

A Child Is in the Well!

by James Smith

The speaker reflects on a childhood experience of being rescued from a well and uses it as an opportunity to express gratitude and dedicate his life to God's glory and praise.

Scripture: Psalm 34:17, Psalm 116:6, Proverbs 3:5, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21

Topics: "Divine Providence", "Surrendered Life"

Description

James Smith preaches about the miraculous rescue of a child from a well, emphasizing the divine providence and the chain of events orchestrated by God to save a life. He reflects on his own near-death experience as a child and how it led him to dedicate his life to God's glory and service. Smith urges believers to live a life fully surrendered to God, seeking to magnify Christ in all they do, and to find true life in having Christ formed in their hearts and being used for His kingdom.

Transcript

My brother sometimes sends me a subject for my pen , and a letter just received from him contains the following account:

"A child is in the well! A child is in the well! " It is now more than fifty years since I heard that cry. It was a terrible scream, and it is as fresh in my memory, as when it was first uttered by that affrighted woman. A boy had been sent by his mother to the well to draw water, and had taken his little brother with him, and while he was engaged in drawing it, the child unperceived by him -- was looking down into the well, and fell in! The wonder was that he was not killed in the descent, by striking against the large iron bucket. The excitement was great. The neighborhood was aroused, and all were filled with alarm, as the well was unusually deep. But it happened that a young woman came for water at the very moment, and in her fright she dashed her pitcher to pieces, and screamed out, "A child is in the well! A CHILD IS IN THE WELL!"

This piercing cry reached the ear, and entered the heart of a laboring man, who was at his dinner nearby. He flew to the rescue, and without stopping to consider his danger -- descended by the chain, just in time to catch the child, as it was sinking under the water for the third time!

Now all were at work to get the man and the child up in safety, ropes and ladders were procured, and success crowned the efforts of the kind-hearted neighbors. The child was put into the arms of its distracted mother, and the poor man was praised for his kindness and courage.

But who shall say how much depended upon that cry -- that tearful scream of a woman, " A child is in the well?" The child's life hung upon that cry. Another minute -- and the child would have certainly drowned! But,

"Not a single shaft can hit,

Until the God of love sees fit!"

The cry of that affrighted woman aroused the man, the man fled to the rescue, the child was saved from drowning -- but the hand of God was not seen or acknowledged, until years rolled on! For more than thirty years, that child has been a preacher of the gospel, and has written many useful works. He has been the instrument in the hand of a wonder-working God, of rescuing many poor ungodly sinners from a far deeper well. Through that child, thousands have heard of the name and fame of Jesus, and those thousands have in some way been useful to others, and thus the effect will be felt to the end of time. How much depended on, and resulted from, that scream, "A child is in the well!"

"God moves in a mysterious way,

His wonders to perform!"

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The above account of my own preservation when but a child , is sent to me as a subject for my pen -- but what can I add to it? My heart as swelled with thankful emotions, and my eyes have been moistened with tears of gratitude, while I have been copying it, and I have been ready to exclaim with Leah, "Now will I praise the Lord!" and with David, "I will sing of God's mercy!"

I cannot but admire the wonderful working of divine providence -- how perfectly everything is arranged and adjusted . How well all is timed . I do not wonder the godly say that "we are immortal until our work is done," for new proofs of this are constantly arising. Where is the Christian, the laborer in God's vineyard, who cannot find an illustration of this fact in his own experience? I can find more than one in mine.

Some may perhaps reflect upon me for publishing my brother's narrative, and think me deficient in modesty ; but I am not a young man now, nor am I so much affected by what my fellow-men say, or write of me -- as I once was. If God, either as the God of providence, or grace, can be glorified, by anything I write or publish -- it is enough! And surely no Christian can read the above with an unprejudiced mind, without glorifying God.

How near was I to death -- yet God intended me to live. How imminent was the danger -- and how simple and suitable were the means of preservation. How wondrously God wrought -- and yet no one present then, appeared to see his hand , or acknowledge his intervention .

How much often depends upon a trifling action. Take away one link -- and the chain falls to pieces. Not one of the above circumstances could have been omitted -- or my life would surely have been lost!

The woman must come at the exact moment; alarmed, she must scream at the top of her voice;

the laborer must be eating his meal at home nearby; in his fright, he must do, what if he had waited to reflect, he would have feared to attempt!

But the hand of God was in the whole. "He performs the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him."

What effect should the bringing of this circumstance before my mind at this time, have upon me? I trust it has made me feel grateful, and has led me anew to praise my God, for his wonderful works to men. But this is not enough. I would anew in the most solemn manner dedicate myself -- my life so wondrously preserved, with all my powers, talents, and opportunities, to the Lord, and to his glory.

Often have I surrendered myself to my God, and consecrated myself to his glory and praise, and I do so with all my heart and soul, again this morning.

For the Lord -- I desire to live;

to promote his cause -- I desire to labor;

to bring sinners to Jesus, and to comfort and to edify his people -- I desire to make the one grand object of my life.

As the especial care of his providence, as well as the subject of his sovereign and distinguishing grace -- I desire to be his, wholly his, only his, and his forever!

Lord, take me anew into your hands, and make me more and more like your beloved Son; not only so -- but as you have used me for the good of others, and the glory of your great name -- use me yet more extensively, and glorify yourself by me, ten thousand times more than you ever have done yet!

My one undying desire of my soul, is that Christ may be magnified in me, and be glorified by me, both in life and in death. Many years ago, this desire was kindled at the cross, by a sense of the infinite love of Jesus, and nothing has ever been able to extinguish it yet, nor do I believe that anything ever will.

Reader, can you look back upon any hairbreadth escape from death? Can you look back upon a deliverance, not from a well of water -- but from the pit of destruction? Can you say with David, "Great is your mercy toward me, for you have delivered my soul from the lowest Hell!" What would deliverance from death be -- if we are not delivered from Hell? Of what value would a few years on earth be -- if spent in sin, if filled up with worldly pleasure -- if the end should be a place in Hell forever?

Blessed be God, he not only saved my life, and delivered me from an early death; but he saved my soul, and condescended to employ me in his vineyard.

Beloved, life without God's favor -- life without a saving interest in Christ -- life unless it is spent in God's service -- is not worthy the name of life. To live, is to have the life of God in the soul! To live, is to have Christ formed in the heart! To live, is to be inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and to be consecrated to God's glory and praise! O to live as Jesus lived! To keep the same end in view, to walk by the same rule, and to do the works he did!

For this, we were redeemed by his blood;

for this, we were called by his grace;

for this, our lives are preserved in the present world, and

for this, his fullness is thrown open to us, and we are invited to make use of his grace.

Holy Spirit, lead us to make more use of Christ, to enjoy closer communion with Christ, and to live, walk, work, and talk, more entirely for the glory of Christ!

Blessed Jesus, accept of us as your own property, fill us with your own sweet Spirit, stamp your lovely image upon us, and use us to exalt your dear name, spread your well deserved fame, and extend your glorious cause!

Father of mercies, God of all grace, receive our praises for your wondrous love, sovereign grace, and special providence! Help us to praise you here on earth, and then take us to praise and bless you eternally in Heaven!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-smith/a-child-is-in-the-well/>

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