

THE GLORY OF THE SAINTS

A SERMON

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“This honor has all his saints.” Psalm 149:9

THERE are five departments that make up perfect and true saint-ship. The first is, sanctified by God the Father; that is to say, chosen by him away from their sinner-ship place into eternal oneness with the Savior, and so, by the imputation of his work, thereby constituted saints in God's purpose. Second, there is the mediatorial work of the dear Savior; he suffered without the gate, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood; hereby he put that sin mediatorially away which before had been put away in purpose. The third department in saint-ship is regeneration; the soul born of an incorruptible seed, that lives and abides forever; and when the soul is born of God, it seeks to live upon and to walk by not corruptible, but incorruptible things. The fourth department in saint-ship is that of the truth of God; there must be a belief of the truth. “Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth.” “Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth.” Fifth, there is their ultimate personal perfection. These are the things that make up saint-ship, then; the sovereign, sanctifying grace, of the Father; the mediatorial work of the Savior; the quickening work of the Holy Spirit; faith that purifies the heart, and that ultimate perfection and blessedness into which they shall come. And I think, before I enter upon the subject, it will be right for us to make the confession that this saint-ship, which in my text is called “honor,” for herein lies the honor, though the things I have named embody a great many others; it is well that we should confess that this is that kind of honor which is the very last thing that we should seek by nature. That honor that comes from God is what no man naturally seeks. All are very much affected by the honor or dishonor in which we may be held by men; but none of us are affected, until the Lord in mercy affects us, as to whether we are held in honor or in dishonor by the great God. But when he laid these things home to the conscience, then it became our concern as to how he would hold us; whether he would hold us in honor or in dishonor; for we read in the Holy Scriptures that “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Therefore may the Lord, if it be his will, make it the feeling of every one of this assembly, after I have gone through what I intend, the Lord enabling me, to set before you this morning, that each may go away and say to himself, Well, I shall never be content until I am assured by the Spirit of God that I am among this happy people; that I am one of those saints that have this honor. For as on the one hand, friends, there is no dishonor to equal

that which sin has put upon us, so, on the other hand, there is no honor to equal that to which salvation can exalt us. I will therefore notice this honor under a fourfold form; I do so because the four things seem expressed and suggested in the language of the Psalm. And the first shall be *the honor of new creature-ship*. The second is *that of joyful acceptance with God*. The third is *that of universal dominion*. The fourth and the last is *that of heirship apparenacy*.

First, then, I notice *the honor of new creature-ship*. There is a clause in the beginning of this Psalm that is a key to the whole of it. It there says, "Sing unto the Lord a new song." Now what is this new song? We are assured, in the 14th of Revelation, that "no man could learn that song," this new song, "but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." You will then observe that this new song consists in that which passes old things away, and brings in a new life, a new scene of things altogether, and therefore called a new song, because it is new peace, and new life, and new joy; yes, everything that is new. And so, said the apostle, that he that is thus born of God "is a new creature; old things are passed away, all things become new." None could sing this song, then, but those that were redeemed. Let us look for a few moments closely into this redemption, and let us see, as we go along, what we know of the honor of a personal acquaintance with this redemption. None could sing the song of redemption but the redeemed, because none others could know what it was. And you will notice that this is a very broad sort of redemption, the redemption of Christ; it extends to everything. I will just name a number of the evils to which it extends, and in all of which the man who is born of God will appreciate it. Now by the blood of Christ we are said to be redeemed first from the curse of the law, and eternity alone can tell out fully what is the curse of the law. The curse of the law does not mean merely our present mortal state, and literal death and judgment, and the conflagration of this globe we inhabit; but the curse means also the second death, eternal banishment from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Now then, where the Lord intends salvation, he gives more or less a sight and sense of this. And the blood of Jesus Christ, or the death of Jesus Christ, redeems us from this, because in his one death he embodied all deaths; he embodied our hell in his death, he embodied our literal death in his death, he embodied our spiritual death in his death; and he has thus redeemed us from the curse of the law. And then we are said to be redeemed from all iniquity: "He shall redeem Jacob from all his iniquities." And that is the point I wish to aim at, that the redemption of Jesus Christ has cleared the way, has made the way clear. There is a curse by sin, but the redemption of Jesus Christ has so cleared the way that there is to be no more curse. Then it redeems us from all iniquity. That is an Old Testament declaration. John seems to have had his eye upon it when he said. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanses us from all sin." Then we are said to be redeemed also from this present evil world. And when the Lord said that he would put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel, you will perceive that the margin reads it otherwise. Our translators have sometimes given us a marginal reading in addition to the textual, because it was not possible for them by a translation, without an explanation, to give the full import of the original sentence; therefore, as these learned men could not do so, they have very kindly, and, as I think, very wisely, given us a marginal reading as well. So then it is said, "That you may know that the Lord does put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel;" the margin reads it, "That you may know that the Lord does put a redemption between the Egyptians and Israel." So that when it says the Lord has put a difference, the word "redemption" will explain what that difference is. I dare not trust myself in this part with any attempt to describe what the difference is; the difference is too great for language to describe. A redemption put between the two: the one is thus redeemed from the curse, the other is left under the curse; the one is thus redeemed from all his iniquities,

and the other is left under all his iniquities; the one is redeemed from this present evil world, and the other is left to make up his portion in this evil world; the one is redeemed from death, the other is left under the reign and power of death; the one is redeemed from all adversity, and the other left to everlasting anguish, everlasting tribulation. Now then, they that enter into this song of redemption, friends, they that enter into this new creature-ship scene, must thus appreciate what Jesus Christ has done, that his redemption does extend to every evil under which we are; and precious faith in the Lord brings us to see this, and to believe this. And notice here the eternity of this redemption; "he has obtained eternal redemption." Now in the old covenant, when the curse was removed, it might return again, and did return; when their iniquities were reformatively removed, they might return again, and they did return again; when their adversities were removed, they might return again, and they did return again; and when the plagues, and diseases, and death that cut them off were removed, they, might return again among the Jews in that covenant, that covenant being conditional, and they did return again. But here, in Christ Jesus, if you have laid hold of his eternal redemption, the curse from which you are delivered can never return again; the sins from which you are redeemed, and if you are a believer in him you are redeemed from all, can never return again; the adversities from which you are redeemed can never return again; the death from which you are redeemed can never return again; the tribulations, and diseases, and imprisonment, for we are spoken of as being in prison, can never return again; it is an eternal redemption. How sweet that scripture, when the Lord is pleased, at least, to make it so, that "the redeemed shall return, and shall come to Zion, and everlasting joy shall be unto them" Thus, then, here is new creature-ship. And if you see the infinite and eternal importance of this redemption, and its adaptation to you, you will view God through the medium of this redemption; then you will see that God, your Father, sent redemption; that Jesus Christ, by his precious blood; obtained redemption, that the Holy Spirit has revealed to you this eternal redemption, and that the gospel declares to you this eternal redemption, and so you will know what you are singing when you sing those words,

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Your flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

"This honor has all his saints." Again; this redemption not only reaches to all our necessities, not only is it in sweet accordance with the eternity of the love of God, the eternity and stability of that covenant of which the Savior is the Mediator, and in accordance with the stability of the sworn promise that is yea and amen; but, secondly, this redemption is, as you will see, by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And those that rightly see this redemption, I will tell you presently what they will do. I go now to the 40th Psalm, and I take the dear Savior to be the speaker in that Psalm, without at all denying that the words I am about to quote may be applicable to Christian experience, for taking the words in one sense does not imply that they may not also, in perfect accordance with that one sense, be taken in another; but this morning I will take the Savior as the speaker there. "I waited patiently for the Lord." Oh, how patiently did the Savior wait, all his days! Do you not, all of you, friends, think that the Savior had enough, from day to day, to try his patience; that he had enough from the mistakes of his own disciples, that he had enough from Satan, enough from a slandering and persecuting world, enough from men that were every day seeking to destroy him; think you not that he had enough to try his patience? And all our sins were

upon him, and our tremendous responsibilities upon him; yet all these could not awaken in him the least impatience; because in his pure nature there was not only no sin, but in that pure nature there was deity, there was omnipotence, there was infallibility. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." And now comes the resurrection of Christ; "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit." If your soul got into that pit it would never get out again; if your soul got into the miry clay of your own sins, you could never get out again. Jesus Christ did not go into the hell of the damned, Jesus Christ did not go into the pit of the lost, but he went into the pit of God's wrath; and is he not the speaker in the Psalm, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me"? "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit," there is his resurrection; "out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock," he dies no more, he stands eternally firm in the mediatorial triumphs that he has achieved; "and established my goings. And he has put a new song in my mouth," and that new song his people shall sing; the Savior has put old things away, and made all things new; "even praise unto our God now mark, "many shall see it, and fear." If ever you have rightly seen the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it will create a twofold fear in your mind; the one is, you will be afraid to be any longer an enemy to him, you will be afraid any longer to say a word against him, you will be afraid any longer to despise his people, you will be afraid any longer to despise his holy ways; that is one feeling that it will create, fear, they shall fear. And the second is that that reasoning of the apostle will have solemn weight with you, namely, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" So, you will be afraid to live any longer without God, without Christ, without mercy, and without salvation. "Many shall see it, and fear." And this is my object this morning, to point out what the dear Savior has done, that those of you that have never feared may begin to fear to live any longer in your present state; and that your fear may not stop there, but that you may go on to fear to live any longer without Christ and without God in the world. Mark the language: "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." That it is, "and shall trust in the Lord." Ah, blessed God, I trust in you; for though I am a sinner, there is redeeming blood, and by that redeeming blood forgiving mercy. I trust in you; for though I am unholy, yet that redeeming blood cleanses from all sin. I trust in you, for though unworthy, yet by that blood a sinner may have boldness of access to yourself. This is a new song. Ah, such a one said. this is something new; here is a redemption, here is an achievement of the dear Savior, here is a revelation of the great God I never saw before. Such an one will say, I do not wonder at ministers being so earnest, I rather wonder they are not more earnest; I do not wonder at the people being what I once, thought so enthusiastic; I do not wonder at the people combining, and consecrating so large a part of the property that Providence has favored them with to forward such a cause as this. Ah, such an one will say, What shall I do to worship such a God as this, to glorify such a God as this? This is a new song indeed; this is honor indeed. Here am I by the blood of the everlasting covenant brought up out of the pit wherein there is no water; here am I brought into the new heavens and into the new earth. Not only does it mean, then, redemption, and that rightly seen will create a godly fear, and turn us to the Lord, but it will enable us to glorify him. Now the language of the redeemed is very peculiar. There was in the 5th chapter of Revelation a book held up; that book is evidently the Old Testament Scriptures, and that book was sealed with seven seals. And so the Scriptures are sealed to every natural man; you that know not the Lord, the Holy Scriptures are sealed to you; you may hear the sound, and get a little theoretical acquaintance with what I have been speaking of this morning, but you cannot enter into this redemption, you cannot enter into this turning to the Lord, you cannot enter into the endearments of the Gospel; whereas those of you that are Christians, you do enter into it. Now then, when this book was held up, and the proclamation made, "Who is worthy" that is, *able*, as the Greek word there means, "to open the book, and to lose the

seven seals thereof?" Now do just listen to me for one moment. The man who shall be able to open the Old Testament Scriptures, and to lose the seals thereof, and to let sinners into the enjoyment of the same, he must be able to bring a righteousness that answers to the Old Testament, he must bring a sacrifice that answers to the Old Testament; he must be a man that has done the work which the Old Testament predicted. And there was not one found in heaven, nor on the earth, nor among the righteous dead under the earth; and John wept much. Ah, happy man, to weep over the concealment of eternal things; happy weeper, that are brought to weep over the concealment of the love of God from your eyes, to weep over the concealment of God's salvation from your heart, to weep over the concealment of God's mercy from you, and to tremble at the words, "They are hidden from mine eyes." And John wept much, he wept much. Oh, happy weeper! happy mourner! blessed are they that thus mourn, for they shall be comforted. So, it goes on, "Weep not;" weep not. You are weeping at the concealment of eternal things from your eyes, from your soul, from your heart. "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda has," by his triumphant death, met every prediction, given its eternal meaning to every testimony of the holy prophets; "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and to lose the seven seals thereof." He has conquered every foe, he will bring to light the deep mysteries of eternity, he will throw open the gates, the everlasting doors, the King of glory shall be seen, and your soul shall rush into glory's full possession, and that forever. See the effect this had. "You are," said those to whom this new song or this redemption was revealed, "You are worthy to take the book;" you are able, and therefore worthy, to take the Old Testament Scriptures. Ah, friends, when I come to preach, and Jesus Christ takes my text in hand, and me too, then I get on well; and when you come to hear the word of God, and Jesus Christ takes the word and takes you in hand both, and brings you to the word, and the word to you, then you get on well. It is when he expounds the Scriptures to us, whatever instrumentality he may employ, it is when he expounds the Scriptures to us that our hearts burn within us. Mark the reasons why he was worthy: "For you was slain, and has redeemed us to God by your blood." Just mark the two aspects of redemption; just now we showed that it reached to every evil, and wrought deliverance therefrom; and now we have another aspect, it not only reaches to every evil, and delivers us therefrom, but brings us to God. "You have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and have made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." "This honor, have all his saints." Thus, then, here we have this new song, this redemption, this death and resurrection of Christ, this revelation of eternal things. And there is one sacred feeling in the Christian which I must just notice before I go to the second part, and that is this, that Christians are particularly fond of the Holy Scriptures being opened up. A clear statement of God's truth demonstrated from God's word very often clears the visual ray, illumines the understanding, and the rays of such openings up sometimes dart light into the soul, turn the winter out, send Satan away, subdue troubles, arm the mind, and where there was darkness now is light. Ah, wondrous gospel! God is a God that shows us light; we may well rejoice in such light as this.

But, secondly, I will now notice *the joyful acceptance*. "Let them praise his name in the dance; let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp." Once more I must direct you to the 22nd verse of the 71st Psalm, and you will get there the musical instruments of that dispensation explained in their spiritual, mystical meaning. "I will also praise you with the psaltery, even your truth, O my God." So that David there makes the psaltery a figure of God's truth: and is it not very suited? "Let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp." Are not the truths of the gospel music to the soul? Do they not calm our breasts? Do they not often charm our souls? Yes, when

the Lord helps his ministers to play well upon the instrument of the gospel, as harpers harping with their harps, ah, sometimes the sweetness, the melody, the music, the blessedness of the things that are sounded forth, will make the believer forget his melancholy, forget his troubles, forget his cares, and he will say,

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In the believer’s ear!”

Here, then, this refers, as we shall presently show, to that joyful acceptance we have with God. “For the Lord takes pleasure in his people.” Now the world does not do that, and the people of God, though I am not much of an accuser of the people of God, would not accuse them at all, but we must be faithful, and so I must say that the people of God do not always take so much pleasure in each other’s welfare as could be desired. Well, friends, if there is great failure in this, and some of your mother’s children are angry with you, and the sun of reproach has looked upon you and made you rather black, never mind, the Lord takes pleasure in you, and so, if your brethren do not take pleasure in you, the Lord does, and if you do not take pleasure in any of your brethren, because they are angry with you, you may take pleasure in the Lord, for “the works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein; his work is honorable and glorious.” So “the Lord takes pleasure in his people.” There stands the Savior, and he says to the church, “How fair and how pleasant are you, O love, for delights!” There stands the soul, contemplates the majesty of the Savior, his countenance as Lebanon, quotes the same words, “How fair and how pleasant are you, O love, for delights!” But then it also says, “Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds.” I know Dr. Watts’s words, poetically speaking, are very nice, that:

“The saints should be joyful, even on a dying bed,
And like the souls in glory sing, for Christ will raise the dead.”

A good piece of poetry, and very excellent, but it is not the meaning of this scripture, because in the next verse it says, “and a two-edged sword in their hand.” Surely therefore, friends, the saints being joyful in glory cannot there mean eternal glory, and resting upon their beds cannot there mean heaven, because in the next verse there is a two-edged sword for them. Surely, we shall never learn war in heaven; there is quite enough of that here: “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;” no, “Neither adversary nor evil occurrent.” Now the saints, while on earth, then, are to be joyful in glory. What glory? Why, God himself, God himself; he is your glory, and the lifter up of your head. “And let them sing aloud upon their beds.” As Dr. Kitto well observes, we are often misled in our translation by the word “beds” it there means “place of living” or “banqueting houses,” and it is a kind of banqueting-house idea, “He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.” And so, God becomes our glory, and here is our joyful acceptance; that is the idea, acceptance in the banqueting house, accepted in Christ Jesus. If we were better versed, some of us, in this acceptance with God we should not, I was going to say, stand at such a distance from him as we do. Now let us see if I can encourage some poor, heavy-hearted, fearful one by pointing out this acceptance, where “he will beautify the meek with salvation.” “This honor has all his saints.” There was one of old that in riotous living spent all his loseables, all his moveables, all his perishables, got rid of the whole. What a mercy there were some immoveables the poor prodigal could not touch, that there were some unlosable things that he could not touch, that there were some unlosable things that he could

not lose, that were never trusted in his hands. He began to be in want, and he went and joined some false church, and they sent him to feed, you know what, and he desired to fill his belly with their false doctrines, called husks, but no man gave unto him. What am I to do? "Why, I will arise, and go to my father" God is my Father in creation, who knows but it may prove by-and-bye that he is also my Father in salvation? So "I will arise, and go to my father, and I will say, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight." Against heaven, against heaven! what, have you been angry with heaven? Yes, I have, I have been angry with religion, I have been angry with the people, I have been angry with the place, and my language has been, "Away with him, away with him!" I have sinned against heaven, and against God himself. I have been an enemy of the whole; "and am no more worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants." Now comes the joyful acceptance. "His father saw him", no one understood the case so well as the father, no, "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him," and brought him into the house. So, it is now, the Lord takes the soul into this joyful acceptance with him. And he said to his servant, "Bring forth the best robe." He is as bad in his own unrighteousness as a man can be, and I will make him as righteous as the best robe can make him, and put the ring of adoption upon his finger, and let him be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. "Bring here the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." Well, what do you think the reasons are that the father assigns why they should thus be merry? I will try and present the idea to you; it is infinitely delightful. Did he say, "Let us eat, and be merry, for this my son was guilty, but I have pardoned him? This my son has lost all the loseables, destroyed all the moveables, run through all the perishables, and is the vilest wretch that ever existed, but I have received him? This my son, if he could have made himself at home among swine, he would never have come to me; he has come to me as the very last resource; he would have gone almost anywhere. I have not to thank him for coming; necessity drove him, and then he heard of the provision of my house, and was drawn?" Did the father so speak? If he had, every sentence would have conveyed the idea of reproach. Why, the poor prodigal, if the father had named his sin, would have hung his head down; if the father had named his bad conduct, his heart would have sunk within him. Ah, he would have said, My father has not forgotten it then; I was in hopes that he had not only forgiven, but forgotten; I was in hopes his language would have been, "I even I, am he that blots out your transgressions, and will not remember your sins." Nor would the father. "This my son was dead;" I am angry, not with him, but with the sin and with the devil that killed him: "this my son was lost, and is found;" I am angry, not with him, but with that old serpent that led him into the regions of the lost; but he is found, to be lost no more; alive, to die no more. Nor could the Pharisaic observation of the elder brother at all move the father: "It was suitable that we should make merry, and be glad; for this your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." "And," it says, "they began to be merry;" but heaven knows when they left off; I don't; not a word said about leaving off. That is a beautiful clause, "They began to be merry." Now this was the prodigal; the prodigal was beautified with salvation, the prodigal was joyfully received, the prodigal was joyfully treated; and so, our God rejoices infinitely in the salvation of sinners, and "this honor," not only the honor of entering in vitally to the song of eternal redemption, but this honor of joyful acceptance with God, "have all his saints."

I must hasten to notice the third part; *universal dominion*. So, I am getting you along, you see; first I get you into redemption; then I get you into joyful acceptance, and now I am going to enthrone you; I am going now to make you kings, and to show that your dominion is universal. "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth;" the high praises; the lofty and eternal transactions of an

everlasting covenant; these are “Glory to God in the highest!” these are the highest, most sublime, most intense, most extensive, and most durable of all praises, for they are those praises that shall burn like immortal fire in the souls of the saints of God encircling Jehovah’s throne forever, forever, and forever. “And a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints.” Now I will take the kings firsthand if we can get hold of them, we shall manage the rest very well; we shall not be so at a loss for the understrappers if we get hold of the kings first. “To bind their kings with chains.” Now this has been done, I am aware, by the Old Testament saints literally, as you see in the history of the Jews; but I shall take this binding the kings with chains in a way that will have a tendency to shame some of you out of your unbelief and out of your fears, myself among the rest. The Old Testament saints did sometimes, by prayer to God, and by the honor the Lord put upon them, bind kings to do them good. Daniel bound four kings, one after the other. Here is Nebuchadnezzar, he has a dream; and we are sure that the Babylonians would have been glad to sweep Daniel and all the Israelites from the face of the earth. Here is this mighty king, we see what he was by his casting the three into the fiery furnace. A decree comes out presently, which decree went out against Daniel. It drove Daniel to prayer, and his companions. Daniel, rapt in the revelations of an eternal kingdom, surpassing, succeeding, demolishing, and bringing to nothing, all other kingdoms, while that kingdom should stand to eternity, goes before the king, with his heart full, and his mind full, his eyes red with heavenly wine, his countenance like the countenance of an angel; and with what self-possession, and with what order, does Daniel go through the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Ah, we must not touch this man. Nebuchadnezzar was bound to make Daniel the greatest man, next to himself, in the kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar was bound to give into Daniel’s hands all the power that should be for the good of Israel, and for the glory of God. Thus, he bound him with this mystic chain. The second king he bound was Belshazzar; he bound Belshazzar to bow before him, and acknowledge that none but Daniel could read the mystic handwriting. He did read it; the king’s knees smote together; Daniel dealt out those rebukes that the king deserved; here again he bound this king with chains. Third, Daniel binds by prayer, by the excellency of that grace that he possessed, bound Darius to him, and Darius was on his side, and though Darius had not power to prevent his going into the lions’ den, Darius was bound to remain awake all night, and to go early in the morning; ah, see the monarch; Ah, I hope Daniel is not hurt; I hope Daniel is not dead; I hope Daniel is not torn to pieces; I hope he is well. “Daniel, Daniel, is your God, whom you serve, able to deliver you?” “Yes, yes; he has sent his angel, shut the lions’ mouths; no harm in come unto me.” Out came Daniel; down went the devil; to destruction went Daniel’s foes. “To bind their kings with chains.”