

SERMON II.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 30TH, 1876.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.—ACTS v. 31, 32.

It is said respecting the Blessed Son of God in the days of His flesh, when He would secrete Himself from the multitude, that "He could not be hid." Poor sensible sinners would find Him out, poor sick and afflicted ones would seek for Him through all the streets and broadways till they found Him. Why? Because He could do that for them that none other could; therefore He saith, speaking by the prophet, "From the bowels of My mother hath He made mention of My name." God the Father is determined to exalt Him, it is the work and delight of the Holy Ghost to lift Him up. Every poor sinner that has tasted somewhat of His grace, and felt His power, cannot get Him high enough. I do not wonder, and I expect some of you do not either, at what the great apostle said, "He is all and in all." I do not wonder at the spouse, having seen and felt what was in Him, crying out, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, yea He is altogether lovely." This was the promise of the Father respecting him, "If thou wilt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see a seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thine hand." Therefore it is said, "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" none ever went lower; when speaking by prophecy of Himself He declared "I am a worm and no man." But as "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, so God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." So it is said respecting Him, "On His head are many crowns." Every man and woman that has tasted of His grace, felt and realized the sweetness and preciousness of His blood, will cast their crowns at His feet, and say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the honour and glory;" and sing throughout a vast eternity, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, to Him be glory, might, majesty, and dominion."

How does He stand in thy estimation, sinner? What think you of Christ? I tell thee He will be all in all to thee or He will be nothing at all; God will have Him everything to every one that is saved, so will the Holy Ghost make Him so. Can you say in heart and affection, "Give me Christ or else I die?" Can you say in truth and sincerity, "None but Jesus?" What a mercy to have a heart to receive Him, faith to embrace Him, love to adore Him as He stands in my text, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand." Balaam, with a view of prophecy says, "His king shall be higher than Agag, and His kingdom shall be exalted. All kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him." As He went so low, God will have Him so high; the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father; all men shall honour the Son as they honour the Father. How many of you can say in heart and truth, "That I may be found in Him, not having on mine own righteous-

ness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness of God by faith?" I will tell you a solemn truth, every knee that does not bow to Him in this life, every soul that does not bow to Him in faith, truth, and affection, and kiss the Son, He will dash in pieces as with a rod of iron; He will say of all such, "Take these mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before Me." From His judgment there will be no appeal. Those that have received Him in heart and truth shall go away with Him to everlasting life, but the wicked into the punishment of hell.

"Him hath God exalted." He is the one thing needful, my friends, He is the Pearl of great price. When God the Holy Ghost brings men and women to see what they are by nature and by practice, what their sins merit and deserve, as He reveals Christ to them in His suitability and sufficiency, how He sparkles in their eyes. What would they not give or do to be possessed of this Christ, and be able to say, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is towards me;" He is exalted then. But, my friends, if God the Holy Ghost has not brought you to see what you are as a ruined, undone, law-cursed and condemned sinner, then He is but of little worth; the profits and pleasures of this world are more to thee than Jesus Christ. This is what you say in heart, "When I have a more convenient season I will send for Thee;" it may be He will not come, then thou art for ever undone. How solemn for some here to be in this position; to think that while God hath exalted Him, that He is the delight of the Father, upon whom His eternal eyes are fixed; that He is the song of tens of thousands of angels who gaze on Him with ineffable delight; that thousands desire to have a glimpse of; yet there are some in Providence Chapel sitting and hearing about Him, that think more of the gold and silver of this world than of Jesus Christ; their thought and care is, "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? and, Wherewithal shall I be clothed?" Jesus Christ is the least in their thoughts the least in their affections, and the least of all in their estimation. While I do hope and trust there are some before Him to whom He is exceedingly precious, that can say in heart and truth before Him, "Lord Jesus, lift thou upon me the light of Thy countenance, that will put more joy in my heart than the wicked ever knew;" that can say with feeling and love in their hearts, "I could die with Thee in a ditch, I could rot with Thee in a gaol; let me have Christ I am above all things happy, and exceedingly rich." They would esteem a word from Him, a look from Him, a touch from Him, a heavenly visit from Him, above all that can be named in this world. They are willing at times to go miles to hear from him, willing to go through any inconvenience to hear about him, and go in secret places to get a glimpse of him. O you are the men and women that will be with Him, the Holy Ghost has made Him something to you, for He declares "He shall take of Mine and shall shew it unto you." Let the Holy Ghost unfold His beauties and open Him up to our hearts it will leave us without heart; I know that well enough. How often have I found when my foolish heart has been running after things of the world for a day or two, when I have just turned aside to confess my sins in secret, He has bowed the heavens and come down, revealed something of Himself to my heart, He has beggared all besides, every feeling of my soul has bounded towards Him in a minute, and I have said of all other things, "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity and vexation." Then I have thought, "Surely my heart will never be carried away again with the things of this life as they have been, surely Christ will always be in my heart and affections;" but I have lived to prove to this day that we are flesh as well as spirit, "the first man is of the earth earthy, the second is the Lord from heaven." Yes, I have lived to prove to this day that we are more flesh than spirit, but the mercy is, my friends, that we are not all flesh; there is something in our hearts that prizes Christ, that

exalts Him, that goes after Him, and at times lifts Him up above all other things.

If you look into the blessed Word of God you will find, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand." How He was all and everything to Old Testament Saints. The very mention of His name by God the Father to our first parents ("The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head,") raised them up to a lively hope, and gladdened their hearts above all that sin and the devil could do to cast them down. How Abel's faith fastened on Him when he offered a lamb in sacrifice. How exalted He was in the estimation of Moses, though heir to the throne of Egypt, who swayed her sceptre over peoples and nations, he esteemed the worst part of Jesus, so to speak, better than all the wealth that Egypt could give him; "he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt"; anything to be with Christ, to have an interest in him. What joy Christ was to dear old Abraham. It is said of him he had exceeding much riches in gold and silver, and three hundred servants born in his house, if my memory is correct; you do not hear that this rejoiced him, but something of Christ was revealed to him, and Christ said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it and was glad." So you find with all Old Testament saints, they felt what Jeremiah said, "O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble." Then to come lower, what must he have been to the apostles? They rejoiced that they were "counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." O what was He to them to what He is to some of us! There are perhaps some before God who would not like their acquaintances to know that they come to Providence Chapel, as much as they can they keep people from knowing it, or what they believe, for fear their neighbours should say, "That is a Methodist, that is one of the elect." Some of you would not like some of your friends to know what you really believe, and who are the people you really love, although it would cost you nothing but a word from their tongues; they would not shut you up in a prison, nor take away your bread, yet you would be ashamed about this. May God bring you to love Jesus Christ better, and make Him more precious to your hearts; you will not be ashamed to own Him in the burning day, may His Blessed Majesty not be ashamed of you. As I said just now, see what the apostles thought of Jesus Christ; they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name, it was such ointment poured forth, there was such glory and dignity in Him, that it was an honour to be striped for Him, or to be cast out of men for His sake.

"All over glorious is my Lord."

I knew what this shame was in days past, that is how I find you out. I often think how debased we must be, how low we must have sunk, to be ashamed of Him whom angels adore, and the God of heaven delights to lift up. We have reason to be glad He is not ashamed of such wretches as we are. "Him hath God exalted." See how exalted He was in the apostles' estimation; I am not aware of any that did not suffer for His name. Various tortures and martyrdoms they went through, but it was nothing to them: Does not our religion dwindle into a dot? What a little love we have towards Him, compared with how He was exalted in their estimation. But to come a little nearer home, is He anything to thee? Have you been brought to see and feel that without Him perish you must, so that you can say,

"Nothing but thy blood, O Jesus,
Can relieve us from the smart."

O, to have a word from Him. Can you esteem the word of His mouth more precious than anything else? Would one drop of His precious blood sprinkled on thy conscience make thee more happy than any man in the parish of Croydon could make thee? To clasp Him in the arms of thy faith

would enable thee to face death, and say, "Into Thy hands I can commend my spirit." To be clothed in his righteousness would make you this day the happiest man in all England. "O," say you, "if at times I can but creep to His feet, and see, feel, and believe He is looking down, I cannot tell you how happy and glad I am." You are the man that He will welcome in the burning day, that He will own before thousands. How God has exalted Him to thee. "Why," say you, "I must be damned without Him; everything of Christ is to me above everything else; His Word, His people, His house, is precious to me, and make me delight in these things." I am glad to hear you say that. "Him hath God exalted." Why He is exalted to you is because you are brought to see your nakedness without Him, your filthy and ruined condition without Him. Just as the Holy Ghost sinks us down so he lifts up Christ. Every man sent of God has got and has had such a discovery or what he is as a sinner, that his desire is to show poor sinners what they are, and tell of the all-sufficiency of Christ to meet their state. I am at a point about one thing, however I may have failed in it, ever since God opened my mouth, that is, for nearly 32 years, I have had such a desire to sink sinners down, to bring them to the gates of hell, and prove to them their state by nature. I have had such a desire to speak of Christ who has saved me, that I have said, "Good God, give me the strength of a Samson to declare it." My desire is that every man and woman in the parish should bow at His feet, and sing, "Hosanna to the Christ of God." This has been the longing and burden of my prayers many times in a day for many years; O to exalt and extol Him, and testify of what He is to ruined, undone, and perishing sinners. Though I cannot do it as I would, yet God has encouraged my heart with this "If there is in you, child, a willing mind it is accepted, according to what a man hath; I can make my strength sufficient in your weakness; go, stand in the temple, and speak unto the people all the words of this life."

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand." He cannot be put higher; "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." As I just said, it is the delight of every man and woman taught by the Blessed Spirit to exalt, speak well of, and testify of the suitability and blessedness there is in God's dear Son. Every soul that has been brought to see and feel what He is, and to taste of His grace, will in heart and truth cry out, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." I will tell you what are the feelings of your heart at times, more or less, they are "Lift Him up, glorify Him; speak well of Him;" I can never get Him high enough for you. When all has been said and done it is just this in your soul's feeling, "The one half has not been told, I see more in Him than ever you have said of Him." As the Holy Ghost reveals Him, we find what God said of Him to be true, "Behold my servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high;" so He is. This is what He is in the estimation of all that get to heaven; when God is speaking of Him, he says, "I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion; I will declare the decree;" that holy hill is the heart and affections of sensible sinners. Every soul that has tasted somewhat of Him will kiss the Son, and say in his heart, "Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour." First, he is the Prince of life. When the apostle is speaking of the Blessed Son of God, he says, "You have killed the Prince of life whom God hath raised from the dead." It is in Him we live, move, and have our being, he is the Prince of life in that sense, He "has appointed our days that we cannot pass, and months that we cannot go over; for of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." As He has appointed our days that we cannot pass, so we have to wait, as Job says, "All my appointed time will I wait till my change come." If we consider what has just taken place on the railway, we hear that in the first collision, several who were unhurt were assist-

ing others in extricating themselves from their dangerous positions, along come the other train, killing some that were unhurt by the first accident, although not extricated from their positions, and also others who were able to get out of the train to assist. How safe they seemed; helping others, the next few minutes they were lifeless corpses. "In Him we live, move, and have our being." Therefore it is said, "What is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." So the Father has committed all judgment unto the Son.

Not only is he the Prince of life in the sense I have spoken of, but He says, "I am the resurrection and the life; He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." You find Him going to Jairus' daughter, she was dead; "Maid, I say unto thee, arise;" up she rose. We find the widow's son being brought out of the gates of Nain to be buried. Jesus stopped the bier, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" and he sat up. We hear Him telling Martha and Mary, "I am the resurrection and the life;" He goes to the grave of Lazarus, and says, "Lazarus, come forth;" and he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and He said, "Loose him and let him go."

Not only is He the Prince of life as to our natural life, but he is the Prince of life as to all spiritual things. Not a real desire can be found in any man under the canopy of heaven but what comes from the Son of God. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." You cannot move a finger in any good thing towards Jesus Christ without the influence of His grace, you cannot think a good thought without his grace, you cannot take a step heavenward without the Prince of life. By nature we are as dead spiritually as a corpse in the cemetery is naturally. Now it has pleased the Father that in Christ should all fulness dwell; He is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Do you know what it is to move towards Him in desire? Do thy affections run after him? Do thy feet carry thee to places where He is to be heard of? Does thy heart beat to know more about this Blessed Son of God? Yea, to bring it close, is there any moving in thy soul after Jesus Christ? Are thine eyes, thy heart, and thy feet Zionward, that you can say at times,

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people and His ways;
Envy, and pride, and lust depart,
And all His works I praise?"

Thy back is to hell, and thy face heavenward, and your feeling is, "The desire of my soul is towards Thee, and to the remembrance of Thy name." "Yes," says you, "that it is." Then it comes from Jesus Christ. "O," say you, "it is very feeble." All the time we feel the pulse beat, we say, "There is life;" all the while there is breath in the body, although the breathing may be short, and some moments between, we say, "There is life." If there is any beating in thy heart towards Jesus Christ, if the breathing of thy soul is towards Him, you can never die. "Why?" say you, "Because I live, ye shall live also," says the Son of God. Thy life is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord Jesus Christ; you have that life from Him. Not all the deathliness that you may feel, the worldly-mindedness that you may sink into, nor the power the devil may seem to have over you, can ever quench that spark divine. "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" all the while there is life in the root the branches cannot die. Those heavenly desires that you have had at times in your soul the devil cannot get, nor have any of the damned in hell ever had one, they are dead in their sin, and damned of God. "They that go down to the pit cannot hope for Thy truth." You know that at times this life will rise up like oil above water, and your thoughts run towards Christ from a feeling sense of your need. Harken to what He says, "The smoking flax I will never quench."

The devil will never outwit or cheat Him. "His King shall be higher than Agag;" He bruised the devil's head, He came to destroy the works of the devil, He has done it in your heart. "I give unto My sheep eternal life," (because He is the Prince of life; none but He could give it,) "none shall pluck them out of My hand." "The Father that gave them Me is greater than all, neither shall any pluck them out of My Father's hand." Our life is hid with Christ in God; if the devil could get at Christ (so to speak) our life is hid in God, it is in a double case (so to speak), it ~~lays~~ wrapped up in the heart of Jehovah. "I and my Father are one." He is the Prince of life. What! do you feel some love springing up in your heart, some hungering and thirsting, some little risings-up of hope, movings of love, goings forth of faith? These spring from life; God will maintain that life in your soul, death will not be able to swallow it up. This is how the child of God overcomes death, he says, "O death, where is thy sting?" Where there is not this eternal life death swallows them up. Paul says, "All things are yours; life or death; O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." So then this union with the Blessed Son of God is out of the reach of death; death will touch every other other union but this, but it cannot touch this. Death will separate brother from brother, friend from friend, husband from wife, even soul from body, but it cannot separate the soul from Jesus Christ, because he is the Prince of life. The Son of God says, "He that believeth on Me shall never die." What a mercy if any of you can feel this, you may go home and say, "Blessed be God, I shall live for evermore." "For this is the Father's will that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life." So you may say, "Satan and world, do your worst, I have got an immortal life, a life flowing from the Prince of life, springing up in my soul, because Christ lives I shall live too."

Again, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour." Not only is He the Prince of life, but He is the Prince of Peace. It is said, "He shall be called, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." He is the peace-maker, He is the peace-giver, and He is the peace-bringer; there is no peace worth having but what comes from His pardoning voice. He told the disciples, "My peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." It is said, you know, that it is a "peace which passeth all understanding;" it must be so. You find that the rabble took Stephen, and said that he blasphemed the temple, so they took him without the city to stone him. While the stones are dashing out his brains he kneels down and says, "I see the heavens opened, and Jesus sitting at the right hand of God; Lord lay not this sin to their charge;" although the stones are rattling about him and breaking his bones he feels such peace, he sweetly falls asleep. This a peace; see what Christ can do." Look when sin had stung our first parents, O the anger of God that seemed to burn against them, how they flew from God in Paradise, because in that sense there was no peace to the wicked. See Paul and Silas in a stinking dungeon, look at their bleeding backs, see their feet fast in the stocks, yet praising and blessing the Christ of God, as happy as angels. The Prince of Peace was there. Let Him bring peace to your conscience the clamour without will be nothing; it will be as when you have sat in your house during a storm at any time, it has been thundering and lightning, you may have said, "What a storm!" but it has not troubled you. But we must give it up for the present.