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THE TRUE FEAST

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BY

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THE TRUE FEAST.

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LUKE vii. 44-48.

“And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”

It has been remarked, beloved friends, that in Luke's Gospel the blessed Lord is presented to us specially in his social character. Over and over again we read of His sitting at meat, and one great charge brought against Him by the Pharisees and Scribes was, that “this man receiveth sinners and *eateth with them.*” Over and over again we have His social joys brought before us. Look at the 15th chapter. What a wondrous picture of

social happiness! The sinner, who had wandered away from his home and his God, returns and is feasted at the father's board,—the best robe, and the ring, and the shoes having been previously bestowed.

In olden time, when He guided Israel through the wilderness, God acted in grace truly, but it was with reserve. When He led that elect people, He was enshrouded in the cloud; when He fed their hosts, it was with the mystic bread; but now there was no restraint, all veils are thrown away, and in Him who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, all that Father's ineffable grace and love shone forth. Where, in the past, would you find a manifestation of *God* like that unfolded to us here—the Lord of Glory sitting, happy, with sinners? And this was the character which He bore. He loved to sit down with sinners, not that He loved their sin, but them, in whose cause He unfolded His love, bringing out the depth of His grace. And we had never known His grace but for the sin which gave occasion for its display; the prodigal never had known the love and grace of his Father's heart, if he had never wandered and sunk into such depths of iniquity. And so, too, in regard to the scene before us here; the wonderful grace of Jesus would not have been manifested but for His contact with this sinner.

She came to Him as she was, but He rejected her not, nay, her very sinfulness and vileness but presented a platform on which He purposed to erect an eternal trophy to His own grace. Well! She comes; and oh! what a picture! Simon—the proper, upright, moral Simon—invites the Lord to be his guest, but Simon was not the attraction for that blessed One; no, nor yet the other guests invited to meet Him; no, nor yet the feast—the loaded tables. Oh, no! beloved, it was that the blessed Lord knew that He would be feasted there on far different joys. Ah! it was this poor sinner that attracted Him to that house—that city sinner was His feast. Like another Mary, it was the loadstone of *her love* that had drawn the blessed Lord to the spot where she would be, as it was His that had drawn hers. Like another Mary, she had got by some means, an inkling of the wondrous value which was in Him, and an irresistible determination possessed her, that she would go to Him. Fancy her, beloved, down, perhaps, amid her accustomed haunts of sin, and then, as her irresistible desire increased, she resolved to go; she finds her way by a path which no angel had ever trod, to a place in the Lord's affections, which an angel might well have coveted to occupy.

Oh! beloved, beloved, I would I had such a sinner here to-night, that I might, blessed work,

unveil to such an one some of those depths of love which, even now that He is in heaven and at rest, He still has towards the sinner and outcast. And why may there not be? Some of you, perhaps, know.

And now, mark here—first, what *the woman* did, and next what *Simon* did, and then what *the Lord Himself* did, and lastly *what the woman received*.

We are not told where this woman first met the Lord, or where she had first heard of Him, or had first seen the value that she now knew was in Him.

A veil is drawn over that page; but this is certain, *somewhere* the Lord met with her, He Himself had sought and found her, and touching some tender chord in her soul, had awakened in her the first Divine longing.

Wondrous thought that God, who from all eternity had chosen the sinner, should now thus Himself delight in seeking the sinner. This woman had never sought Him had not He at the same moment sought her. But, as we were saying, somewhere, or by some means, in the very midst of her sin, for she was indeed a sinner, God had lodged the arrow to convict; it had penetrated deep into her soul, and she knew not how to get rid of it. How could she? By-and-bye she finds that Jesus, whose love and compassion she had heard or felt,

was to be the special guest of a Pharisee ; a bold determination seizes her ; she, too, will go there and there seek His help and grace. Ah ! beloved, I have fancied the weary and heavy-laden one treading her way through the streets until she comes to the sought-for dwelling ; I have imagined her halting for an instant, amazed at her own boldness in coming, unbidden, where Jesus was. Yet she wavered not in her resolution ; a burdened, aching heart impelled her on, as all such hearts do, to seek relief. Ah ! dear people, when a soul has got a true hold of God, or God rather has got a hold on the sinner, nothing is an obstacle. Well, this woman, right or no right, comes to the house, but that is not all. She finds her way within, and there through the door, perchance ajar, she beholds Him whom she has been seeking ; another moment, and she is inside where Jesus is.

Well can we imagine Simon's secret disdain of her who could thus intrude ; but there was ONE there who, although specially invited to share in Simon's feast, was being feasted far more sumptuously by the sight of that woman's love and faith, than by the feast itself ; see how His heart turns with divinest love and pity towards her, for He who saw and loved her was God manifested in the flesh. The springs in *Him* were springs of Divine compassion.

Religiousness—mere religiousness, provides man with a covering, makes man outwardly fair and righteous, such as was the Pharisee; but the truth shows God to the soul, and reveals the soul to itself—shows its sinfulness and wretchedness. It is in the light of God we see this. And though in that light sin is found to be exceeding sinful, yet, at the same time, by revealing Jesus, whom this woman had sought and now saw, it brings pardon and peace, and all this made sure to the soul, as we shall see, not by love, great as hers was, but by faith. “Thy *faith* hath made thee whole.” Oh! beloved, what a picture have we here! Let us look at it again. There is the feast; there are the spread tables; there are the invited guests, and there is the self-righteous Simon; and there, now, behind as it were, and yet in the midst of that festal scene, drawn by the irresistible presence of Jesus, of whose love and grace she was soon to have such rich assurance, this woman presents herself, a wretched, scorned outcast; but she heeded not the feast; she cared not for Simon; she heeded not either the astonished glances which the guests directed towards her; *she thought only of Jesus.*

Oh, mark it well! deeply anxious sinners, sinners deeply moved by God, sinners under the arrests of His love, do not stay at circumstances. This woman was wholly dead to any, or all, such

circumstances as these; she had come with one purpose, one object alone fixed her eye: she wanted Jesus—Him alone; she thought of her *sins*; and oh! in an instant, she was found bathing His feet with her tears. Our Lord was in all probability reclining, after the Eastern fashion, upon a couch, placed to the table, so that, speaking after the manner of men, He would not perceive any one bending at His feet, and so may it have been that His eye did not notice her till the hot tears bedewing them told their own tale. And yet she had *not* been unnoticed all this while. Oh no! He had marked her each step of her way, and inwardly He had already embraced her in the arms of His love and grace. Little thought Simon what was occupying the mind of his guest; Jesus was occupied with that woman; and, unlike Simon, who was occupied with the feast, that woman was occupied with Jesus, *Himself alone*; she was blind to everything but “Jesus only.” She had seen something of His beauty, something of His power; and He in His grace had delighted in her, even in that city sinner whom He destined shortly to make so blest a trophy of His forgiving love.

“He drew her, and she followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice Divine.”

But what did she bring? She brought an alabaster box of ointment—most costly, most precious.

She broke it, and poured the fragrant contents upon His feet. Ah! beloved, such an alabaster box is the most precious thing to be opened in any house; the odour must fill, as did that from this box, the whole house. You understand me, beloved: you cannot, in love, have to do with Jesus, but you break before Him and over Him an alabaster box; the personal dealings with Him of any soul that needs Him are to Him most precious; and you cannot come thus into personal contact with the blessed Lord but fragrance results; all in the house, all around you, must take knowledge of you that you have been with Him; you carry away with you the odour of contact, of communion, with Him.

But to return again to this picture before us—the manner of it; as she stands there, the memory and consciousness of past guilt and sin kindle deep grief in her soul, and she finds relief in weeping. The touch of her tears attracted His notice, and He looked round, and there, as I have said, was a richer feast to the Master than any which Simon had spread. And as the tears fell a warm bath to His weary soiled feet, she found a towel wherewith to wipe them in the loose long tresses which fell upon her shoulders. Simon ought, if only for courtesy, to have provided water for His feet; but whether this attention was simply overlooked or not, he neglected to do so, and the Lord

rebuked him for it. Said He, "Thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head." "*This woman.*" Ah, He loved to speak of her; He loved to contemplate her; and as He spoke, down, down, down fell her tears in rapid succession. She sees the assoilment of those feet; she marks the long lines of dust contracted by weary travel unremoved; and so she takes the long tresses of her hair and binds them round His feet, turns her tears into a bath, and her hair into a towel; as we have been reminded to-day, nothing to break the immediate fellowship, not a towel even—her tears, direct on *Himself*, her hair, direct on His feet. It was all *Jesus*, Jesus, and that which was of His creation in her for Himself. Ah, beloved, the feet were *His* feet; that was the true secret of it all; nothing was too costly for *them*, for *HIM*, either the ointment, or the kisses, or the tears. Truly, the Lord was feasted at the sight of such love, such confidence, such contrition, and such joy!

But what thought Simon of all this? Strange, indeed, must the scene have been to him; he had no sympathy with the joy of the Lord, and still less with the singular intrusion of the woman. As to other guests, and there were such, common courtesy forbade reproach or comment. Simon himself

was a silent spectator, wondering in himself at the Lord's endurance of such boldness on the part of one who was known as a sinner. So, not aloud, but to himself, he thus spake: "This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him, for *she is a sinner.*"

The Lord knew—the Lord marked; and notice the wisdom with which He dealt 'with Simon's murmurings. It was not necessary Simon should tell Him what he thought, just as it had been unnecessary for that poor woman to reveal *her* thoughts; the Lord had alike read the one and the other, for all things are open to Him. Is there any one here saying, "Oh! that my tears could fall upon His feet! Oh! that my sins could be thought out as hers were in His very presence! If Jesus of Nazareth were now to pass by, I would go to Him; yea, I would press in where He was; for, oh! I long to hear Him speak that word to me, even me, '*Thy sins are forgiven.*'" Well, dear soul, the Lord knows the secrets of every heart; He reads even at this moment that longing of thine; nothing is hid from Him, and it is as a cup of refreshing to Him *thy* seeking—*thy* longings; it is joy, *joy*, to the seeking Saviour when any one sinner that repenteth seeks and longs for Him.

But now, knowing that thought of Simon's, the

Lord says to him, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both; tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?" And then the blessed Lord beautifully applied the illustration, to bring conviction as to this woman's greater love to Simon's, conscience. But before we look at that, let me first say a word as to the "five hundred" and the "fifty pence." The one who owed the five hundred pence was the poor woman—a poor immoral character, while the fifty pence represented Simon himself, a moral, upright Pharisee. It was, moreover, if he thought at all, what Simon would think the proportionate difference between his debt and that of the woman. He considered himself moral, upright, religious, and probably was scandalized by any comparison with the outcast who had thus entered his house.

But, says the Lord, "Which will love *most*?" Oh! that "*most*"—surely it applied to the one who owed the most. As if the Lord had said, "Here is this woman, a sinner; and who, moreover, is deeply conscious of her sinfulness; she has been treading the haunts of crime, she knows their depth, their darkness, their horrors, and therefore she can appreciate the grace which is in me; and because

she has had so much forgiven, therefore she loves much." And, shall I say, he who has in like manner been snatched from the drop, plucked from the very clutches of the devil, the drunkard, the murderer, will raise a louder song by-and-bye than he who has never known such depths of iniquity. The height to which he is raised will be proportionate to the depths into which he had sunk. Oh! what a heaven it will be when millions of "five hundred pence" sinners shall be brought home! No voices will send up louder songs than theirs, no hearts will respond more heartily than they to the triumphant chorus, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Rescued from depths which no angel ever fathomed, they have travelled up, up to heights which no angel ever reached. Oh! ye moralists! ye hypocrites! ye self-righteous Pharisees, who say, "I am as good as my neighbour; I keep all the commandments; I observe mercy, morality, kindness in my ordinary dealings;"—the vile sinners whom ye despise shall come from the north and south, and from the east and west, and shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven, whilst ye yourselves shall be cast out. On what principle, I ask, can you distinguish between him who owes fifty

pence and has *nothing to pay*, and another person who owes five thousand pence and is equally unable to meet the claim? They both have *nothing to pay*. They are, as to want, on equal ground. The law can put its hand upon the one as well as the other. It is a matter of debt, and utter inability to pay it in both cases. And so, beloved, is it as to sin. The child who has not lived long enough to sin consciously, but is born in sin, and the vile old man hanging over the very precipice of hell, are one and the other by nature under sin, and must have salvation if they are not to perish for ever. There are no *degrees* as to the matter of *sin* or *salvation*. I have either a sinful nature, and so need salvation, or I have a sinless nature and do not need salvation. But as to our world, man, ourselves, "*all* have sinned"—*all* therefore need a Saviour. But, oh! though there is no difference in this respect as to sin in itself, any of it or all of it being such, there is a wonderful difference as to the sense which people possess of the *removal* of sin. "Ah," said an old woman, "you were wrong to-night when you said that no voice will sing a louder song than yours; for, surely, I who have served the devil all my life, but have now been rescued, surely, I must praise Him most." And as she was speaking, a young man came up and interrupted: "Nay, mother, I shall sing even a louder song than you will, for I

was within a very hair's-breadth of damnation, rushing down to hell headlong, when God's grace arrested and saved me." Ah! these are the five-hundred pence sinners! and truly, if one voice can be louder than another yonder, *their* songs will not be the feeblest. And if each one is to be louder than the rest, no wonder that, as the jubilant song rolls on and on, and swells louder and louder still, through the eternal ages, no wonder that it shall be like the sound of many waters, of oceans piled on oceans of rushing sounds, such as human orchestra has never known, and created ear has never heard. Yes, though there is no difference as to salvation—the same alike for great sinners and little sinners, yet there is a marvellous difference in the love of those who are saved. Love is shown strikingly in this narrative; the Lord contrasts the love which this woman, this five hundred pence sinner, had shown Him, with the want of civility which Simon had manifested. As if He had said, "Ever since I came in here, the love of this woman has been a cup of refreshing to my lips; she has brought me her confidence in me as her Saviour, her love to me as her Redeemer; and it has been a feast most costly." Ah! beloved, do I weary you with bare repetition of it? He did not care about that which so engrossed Simon's mind; He did not care whether this part of the feast were good, or

that part dainty; no, what he said was this—
 “This woman—this woman—this woman;”—not,
 “This feast,” but “this woman.” Over and over
 again, it was “this woman.” And ah! who was
 it that had an ear to hear it but the silent weeping
 one herself? What wonder to her! what joy!
 what rest to her soul! What heeded she the way
 she had come, the fear she once had, the rebuke of
 Simon? There was conscious communion now be-
 tween her soul and the Lord. Dead to all else the
 language of her heart was—

“Precious Jesus, I have found thee,
 All my utmost need required,
 In thyself, dear Lord, thou’st found me
 All thy loving heart desired.
 I would praise Thee,
 From my heart by love inspired.”

“Both Thine arms are clasped around me,
 And my head is on Thy breast,
 For my weary soul has found Thee
 Such a *perfect, perfect* rest;
 Dearest Saviour,
 Now I know that I am blest.”

And oh! as to yourselves, if you would give
 the Lord of glory the highest feast conceivable, you
 can do it by owning yourself a sinner just as she
 did, and Him a Saviour as she did. The Lord had
 more joy over one such woman than over ninety and
 nine Simons who would bring Him to a feast, but
 withhold the love and trust of their hearts. He had

more joy in that poor city sinner than in all the illustrious guests that ever could be invited—invited in mere compliment to Himself.

And there are many now who will patronize Christianity in much the same way as Simon patronized Jesus, they invite Christians to their house as Simon invited our Lord, but it is not such who truly feast the blessed Lord, but those sinners who, once buried in depths of iniquity, have found their peace and rest in Him, and who, with all others *owning* themselves to be such, can say—

“I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto Me and rest,
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon My breast.”

And who also respond—

“I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.”

And now, mark, what the Lord has to say to the woman herself; and oh! what a word it is—
“Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.”

Observe, He does not say, “thy love,” or “thy tears,” or “the ointment,” but “thy *faith* hath saved thee.”

Nor did He say, “thy love *and* thy faith;” no, it is THE BLOOD OF JESUS, and that alone; nothing can be added to the merit, the value,

the efficacy of that precious blood. But what sees Christ dying for us, shedding for us, for our sins, that precious blood? FAITH. Faith takes hold of that blood; and so faith glorifies the Lord Jesus. When with lowly heart, trusting alone in Jesus, I come to Him, then He is glorified. And mark here, beloved: faith always believes; it can do nothing but believe; it cannot doubt; and salvation is just on believing. And this salvation, as I remarked in another place, is a *present* salvation. Said the blessed Lord to that dying and redeemed thief, "*To-day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

"To-day,"—ah, truly, it *was* a day! At its beginning, in his prison cell, he was a child of wrath, even as others; in the midst of that day, hanging on the tree, he was a public blasphemer; and at its close was carried, redeemed, changed, sanctified, and holy, into the very presence of Jesus in Paradise. I noticed, too, what a *perfect* salvation it was; "*To-day* shalt thou be *with me*." "*With me*." Does not that imply the very highest conceivable bliss? There is nothing higher. He Himself will constitute our heaven. A crown is but a thing; harps, and robes, and mansions are but things, but He is *a person*. He says, "You shall sit at *my* table." The table blessed because *it is His*. And again, "Shall sit down with *Me*." And here, "*To-day*

shalt thou be with Me." And what a word, "Me," inclusive of all that He has and is.

Dear friends, is this our thought of happiness—to be for ever with Him ; not glory, not heaven even ; when we next see Him with these bodily eyes, it will not be in heaven at all, *but in the air*. We shall meet the Lord in the air, and be for ever with the Lord. And then a *personal* salvation was in that word "*thou*." "Thou shalt be with me," thou, and not another, thou *thyself*.

We have these same three features unfolded in the salvation of this woman. Said the blessed Lord to her, "*Thy* faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

Here we have a personal salvation: "*thy*" faith, and not the faith of anyone else ; next, a *present* salvation, *hath* saved thee ; or as He said to another, "*hath* made thee *whole*." Here you have a *perfect* salvation ; not partly saved and partly lost, not partly justified and partly condemned ; not partly forgiven and partly not forgiven ; ah, no ! but "SAVED"—"Thy faith hath SAVED thee."

Mark well, the immediate *moral effect* on her life. She had owed much ; she loved much—*loved at once*. Love in her was a blessed fruit of what she saw in Jesus ; love drew her to where He was ; she was not ashamed to confess Him before men. Love led her to minister to Him.

The alabaster box was for Him—the more costly the better ; she did it unto Him, knowing that He would receive it. This is the true principle of service : it must be done *to Him*. All work that is not done *to Him* will be as hay, wood, and stubble in that day.

But what a change in life and walk does the knowledge of Christ work in a sinner. This woman was a new creature. No more her haunts of sin—no more her ways of guilt. Was she the once fallen sister of Martha and Lazarus? Likely she was.—What a life was hers on conversion! She knew Him—she loved Him. Sitting at His feet, she had chosen the good part, never to be taken from her. That “good part” was not salvation, for Martha had that as much as her sister. No, she had entered into the Lord’s own thoughts of her—sat at His feet to know and enjoy them from himself. This is the true place of service—sitting at Christ’s feet. Ah, beloved, this woman’s change was a real change. Many in our day talk of justification and of sanctification with the lightness of men in the flesh ; but he who is really justified will live justly ; and he who is really sanctified will live holily.

May God give you, beloved, to understand all this ; may He give you to see it to be your salvation, even to know it ; may you especially know His grace and love *in receiving sinners*, the mani-

festation of which we have here in Christ Jesus. Never had this been so clearly unfolded before, When God led the sacramental host of Israel, though it was in grace, yet He shrouded Himself within the mystic cloud; no man might see Him and live. But now God, without any restraint, has manifested the ineffable love and grace of His heart in the face of Jesus Christ; all the veils have been torn aside—the Father is seen in the Son. God is seen in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto them their transgressions; His holiness, righteousness, love, and grace, all revealed in Him. But though revealed, it were impossible that *all* could be fully known. There are depths below depths, and heights above heights of grace and love which have been from all eternity, and which eternity to come can never exhaust or unfold. Language fails, words—thoughts—are inadequate when one attempts to grasp the wondrous love of God to sinners.

And, beloved, it is always the same. Take as an illustration the history of a city sinner, such as the one of whom we have been speaking.

A daughter had wandered away from her home until even a mother's patient search could ascertain no more concerning her. But she was, though lost, the still fondly-loved child. Apparently, like the prodigal, she was dead to all; but that mother's

heart did not forget, could not cease to pray and yearn over the wandering one. One night the storm howled with unusual fury over her desolate home. The mother's thought went out in prayer after the daughter; for, though good as dead, the mother knew there was one who could rescue and restore. The storm still raging, she went again upon her knees, and again pleaded with God who gives all things to the prayer . . . Scarcely had she risen from her knees when an object presented itself at the door,—her own lost one, the very picture of wretchedness and want.

“May I be forgiven, mother?” sobbed the penitent child.

A welcome was given, and then the mother said,

“We'll ask God to save and forgive you, my child.”

“Mother,” said she, “God *has* forgiven me.”

Passing along on the high road of her sin and shame, she went through a crowded street, where a voice was heard uplifting Jesus. It was some good evangelist making known the good news of God to the dying sons of men. Would that more who profess to be preachers and evangelists, loved sinners just where they are, as Paul did, as Jesus did in the street, or in the house, or by the way, and not merely amid the well-ordered and pre-arranged gatherings. The word went home in the power of the Holy Ghost.

“God saved me,” said she, “and that has brought me home.”

What a word for that soul!—“God saved me;” and what a word to that mother. Oh, ye mothers, He does, indeed, give all things to prayer. And ye believers, because ye are lovers of souls, or rather lovers of the glory of your Lord, what a word is this for you. And oh! sinners, you, perhaps, are saying, though we knew it not, “He hath saved me.” Blessed *hath!* Blessed in heaven—blessed to sinners; for this man, the ascended ONE, still receiveth sinners:—

“Oh! ye that feel your sin,
And coming long have been,
Now find your rest in Him.”

O ye people! All ye that pass by! come to this precious Saviour; come to Him now! for him that cometh—her that cometh—ye poor daughters of sin—“He will in no wise cast out.” Said the Lord to this woman: not “thy love,” but “thy *faith* hath saved thee, *go in peace.*” This was what she got—this was what she wanted, to be ever in peace; she was to be always in peace. Such is the force of our Lord’s word: be going on in peace. Peace was a blessing to be conserved—a blessing which was to abide with her; her salvation was complete—she got *the Lord*. Ah, this was beyond all else; she had sought *Him*, and now had found Him.

He had said to Her, "*Thy sins are forgiven thee.*" Blessed word! And, "*Go in peace.*" Again, I ask, was this spoken to her whom afterwards we know as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus? Ah, then, what peace was hers, and what love! Her sense of Christ's value was that which made her what she was—a loving, living disciple at His feet. *Her* walk ever after was with Him. Instead of weeping at His grave on the morning from the dead, she was in peace in *the Risen One*; and on His ascending into heaven, she might have said, well remembering Him—

I hear His words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.

'Tis everlasting peace!
Sure as Jehovah's name,
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
For evermore the same.

The clouds may go and come,
And storms may sweep my sky,
This blood-seal'd friendship changes not,
The cross is ever nigh.

My love is oftentimes low,
My joy still ebbs and flows,
But peace with Him remains the same,
No change Jehovah knows.

That which can shake the Cross
May shake the peace it gave,

Which tells me Christ has never died,
Or never left the grave!

Till then my peace is sure,
It will not, cannot yield;
Jesus, I know, has died and lives—
On this firm rock I build.

I change, He changes not;
My Christ can never die:
His love, not mine, the resting-place,
His truth, not mine, the tie.

The Cross still stands unchanged,
Though heaven is now His home;
The mighty stone is rolled away,
But yonder is His tomb!

And yonder is my peace,
The grave of all my woes!
I know the Son of God has come,
I know He died and rose.

I know He liveth now
At God's right hand above;
I know the throne on which He sits,
I know His truth and love!

Oh! blessed, thrice blessed peace!— a peace which we have in Him who died for us, and who is the Risen and ascended ONE. Dear friends, is this peace yours? Have you ever, for yourselves, heard that word—"Go in peace." Beloved, is it yours? Sinner, is it yours? Then, go in peace. Yea, now, this very hour, live in it—His peace—peace in believing in Jesus. And oh! have you in

your own soul heard this word, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

It is sin which has involved us in death.

Five hundred pence sinners and fifty pence sinners were alike sentenced to die; but Jesus died for us: this is the Gospel—this gives peace. On the ground of His own death for us the Lord can say, "*Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace.*" Accordingly, believing in His word, we are forgiven—we have salvation—we have peace—we *are saved*. This, O this is the Gospel—this it is which we preach—this is *the word*, the word of the living God, this is what we believe. But oh!—

Not by the natural mind
Can we discern the word,
For none by searching e'er can find
Out God—the Saviour Lord.

To learn by might—our own,
To toil with natural breath,
Is empty as the whistling wind,
And worketh only death.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear
Of man hath heard God's love;
*That love once known, the Lord is there
With quick'ning from above.*

O 'tis the Spirit's work
To search out deepest things,
And babes and sucklings born of Him
Can take whate'er he brings.

My God! now give this power,
This quick'ning from above,
That new-born souls this very hour
May see and feel Thy love.

Then praises to His name,
Who bought us with His blood!
Eternal praises we'll proclaim,
Thou wonder-working God!

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