

God's Delight in Blessing His People

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon emphasizes God's desire to bless His people through Christ, encouraging believers to embrace their identity and unity in Him amidst trials and challenges.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1

Topics: "Unity in Christ", "God's Blessings"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes God's profound love and delight in blessing His people, illustrating that His thoughts are centered on blessing and that true blessing is found only in Him. He explains that through Christ, who descended to the depths and ascended to the heights, we are brought into the fullness of God's love and grace. Darby highlights the importance of Christ dwelling in our hearts, enabling us to experience divine sympathy and joy amidst trials. He encourages believers to walk in lowliness and love, recognizing that our unity in Christ transcends worldly relationships and afflictions. Ultimately, he assures that God's presence is the source of our happiness and the foundation for our growth into Christlikeness.

Transcript

Words of Faith 3 (1884), p. 225-230.

One cannot help seeing in such a scripture as this the profound interest the Lord takes in blessing. There is profound love in it, as well as the fact that He delights in blessing His people. His purpose is to bring us into the enjoyment of His own blessedness: His thoughts are blessing, and there is no blessing anywhere else but in Him. If I speak of blessing, it must be what is in the heart of God. A father's thoughts of giving to his children are measured by his love for them. When we see what is in God's heart for us, and that all His thoughts have the form and power of blessing, what a portion must ours be! He is bringing us to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ - this is to be the result.

But it is the principle or spring of blessing that is in my mind to speak upon. He is conforming us to His own thoughts in blessing at the end. The objects of such love - poor, abject sinners, taken up by Him to show forth the greatness of His love. Christ is the great Workman of it all. It is by Christ He does it all. When God sets about to bless, it is by "the Son of his love." It is an immense foundation for us to rest upon, not only strong, but wide, and large, and deep - "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. What, then, is to escape the power of Him who has been borne up to the throne of God; who, after going down to the very lowest place of death, has been taken up to the highest place of glory - the throne of God? And all

between is filled up by Christ: thus nothing can escape. He went down to the place of death and sin - "made sin for us" - and went up to the throne of God. There is strength for us poor sinners - something to rest on. And it is not something distant from us, but we have the consciousness of its being in and around us.

It is said, in Revelation 21, of the holy city: "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." This Lamb is nearer to my heart than any one; He has known me better than any - better than I know myself. And this Christ, who dwells in our hearts by faith, is the One we shall meet there. We shall find One in heaven nearer and dearer to our hearts than any one we have known on earth. Nothing is so near to us as the Christ that is in us, and nothing is so near to God as Christ. Yet the world is in the heart - all that is agreeable and outwardly good in the world finds its echo in the heart; all the evil that has come in finds its root there too. Christ was here amidst it all - He met it all - without having the evil in Him. He knows it all - everything we feel; all that passes through the heart of man, save sinful lust, Christ has gone through; not seeking anything in the world, but resisting the evil.

Now, spite of all the sensitiveness of the heart to good or evil (and that makes the heart of man such a wonderful thing), Christ in us can meet it all. The centre and key to all is Christ - He has power to put away the evil. If there were one thing in which our hearts could not rest upon Christ, it would be dreadful. All have the knowledge of good and evil; even the unconverted man has; but without Christ he sets about racking his heart to find some good thing under the sun, and then all the best affections of the man are only the occasion of his greatest distress, because sin has come in. The heart gets pulled every way, and it must go through it; wives lose their husbands; children, their parents, etc. etc. Now, the instant we get Christ in all this, we get the perfect good that God delights in. Divine sympathy is found in God Himself. We may have trial and conflict - we must have it in passing through this wilderness - but we get weaned from the things that are a snare to us by looking to Christ in them.

Present confidence in Christ is needed in trial - as in losing a near relative, etc. - but the practical effect is, that every trial we go through, gives us (if the heart is thus trusting in Christ) to know more and more of what He is to meet the need, and more of Christ as possessing Him, and, as Jehovah said to Israel, "I bare thee on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself." It is here in the wilderness that we find all the unfoldings of what God is in Christ. We cannot do without Christ one minute; we want water and manna in the wilderness; God gives these to us; and not only we get all this - water, manna, etc. - but we get Christ Himself in it all. No matter what it is that exercises our hearts in the knowledge of good and evil, and the need of the heart in consequence, it makes Christ more known, and more enjoyed.

Our proper, so to speak, our natural portion, as Christians, is to enjoy God. Where has God planted us? In the enjoyment of an accomplished redemption, and the result is, that love has not only been manifested towards us, but poured out in us - "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He has given us;" "we dwell in God." God's love is infinite in measure, but we are in it, we dwell in it; He dwells in us, and we dwell in Him, and we learn it, amid all our weakness and failure.

"Builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit," that is our "vocation." What a thought! What a bringing down! - not of heaven, but something more than heaven, namely, the special blessing of God Himself come down to dwell in us. God would not dwell in angels, there is not the same want in them; but He will make Himself better known to angels, through His kindness towards us by Christ Jesus. There is a great deal more for us than the bringing down of heaven. "Whosoever shall confess Jesus the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

What is the first practical effect of this blessed sealing, and this being an habitation of God through the Spirit?

Here is the answer: Walking worthy of our vocation, with all lowliness and meekness. The vessel of God! All the passions of the flesh still in us but disallowed, and the presence of God making us unspeakably happy - that is our portion! What a thought!

"In all lowliness," etc., means a good deal. A man who is humble needs not to be humbled, and there is no safety but in being low. When what flows from self is not working, there is this lowliness; and why? Love is working, I cannot be happy with you all if self is working; but if self is not working, love is, and I am full of love towards you all. What a spring of blessedness in common there is here! So far as self is down, broken to pieces, there is an outgoing of perfect love to the brethren. Love is of God, and when His nature is at work, we love one another. The spring of the fellowship we find to-night, is God being here. God is our joy, and love - God's own nature - working, we are happy, and God is our common Object.

There are trials and difficulties for us all, but there is blessed joy in knowing one another thus, and seeing Christ in one another - "Receive ye one another, as Christ also has received us, to the glory of God." If we meet a Christian, though he may be a stranger, we can be more intimate with him than with one of one's own family who is not. Why? Because God is there. Another thing, too; there is the consciousness of what this unity is: "There is one body, and one Spirit;" "One Lord, one faith;" "One God, and one Father." We are brought together, not only through being united in the Spirit, but by what we possess together - "One Spirit," "One Lord," "One Father," etc. etc.

Rich or poor, each have their particular trials. I have mine, you have yours; but both of us have God - "One God and Father of all; who is above all, and through all, and in you all." God is above the world. You cannot tell me of one thing God is not above, and therefore there is not one thing that can separate me from His love. He is through all. You cannot find yourself in trouble, and not find God there; you cannot find yourself in any -difficulty, perplexity, and not find God through it all. He is in you all as believers; He is come to be the spring of all blessing and happiness in us.

If I know what water is, it is by drinking; if I know what sweetness is, it is by tasting it; if I know God, it is by His being in me. We can look upon one another, and see God in us all. What perfect blessedness and unity!

Then, these light afflictions; what are they? God is come to take possession of us, and He is the spring in our hearts to go through them all. And, then, He comes to make us love, because He loves; we shall find it is fully so in heaven. If anything is a safeguard against evil, it is that God, by His Spirit, dwelleth in us. But there is more: He is the spring in us of the new nature - God's nature.

Next, we read of "the perfecting of the saints." Christ is the Object of God's thoughts, and He says, "I must have these loved ones like Christ." Therefore, what God does, is to make them all grow up into Christ: for there is to be more and more of Christ in us every day; all the flow of Christian affection, all the enjoyment we have here, is for this end.

We can look at our brethren, and know that they are all going to be in heaven with us, and the enjoyment of this fellowship shuts out the world; we are not thinking of our Cares and troubles now. True fellowship with the brethren is perfect deliverance from all that is of the flesh; flesh cannot enter into it, all that is of the world is gone - we are dead to it. Every bit of real fellowship that we have with one another, as

brethren in Christ, is a proof that outside things are gone - done with.

The more we are individually full of divine things, the more this communion with each other is realised. Two brethren together, if both are spiritual, open the sluices of joy, that all the powers in the world cannot dry up. The power of the Holy Ghost, that makes us overcome now, will make us enjoy heaven, where there is-nothing else - "They that dwell in thy house will be still praising thee." To those who are in Christ, all the power of evil, all the power of Satan and the flesh, are gone, and our common joy here below, in the union of our affections, is in and with God, and when we are there above it will be complete - "Christ all, and in all."

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