

Sermon for New Year's-Day

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that through Jesus Christ's new covenant, believers are transformed into new creations, leaving behind the old self and embracing a life of faith, grace, and sonship with God.

Scripture: Revelation 21:5, Isaiah 65:17, Romans 3:20, Romans 5:12, Romans 8:15, Galatians 3:24, Romans 5:19, Romans 3:28

Topics: "New Creation", "New Covenant", "Justification by Faith"

Description

In this devotional sermon for New Year's Day, C.H. Spurgeon explores the profound transformation that Jesus Christ brings through the new covenant. He contrasts the old covenant of law and condemnation with the new covenant of grace and justification by faith. Spurgeon encourages believers to embrace their new identity as sons of God, living a renewed life empowered by the Holy Spirit. This sermon offers hope and assurance for those entering a new year, reminding them that in Christ, all things are made new.

Transcript

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."■ Revelation 21:5.

HOW PLEASED WE ARE with that which is new! Our children's eyes sparkle when we talk of giving them a toy or a book which is called new; for our short-lived human nature loves that which has lately come, and is therefore like our own fleeting selves. In this respect, we are all children, for we eagerly demand the news of the day, and are all too apt to rush after the "many inventions" of the hour. The Athenians, who spent their time in telling and hearing some new thing, were by no means singular persons: novelty still fascinates the crowd. As the world's poet says■

"All with one consent praise new-born gawds."

I should not wonder, therefore, if the mere words of my text should sound like a pleasant song in your ears; but I am thankful that their deeper meaning is even more joyful. The newness which Jesus brings is bright, clear, heavenly, enduring. We are at this moment specially ready for a new year. The most of men have grown weary with the old cry of depression of trade and hard times; we are glad to escape from what has been to many a twelve-months of great trial. The last year had become wheezy, croaking, and decrepit, in its old age; and we lay it asleep with a psalm of judgment and mercy. We hope that this newborn year will not be worse than its predecessor, and we pray that it may be a great deal better. At any rate, it is new, and we are encouraged to couple with it the idea of happiness, as we say one to another, "I

wish you a happy New Year."

"Ring out the old, ring in the new; Ring, happy bells, across the snow; The year is going, let him go; Ring out the false, ring in the true."

We ought not, as men in Christ Jesus, to be carried away by a childish love of novelty, for we worship a God who is ever the same, and of whose years there is no end. In some matters "the old is better." There are certain things which are already so truly new, that to change them for anything else would be to lose old gold for new dross. The old, old gospel is the newest thing in the world; in its very essence it is for ever good news. In the things of God the old is ever new, and if any man brings forward that which seems to be new doctrine and new truth, it is soon perceived that the new dogma is only worn-out heresy dexterously repaired, and the discovery in theology is the digging up of a carcase of error which had better have been left to rot in oblivion. In the great matter of truth and godliness, we may safely say, "There is nothing new under the sun."

Yet, as I have already said, there has been so much evil about ourselves and our old nature, so much sin about our life and the old past, so much mischief about our surroundings and the old temptations, that we are not distressed by the belief that old things are passing away. Hope springs up at the first sound of such words as these from the lips of our risen and reigning Lord: "Behold, I make all things new." It is fit that things so outworn and defiled should be laid aside, and better things fill their places.

This is the first day of a new year, and therefore a solemnly joyous day. Though there is no real difference between it and any other day, yet in our mind and thought it is a marked period, which we regard as one of the milestones set up on the highway of our life. It is only in imagination that there is any close of one year and beginning of another; and yet it has most fitly all the force of a great fact. When men "cross the line," they find no visible mark: the sea bears no trace of an equatorial belt; and yet mariners know whereabouts they are, and they take notice thereof, so that a man can hardly cross the line for the first time without remembering it to the day of his death. We are crossing the line now. We have sailed into the year of grace 1885; therefore, let us keep a feast unto the Lord. If Jesus has not made us new already, let the new year cause us to think about the great and needful change of conversion; and if our Lord has begun to make us new, and we have somewhat entered into the new world wherein dwelleth righteousness, let us be persuaded by the season to press forward into the center of his new creation, that we may feel to the full all the power of his grace.

The words he speaks to us to-night are truly divine. Listen, ■ "Behold, I make." Who is the great I? Who but the eternal Son of God? "Behold, I make." Who can make but God, the Maker of heaven and earth? It is his high prerogative to make and to destroy. "Behold, I make all things." What a range of creating power is here! Nothing stands outside of that all-surrounding circle. "Behold, I make all things new." What a splendor of almighty goodness shines out upon our souls! Lord, let us enter into this new universe of thine. Let us be new-created with the "all things." In us also may men behold the marvels of thy renewing love.

Let us now, at the portal of the new year, sing a hymn to Jesus, as we hear these encouraging words which he speaks from his throne. O Lord, we would rejoice and be glad for ever in that which thou dost create. The former troubles are forgotten, and are hid from our eyes because of thine ancient promise, ■ "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isaiah 65:17).

I am going to talk to-night for a little upon the great transformation spoken of in the text, "I make all things new;" and then upon the earnest call in the text to consider that transformation: "He that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold': attend, consider, look to it!" "Behold, I make all things new." Oh for a bedewing of the Holy Spirit while entering upon this theme! I would that our fleece might now be so wet as never to become dry throughout the whole year. Oh for a horn of oil to be poured on the head of the young year, anointing it for the constant service of the Lord!

I. Briefly, then, here is one of the grandest truths that ever fell even from the lips of Jesus:■"Behold, I make all things new." Let us gaze upon THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION.

This renewing work has been in our Lord's hands from of old. We were under the old covenant, and our first father and federal head, Adam, had broken that covenant, and we were ruined by his fatal breach. The substance of the old covenant was on this wise,■"If thou wilt keep my command thou shalt live, and thy posterity shall live; but if thou shalt eat of the tree which I have forbidden thee, dying, thou shalt die, and all thy posterity in thee." This is where we were found, broken in pieces, sore wounded, and even slain by the tremendous fall which destroyed both our Paradise and ourselves. We died in Adam as to spiritual life, and our death revealed itself in an inward tendency to evil which reigned in our members. We were like Ezekiel's deserted infant unswaddled and unwashed, left in our pollution to die; but the Son of God passed by and saw us in the greatness of our ruin. In his wondrous love our Lord Jesus put us under a new covenant, a covenant of which he became the second Adam, a covenant which ran on this wise,■"If thou shalt render perfect obedience and vindicate my justice, then those who are in thee shall not perish, but they shall live because thou livest." Now, our Lord Jesus, our Surety and Covenant Head, has fulfilled his portion of the covenant engagement, and the compact stands as a bond of pure promise without condition or risk. Those who are participants in that covenant cannot invalidate it, for it never did depend upon them, but only upon him who was and is their federal head and representative before God. Of Jesus the demand was made and he met it. By him man's side of the covenant was undertaken and fulfilled, and now no condition remains; it is solely made up of promises which are unconditional and sure to all the seed. To-day believers are not under the covenant of "If thou doest this thou shalt live," but under that new covenant which says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." It is not now "Do and live," but "Live and do;" we think not of merit and reward, but of free grace producing holy practice as the result of gratitude. What law could not do, grace has accomplished.

We ought never to forget this bottom of everything, this making of all things new by the fashioning of a new covenant, so that we have come out from under the bondage of the law and the ruin of the fall, and we have entered upon the liberty of Christ, into acceptance with God, and into the boundless joy of being saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, so that we "shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." You young people, as soon as ever you know the Lord, I exhort you to study well that word "covenant." It is a key-word opening the treasures of revelation. He that rightly understands the difference between the two covenants has the foundation of sound theology laid in his mind. This is the clue of many a maze, the open sesame of many a mystery. "I make all things new," begins with the bringing in of a better hope by virtue of a better covenant.

The foundation being made new, the Lord Jesus Christ has set before us a new way of life, which grows out of that covenant. The old way of life was, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." There they are, perfect, and holy, and just, and good; but, alas, dear friends, you and I have broken the commandments. We dare not say that we have kept the ten commands from our youth up; on the contrary, we are compelled by our consciences to confess that in spirit and in heart, if not in act, we have

continually broken the law of God; and we are therefore under sin and condemnation, and there is no hope for us by the works of the law. For this reason the gospel sets before us another way, and says, "It is of faith, that it might be by grace." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Hence we read of being "justified by faith," and being made acceptable to God by faith. To be "justified" means being made really just: though we were guilty in ourselves we are regarded as just by virtue of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. Thus we fell into condemnation through another, and we rise into justification through another. It is written, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities"; and this scripture is fulfilled in all those who believe in the Lord Jesus unto eternal life. Our path to eternal glory is the road of faith, ■ "The just shall live by faith." We are "accepted in the Beloved" when we believe in him whom God has set forth to be our righteousness. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight"; but we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

What a blessing it is for you and for me that Jesus has made all things new in that respect! I am glad that I have not to stand here and say, "My dear hearers, do this and do that, and you will be saved": because you would not do as you were commanded; for your nature is weak and wicked. But I have to bid you ■

"Lay your deadly doing down, down at Jesus' feet; Stand in him, in him alone, gloriously complete."

I trust you will accept this most gracious and suitable way of salvation. It is most glorious to God and safe to you: do not neglect so great salvation. After you have believed unto life you will go and do all manner of holy deeds as the result of your new life; but do not attempt them with the view of earning life. Prompted no longer by the servile and selfish motive of saving yourself, but by gratitude for the fact that you are saved, you will rise to virtue and true holiness. Faith has brought us into the possession of an indefeasible salvation; and now for the love we bear our Savior, we must obey him and become "zealous for good works."

By grace every believer is brought into a new relationship with God. Let us rejoice in this: "Thou art no more a servant but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Oh you who are now children, you were servants a little while ago! Some of you, my hearers, are servants now, and as servants I would bid you expect your wages. Alas, your service has been no service, but a rebellion; and if you get no more wages than you deserve you will be cast away for ever. You ought to be thankful to God that he has not yet recompensed you ■ that he has not dealt with you after your sins, nor rewarded you according to your iniquities. Do you not also know, you servants, what is likely to happen to you as servants? What do you yourself do with a bad servant? You say to him, "There are your wages: go." "A servant abideth not in the house for ever." You, too, will be driven out of your religious profession and your period of probation, and where will you go? The wilderness of destruction lies before you. Oh that you may not be left to wander with Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman!

"Behold, I make all things new," says Jesus, and then he makes his people into sons. When we are made sons do we work for wages? We have no desire for any present payment, for our Father says to us, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine"; and, moreover, we have the inheritance in reversion, entailed by the covenant. We cannot demand the servile wage because we have already all that our Father possesses. He has given us himself and his all-sufficiency for our everlasting portion; what more can we desire? He will never drive us from his house. Never has our great Father disowned one of his sons. It cannot be; his loving heart is too much bound up in his own adopted ones. That near and dear relationship which is manifested in adoption and regeneration, binds the child of God to the great Father's

heart in such a way that he will never cast him off, nor suffer him to perish. I rejoice in the fact that we are no longer bond-slaves but sons. "Behold," says Christ, "I make all things new."

There has also been wrought in us by the work of the Holy Spirit a new life, with all the new feelings, and new desires, and new works which go therewith. The tree is made new, and the fruits are new in consequence. That same Spirit of God who taught us that we were ruined in our old estate, led us gently by the hand till we came to the New Covenant promise and looked to Jesus, and saw in him the full atonement for sin. Happy discovery for us; it was the kindling of new life in us. From the moment that we trusted in Jesus, a new life darted into our spirit. I am not going to say which is first, the new birth, or faith, or repentance. Nobody can tell which spoke of a wheel moves first; it moves as a whole. The moment the divine life comes into the heart we believe: the moment we believe the eternal life is there. We repent because we believe, and believe while we repent. The life that we live in the flesh is no longer according to the lusts of the world, but we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Our spiritual life is a new-born thing, the creation of the Spirit of life. We have, of course, that natural life which is sustained by food, and evidenced by our breath; but there is another life within which is not seen of men, nor fed by the provisions of earth. We are conscious of having been quickened, for we were dead once, and we know it; but now we have passed from death into life, and we know it quite as certainly. A new and higher motive sways us now; for we seek not self but God. Another hand grasps the tiller and steers our ship in a new course. New desires are felt to which we were strangers in our former state. New fears are mighty within us, ■ holy fears which once we should have ridiculed. New hopes are in us, bright and sure, such as we did not even desire to know when we lived a mere carnal life. We are not what we were: we are new, and have begun a new career. We are not what we shall be, but assuredly we are not what we used to be. As for myself, my consciousness of being a new man in Christ Jesus is often as sharp and crisp as my consciousness of being in existence. I know I am not only and solely what I was by my first birth; I feel within myself another life ■ a second and a higher vitality which has often to contend with my lower self, and by that very contention makes me conscious of its existence. This new principle is, from day to day, gathering strength, and winning the victory. It has its hand upon the throat of the old sinful nature, and it shall eventually trample it like dust beneath its feet. I feel this within me: do not you? [A loud voice, "Ay! Ay!"] Since you feel this, I know you can say to-night that Jesus Christ, who sits on the throne, makes all things new. Blessed be his name. [Several voices, "Amen."] It needed the Lord himself to make such as we are new. None but a Savior on the throne could accomplish it; and therefore let him have the glory of it.

I believe that Jesus Christ has in some of you not only made you new, but made everything new to you. "Ah," said one, when she was converted, "either the world is greatly altered, or else I am." Why, either you and I are turned upside down in nature, or the world is. We used to think it a wise world once, but how foolish we think it now! We used to think it a brave gay world that showed us real happiness, but we are no longer deceived, we have seen Madame Bubble's painted face in its true deformity. "The world is crucified unto me," said Paul; and many of you can say the same. It is like a gibbeted criminal hung up to die. Meanwhile, there is no love lost, for the world thinks much the same of us, and therein we can sympathize with Paul when he said, "I am crucified unto the world." What a transformation grace makes in all things within our little world! In our heart there is a new heaven and a new earth. What a change in our joys! Ah, we blush to think what our joys used to be; but they are heavenly now. We are equally ashamed of our hates and our prejudices: but these have vanished once for all. Why, now we love the very things we once despised, and our heart flies as with wings after that which once it detested. What a different Bible we have now! Blessed book; it is just the same, but oh, how differently do we read it. The mercy-seat, what a

different place it is now! Our wretched, formal prayers, if we did offer them■what a mockery they were! But now we draw near to God and speak with our Father with delight. We have access to him by the new and living way. The house of God, how different it is from what it used to be! We love to be found within its walls, and we feel delighted to join in the praises of the Lord. I do not know that I admire brethren for calling out in the service as our friends did just now; but I certainly do not blame them. A person shook hands with me one day this week who does not often hear me preach, and he expressed to me his unbounded delight in listening to the doctrine of the grace of God, and he added, "Surely your people must be made of stone." "Why?" said I. "Why!" he replied, "if they were not they would all get up and shout 'Hallelujah' when you are preaching such a glorious gospel. I wanted to shout badly on Sunday morning; but as everybody else was quiet, I held my tongue." For which I thought he was a wise man: but yet I do not wonder if men who have tasted of the grace of God, and feel that the Lord has done great things for them, whereof they are glad, do feel like crying out for joy. Let us have a little indulgence to-night. Now, you that feel that you must cry aloud for joy, join with me and cry "Hallelujah" [A great number of voices cried, "Hallelujah!"] Hallelujah, glory be to our Redeemer's name. Why should we not lift up our voices in his praise? We will. He has put a new song into our mouths, and we must sing it. The mountains and the hills break forth before us into singing, and we cannot be dumb. Praise is our ever new delight; let us baptize the new year into a sea of it. In praise we will vie with angels and archangels, for they are not so indebted to grace as we are.

"Never did angels taste above Redeeming grace and dying love."

But we have tasted these precious things, and unto God we will lift up our loudest song for ever and for ever.

The process which we have roughly described as taking place in ourselves is in other forms going on in the world. The whole creation is travailing, all time is groaning, providence is working, grace is striving, and all for one end,■the bringing forth of the new and better age. It is coming. It is coming. Not in vain did John write, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." What a prospect does all this open up to the believer! Our future is glorious; let not our present be gloomy.

II. But now, in the text there is AN EARNEST CALL for us to consider this work of our Lord. He that sitteth on the throne saith, "Behold, I make all things new." Why should he call upon us to behold it? All his works deserve study: "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Whatsoever the Lord doeth is full of wisdom, and the wise will search into it. But when the Lord himself sets up a light, and calls us to pause, and look, we cannot help beholding.

I think that the Lord Jesus Christ especially calls us to consider this, that we may, according to our condition, derive profit from it.

First, if the Lord Jesus makes all things new, then a new birth is possible to you, dear friend, though you have come here to-night in a wrong state of heart, with your sins upon you, binding you fast. There is enough of light in your soul for you to know that you are in darkness; and you are saying to yourself, "Oh, that I could reach to better things! I hear how these people of God cry 'Hallelujah!' at what Christ has done for them. Can he do the same for me?" Listen! He that sitteth on the throne says in infinite condescension to you upon the dunghill, "Behold, I make all things new." There is nothing so old that he cannot make it new—nothing so fixed and habitual that he cannot change it. Dost thou not know, dear heart, that the Spirit of God has regenerated men and women quite as far gone as thou art? They have been as deeply sunken in sin, and as hardened by habit as ever thou canst be, and they thought themselves given up to despair, as thou thinkest thyself to be; yet the Spirit of God carried out the will of the Lord Christ, and made them new. Why should he not make thee new? Let every thief know that the dying thief entered heaven by faith in Jesus. Let every one that has been a great transgressor remember how Manasseh received a new heart, and repented of his evil deeds. Let every one who has left the paths of purity remember how the woman that was a sinner loved much, because much had been forgiven her. I cannot doubt of the possibility of your salvation, my dear friend, whenever I think of my own. A more determined, obstinate rebel than I could scarce have been. Child as I was, and under holy restraint as I was, so as to be kept from gross outward sin, I had a powerful inner nature which would not brook control. I strove hard and kicked against the pricks. I labored to win heaven by self-righteousness, and this is as real a rebellion as open sin. But, oh, the grace of God, how it can tame us! How it can turn us! With no bit or bridle, but with a blessed suavity of tenderness, it turns us according to its pleasure. O anxious one, it can turn you! I want, then, to drop into your ear—and may the Spirit of God drop into your heart—this word, you may be born again. The Lord can work a radical change in you. He that sitteth on the throne can do for you what you cannot do for yourself; and, as he made you once, and you became marred by sin, he can new make you; for he saith. "Behold, I make all things new."

Furthermore, you will say to me, "I desire to lead a new life." To do this you must be new yourself; for as the man is, so his life will be. If you leave the fountain foul the streams cannot be pure. Renewal must begin with the heart. Dear friend, the Lord Jesus Christ is able to make your life entirely new. We have seen many transformed into new parents and new children. Friends have said in wonder, "What a change in John! What an alteration in Ellen!" We have seen men become new husbands, and women become new wives. They are the same persons, and yet not the same. Grace works a very deep, striking, and lasting change. Ask those that have had to live with converted people whether the transformation has not been marvellous. Christ makes new servants, new masters, new friends, new brothers, new sisters. The Lord can so change us that we shall scarcely know ourselves: I mean he can thus change you who now despair of yourselves. O dear hearts, there is no absolute necessity that you should always go downward in evil till you descend to hell. There is a hand that can give you a gravitation in the opposite direction. It would be a wonderful thing if Niagara when it is in its full descent should be made to leap upwards, and the St. Lawrence and the sea should begin to climb backward to the lakes. Yet God could do even that; and so he can reverse the course of your fallen nature, and make you act as a new man. He can stay the tide of your raging passion; he can make you, who were like a devil, become as an angel of God; for thus he speaks from the throne of his eternal majesty, "Behold, I make all things new." Come and lay yourself down at his feet, and ask him to make you new; I beseech you, do this at once!

"Well, I am going to mend myself," says one: "I have taken the pledge, and I am going to be honest, and chaste, and religious." This is commendable resolving, but what will come of it? You will break your resolutions, and be nothing bettered by your attempts at reform. I expect that if you go into the business of

mending yourself, you will be like the man who had an old gun, and took it to the gunsmith, and the gunsmith said, "Well, this would make a very good gun if it had a new stock, and a new lock, and a new barrel." So you would make a very good man by mending, if you had a new heart, and new life, and were made new all over, so that there was not a bit of the old stuff left. It will be easier, a great deal, depend upon it, even for God to make you new, than to mend you; for the fact is that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and is not reconciled to God, neither, indeed, can be; so that mending will not answer; you must be made anew. "Ye must be born again." What is wanted is that you should be made a new creature in Christ Jesus. You must be dead and buried with Christ, and risen again in him; and then all will be well, for he will have made all things new. I pray God to bless these feeble words of mine for the helping of some of his chosen out of the darkness of their fears.

But now, beloved, farther than this. There are children of God who need this text, "Behold, I make all things new," whose sigh is that they so soon grow dull and weary in the ways of God, and therefore they need daily renewing. A brother said to me some time ago, "Dear sir, I frequently grow very sleepy in my walk with God. I seem to lose the freshness of it; and especially by about Saturday I get I hardly know where; but," he added, "as for you, whenever I hear you, you seem to be all alive and full of fresh energy." "Ah, my dear brother," I said, "that is because you do not know much about me." That was all I was able to say just then. I thank God for keeping me near himself; but I am as weak, and stale, and unprofitable as any of you. I say this with very great shame■shame for myself, and shame for the brother who led me to make the confession. We are both wrong. With all our fresh springs in God, we ought to be always full of new life. Our love to Christ ought to be every minute as if it were new-born. Our zeal for God ought to be as fresh as if we had just begun to delight in him. "Ay, but it is not," says one; and I am sorry I cannot contradict him. After a few months a vigorous young Christian will begin to cool down; and those who have been long in the ways of God find that final perseverance must be a miracle if ever it is to be accomplished, for naturally they tire and faint.

Well, now, dear friends, why do you and I ever get stale and flat? Why do we sing,

"Dear Lord, and shall we ever live At this poor dying rate?"

Why do we have to cry■

"In vain we tune our formal songs, In vain we strive to rise; Hosannas languish on our tongues, And our devotion dies"?

Why, it is because we get away from him who says, "Behold, I make all things new." The straight way to a perpetual newness and freshness of holy youth is to go to Christ again, just as we did at the first.

A better thing still is never to leave him, but to stand for ever at the cross-foot delighting yourself in his all-sufficient sacrifice. They that are full of the joy of the Lord never find life grow weary. They that walk in the light of his countenance can say of the Lord Jesus, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth"; and that dew falls upon those who dwell with him. Oh, I am sure that if we kept up perpetual communion with him, we should keep up a perpetual stream of delights.

"Immortal joys come streaming down, Joys, like his griefs, immense, unknown;"

but these joys only come from him. We shall be young if we keep with the ever young and fresh Beloved, whose locks are bushy and black as a raven. He saith, and he performs the saying, "Behold, I make all

things new."

He can make that next sermon of yours, my dear brother minister, quite new and interesting. He can make that prayer-meeting no longer a dreary affair, but quite a new thing to you and all the people. My dear sister, next time you go to your class, you may feel as if you had only just begun teaching. You will not be at all tired of your godly work, but love it better than ever. And you, my dear brother, at the corner of the street where you are often interrupted, perhaps, with foul language, you will feel that you are pleased with your position of self-denial. Getting near to Christ, you will partake in his joy, and that joy shall be your strength, your freshness, the newness of your life. God grant us to drink of the eternal founts, that we may for ever overflow.

And, further, dear friends, there may be some dear child of God here who is conscious that he lives on a very low platform of spiritual life, and he knows that the Lord can raise him to a new condition. Numbers of Christians seem to live in the marshes always. If you go through the valleys of Switzerland, you will find yourself get feverish and heavy in spirit, and you will see many idiots, persons with the goitre, and people greatly afflicted. Climb the sides of the hills, ascend into the Alps, and you will not meet with that kind of thing in the pure fresh air. Many Christians are of the sickly-valley breed. Oh that they could get up to the high mountains, and be strong!

I want to say to such, if you have been all your lifetime in bondage, you need not remain there any longer; for there is in Jesus the power to make all things new, and to lift you into new delights. It will seem to be a dead lift to you; but it is within the power of that pierced hand to lift you right out of doubt, and fear, and despondency, and spiritual lethargy, and weakness, and just to make you now, from this day forward, "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

Now breathe a silent prayer, dear brother, dear sister, to him who makes all things new. "Lord, make thy poor, spiritually sick child to be strong in spiritual health." Oh, what a blessing it would be for some workers if God would make them strong! All the church would be the better because of the way in which the Lord would help them to do their work. Why should some of you be living at a penny a day and starving yourselves, when your Father would give you to live like princes of the blood royal if you would but trust him? I am persuaded that the most of us are beggars when we might be millionaires in spiritual things. And here is our strength for rising to a nobler state of mind, "Behold I make all things new."

Another application of this truth will be this: "Oh," says one, "I do not know what to make of myself. I have had a weary time of late. Everything seems to have gone wrong with me. My family cause me great anxiety. My business is a thorny maze. My own health is precarious. I dread this year. In fact, I dread everything." We will not go on with that lamentation, but we will hear the cheering word, ■ "Behold, I make all things new." The Lord, in answer to believing prayer, and especially in answer to a full resignation to his will is able to make all providential surroundings new for you. I have known the Lord on a sudden to turn darkness into light, and take away the sackcloth and the ashes from his dear children, for "he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Sometimes all this worry is mere discontent; and when the child of God gets right himself these imaginary troubles vanish like the mist of the morning; but when they are real troubles, God can as easily change your condition, dear child of God, as he can turn his hand. He can make your harsh and ungodly husband to become gentle and gracious. He can bring your children to bow at the family altar, and to rejoice with you in Christ. He can cause your business to prosper; or, if he does not do that, he can strengthen your back to bear the burden of your daily cross. Oh, it is wonderful how different a thing becomes when it is taken to God. But you want to make it all new yourself; and you

fret and you worry, and you tease, and you trouble, and you make a burden of yourself. Why not leave that off, and in humble prayer take the matter to the Lord, and say, "Lord, appear for me, for thou hast said, 'I make all things new.' Make my circumstances new"? He is certainly able to turn your captivity as he turns the sun when it has reached the southern tropic.

Come, there is one more application, and that is that the Lord can convert those dear friends about whose souls you have been so anxious. The Lord who makes all things new can hear your prayers. One of the first prayers that I heard to-night in the prayer-meeting was by a dear brother that God would save his relatives. Then another with great tenderness prayed for his children. I knew it came from an aching heart. Some of you have heart-breakers at home: the Lord break their hearts. You have grievous trouble because you hear the dearest that you have blaspheming the God you love. You know that they are Sabbath-breakers, and utterly godless, and you tremble for their eternal fate. Certain persons attend this Tabernacle■I do not see them to-night■but I can say of them that I never enter this pulpit without looking to their pews to see whether they are there, and breathing my heart to God for them. I forget a great many of you who are saved; but I always pray for them. And they will be brought in, I feel assured; but, oh, that it may be this year! I liked what a brother said at the church-meeting on Monday night, when his brother was introduced to the church. (Ah, there he sits.) I asked about his brother's conversion, and I said, "I suppose you were surprised to see him converted." He said, "I should have been very much surprised if he had not been." "But why, my dear brother?" I said. "Because I asked the Lord to convert him, and I kept on praying that he might be converted; and I should have been very much surprised if he had not been." That is the right sort of faith. I should be very much surprised if some of you that come here, time after time, are not converted. You shall be: blessed be God. We will give him no rest until he hears us. But come! Are we to be praying for you, and you not praying for yourselves? Do you not agree with our prayers? Oh, I trust you may. But, even if you do not, we shall pray for you; and we were sure that you opposed our intercessions, and were even angry with them, we should pray all the more, for we mean to have you won for Jesus, by the grace of God, and you may as well come soon as late. We are bound to have you in the church confessing your faith in Jesus. We will never let you go, neither will we cease from our importunate prayers until we get an answer from the throne, and see you saved. Oh that you would yield on this first night of the year to him who can make new creatures of you. God grant you may!

The Lord answer our prayer now, for Jesus' sake, for we seek the salvation of every hearer and every reader of this sermon. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON■Psalm 103.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK■183, 1,035, 208.

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