

THE GLADNESS OF THE MAN OF SORROWS

NO. 498

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 8, 1863,
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 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“You love righteousness and hate wickedness: therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows. All Your garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made You glad.”
Psalm 45:7, 8.

DURING the last few Sundays we have been considering the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. We followed Him through the agony of the garden, the sorrows of the betrayal, the weariness and slander of His various trials, the shame and mockery of the soldiers, and the sorrows of His cross-bearing progress along the streets of the city. It seems fit this morning, to make a pause that we may take a breath in this, our pilgrimage of sorrow, and be comforted by a view of the land of glory to which the thorny pathway leads. A festive occasion like the present may have unfitted your minds for deep contemplations upon the passion, and it may be more congenial with our present mood of gladness to meditate upon the glory which followed the shame. The same person will be before our eyes, but we shall view Him in a brighter light, we shall see the silver lining of the black cloud of anguish, the rich pearls hidden in the stormy deep of His sufferings, and the days of heaven which were conceived in the womb of the black night of His agony. The Man of Sorrows is the fountain of all joy to others, and is the possessor of all the joys of heaven and earth by virtue of His triumphs. He has experienced joys in proportion to His sorrows; as He once waded through deep waters of grief, He has now climbed to the highest mountains of happiness! For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and now, having sat down at His Father’s right hand, He enjoys pleasures forevermore! We have seen our David crossing the brook Kidron weeping as He went; shall we not gaze upon Him as He dances for joy before the ark? We saw Him crowned with thorns—shall we not go forth to meet Him, and behold Him with the crown which His mother crowned Him in the day of His espousals, and in the day of the gladness of His heart? Oh that while we muse upon these things, our heavenly Father may hear the prayer of our great Advocate who once cried on our behalf—“And now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have *My joy* fulfilled in themselves.”

Our text describes the joy poured forth upon our glorious King in a twofold manner. Our Lord is first made joyous by His Father—“You love righteousness and hate wickedness: therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows.” But there is another joy, which He gets not from one person, but from many. Read the next verse—“All Your garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby *they* have made You glad.” Here both saints and angels unite to swell the ever-deepening and widening river of the Savior’s gladness! When we shall have walked by these still waters, and trod these green pastures, perhaps we shall be prepared to say with the apostle, “And not only so, but *we also* joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” And we shall be qualified to sing with the spouse, “We will rejoice and be glad in You; we will remember Your love more than wine; the upright love You.”

I. Come, my brothers and sisters, let us ponder that part of OUR SAVIOR’S JOY WHICH IS GIVEN HIM BY HIS FATHER.

To a degree the Redeemer possessed this joy *even while He was here on earth*. We are not sure that the early life of the Savior was full of sorrow. As He grew in wisdom and in stature, He also grew in favor both with God and man; and favor with God and man would probably give the youthful Jesus an unusual degree of holy happiness. When He entered upon His public ministry, sorrows in troops beset Him, so that the countenance once fairer than the children of men became more marred than that of any man. At the age of 32 or 33 He was taken to be near 50, from the effect of labor, hardship and woe. Yet, even in the days of His affliction, the Great Mourner was not utterly wretched; even amid the wormwood and the gall there were drops of joy. When, in His baptism, the heavens were opened, and the

Spirit descended, did that divine Dove bring no peace, no comfort upon His wings? When the Father bore witness, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” did those approving words from the opening heavens afford no satisfaction to the mind of the obedient Son? Brothers and sisters, the perfect nature of our Redeemer could not but rejoice exceedingly in the smile of the Father, and the descent of the Holy Spirit! When in the wilderness, after the 40 days of fasting and of temptation, the angels ministered unto Him—did they bring Him no celestial joys, no consolations of God? Did He know no secret joys upon the mountaintops, where He communed with God at midnight? Was it no delight to Him to utter sweet invitations, and loving words of mercy? Surely those lips were blessed which poured forth benedictions, and there must have been some comfort in the hands which bound up the broken-hearted, and opened the prisons of the captives. We read that Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, “Father, I thank You, that You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.” The doctrine of electing love stirred the deeps of His great soul, and made the floods clap their hands! “The King shall joy in Your strength, O Lord; and in Your salvation how greatly shall He rejoice.”

Do you think, brothers and sisters, our Savior lived in this world, *doing so much good*, without receiving some joy in His acts of mercy? To teach, to labor, and to make men holy, must give joy to a benevolent mind. It could not be otherwise than pleasant to a good man to do good. If God delights in mercy, surely His express image must do the same! To restore the dead to their sorrowing relations was this no satisfaction? Did the widow’s grateful eyes in the gates of Nain kindle no flashes of joy in His heart? Did the thankfulness of Mary and Martha inspire no comfort in the Life-giver? Do you think that it was not gladsome work to feed the famishing multitudes? Who could look upon the feasting thousands without rejoicing? To heal the leper, to restore the lame, to give eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf—who could do all this, and not be happy in distributing the gifts? Surely, brothers and sisters, there were some hosannas in Jesus’ ears, and though He could always hear the cry of, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” yet He must have felt the wondrous joy of doing good, which is one of the delights entailed on all self-sacrificing lovers of others!

Think, beloved, of His character, and surely He must have known the *joy of being good*; for there is a deep gladness in holiness, a blessed peacefulness in righteousness. The holiness of angels is their happiness, and although to a large degree the Savior laid His peace aside, yet there is a rest of soul from which virtue cannot separate. Distractions of conscience He never knew. Disturbances of mind on account of sin He did not feel on His own account, although as our substitute He was made sin for us. He suffered. Mark, I am not for a moment detracting from His sufferings—I see high mountains of grief; the eagle’s wing cannot reach their summit, nor foot of angel climb their brows—but lo, I see leaping streams of pleasure running down the rugged steeps, and amid the hollows of the desolate hills I gaze upon deep lakes of joy unfathomable by mortals!

Brothers and sisters, we have every reason to believe that our Savior permanently found a solace while on earth, in the consideration *that He was doing His Father’s will*. He said, “It is My meat and My drink to do the will of Him who sent me.” “Know you not that I must be about My Father’s business?” On several occasions the Voice from heaven proclaimed the Father’s good pleasure in His only begotten—once the glory of heaven enwrapped Him on the holy mount; and during His whole life He had the presence of God until the moment of necessary desertion, when we find Him, for the first and only time, crying, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” To do a work which He had contemplated from all eternity, to engage in an occupation, which had always been most delightful in prospect, could not have been altogether, and only, sorrowful! It was a passover with many bitter herbs, but with delight had He desired to eat of it. It was a baptism, and a baptism of blood, but He was straitened until it was accomplished. Of old, in expectation, His delights were with the sons of men. Were there none in the *work*? Brothers and sisters let your Lord speak for Himself—“Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God: yes, Your law is within My heart.”

In the glorious prospect which this great work opened to Him, when it would be completed, I am absolutely sure our Savior found comfort. Think not I speak too strongly; I have Scriptural warrant. Turn to the 22nd Psalm, which is the soliloquy of Christ upon the cross, and you find Him, after He bemoaned His desolate condition, comforting Himself thus, “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before You. All they who are fat upon earth shall eat and worship; all they who go down to the dust shall bow before Him; and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve Him: it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall

come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He has done this." He saw with prophetic eyes through the thick darkness which enveloped the cross, the rising of the bright sun of heaven's eternal noon! He saw, when He hung upon the cross, not only the mocking eyes of multitudes of enemies, but the loving eyes of millions of souls whom He should redeem from hell! He heard not only the shouts of the vulgar mob, but the songs of blood-redeemed spirits. When He saw the lions and heard them roar, was it not a comfort to the Shepherd that He had kept the sheep, and none of them had perished? Indeed, my brothers and sisters, there is more than enough evidence to prove that a rich anointing of gladness rested on the head of the Man of Sorrows!

Still, dear friends, this may be viewed by some as a moot point. We allow that there is room for differences of opinion, but not so as to the great joy which Christ obtained *after He had endured the cross, despising the shame*. Let us enter into the secret joys of our beloved. Consider, my brothers and sisters, the work accomplished; Christ has borne the wrath of God; God is reconciled to His people; Death has been destroyed—Christ is risen from the dead—the dragon's head has been broken, the powers of sin have been subdued. Our Lord ascends to heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of the archangel; the glorified spirits accord Him a triumphal entry! "Lift up your heads, O you gates, and be you lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in!" He sits down upon His throne at His Father's right hand, and then it is that He is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows!

I should not have failed to remark that, as God, our Redeemer always possessed fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. We are speaking of Him in His complex person as man and God, and in His official role as Mediator—it is His delight in this capacity which we now consider.

The joy of the risen Mediator laid, first of all, in this—that *He had now accomplished a work which He had meditated upon from all eternity*. Before the daystar marked the dawn; before the calm of space had ever been stirred by wings of angels, or the solemnity of silence had been startled with song of seraph, Christ had purposed to redeem His people. It was in the eternal purpose of the great Second Person in the Divine Unity, from before all worlds, to redeem unto Himself a people by price. What joy must it give Him, now that He can say, "I have finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness."

His heart had not only meditated, *but had been mightily set upon His work*. He had bound His people's names upon His breast; He had engraved them upon the palms of His hands; His ears were bored, for He intended to serve even until death. What if I say that, from before all worlds, He thirsted and panted that He might do His Father's will, and redeem His people from their ruin? Now, brothers and sisters, that desire which had been in Him like coals of juniper, unquenchable, is now fulfilled to the uttermost—how can He be otherwise than anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, since none other ever purposed so firmly or succeeded so perfectly?

Consider, too, *how great the pains which He endured, and we must believe, the joy to be commensurate with the pain* in the accomplishing of His great life-purpose. He descended to the cross of deepest woe. Have I not tried to paint in my poor way the mysterious agonies of our blessed Savior? But I feel that I have failed. Now, when all this had been suffered, what joy to look back upon it! Never day so bright as that which follows black darkness; never calm so sweet as that which succeeds hurricane and tempest; never native place so delightful as to the long exiled pilgrim. So deep the sorrow, so high the joy—so unspeakable the grief, so unutterable the bliss!

Remember, beloved brothers and sisters, *the enemies He had overcome*, and you will not marvel that His joy was matchless. Had He not defeated Death—grim tyrant—vanquisher of all mankind? Had He not broken the head of the old serpent, who in his crushing coils had bound and pressed a universe of souls? Did He not defeat in battle all the fiends in hell? Was not evil forever dethroned? Did not goodness sit upon a glorious high throne? Was not virtue exalted to the highest heaven, and sin cast down to the lowest hell in that day of the judgment of this world, when the Prince of Darkness was cast out? "Behold," He might have said, "I see Satan falling like lightning from heaven. The dragon bound with a great chain. Lo, hell's gates are shut upon the saints, the grave is rifled of its spoils, heaven is crowded with the saved, and earth purified from sin." O Jesus, You mighty conqueror! Your glorious victories must surely give to You, as they do to us, a blessed anointing with the oil of gladness!

Our Lord possesses in heaven, now, as perfect man, the joy of looking back upon a life without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; He has the satisfaction of seeing this perfect obedience covering all His people, till they stand lovely in His loveliness; He has the equal delight of observing the efficacy of His blood to wash the foulest, and make them whiter than snow—while His intercession scatters mercy in

one everlasting shower upon the sons of men! Since His heart was love, His joy must be in deeds of love, and as He has become a fountain always welling up with loving gifts towards the chosen sons of men, His delight must be unchanging like His nature, and unbounded like His divinity. “God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows.”

We pause a moment, having tried to dwell upon the joy, to notice the cause of it. “You love righteousness, and hate wickedness, therefore God has anointed You.” It seems, then, that the first cause why Jesus Christ has received fullness of joy lies in *His having loved righteousness*. This He did necessarily because of the spotless purity of His nature; this He did practically in *the hallowed sincerity and integrity of His life*. Of whom could it be said so truly as of our Lord, that the law of God was in His heart? How abundantly did He prove His love of righteousness, by vindicating it in His death, fulfilling in His own person all the sentence of divine wrath, and taking upon Himself all the curses which fell upon offenders! You cannot suppose righteousness to be more clearly manifested than in the living works of Jesus, nor more completely avenged than in His dying throes! How sovereign is that righteousness to which even the Son of God bowed His head and gave up the ghost? The world deluged with water, the plains of Sodom smoking with brimstone, the land of Egypt vexed with plagues—all these terrible things in righteousness manifest the justice of God—but none of them so solemnly as the voluntary sacrifice of Jesus! Our beloved loved righteousness, indeed, when He emptied out all His heart that He might make us righteous! Moreover, as in His life and death we see that He loved righteousness, we discern it, too, in *the constant effect of His work*. His gospel makes men righteous. Does it not give them a legal righteousness by imputation, a real righteousness by infusion, a righteousness which covers them with fine linen, and makes them all glorious within? The spirit of the gospel which we preach is to magnify that which is pure, and lovely, and of good repute. Wherever the Lord Jesus displays His gracious power, sins yield the throne, purity wins the scepter, divine grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through the perfect sacrifice—the living power of Jesus!

The text adds, “*You hate wickedness.*” A man’s character is not complete without a perfect hatred of sin. “Be you angry and sin not.” There can hardly be goodness in a man if he is not angry at sin; he who loves the truth of God must hate every false way! How our Lord Jesus hated it when the temptation came! Thrice it assailed Him in different forms, but always it was, “Get behind Me, Satan.” How He hated it when He saw it in others—none the less fervently because He showed His hate more often in tears of pity, than in words of rebuke. Yet what language could be more stern, more Elijah-like, than the words, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers.” He hated wickedness so much that He bled that He might wound it to the heart. He died that it might die—He was buried that He might bury it in His tomb, and He rose that He might forever trample it beneath His feet! Christ is in the gospel, my brothers and sisters, and you all know how utterly that gospel is opposed to wickedness in every shape! No matter how wickedness may array itself in fair garments, and imitate the language of holiness—the precepts of Jesus, like His famous scourge of small cords—chase wickedness out of the temple, and will not let it have peaceful lodging in the Church! So too, in the heart where Jesus reigns, what war there is between Christ and Belial! And when our Redeemer shall come to be our judge, in those thundering words, “Depart, you cursed,” which are, indeed, but a prolongation of His life-teaching concerning sin, then shall it be seen, I say, that He hated wickedness. As warm as is His love to sinners, so hot is His hatred of sin; as perfect as is the righteousness which He completed, so perfect shall be the destruction of every form of wickedness! Oh You glorious champion of right, and destroyer of wrong, for this cause has God, even Your God, anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows!

But, beloved, we must dwell for one moment upon another thought supplied by the text, the *character of this joy* is hinted at by way of comparison—“God, even Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows.” And who are His fellows? Suppose His fellows to be the kings and princes of this world, for the psalm is descriptive of Christ in His royalty? Well, is He not anointed with gladness above them all? Kings rejoice in their dominions, their extent and population—our King looks from shore to shore, and from the river even to the ends of the earth—and of His dominion there is no end! Princes delight in the fame and honor which their office and deeds may bring them; but before the Lord Jesus Christ, the fame of monarchs dwindles into nothing! His name shall endure forever—throughout all generations the people shall praise Him. Monarchs delight in the riches and treasure which their dominions yield—Christ receives a wealth of love and homage from His people, before which the riches of Croesus become poverty itself! “The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even

the rich among the people shall entreat Your favor.” Kings are accustomed to rejoice in the victories they have achieved. He that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, traveling in the greatness of His strength, has more joy than they. They boast the sureness of their throne, but, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” The inward thought of some kings may be that they are invincible in power, and that their will is law; but at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and His enemies shall become as the fat of rams; into smoke shall they consume, yes, into smoke shall they consume away. Good kings rejoice in the beneficence of their rule, and the happiness of their subjects; our King may surely glory in the favors which He has scattered from His scepter. But time would fail us if we were to complete the contrast here. Kings of the earth, you may take off your crowns and remain uncrowned in the presence of King Jesus, for on His head are many crowns! O you lords and mighty men, you may lay down your dignities and honors, for you are unhonored and undignified in the presence of Him who is above His fellows!

My brothers and sisters, where shall His fellows be found? Search among the wise, and who shall match the gladness of incarnate wisdom, for man’s wisdom brings sorrow. Go and travel among the famous, and who shall be compared with His illustrious name? Where else is there a name so full of joy? Search out the mighty, who has an arm like His? Go and search among the good and excellent, who have blessed their kind by philanthropy—who among them is so anointed as the man of Nazareth? As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. Standing as high above all the rest of men as the heavens are above the earth; He is, indeed, anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows! I find that some interpreters read it—“The oil of gladness *for* His fellows.” The rendering is probably incorrect, but it bears a very truthful, sweet, and comfortable thought in it. If the saints are His fellows, and He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, then the oil of gladness was first poured on His head that it might descend even to the skirts of His garments, and that all the saints might be made partakers of His joy!

We have said enough, we think, on this first point—here is the material for much meditation. Search, my brothers and sisters, and learn how the Lord, even our God, has glorified His Son Jesus!

II. Now, we turn to THE GLADNESS AFFORDED BY THE CHURCH. “All Your garments smell of myrrh, and cassia, and aloes, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made You glad.” His garments have been saturated with very precious and fragrant odors; this is the work of His Church in the phrase, “ivory palaces,” the allusion is to certain costly structures which some Oriental kings erected, plated within and without with ivory. We read of Ahab, that he built an ivory house, and it was a solemn threat from the lips of Amos, “The houses of ivory shall perish.” These ivory houses relate, I suppose, either to the courts of glory, or, more consistently with our interpretation this morning, to the hearts of believers. Or, better still, to the Churches, which are like palaces of ivory, both for glory, and majesty—for richness, and for purity. The saints’ graces—their love, their praise, their prayers, their faith—are like myrrh, cassia, and aloes. The Savior’s garments are so perfumed, that when He rides in His triumphal chariot, He scatters sweet odors all around. It is a great and certain truth of God, that Christ finds an intense satisfaction in His Church. “He will rejoice over You with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over You with singing.” In His people, *as the objects of His choice*, He finds satisfaction. It is true there is nothing in them naturally; they are by nature heirs of wrath, even as others; but having set His love upon them, having determined to make them His people, He takes a delight in the objects of His choice because of that choice. Nothing in us could have been the origin of the Savior’s first delight in us. Now, doubtless, that we are His workmanship, He takes a delight in the works of His own hands! But when we were like broken potsherds, thrown away upon the dunghill of the fall, if He saw anything in us it must have been in His own eyes.

But, dear friends, as men always take a deep interest in that which has *cost them dearly*, so since that triumphant day when Jesus stretched out His hands upon the cross, and paid the price for His people, He has found an infinite solace and delight in them. He sees in every believer’s face a memento of His groans; He looks into the eyes of every penitent, and sees His own tears there; He hears the cry of every mourner, and there hears His own groans over again; He beholds the reward of His soul’s travail in every regenerate heart, and therefore, as the purchase of His blood, we make Him glad.

Again, *as His workmanship*, as He sees us day by day more conformed to His image, He rejoices in us. Just as you see the sculptor with his chisel etching out the statue which lies hidden in the block of marble, taking off a corner here, and a chip there, and a piece here—see how he smiles when he brings out the features of the form—so our Savior, as He proceeds with His engraving tool, working through

the operation of the Spirit, and making us like unto Himself, finds much delight in us! The painter makes rough drafts at first, and lays on the colors roughly. Some do not understand what he is doing, and for three or four sittings the portrait is much unlike the man it aims at representing; but the painter can discern the features in the canvas—he sees them looming through that mist and haze of color—he knows that beauty will yet beam forth from yonder daubs and blotches. So Jesus, though we are yet but mere outlines of His image, can discover His own perfection in us where no eyes but His own, as the Mighty Artist, can perceive it! Dear friends, it is for this reason—because we are the work of His hands—that He takes delight in us!

Don't you know that we are His brothers and sisters? And brothers should delight in brothers. No, we are His spouse—and where should the husband find his comfort but in his bride? We are His body—shall not the head be content with the members? We are one with Him, vitally, personally, everlastingly one! And it is little marvel, therefore, if we have a mutual joy in each other, so that His garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces of His Church, wherein He has been made glad!

Let us think *how we can make Him glad*. Brothers and sisters, *our love* to Christ—oh, we think it so cold, so little, and so, indeed, we must sorrowfully confess it to be—but it is very sweet to Christ. We can never compare our love to Christ with His love to us, and yet He does not despise it. Hear His own eulogy of His Church in the Song, “You have ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse. You have ravished My heart with one of your eyes, with one chain of your neck. How fair is your love, My sister, My spouse! How much better is your love than wine, and the smell of your ointments than all spices!” “You are beautiful, O My love, as Tirza, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. Turn away your eyes from Me, for they have overcome Me.” See, see, my brothers and sisters! His delight is in you! When you lean your head on His bosom, you not only receive, but you give Him joy! When you gaze with love upon His beauteous face, you not only receive comfort, but give delight! Our *praise*, too, gives Him joy, when from our hearts we sing His name, and when gratefully, though silently, we breathe a song up to His throne. As princes are delighted with incense, so is Christ delighted with the praise of His people. And our *gifts*, too, delight Him. As the son of our good Queen accepts rich tokens of kindness from the people of his land, so our Lord Jesus is charmed with the offerings of His people. He loves to see us lay our time, our talents, our substance upon His altar—not for the value of what we give—but for the sake of the motive from which the gift springs! He takes far more delight in what we do for Him than our Queen's son could take in splendid arches, or in the glorious pageantry of yesterday. To Christ the shouts of His people are better than the cheers of the most enthusiastic populace, and to Him the lowly offerings of His saints are more acceptable than thousands of gold and silver! Forgive your enemy and you make Christ glad! Distribute of your substance to the poor, and He rejoices! Be the means of saving souls, and you give Him to see of the travail of His soul. Preach His gospel, and you are a sweet savor unto Him. Go among the ignorant, and among the hopeless, and try to lift them up for His sake, and you have given Him satisfaction! I tell you, brothers and sisters, it is in your power this very day to break the alabaster box, and pour the precious ointment on His head, as did the woman of old, whose memorial is to this day set forth. *You* can anoint Him above all His fellows with the oil of gladness!

I think I see a great procession. It is Jesus Christ riding alone through the tens of thousands of souls whom He has redeemed with His own blood. I think I see Him looking to the right and to the left as He rides along the centuries. Look how every window of every age is crowded! Glorified spirits look down from the housetops of heaven—the Church militant looks up from the streets of earth—multitudes upon multitudes of souls that love Him, and call Him King, salute Him as their Redeemer! I notice that, as He goes along in this great procession, His eyes are bright with joy. We liked to see the Prince and Princess happy yesterday, but their joy could be nothing compared with that of Christ as He rides along in triumph! How the multitudes delight Him; the ten thousand times ten thousand—who shall tell how many Christ has redeemed? Their number is beyond all human count! So many are they that, as they clap their hands, and shout His name, I hear a voice like many waters, or like great thunders, while they cry, “Hallelujah, Sweet Prince! Ride on triumphantly! And reign forever and ever!” There is one thing Christ feels as He looks upon the crowd around Him, which our Prince could not feel yesterday—He knows that every one of these would lay down their lives for Him—of all those whom Jesus bought with blood; among those who are renewed in heart; there is not one who would not bleed for Him! To the stake they would walk, and sing amidst the flames! To the dungeon they would go, and praise Him while they rot in darkness! They would be dragged at the heels of horses; they would be stoned; they would be sawn in

sunder; they would wander about in sheepskins, and in goatskins, and they would glory in all these things that they may show their love to Christ!

Every eye in the vast throng which gathers about the triumphal chariot of Christ beams with intense love for Him. And when they shout, each one shouts louder than his fellow! Each one in the whole throng feels he owes more to the great King than anyone else! There is something special about each face the King looks on, and as He remembers the special circumstances, He perceives the reason for that special love. Either it is much forgiven, or else it is much trial averted, or much strength conferred by which to perform labor. I am sure that when you and I are in that throng looking upon Him, we may truly say—

*“Then loudest of the crowd I’ll sing,
While heaven’s resounding mansions ring
With shouts of sovereign grace!”*

You did well to applaud your Prince yesterday, but what had he ever done for you? What debt did you owe to him? Owed he not far more to you? But our King, as He rides along in the midst of the joyful hosts of the blood-bought, has this upon His mind—“I bought all these souls with My blood.” He recollects, as He looks upon them, where they would have been but for His grace, and the very pangs of hell must add joy to His soul when He remembers that He saved them from passing into the pit of hell! He recollects, too, what they once were—how full of sin, what enemies of God—how they crucified Him, how they trampled on His precious blood; and now He sees them bowing before Him, too glad to catch but a glimpse of Him as He rides by. They are more than happy to be as the dust of His feet if He will but honor them by treading upon them—that He might be lifted the higher! O my brothers and sisters, we love the Lord Jesus Christ, and our hearts give Him a reception such as never was accorded to an earthly Prince. Pile the arches! Pile the arches! Let hearts pour forth their life-blood, if in no other way the banners can be dyed red! Strew the streets! Strip off your garments if in no other way the pageant can be made illustrious! Bring forth the royal diadem, and let every saint renounce wealth, and comfort, if by no other means Jesus can be crowned! Empty heaven, if by no other way Jesus can be attended with guards of honor. Come, all you sons and daughters of His great family, and offer yourselves a living sacrifice, if there can be no other incense! We are all prepared—I speak for the sacramental host of God’s elect—we are all prepared, by His grace, to follow Him through floods and through flames! We are prepared to give Him all the honor that heart can conceive. We are prepared to kiss His feet as well as to crown His head! Bring forth the royal diadem today and crown Him Lord of All; and each day as He rides along, till He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, let Him be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords!

III. Now for another text, but not another sermon. It is in the fourth verse of the first chapter of the Song of Solomon—“WE WILL BE GLAD AND REJOICE IN YOU.”

God has made the king glad, and His saints make Him glad; let us be glad, too! But let us take care that our gladness is of the right sort. “We will rejoice and be glad in *You*.” That man is glad in his farm; that other in his merchandise; that one yonder in his wealth—that woman in her jewels; that other in her beauty. “We will rejoice and be glad in *You*.” But in what? We will rejoice, more especially, in *His love to us*. You remember Jesus Christ said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?” Interpreters read that two ways. Some think He meant, “Do you love Me more than you love these nets, and this boat, and your earthly calling, and these friends?” I think I hear Jesus Christ speaking this morning, and He says, “My people, I love you more than these.” He points to spirits that once stood around His throne, angels that have sinned—they fell like lightning from heaven, and there they lie in flames. And Christ says, “I love you more than these. I let these perish, but I saved you.” Pointing to the kings and princes of this world, the great, the mighty, and the learned men—and to all the nations that sit in darkness—He says, “I love you more than these. I gave Ethiopia and Seba for you.” Then taking a higher range, He points to heaven; there sit the angels before the throne of God, and He says, “I love you more than these; I left their company for yours.” He bids you listen to their harps, and to their songs, and He says, “I love you more than these; I left all these melodies that I might be able to meet your groans.” Yes, He points to His own throne, so bright with glory that mortal eyes scarcely dare to rest upon it, and He says, “I love you more than these, for I left the glory of My throne that I might redeem you with My blood.” Saint, will you not join with me? Shall we not both say, “Savior, blessed be Your unexampled love! We will rejoice and be glad in You!”

But some interpreters read the text—“Do you love Me more than these?”—“Do you love me more than these others love Me?” Jesus speaks today to us, “I have loved you more than these; your mother loved you; strong were her pangs when you were born, and anxious her cares when she nursed you at her bosom. But I have loved you more than these, and more than your brothers and sisters loved you—born of the same parents, they watched over you with delight, and they have been ready to help you in your time of need, but I have loved you more than these. And more than your husband loved you, loved you as his own soul. He has cherished you, and has been ready to lay down his life to give you back health when you have been sick—I have loved you more than he. Your children, too, have loved you; they have climbed your knee, and smiled upon you for all your kindness to them, and they have strengthened your old age, and you have leaned upon them, as upon a staff, when you have been tottering with weakness. But I have loved you more than these! And you have had a joyous companion, a dear friend who has been with you from your youth up, and has never lifted his heel against you; and you have had your confidantes and your brethren who went up to the House of God with you and talked cheerfully by the way, but I have loved you more than these.” I think I hear Him say to me—“There are some in this congregation who would pluck out their own eyes to give them to you. They love you, for you are their spiritual father—but I have loved you more than these.” And He points to all the good men that have ever tried to teach you, to all the comforters who have given you joy, to all the helpers that have aided you on the road to immortality, and He says, “I have loved you more than these.”

Well, if His love is matchless like this, we will rejoice and be glad in *Him!* The Lord knows I have nothing else to rejoice in. I cannot rejoice in myself—there are so many sins and so many doubts—but I will rejoice, and be glad in *Him* if He loves me like this. He has finished the work for me, given me a perfect righteousness, washed me in His blood, taken off His robe to clothe me, given His life that He may make me live! He has entered the grave to bring me out of it, and said that I shall shortly be enthroned with Him above the sky—I will rejoice and be glad in Him! When King Solomon was crowned, all the people rejoiced; and shall we be mourners when Christ sits upon His throne? Let the heaviest heart begin to leap! And if you have to bear your burdens tomorrow, yet throw them off today. “We will rejoice and be glad in You.” I should not like one Christian to go down these aisles this morning without some light of heaven’s brightness on his cheek—without some note of heaven’s music in his ears. “Oh,” says the Christian, “Yes. I will. The cross is heavy, but I will hope *beneath* it; the furnace is hot, but I will sing *in* it; the way is rough, but I will tread it with light footsteps, for I will rejoice and be glad in Him who has loved me, and given Himself for me!” Well, you see, there is a glad Christ in heaven, and here is a glad Church on earth! There is Christ anointed by His Father; here are His people sharing that anointing! Here is Christ giving you joy, and you giving Christ joy! Belt the world with happiness—lift up the ladder of your songs! While the bottom rests on earth, let the top reach to heaven! And you angels of God, hold fellowship today with God, and with us through the joy and peace which God the Father gives us, while we rejoice and are glad in Him!

I wish you all understood this subject, but some of you are strangers to it altogether! Remember, there is no joy anywhere but in Christ; it is all poor mockery which you get elsewhere. Jesus Christ is to be had, and whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life!

The Lord give you His benediction, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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