath delivered us from the power. We may be in darkness sometimes, but it shall not have power over and enslave us. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace. Let the experiential inference then be, “I am resolved to be happy, yet I will—I will—rejoice in God, for He hath delivered.”

The next inference is *practical*. If we are delivered from the power of darkness, do not let us put ourselves under its power again, and do not let us temporize with it. You would fancy, from the actions of some professors, that they were not delivered from the power of darkness at all, but were only helped to keep away from some conspicuous sin.

When I hear some people talk about fox-hunting Christians, card-playing Christians, Christians who are never at prayer meeting, Christians who have no zeal for souls, it seems to me that they might just as well talk about angels who are not in heaven, or angels who never obey the voice of God! Why, these are sham Christians. They are not genuine Christians—they are of the world and do the things of the world. We may conclude that their hearts and natures are worldly, for if they were spiritual, they would love spiritual things and their hearts would be engaged in spiritual exercises.

Brethren, the grace of God has not come into us merely to keep us away from some few notable vices, but to deliver us altogether from the power of darkness, and if I can sometimes go into sin—just occasionally by way of pleasure—it proves that I am a stranger to the deliverance which Jesus Christ gives to His really called and regenerated people.

And now the last inference is a *hopeful* inference. If He hath delivered us from the powers of darkness, He will deliver us all the way through. If He has done this great thing for us, what will He not

do for us? If He hath delivered us from the tremendous power of sin, He will certainly deliver us from the power of death. If sin is taken away, why need we fear?

Has He delivered us from the power of darkness? Then He will certainly help us in our daily troubles. Did He give His own dear Son to put away our sin and will He not give us bread and water? If He has covered our souls with the beautiful robe of righteousness that Christ has woven, will He let us want for ordinary raiment?

Oh! let us be of good cheer. The good God of Grace cannot be a bad God of Providence. He who feeds us so well on heavenly bread cannot starve us for lack of bodily bread. He hath delivered us. We have already received the greatest mercy—and you may be quite sure of the smaller ones.

When Sir Francis Drake was overtaken by a storm in the Thames off Greenwich, “What?” said he, “afraid of a storm? Been round the world three times, and afraid now of being drowned in a ditch? No!” And surely we who have circumnavigated a whole world of discipline and trouble, over whose heads the waves and billows have rolled, we do not mean to be drowned in this present trouble.

Do you, my dear friend? You shall not perish in this ditch. You shall get safe home. He who has delivered you from the power of darkness will never withdraw His hand and help until He brings you within the pearly gates, puts the crown on your head, the palm branch in your hand, the snow-white robe upon your shoulders, and the new song of everlasting joy into your mouth, even praise for evermore. Be of good courage, then.

And then there is this inference for some of you who are not converted. *If God has delivered us, why should He not deliver you?* Why, some of us who have been delivered seemed very unlikely ever to be delivered. We did not want to be. We loved darkness rather than light and yet He delivered us from it. We were, some of us, very hardhearted. Some of us had plunged very deep into sin.

There are some here who are wonders of divine grace. They were once wonders of sin and yet the love of God looked them up and brought them out—fetched them from the bar of the gin palace, fetched them out of the theater, brought them even from the brothel, some of them, and washed and cleansed them and made them sit among God’s people, and love His ways, and rejoice in His dear name. And why should not God do the same with you? I know twenty reasons why He should not, but I will tell you one thing He has said, “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” So if you come to Him, He will not cast out even you.

The way to come to Him is to trust Him. That is, trust Christ to save you and it is all done, and you are saved. That is the great work. When a soul, sensible of sin, sees that Christ, by His blood, made atonement, and comes and throws himself upon that sacrifice of the cross, then sin is pardoned. Then because the sin is pardoned, the forgiven sinner is grateful and he says, “I will not go on in this sin.” So he puts it away and he is led into a life of holiness, by the mercy of God.

Oh, that we could all say in the words of the text—and if we cannot all say it tonight, I hope we shall soon be able to do so—“Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

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