

“GO IN PEACE”
NO. 2770

A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD’S-DAY, MARCH 16, 1902.
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,
ON LORD’S-DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 23, 1883.

“And He said to the woman, Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”
Luke 7:50.

THERE appears to have been four stages in Christ’s dealing with this woman. I know not what had preceded the narrative as we have it recorded in this chapter; I need not enter into that question now. There had, doubtless, been a work of the Spirit of God upon that woman’s heart, turning her from her sin to her Savior; but when she stood at our Master’s feet, raining tears of penitence upon them, wiping them with the hairs of her head, giving to them kisses of love, and anointing them with the ointment from the alabaster box, there were four stages in His gracious dealings with her.

The first was, when He silently accepted her manifestations of love. When the copious tears from her eyes fell upon His feet, He did not withdraw them. When those feet were wiped with the luxuriant tresses of her hair, still He did not withdraw them; and when she ventured upon a yet closer familiarity, and not only kissed His feet, but did not cease to kiss them, He still did not withdraw them, but quietly accepted all that she did. And when the precious ointment was poured in lavish abundance upon those precious feet of His, He did not upbraid her; He did not refuse her gifts, but tacitly accepted them, though without a word of acknowledgment just then. And I think it is a very blessed thing for any one of you to be accepted before God, even though no word has come from His lips assuring you that it is so. When your tears, and cries, and secret love, and earnest seeking—when your confession of sin, your struggle after faith, and the dawning of your faith are just accepted by the Lord, though as yet He has not said to you, “Your sins are forgiven you,” it is a very blessed stage for you to have reached, for the Lord does not begin to accept anyone, even by a silence which means consent, and then draw back. He accepted this woman’s love and gifts, though, for a time, He gave her no assurance of that acceptance, and that fact must have greatly cheered her. Manoah’s wife said to him, “If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands;” and I feel sure that, if the Lord had not meant to bestow His mercy upon this woman, He would not have submitted to her washing of His feet with her tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head, and the subsequent continual kissing of them, and anointing of them with the precious ointment.

Our Lord’s favorable inclination towards this woman was still more marked in the second stage of His dealings with her, when He began to defend her against her accuser. When Simon’s evil thoughts had condemned her and her Lord also, Jesus spoke that wonderful parable which set forth the greatness of this woman’s love, and justified the extraordinary way in which she manifested it. Christ did not speak to her, but He spoke up for her; and such action as that should be quite sufficient to keep the soul of a believer in Him. What though my Lord has not revealed Himself to me? He has revealed Himself to the Father for me. What if He has not spoken to me? Yet, if He has spoken to God on my behalf—if He has spoken in the Scriptures in defense of poor sinners, and advocated their cause in the High Court of Heaven, then how thankful I may be, and how thankful they may be!

In the third stage, our Lord did still more for this woman, for He spoke to her these gracious words, “Your sins are forgiven.” Oh, how they must have dropped like dew into her poor soul! How she must have been refreshed by them! She, who was a sinner—a great sinner, a public sinner—yes, a professional sinner, hears her Savior say to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” The absolution pronounced by the man who calls himself a priest is utterly worthless; but it would be worthwhile to give a thousand worlds, if we had

them, for absolution from our great High Priest! Yes, He who knew all about the woman’s sin, He who had power on earth to forgive sins, had said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” Was not that enough for her? Would not that short sentence set all the bells of her heart ringing as long as ever she lived?

Yes, but there was still more to follow, for the Lord spoke to her a second time, and said, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” So she was not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but she was also delivered from the power of sin. Her faith had saved her; she was a saved woman, so she might go in peace. Now she is enjoying the sunlight of full assurance, the bright clear noontide of acknowledged acceptance: “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Some of us have this great blessing, and we rejoice in it; but if others of you have not come quite so far on the heavenly road, do not begin murmuring or doubting. Bless the Lord Jesus Christ for any favor that He has shown to you, a poor unworthy sinner; and if you have even the faintest ray of light, pray Him to make your path like that of the just, which “shines more and more unto the perfect day.” If you have received any token for good from your Lord, be thankful for it, and expect before long to hear in your soul the sweet music of this gracious word, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

So we have come to our text, in which two things are very clearly revealed. The first is, *an assurance*: “Your faith has saved you;” and the second is, *a dismissal*: “Go in peace.”

I. First, then, here is AN ASSURANCE: “Your faith has saved you.”

That assurance teaches us, first, that *salvation is a present thing*: “Your faith *has* saved you.” This is something that is already accomplished. You are saved; not, you *shall* be saved; but you are even now in possession of the priceless gift of salvation: “Your faith has saved you.” All through the Scriptures, and especially in the New Testament, it is plainly asserted that believers in Christ are already in possession of salvation. I will not stay to prove that it is so, but will rather explain it. If anyone says to me, “In what respect are believers saved?” I answer, that they are saved in the price, in the promise, in the principles, and in the pledge of salvation. The alliteration will help you to remember these four points.

First, they are saved in the price of salvation. All that was necessary to save them from the result of sin has been endured by the Lord Jesus Christ. He has ransomed them by His death upon the cross. He has stood in their stead, and borne their sin in His own body on the tree, and suffered the full penalty for it. He has finished the transgression, and made an end of sin, and made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in, for them, everlasting righteousness; so that they *are* saved. The great work of their salvation was completed by Christ upon the cross when He laid down His life for them, and now they are “bought with a price,” even “the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Next, they are saved in the promise of salvation. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who cannot lie, has declared “that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God’s promise is certain of fulfillment, so that every believer in Jesus may be absolutely sure of salvation. We often take the check of a man who is known to be in a good financial position, and we consider his check to be as good as if it were hard cash; and, in like manner, we accept God’s promise of salvation as being just as sure as the salvation itself. Paul tells us that God’s promise has been confirmed by an oath, “that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

Then, thirdly, we have salvation in the principles of it; that is to say, all those graces, which constitute the essentials of a perfect character, are in every true child of God. There is given to us, when we are regenerated, the very same life which we are to live forever in heaven. We have now the root, the bulb, the seed, out of which immortality and perfection will most surely grow; we may not yet be perfect, but we have that which will come to perfection. We have within us a new nature, which cannot sin, because it is born of God; and this will gradually overcome the old nature, as the Israelites drove out the Canaanites, and we shall be perfect before the throne of the Most High. A man may have, in a very small room, a whole field of wheat lying in embryo, in the seed which is to be sown in the springtime, and reaped in the autumn; and we have, in the gift of God’s grace, all heaven in embryo, in the seeds of faith and love, and the work of the Holy Spirit within our souls. Thus, we have salvation in the principles of it.

And, once more, we have salvation in the pledge of it; for, when the Holy Spirit enters our heart, His coming there is the pledge and the earnest of heaven. There is a difference between a pledge and an earnest, and what I really mean is rather an earnest than a pledge. A pledge is taken back, but an earnest is retained. A man, who has his wages to take at the end of the week, may get some earnest-money in the middle of

the week; and, if his master is what he should be that will be a pledge that he will get the rest. So, the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who virtually puts heaven into us, and makes us fit to be in the heaven which Christ has gone to prepare for us. What a mercy it is to have the witness of the Holy Spirit, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Heavenly Father, to have aspirations after holiness which we never had in our unregenerate state! All this is the pledge of heaven; and in having the pledge, we have practically the salvation itself. The Holy Spirit would not have come into our hearts, and given us all these blessings, if He had not meant to “perfect that which concerns us,” and to save us in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

Salvation, then, is a present thing, in price, in promise, in principles, and in pledge; but the important question for each of you to answer is—Have you obtained that salvation? If you have not, you are in a truly terrible condition, for you are “condemned already” because you have “not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” But if you have obtained this salvation, then you are indeed rich to all eternity. Perhaps you live in one poor room, and have to work very hard for a livelihood, yet you are much richer than those emperors and kings, who have much earthly pomp and state, but who are not the subjects of God’s grace, for you are saved; the Lord has given you that salvation which can never be taken away from you. So, rejoice in this salvation; and, if you have little else to cover you, let this salvation be your royal apparel; let this salvation load your table with heavenly dainties; let this salvation smooth your path, however rough it may be, and cheer your heart, however great your trials may be.

So, this assurance means that salvation is a present thing.

Next, it teaches us that *salvation is obtained by faith*: “Your faith has saved you.” “But,” says someone, “Was it not the Lord Jesus Christ who saved her?” Yes, certainly it was; but do you see what Christ does? He is so fond of faith that He takes the crown from His own head, and puts it on the head of faith, as He says to the woman, “Your faith has saved you.” Is that a safe thing for Christ to do? Oh, yes! Because faith at once removes the crown from her own head, and puts it back upon Christ’s, saying, “Not unto me, not unto me, but unto Your name be all the glory.” Christ loves to crown faith because faith loves to crown Christ. As for boasting—faith cannot tolerate that for a moment; she hurls it out of the window, and will have nothing further to do with it. Our Savior speaks thus, “Your faith has saved you,” because He knows that it will be understood that faith is only the connecting link with Himself—that He really works the salvation, but that the faith of the believer is the means of obtaining it.

There are four things, concerning this faith, which I want you to notice, and I will put them under the same letter that I used before, so that it may be the easier for you to remember them. First, this woman’s faith was a personal faith: “*Your* faith has saved you.” O dear friends, I implore you to give up all idea of being saved by anybody else’s faith! You must believe in Jesus for yourself, or you will be a lost man forever. What a dreadful falsehood it is when men stand up, as sponsors for a child and promise and vow various things, none of which are within their power to perform! As to anything that anybody ever promised with regard to your soul, what can another person do for you in such a matter as that? The most earnest faith in your parents can never bring you to heaven, unless you also have faith in Jesus. There is a great blessing which may come to us, through the faith of others, if they exercise it in prayer on our behalf; but, still, salvation can never come to us apart from our own personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said to the woman, “*Your* faith has saved you;”—not Peter’s faith, nor James’s faith, nor John’s faith, but her own; and you also must have faith for yourself, or you will assuredly be lost. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved;” but if you do not personally believe on Him, you cannot be saved.

Notice, next, that this woman’s faith was a practical faith. She was saved by faith, and not by works; but she was not saved by a faith which did not produce works. Think of her works—she washes the Master’s feet with her tears, and wipes them with the hairs of her head; she kisses them repeatedly, and anoints them with her precious ointment. I may truly say of her, “She has done what she could.” All that her affection prompted, her devotion performed; for she had the faith which works by love; and if you, dear friends, have a faith that never works for Christ, I beg you to get rid of it at once, for it will turn out to be a bastard faith. The faith that never kisses His feet is a faith that He will tread under His feet. The faith that never anoints Him is a faith that will have no fragrance in His esteem, and He will not accept it. We are not saved by works and faith combined, much less by works alone; but, nevertheless, the faith which saves is not a barren faith; it produces the good fruit of love and service for Christ.

So this woman’s faith was personal and practical. It was also a penitent faith. While she stood at Christ’s feet, behind Him, her eyes showered tears upon them as she wept over her sin. I am always doubtful of the genuineness of a dry-eyed faith. The longer I live, the more I am afraid of those people who profess to leap into faith without any repentance; and there seem to be some, in these days, who do not believe in the old-fashioned sorrow for sin. I would rather see some men less confident than they are if they were more humbled on account of their past transgressions. This woman manifested a truly penitent faith.

And, once more, it was a pure faith—I use that word pure to help your memory, and I mean that her faith was perfectly simple. She wept, but she did not trust in her weeping. She anointed Christ’s feet with the ointment, but she did not rely upon her self-sacrifice. She kissed His feet, but she did not depend upon her kisses. Where was her trust all placed? Why, upon Christ, and upon Him alone. I do not know that she had ever read the Old Testament; certainly, she could not have read the New Testament, for it was not written then. She may not have known much about the Bible, but she knew Him who is the very sum and substance of the Bible. I have heard people talk about a Body of Divinity; but there never was but one in the highest sense of the term, and Jesus Christ is that Body of Divinity. He is, in the true sense, “the Word of God.” This woman had seen Him, she had learned to know Him, He had forgiven her sin, and she had come into that house full of love to Him, and full of trust in Him, and now from His own lips she receives this gracious assurance, “Your faith has saved you.” It was faith in Him, and in nothing else. There was not, and there could not have been, in her case, anything to trust to but Christ. She was, in a very emphatic sense, a sinner; she had not set herself up as being a person of good character; there were, no doubt, scores of people in the city who could have borne lamentable evidence of her sinfulness. But she trusted herself absolutely to Jesus Christ, the sinners’ Savior, and she trusted Him alone, and so her faith was proved to be of that pure kind that saves all who exercise it. Let yours be like that, dear friend—personal, practical, penitential, and pure.

Further, upon this first point, note that *salvation may be a matter of assurance*. This woman had the assurance from Christ’s own lips, “Your faith has saved you.” Those of you who were at the prayer meeting here, last Monday night, will remember that one of our brethren, when he was giving an address, made you smile when he said, “He that believes on the Son hath everlasting life,” and then added, “h-a-t-h—that spells ‘got it.’” “That is a strange mode of spelling, which is not taught at the Board School; yet it is a heavenly way of spelling, and it is perfectly correct. “H-a-t-h—that spells ‘got it.’” If you have the blessing of salvation, there is a possibility of knowing that you have it. “He that believes on the Son hath everlasting life;” he has got it; he has got it now.

“I would believe it,” one says, “if Jesus Christ spoke to me, and said so.” My dear friend, He has said it in His Word. Is that Word a lie, or is it true? If it is true, then what more do you want? Christ has written it in His Word; and I like a thing that is written even better than that which is spoken. You know how a man says, when he wants a guarantee about a bargain, “Give it to me in writing; for some people will swear that they never said what we heard them say, so give it to me in black and white.” Well, here it is in black and white: “He that believes on the Son has everlasting life;” and again, “There is therefore now”—“now,” mark—“no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;” and yet again, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Now, cannot you also say, “Got it”?

“Oh, but!” says someone, “I want evidence that it is so.” Very well, you shall have evidence; you shall have the witness of the Spirit who has renewed you; you shall have the witness of your changed life; you shall have the witness of your new character; but, first of all, is not Christ’s Word sufficient for you? Is not Christ’s written Word enough? Is not this Book, which you believe to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit, and which reveals the Word of the Lord, enough for you? It is enough for me. If all the men in the world were to come, one after another, after I had read something in the Bible, and they were all to say, in their different languages, “That is a lie,” I would not believe it an atom the less; and suppose they were all to stand up, and say, “It is true,” I would reply, “Of course it is, but I do not need your word to confirm what Christ has said.” I am perfectly satisfied if He has said it; and there it stands, and all the powers of hell cannot prevail to overthrow it. Here is the solid rock for a soul to rest upon. Christ says, at this moment, to everyone who believes in Him, and trusts in His blood and righteousness, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

II. So we come to the latter part of our text, which is, A DISMISSION: “Go in peace.” What did our Lord mean by saying this?

I think He meant, first, “*Quit this place of controversy*, and go in peace.” Do you notice that it was when those, who sat at the meat with Him began to say within themselves, “Who is this that forgives sins also?” that He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace”? See the black looks of those Jews, those Pharisees, round about Simon’s table. Why, they are as sour as vinegar, and full of all kinds of skepticism, so the Savior says to the woman, “Go home, good soul, away from all of them.” So, dear friends, whenever you meet with a book that is full of skepticism and unbelief—especially you who have lately found the Savior—you had better throw it away. “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Unbelief will be no help to you; your faith has already saved you; then, what more do you want? You have the assurance within your own soul that you are saved; do not go anywhere, or do anything to damage that assurance. I do not think it is worthwhile to go through a horse pond, and get covered with filth, just for the pleasure of being afterwards washed. It may be that some strong man, like another Samson, may have to go in among the Philistines, and pull their temple down about their ears; but poor Hannah could not do that and those who are like her—the women of a sorrowful spirit—had better go home, and get out of the way of that set of wranglers. They may even be wrangling professors, squabbling about this doctrine and that, and perhaps not understanding any of them properly; so the Savior says to you, “You have the assurance of salvation; do not let anybody worry you out of that. Go in peace.” This is what the apostle means when he says, “Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful disputations.”

Then, next, I think our Savior meant His words to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace,” to be a *kind of dismissal of her case from the Court*. Here is Simon in thought accusing her, and thinking that she ought not to be permitted to come and touch the Master’s feet, and here is the Lord Jesus Christ not only becoming a pleader for her, but deciding the case in her favor as He says to her, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” This was in effect saying, “Your case is dismissed; there is nothing against you. The Court clears you; go home, good soul.” What a mercy it is when the Lord speaks thus to anyone! “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.” Christ has given us our dismissal from the Court of Justice, so let us “go in peace.”

May not our Lord also have meant something more than we see upon the surface of these words? May He not have meant, “*Go home in peace to your daily avocations*”? Ah! She had done a deal of mischief in that home of hers by her sin; for there never was a fallen woman who brought a blessing to her family while she lived in sin. And now that the Savior has given to her the assurance of salvation, He says to her, “Go home, and attend to your ordinary household duties. Go and act as a woman should. Fulfill your part as a mother, or a daughter, or a servant, or whatever your calling may be. Go in peace.”

Do you not also think that *this dismissing word would last her as long as she lived*—and that, all her life through, she would seem to hear the Savior saying to her, “Go in peace”? Perhaps she was to go upstairs, and lie there ill; but she was to “go in peace.” Possibly, she was to come down, and to confront opposition and persecution; if so, she was still to hear this message, “Go in peace.” I think that word would come to her every morning as soon as she woke; and when she was about to close her eyes, and go to sleep, she would still hear it. With such a gracious message as that, she could even go through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and “fear no evil.” It may be that is just what the Lord meant it for—that, when she came to die—and she may have died a martyr’s death, we cannot tell—at any rate, whenever she came to die, this message was ringing in her ears, “Go in peace.”

The practical point that I want to bring home to you Christian people, to you who are saved, is this. Beloved friends, as you go to your families, as you go through life, as you go into eternity, I pray you to “go in peace.” It is heaven begun below to possess “the peace of God, which passes all understanding.” Peace should be the continual portion of all believers. This is what the angels sang when our Lord Jesus appeared on earth, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” And as it was at the beginning of our Savior’s life, so it was at the end, for this was our Lord’s legacy to all His disciples, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.” That which gives one of His titles even to God Himself—for He is called “the God of peace”—should be very precious to your soul.

Peace is the fit result of what the Savior has done for you. Has He forgiven you? Then you have peace. Has He saved you? Oh, then, feel an inward peace which none can take from you! Did He die for you?

Then you can never die, in the full meaning of the word, so be at rest about that matter. Has He risen for you? Then, because He lives, you shall live also; so, let not your heart be troubled, but be at peace. Will He come again to receive you unto Himself? Oh, then, let your peace be like a river flowing from the very throne of God!

This peace within your heart is the blessed fruit of the Spirit of peace. Where the Spirit of God is, there must be peace, for He is the Sacred Dove. The fruit of the Spirit within us should be “quietness and assurance forever.” Do not despise this priceless gift of peace; but, as saved souls, covet more and more of it. Do you know what I mean by talking thus to you? Suppose you are thinking to yourself, “Alas! I am going home to an ungodly husband;” never mind, dear wife, “go in peace.” “Oh, but! Tomorrow, I have to go out among ungodly men.” Never mind; “go in peace.” Do not go among them disturbed and fluttered, but sing to yourself softly—

“My heart is resting, O my God!”

“Go in peace.” Perhaps you are going to the sickbed of one of your dearest friends. Possibly, there is one at home, who is as depressed in spirit as to depress you too. Never mind; “go in peace.” It will strengthen you to have your own heart at peace. I remember once seeing an accident on a hill. I feared that a man had broken his leg, and I know that someone ran to fetch a doctor, and when he came, to my surprise, he walked coolly up to where the man was. If I had been sent for, I would have run myself out of breath to get to the poor man; and when I reached him, I would have been all of a tremble, and would not have been able to do anything properly. But when the doctor heard that there was a man with his leg broken, he walked quietly to the spot, and the result was that he was able to do his work properly. Our Lord Jesus Christ was never in a hurry. It is marvelous to contemplate the leisure of the greatest Worker who ever lived. He always moved along with a holy calm and quiet dignity, and He therefore did everything well. Do you likewise; “go in peace,” for it shall be your strength. Sometimes, your strength is to sit still; and, always, the joy of the Lord shall be your strength.

This is the way in which you are to glorify God in your life—by going in peace. When this woman went back to her home—that same woman who had been such a poor, trembling, broken, bruised reed, because of her sin—those who knew her inquired, “What has happened to Mary?”—if that was her name; I do not know—“What has happened to her? Why, she looks so placid, so calm, she is not like the same woman that she used to be.” I have no doubt that she was rather quick-tempered, for most very loving spirits are like that. “But now,” say her friends, “she takes things so differently; she is so still, and quiet, and restful.” Just so; and then they took knowledge of her, that she had been with Jesus, and had learned of Him, for that was His style and His manner also.

Ah, dear hearts! If Christ has saved you, you have the best reason in all the world for being the quietest, happiest people who ever lived. One said, one day, to a person who had spoken of his salvation in tones of assurance, “You ought to be the happiest man that lives;” and he answered, “So I am.” It was well known that he was very poor, that he did not know where he would get a second coat for his back; but, then, he thought that he did not want a second coat till he had worn out the first one. They said that he did not know where he would get his next breakfast; but he had had his supper, so he was quite content to wait till God should give him his breakfast. He had such simple faith in God that, though he was so very poor, yet he said he was the happiest man in all the world. Go in for that, beloved, for surely you have a right to it if you are a believer in Jesus. Your greatest sorrows are over, your heaviest burdens Christ has carried; the most terrible disaster that could ever happen to you has been averted by Him; the most fearful calamity that you once had cause to dread can never come to you. You are an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. You shall have all you really need in this life, and you shall have the heaven of God in the life to come. The supreme act of God, by which He blesses eternally, has been performed upon you already. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have all united to bless you; and the covenant of peace is signed, and sealed, and ratified, and you must and shall conquer at the last. So, “Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid;” but say to yourself—

*“All that remains for me
Is but to love and sing,
And wait until the angels come
To bear me to the King.”*

God bless you, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:
*EPHESIANS 2.***

Verse 1. *And you has He quickened,—*

You, who were by nature dead, are now made alive unto God by the Holy Spirit. If you had nothing else to think of, all day long, but just these five words, they might suffice to lift you up to the very heights of grateful adoration of your quickening Lord: “And you has He quickened,”—

1. *Who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

These were your grave clothes, or the charnel-house in which you would have continued to lie if the quickening power of God the Holy Spirit had not brought you out into newness of life.

2. *Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:*

This is what happened to us all in our unregenerate state, we were carried along by the world, loving what it loved, judging from its views, and acting according to its maxims. No, worse than that, the devil himself had dominion over us, as he had over the rest of the world; “the prince of the power of the air” was the spirit that worked in us as well as in the rest of “the children of disobedience.” What a glorious deliverance it was to be saved from the power of death, and the dominion of Satan, and to be made partakers of everlasting life!

3. *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

That is the highest point to which human nature can attain; left to itself, it makes us “children of wrath.” Even those who are now most assuredly the children of God were once the children of wrath; there was no difference, in that respect, between them and the rest of mankind. It is only the marvelous mercy and grace of God which have made us to differ from our fellow creatures who are still “dead in trespasses and sins.”

4, 5. *But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ,—*

Again let us praise the Lord with all our hearts for what He has done for us. It is truly wonderful that He should have loved us when we were “dead in trespasses and sins”—with no feeling, no holy desire, no repentance; while indifference, heartlessness, powerlessness covered everything. We were dead in sin, yet He loved us, and therefore it was that He “quickened us together with Christ,”—

5. *(By grace you are saved);*

Not by human merit, not by the energy of our own will; but, “by grace you are saved.”

6. *And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

We are not only alive, you see, but we are elevated into the highest position of the new life—made to live with Christ, and in Christ—made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

7, 8. *That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God:*

Both the salvation and the faith that makes it ours are the gift of God. Twice over, the apostle tells us that we are saved by grace, yet men will not believe it. They will, somehow or other, get away from this humbling but true and precious doctrine. They will contrive, by some method or other, to squeeze in their own works, and their own will, and so rob Christ, if not of His crown, yet of some of its brightest jewels.

9, 10. *Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship,—*

If we have good works, as I trust we have, yet even they are the production of God’s grace; praise and glory for them belong to Him, and not to us: “For we are His workmanship,”—

10. *Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.*

This is the great objective of our election; we are elected that we may be holy, and ordained that we may walk in good works—who can rightly quarrel with such a divine purpose as this?

11, 12. *Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time you were*

without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

That is the condition of every unbeliever at this time: “having no hope, and without God in the world.” Mr. Hume once made the remark that he knew many Christians who were afraid to die, but he was not. The Christian man, to whom he said this, pointed to an ox grazing in the meadow, and said, “You have reached about as high as that bullock has, for he also is not afraid to die; but pray, Mr. Hume,” inquired the good man, “have you any hope after death?” At that question, the philosopher shook his head, for he knew nothing of such a hope as that; the utmost point he could reach was, by indifference, to raise himself above fear. “Having no hope,” is a true description of every man who has no faith in our crucified and risen Savior.

13. *But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ.*

That is the great attracting power, which draws us from our natural distance, and brings us into nearness to God. How we ought to prize that precious blood which does so much for us! It cleanses us from sin; it pleads for us before the throne; and here, you see, having made a way of access for us, it also conducts us along that way, and brings us near to God.

14. *For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

There are no privileges now for the Jew from which the Christian is shut out, for Christ “has made both one.” There is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision now, for all believers are one in Christ Jesus.

15-22. *Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

May we realize that the Holy Spirit is inhabiting His own Church at this moment: and, especially, may all of us who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, realize our own position in that spiritual temple which is the “habitation of God through the Spirit,” for Christ’s sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—708, 550, 548.

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