
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<https://books.google.com>



G R A C E

TRIUMPHANT.

"God be merciful to me a sinner. This man went down to his house justified."—
Luke xviii. 13, 14.

LONDON :
G E O R G E M O R R I S H ,
24, *Warwick Lane*,
P A T E R N O S T E R R O W .

GRACE TRIUMPHANT.

The substance of a discourse, in which special notice was taken of a dear departed young sister, who fell asleep in Jesus, January 11th, 1859.

ABOUT three months ago, I saw her, in this place, for the first time. She was introduced to me, immediately after the preaching, by one who felt a deep interest in her soul's welfare, and who had brought her a considerable distance to hear the gospel. Under these circumstances, I immediately felt interested in her.

But her appearance was sufficient, of itself, to engage the sympathies of the heart. She was evidently concerned, and under deep emotion when I spoke to her. Her expression was calm, but most earnest, which told me at a glance what was passing within. The truths to which she had been listening, were now to her soul, deep and solemn realities. Life and death, heaven and hell,

sin and salvation, the glorious Person, and finished work of Christ, are indeed realities to a truly-awakened—a divinely-convicted conscience. There is little disposition to trifle in such a scene. Though many persons were passing and repassing, "the one thing needful" engaged all her attention. After a few words in a general way, I said to her, in plain terms,

"Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour?"

"I am afraid not, Sir," she softly and quietly replied.

"The Scriptures say it is eternal life to know Him—to know Him as the one who loved us, and died for us on the cross."

"I don't think I am saved, Sir," she answered, with much feeling.

"Well, surely, if you have not faith in Jesus, you are not saved; for although He has finished the work, we are not saved until we believe."

"I feel very anxious about my soul, but I know I am not saved.●"

"Have you been exercised about these things for some time?"

“Oh yes! very much, and — has often spoken to me about them.”

“Well, you have been hearing once more, that the blood of Jesus is the only ground of peace for a troubled conscience. He has done all the work, blessed be His name. He glorified God and put away our sins on the cross. Now, the moment you believe that, and truly rest in Jesus as your Saviour—your only Saviour—your sins will be all forgiven, every one, and your mind will be at rest. If I believe that Jesus put away all my sins when He shed His precious blood, and made my peace with God, I must be happy. And if I were to doubt that, I should be doubting the word of God. You believe, I am sure, that you would be utterly lost without an interest in Christ—that we can only be saved through faith in Him.”

“Oh yes, Sir, I am sure of that, I hope I shall soon believe.”

“Well, the only way to get an interest in Christ is by believing. We are ‘the children of wrath by nature, but we become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.’ ‘And if chil-

dren, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.' (Gal. iii. 26; Rom. viii. 17.) All who have faith are interested in Jesus, and in all the happy fruits of His blessed work. They are joint heirs with Him. Only trust Him. He is worthy to be trusted. He will never disappoint you. May the Lord enable you to look to Jesus as your own Saviour, and rest in Him. You will never be happy until you do so."

After some further conversation, we parted, but not in spirit. She was much on my mind.

"There is a spot where spirits blend,
And friend holds fellowship with friend."

The Spirit of God was now at work in her soul, and she was in deep earnest about her salvation. She came long distances to be at the various meetings, both on week day and Sunday evenings, and she was greatly encouraged to do so by those with whom she lived. But, in a short time, **GRACE TRIUMPHED**, through faith, over all the darkness and unbelief of the natural mind, and established her soul in the full salvation

of God. And here, for the sake of others, I would notice particularly, the truth that was blest to her conversion.

The subject was the parable of the "Pharisee and the Publican," where Jesus so plainly connects these two things, namely, the confession of sin and the justification of the sinner. "God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified." This is a point, beloved friends, of the deepest practical importance. Observe, the poor publican does nothing but confess his own unworthiness—take the ground of a sinner before God—and cast Himself entirely on His mercy. Well, now, in such a case, what could God do? What could He say? Could He say to the poor, helpless soul, "There is no mercy in God for thee?" Impossible! dear friends. That would be to deny Himself, and the whole truth of the Bible, for therein we learn that "God is love," and that "He delighteth in mercy." What then would be the Lord's answer to such a one? We have it from His own lips. "I tell you, this man went

down to his house justified" Oh! mark the precious emphasis of these three words. "I tell you." "I," the truth itself—"the faithful witness," "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified." The same moment that he was in his true place, acknowledging his true condition, and cast entirely on the mercy of God, he was a justified man, an eternally-saved sinner. He was pardoned and justified, according to the riches of divine mercy, and the value of the sacrifice of Christ.

Three things seem naturally and inseparably connected in the justification of a sinner, and will actually be experienced, if we simply follow the scriptures.

I. There is the sinner confessing his sin, and condemning himself.

II. "God, who is rich in mercy," acting from himself, by virtue of Christ's precious blood, forgives the sin, and declares the sinner "justified from all things."

III. Faith listens to this gracious announcement, receives it as the word of God, and the soul finds peace and

rest therein. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 John i. 9; Romans v. 1.

These three things, which go together in the word of God, ought never to be separated in the believer's mind; but alas! they often are. So few know their true place as sinners: and consequently most are ignorant of the true grace of God, and strangers to that peace, which the knowledge of grace alone can give. Let me beseech you, beloved friends, to receive, in the simplicity of faith, these blessed truths. Many go halting nearly all their days, from not seeing them. I mean, from not seeing that God *immediately* justifies the sinner who believes in Jesus. But, oh! let me ask, Are there any poor publicans here now? How many of you are crying out from the depths of your souls, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Is this really the ground you are on? Are you truly crying to Him,

the fountain of mercy, in the name of Jesus? If so, rest assured, my dear friends, that you are justified already, that your many sins are blotted out, and that you have everlasting life. But remember, you must believe this in order to have peace. Oh! for mercy's sake, for the truth's sake, for your own soul's sake, do not separate what the blessed Lord here joins together. Mark well these two points—namely, the sinner's true confession, and God's true justification.

The Lord was graciously pleased to bless the word to the soul of our young friend. Before leaving the room, she confessed her faith in Jesus. Her words were something like the following—

“Now I believe! I think I am saved!” In reply, I said, “Has the Lord brought you down to the lowly place of the poor publican?”

“Yes, I believe He has.”

“Then, remember His own words, ‘I tell you, this man went down to his house justified.’ Only believe His word, and you will be quite happy. Don't

you be parting asunder what He has put together."

I now felt sure that she was the Lord's—that she was a child of God "by faith in Christ Jesus." The change was soon manifest. From a state of deep exercise of mind, she had passed into one of tranquillity and peace. Those who felt deeply interested in her saw it with joy, and felt persuaded that the work was God's. Indeed, so decided was the change, and so real her peace and joy, that she applied for communion almost immediately, such was the energy of the divine life in her soul. And, with the full consent and approval of those who witnessed her daily walk, she was received to the Lord's table, early in December. But her christian course was a brief one. Her wilderness journey was a short one. She was scarcely through the Red Sea, when she was called to pass the Jordan.

She was privileged to break bread only three times, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus, when, on the 28th of December, she was suddenly called away, to attend the death-bed of a dear

mother, who fell asleep in Jesus on the 4th of January. She died of fever. It was a time of deep grief to dear Alice; but she was happy in Jesus, and knew the consolations of His blessed presence. But though she bore up wonderfully, and insisted on looking after things that were needful, it became quite evident that she had caught the fever. And on Monday the 10th, the day that her dear mother's body was laid in its resting-place, she was completely overcome, and she lay down to die. The fever went to the brain, and there it raged; but her sufferings were short. The following morning she was with Jesus. The Lord, in tender mercy, sent His messenger of peace, to close the troubled scene—to release His suffering child, and take her home to be with Himself for ever. When “absent from the body,” we are “present with the Lord.” On Thursday, the 13th of January, the poor body was laid in its resting-place, until the morning of the first resurrection.

Oh, what grace! what mercy! in all the Lord's dealings with her during the

past three months. Her brief stay amongst us is full of the deepest interest, because the Lord is in it all. We can trace the footsteps of love in every turn of her short history. I can hardly realize that she is gone. There she sat; her countenance is as fresh before me, as if she were sitting there at this moment. The earnest expression, the placid look, the slight flush from intense feeling, are vividly before me. But her seat is empty. Her soul has winged its way to the realms of never-ending bliss, there to be with Jesus, until the last trumpet shall sound; when her now-decaying body shall be raised up, and "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. iii. 21.

But, oh! my dear friends, has this solemn dispensation no warning voice for us? Are we as anxious for the salvation of souls as we ought to be? What, think you, would be the feelings of her christian master and mistress now, had they shown no anxiety about her soul, or made no effort to take her

to the preaching of the gospel? What an awful reflection it would have been had she died in her sins! Not that *we* can save the souls of our servants, or our children; but we can bring them in faith to the preaching of the gospel, as God's appointed means of salvation. And I know of no effort which the Lord has so signally blessed, as that of believers bringing their unconverted friends and relatives to the preaching of the gospel. They listen, and pray for their friends, and God's institution is honoured. And oh! what unspeakable consolation to the friends of Alice now to know, to be assured, that her soul is with Jesus; and that, though suddenly cut down with a fever raging in the brain, she was perfectly safe. Oh! beloved friends, are we all doing what we can to win souls to Jesus? Are our consciences clear before God as to those who live with us, whether they be servants, children, or friends? Are we ready to deny ourselves—to make personal sacrifices from love to souls, and faith in the gospel of God, as His means of their salvation? “It pleased

God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. i. 21.

And oh! what a solemn warning voice this event has to the careless and unconcerned sinner! Where, dear fellow-sinner, would you have been this evening, had her case been yours? Had the fever reached your brain last Monday, and proved fatal on the Tuesday, where would your soul have been at this moment? We know where the poor body would have been. The gloomy grave might have closed over it on the Thursday, but—oh! solemn, awfully-solemn, thought!—where would your precious soul have been? The thought can hardly be endured now, though we realize these things so little. Oh! what a mercy that you are here this evening—that you are in the land of the living, and in the place of hope! May you believe the gospel now! May you flee for refuge to Jesus now! He bids you come. Oh, refuse Him not! Suffer not another evening to pass away unimproved. You may be listening to the gospel for the last time on earth. Remember, you have been warned—

remember, you have been invited. If you die in your sins, you will have only yourselves to blame. The Lamb has been slain—the sacrifice for sin accepted. God is well-pleased, and is now beseeching *you* to be well pleased with His beloved Son, that you may live and not die. May you this evening “BELIEVE AND LIVE!” Forget not what took place last Monday. And oh! who can tell that to-morrow may not bring fever with it to some one present? Tuesday is coming, and who can tell that it may not bring death with it? Thursday is coming, and who can tell that it may not bring an opened grave with it to some one who is now sitting at his ease? We say not these things in order to drive you to Jesus, but that you may see the danger of delay. Jesus is worthy to be loved and trusted for His own sake. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. vi. 2.) May you be drawn to Him by the cords of love, and find immediate rest to your souls! and then, oh! then, come what may, you will be safe for ever.

