

Where I Am Ye Cannot Come'

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon emphasizes the irreversible separation between Christ and the world, highlighting the necessity of grace and the role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

Scripture: John 3:3, John 4:14, John 7:34, John 7:38-39, Acts 7:55-56, Romans 8:7, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 2 Corinthians 5:19, Galatians 5:22-23, Colossians 3:17

Topics: "Separation from the World", "Living in the Spirit"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the profound separation between God and the world, asserting that Christ has left this world permanently, stating, 'Where I am ye cannot come.' He explains that while God has made efforts to reconcile humanity through Christ, the world has rejected Him, leading to a definitive separation. Darby highlights the necessity of being born again and receiving the Holy Spirit to truly connect with God, as the world remains in enmity against Him. He urges believers to recognize their identity in Christ and to manifest His presence in their lives, as they await the fulfillment of God's promises. The sermon calls for self-examination regarding one's relationship with God and the importance of living in the Spirit.

Transcript

{Notes of Addresses Vol. 2.}

The whole of this chapter is founded on the fact of the entire separation of God from this world. It is a solemn truth that Christ has left this world for good, and His own words are, "Where I am ye cannot come" (ver. 34). He has gone, and the world will never see Him again. He will come in judgment, when every eye shall see Him; but as He then was dealing in grace with man - looked at as coming into the world and associating Himself with men as Adam's children - that is entirely over. God had something better in store, which has come in for us who believe. The work of redemption was wrought out, but it is important for us to get hold of the fact, that what saves us condemns the world.

God has tried man in every way. Adam sins, and the wickedness goes on increasing till God destroys the world, but saves Noah, who fails himself afterwards. After the flood God began to deal with man when he was separated from Him, having been driven out He gives him the law, which man breaks. When man was a sinner and a lawbreaker, then God comes in in Christ, as a last resource, so to speak. "I have yet one Son; surely they will reverence my Son." God comes down in Christ to reconcile the world unto Himself, and man says, "This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." So they took Him

and cast Him out of the vineyard, and killed Him, and it was all over. Christ leaves the world, and in His aspect of grace to it they never see Him again, and cannot go where He has gone - that is, the world as the world has lost Him for ever. (It is, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" - not "God is.") They would not be reconciled. They cast Him out.

At the commencement of the first three Gospels we find Christ presented to be received; but this Gospel begins with a rejected person, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," we find in the very first chapter. It is not Christ presented to men to see if they would receive Him, but grace working when it was clear that they would not receive Him. In this Gospel it is always the world, and not the Jews, that is spoken of. The Jews are put aside. "God so loved the world." "Light is come into the world."

There is a distinction between chapters 8 and 9. In chapter 8 His word is rejected; in chapter 9 His work is rejected; and in chapter 10 He will have His sheep for all that. In chapter 7 the truth is settled, "Where I am ye cannot come." They were left, and could not follow where He was going. What I press upon you from that is, the total separation of the first man from God, judicially and morally. Before the law man gave up God, turned to idolatry, and God gave them up to such sins and vileness as could not even be named; God saying, as it were, "If you degrade God, you shall degrade man too." That is what "without law" came to. Law comes in, and brings out transgression. Christ comes in grace, and grace in its way of dealing, man would not have. The result is manifested separation between God and man. Chapter 7 brings this out: "The world seeth me no more." His leaving the world was death and judgment to them. In that sense of grace, grace was rejected, it was all no use; therefore the testimony of the apostle is, "The carnal mind is enmity against God. . . . So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Either the tree must be good, and its fruit good; or the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt. Man is now seeking to improve the tree, but poor fruit he makes of it. He may embellish it. Interesting things come out as regards the mind of man, but there is no return of heart towards God.

There was a kind of supplement consequent on the intercession of Christ, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," in Stephen's testifying to Him as seeing Him at the right hand of God. They would not have that either, and shut his mouth by stoning him. The history of the gospels is just our history. We cannot kill Him with our hands now; but when He was presented to us, we preferred our own pleasure, we would not have Him. There is no natural connection with Christ, but a proved impossibility of it. How many there are who have a kind of hope of getting into the second Paradise in a far worse state than man was in when God turned him out of the first! It is true of you naturally now that you have not got Christ, and where He has gone you cannot go; but not finally true of you, I trust, for there is mercy, and grace, and salvation for the vilest - the very vilest. But this is true of the world, as the world to which you belong. It is not true merely of wicked persons, for they are often more easily convinced, - but of respectably living, decent people. You have not got Christ where you are, and where He is you cannot go. The world is doing what Cain did, when he went out from the presence of the Lord, built a city, and called it after his son's name. Then he had his artificers in brass and iron, and tried to make the world pleasant without God. Sin as sin was complete then (I do not mean the rejection of Christ now), but Adam sinned against God; Cain sinned against his neighbour, and gave up God entirely.

In that which is really salvation to us, the cross of Christ, we had no part but the hatred that rejected Him, and the sins that He had to bear. I am entirely separated from God in my Adam life, and I need a new life; but to be quickened in itself is not sufficient for me. Of course, every quickened person will be saved, and we must be quickened - must have a new life - be born again; but being quickened does not take away guilt, and give me righteousness. It gives the sense of sin, desire for holiness, longing after God, and

desire for His favour; but the soul cannot say, "I am in His favour," because it sees the sin. If, however, I have learnt that I am guilty, I am lost, then I see God doing a work all by Himself for me, and the question for the soul then is, What is the worth of this work? - what has God wrought? I say, the Man who has borne my sins is in glory without them. If I am convinced that I am entirely lost, the question for me is, Am I saved? I see a work done entirely outside me and for me, and then the query is, Has God accepted that work? The answer to that is, The One who did the work is at the right hand of God. If Christ is not risen, I am yet in my sins. If He is risen, I am not in my sins. God puts His seal on the work by raising Him, and I am satisfied. I, as a believer, set my seal, not on the work, but on the truth of the testimony to the work - "set to my seal that God is true."

Suppose I have offended a person dreadfully, and a friend goes to try and make peace for me. He does make it all right, and comes and tells me so. I believe him, and it is all right and over. I had nothing to do with making the peace, but I believe the truth of the testimony that it is made, and thus what alone can give the troubled soul rest, is the knowledge that God has accepted the work done, consequent on the glorifying of Christ. Christ, who was made sin for me, is now in the presence of God without my sin, the whole work being finished. He is in the glory, having borne my sins; but He could not carry my sins there. Aaron went inside the veil by virtue of the blood, but until he came out Israel could not tell whether he had been accepted or not, for he might have died there. I know that Christ has not come out yet, but the Holy Ghost has come out, while He remains there, and is given to those who believe, that they may know now that the work is accomplished and accepted, while Christ is hidden as Man up there - much more than Man, but still Man.

I am not only quickened, then, but I have received the Holy Ghost, and come to know that I am in Christ. That is much more than knowing that He died for me. If we are in Him, He is in us, and then comes the manifesting Him to the world. If He is in me, I am to let others see Him.

In this chapter (7) it is the Feast of Tabernacles - that is, after the judgment. The harvest and vintage must first be past, both symbols of the judgment (compare Deut 16:13, and Rev 14:14-20). So, then, the Feast of Tabernacles has never yet been fulfilled. Christ was not going to fulfil it at that time. His time was not yet come. His brethren said, "Manifest thyself unto the world;" but He could not do so, for His time was not come. He could go up to the Passover, for He was Himself the Passover, so that was fulfilled. Pentecost, too, was fulfilled when the Holy Ghost came down. The Feast of Tabernacles is yet to be fulfilled; but Christ says, If you believe, you will get your time of glory before that Feast of Tabernacles comes.

The first effect of the Holy Ghost in me is connection with God. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; but love, joy, and peace come first - that is, our place with God must be and ought to be the first thing. Then, of course, we should be seeking to testify of Him in our walk, and we shall get the long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, &c.

Now, I ask, beloved friends, how is it with you? Have you anticipated the day of judgment, and owned fully before God now that you are lost, and that to be judged must be to be condemned - for God's being full of love does not make Him pass by sin. He sent His Son to put it away. Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, is in glory without them, and, all being settled, the believer is sealed by the Holy Ghost.

Then, I say, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit;" that thus the fruits of the Spirit may be seen coming out in you. In chapter 3 we are quickened, born again; in chapter 4, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" in chapter 7, "Out of his belly

shall flow rivers of living water." - that is, when he is sealed by the Holy Ghost (ver. 39).

The Lord give you to remember that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, to be led by the Spirit, to walk by the Spirit - that whatever you do, in word or in deed, you are to show out the Lord Jesus - in buying or selling, in your dress, or in everyday duties of any kind, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. What is not that is sin, because it is self-will, self-pleasing. The Lord give those who are His to glorify Him in all things.

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