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Substance of Three Sermons preached by our Pastor

on July 4. 1982. Sunday.

Morning Lesson. John 17.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Matthew 28 . 18.

These are some of the glorious, ^{terminal} utterances of our blessed Redeemer prior to His ascension to Heaven. How wonderful it is if He shows our feet the way so "Up to the Lord our flesh shall fly,
At the great rising day."

if before us we have the wondrous prospect by divine grace in our ransomed souls, of presently ascending — our redeemed souls first — to the brightness, beauty, glory and eternal peace and bliss of Heaven. The text falls in this category; the post-resurrection term of forty days ~~when~~ according to the divine wisdom of the Lord when He rose from the dead triumphantly, gloriously. He stayed with His disciples for forty days before ascending. He gave many infallible proofs of His glorious Deity and holy Person and gave them commands. He greatly increased their faith, blessed them with liveliness of hope and sweetly shed abroad His love in their souls. He gave them a wondrous commandment to tarry in the city of Jerusalem for the great event that would take place there from the heavens on their redeemed souls. You have witnessed and we have participated in the holy ordinance of Believer's baptism three times this year. He said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.... For John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." I feel my spirit constrained, the Lord anointing me and granting me heavenly vision, to speak first to day of the Lord Jesus, how He was, what blessed state He was in following His glorious resurrection, and to show you the state of His disciples even before His ascension and during the wonderful season of forty days. I want to see the heavenly, glorious Saviour in those forty days. First as He said in the wondrous prayer to His divine Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He had said triumphantly

on the cross, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Let us see now with our risen Lord all He had accomplished. First, by His perfection of obedience to the moral law because of the essential majesty and righteousness of His divine Person, His Deity and sacred humanity, He had wrought a righteousness not for Himself; all for His eternally loved and chosen people. O the perfection of His obedience! The holy law of God and divine Justice scrutinised every thought, every act, every deed of the Lord Jesus and it was perfection. O that royal robe of righteousness He has wrought! No peace could come, no joy, no happiness apart from this. And He expiated the sins of all His people by shedding His vital blood on Calvary's cross, opening the precious Fountain so all the guilt and filth of sin was removed in one day. I have before me, and this includes the preacher, those who are very concerned about their sins. You realise Eternity is very near. Eternity surrounds us, and immediately our vital breath leaves our bodies, God taking it away, not all forms of apparatus in hospitals can retain life when the Lord takes your breath, and you realise Eternity is imminent. A mercy it is if your great anxiety is your sin -- the guilt and filth of sin -- and you know you can never enter Heaven unless you are forgiven, washed, cleansed. The Fountain is open this morning, and it will remain open to the end of this dispensation. Christ opened it. Dear friends, if any of you are in agony, real soul agony, and exceedingly troubled lest you should be lost for ever, banished from God's presence to the pit, to the lake of fire and brimstone; if your soul is agonising now, in the Name of the Lord I exhort you to pray to Him that He would plunge you in the precious ocean of His love and blood, so on earth, before you breathe your last you know all your sins are washed away, gone for ever so the heavens are open to you and you have the sweet prospect of entering into His Glory.

So Christ expiated the sins of His people -- cleansed and purified them and atoned for their sins. What a price! He had drunk the penal wrath, the vindictive anger, the curse, and the curse entered the holy human soul of Christ and His bones, so we might have Heaven and enjoy eternal felicity. That is what the Lord did, and He died. His death was sacrificial, a precious sacrifice; one sacrifice for sin for ever. He

offered His pure body on the glorious altar of His Deity. Think of it, His precious body sacrificed, and think of how He propitiated divine Justice so God became favourable to us, and because of all this and His burial and the beauty of it. This is only seen by faith and the efficacy and wonder of it will be so amazing in your eyes. The days were when you were preparing the soil on your farms or in your gardens and sowing seed, and you are looking now for a crop. There are some crop failures: some are prolific, beyond all expectation. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." That precious corn of wheat was the body of Christ sown in the earth. Look what sprang from it! Look at the crop! the whole election of grace, all God's dear people, precious souls redeemed by blood. He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. He destroyed his power, so he can never prevail over the people of God to destroy them.

There are many examples in the Bible to show how Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Many good, gracious people have had terrible troubles. Read the gospels and you see that excellent saints had the bitterest troubles. Take the poor agonised father with his son, and he was hoping the disciples would be able to cast out the demon that had special affinity with fire and water, so time after time the demon cast the lad into the fire and water to destroy him. Think of a path like that with a child! The devil was never able to destroy. The Lord Jesus healed him, cast the spirit out, and such were his convulsions they thought the child was dead. He was alive, and there is a lot of teaching there. "Why could not we cast him out? Because of your unbelief. That is your trouble." You may often ask questions and say "Why could not we?" Because of unbelief. "This kind" this unique category as it was and is and will be. "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." The Lord had destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. What about the demoniac? not one demon; many incarnate devils resided in him. He was crying, cutting himself, living among the tombs, a terror to the whole country. The Lord cast them out. And a beautiful word, a lovely word in the Bible, "They went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devil

were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus." I would like to stay there until the Lord sends for me, wouldn't you? It is enough to break your heart if you get there. You will know what it is to have a foretaste of Heaven. This is a great need, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind All the devils as you know, had permission to enter into the herd of swine, "and the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters." They could never destroy the ~~the~~ poor man because Christ had destroyed him that had the power of death that is, the devil. So wonderful my friends, is the work of Christ and what He accomplished, and is still pleased to accomplish; what He is able to do "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He rose triumphantly on the third day by His own glorious power and the perfection of the ability of His Person. He rose by the glorious power of the Father and the power of the Spirit, and the whole Church virtually rose with Him. What a word this is for you!

I will go aside to make a comment. You will often, especially when you get older and in a deeper path, (or when you are younger and have a deep path) you will get in a place where you feel buried with trouble and temptation and with guilt, and when you are buried by the law in the spiritual application of it, as if there were no hope for you. How often in the journey, especially in a deep path you come where you are buried feelingly, as if you go down into a grave and it falls on you. Some may have come this morning feeling buried beneath trouble and their lot. You do not tell any. My friends, because of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and ~~His resurrection~~ all the election of grace virtually rising with Him, you will rise from every grave. He will open your grave first and let the light in. That will be a day for you when He opens your grave and lets in the light of His love, and goodness and mercy, and brings you into the land of promise. No grave will ever hold you. The Lord will bring you up out of your grave. The things you are in are as a grave, and no one knows what you are passing through. Hardly any understand. Poor soul, I tell you one thing, you have got sympathy from the pulpit and from your blessed Lord. You rose virtually with Christ, and whatever devils or man, or your sin, trouble, you will rise. What a comfort for

you. You look on your lot, a business appointment, and come into much trouble. You may think your mountain stands strong and you will be in it until you retire, and unexpectedly something comes. There is one thing about it, honour the Lord. If you are favoured to honour the Lord He will honour you. Put the Lord first always and He will honour you. Trouble can never put a child of God in a grave permanently because Christ is risen.

"Bound down with twice ten thousand ties,
Yet let me hear Thy call,
My soul in confidence shall rise,
Shall rise and break through all."

You have got wings and you will rise. He rose triumphantly. Pray to the Lord to show you what He will do for you. You will come up to such a degree that you will pray, praise, weep, rejoice. I expect you ^{body} feels as if it is buried. Poor soul, you will come up to praise Him for ever. You want to look up to the heavens and think where you will be with Him, when He has delivered you out of all your afflictions -- in that bright world of bliss. You will long to be there, but there is an appointed time

A brief word doctrinally concerning our Saviour. He passed from under the law, where He had ^{been} from His conception. "Made of a woman, made under the law" in a penal sense. The law would exact on Him to obey and to drink the curse. He rose, and He passed into a righteous relationship with the law. He had magnified it and restored honour to it. He entered into a plenary exercise of all His divine perfections, and you hear Him saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." I hope the Lord will be with us to day because there is such a vast body of truth you need. He was no longer a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but a Man of holy, inexpressible, unfathomed joy. He had brought forth His Church. She was pure, holy, clean, washed, clothed, and there is a place by Him and she stood there, His bride. All her debts He paid. I reiterate. In those forty days not an enemy's hand touched Him; not an enemy saw Him, only His friends by revelation. It was on certain occasions He appeared to them. O the glory and wonder of those days when He was with them! He had fought the fight, the victory won. He was about to ascend to the heavens, to His Throne. Think of the joy they experienced! And what of the disciples with Him? Their state was of living in a foretaste of Heaven, and in the annex to Heaven with Him. All

their sins were forgiven and they were filled with inexpressible peace and with holy joy and greatly preserved from the power of Satan. He was defeated. They were living in the superabounding of divine love, in daily, constant expectation of eternal glory. Blessed be God.