

## Christ Triumphant

A Sermon

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“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”—[Colossians 2:15](#).

TO THE EYE OF REASON the cross is the centre of sorrow and the lowest depth of shame. Jesus dies a malefactor's death. He hangs upon the gibbet of a felon and pours out his blood upon the common mount of doom with thieves for his companions. In the midst of mockery, and jest, and scorn, and ribaldry, and blasphemy, he gives up the ghost. Earth rejects him and lifts him from her surface, and heaven affords him no light, but darkens the mid-day sun in the hour of his extremity. Deeper in woe the Saviour dived, imagination cannot descend. A blacker calumny than was cast on him satanic malice could not invent. He hid not his face from shame and spitting; and what shame and spitting it was! To the world the cross must ever be the emblem of shame: to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness. How different however is the view which presents itself to the eye of faith. Faith knows no shame in the cross, except the shame of those who nailed the Saviour there; it sees no ground for scorn, but it hurls indignant scorn at sin, the enemy which pierced the Lord. Faith sees woe, indeed, but from this woe it marks a fount of mercy springing. It is true it mourns a dying Saviour, but it beholds him bringing life and immortality to light at the very moment when his soul was eclipsed in the shadow of death. Faith regards the cross, not as the emblem of shame, but as the token of glory. The sons of Belial lay the cross in the dust, but the Christian makes a constellation of it, and sees it glittering in the seventh heaven. Man spits upon it, but believers, having angels for their companions, bow down and worship him who ever liveth though once he was crucified. My brethren, our text presents us with a portion of the view which faith is certain to discover when its eyes are anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit. It tells us that the cross was Jesus Christ's field of triumph. There he fought, and there he conquered, too. As a victor on the cross he divided the spoil. Nay, more than this; in our text the cross is spoken of as being Christ's triumphal chariot in which he rode when he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. Calvin thus admirably expounds the last sentence of our text:—“the expression in the Greek allows, it is true, of our reading—*in himself*; the connection of the passage, however, requires that we read it otherwise; for what would be meagre as applied to Christ, suits admirably well as applied to the cross. For as he had previously compared the cross to a signal trophy or show of triumph, in which Christ led about his enemies, so he now also compares it to

a triumphal car in which he showed himself in great magnificence. For there is no tribunal so magnificent, no throne so stately, no show of triumph so distinguished, no chariot so elevated, as is the gibbet on which Christ has subdued death and the devil, the prince of death; nay, more, has utterly trodden them under his feet.”

I shall this morning, by God’s help, address you upon the two portions of the text. First, I shall endeavour to describe *Christ as spoiling his enemies on the cross*; and having done that I shall lead your imagination and your faith further on to see *the Saviour in triumphal procession upon his cross*, leading his enemies captive, and making a shew of them openly before the eyes of the astonished universe.

I. First, our faith is invited this morning to behold CHRIST MAKING A SPOIL OF PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS. Satan, leagued with sin and death, had made this world the home of woe. The Prince of the power of the air, fell usurper, not content with his dominions in hell, must need invade this fair earth. He found our first parents in the midst of Eden; he tempted them to forego their allegiance to the King of heaven; and they became at once his bondslaves—bondslaves forever, if the Lord of heaven had not interposed to ransom them. The voice of mercy was heard while the fetters were being rivetted upon their feet, crying, “*Ye shall yet be free!*” In the fulness of time there shall come one who shall bruise the serpent’s head, and shall deliver his prisoners from the house of their bondage. Long did the promise tarry. The earth groaned and travailed in its bondage. Man was Satan’s slave, and heavy were the clanking chains which were upon his soul. At last, in the fulness of time, the Deliverer came forth, born of a woman. This infant conqueror was but a span long. He lay in the manger—he who was one day to bind the old dragon and cast him into the bottomless pit, and set a seal upon him. When the old serpent knew that his enemy was born, he conspired to put him to death; he leagued with Herod to seek the young child that he might destroy him. But the providence of God preserved the future conqueror; he went down into Egypt, and there was he hidden for a little season. Anon, when he had come to fulness of years, he made his public advent, and began to preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. Then Satan again shot forth his arrows, and sought to end the existence of the woman’s seed. Once the Jews took up stones to stone him; nor did they fail to repeat the attempt. They sought to cast him down from the brow of a hill headlong. By all manner of devices they laboured to take away his life, but his hour was not yet. Dangers might surround him, but he was invulnerable till the time was come. At last the tremendous day arrived. Foot to foot the conqueror must fight with the dread tyrant. A voice was heard in heaven, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.” And Christ himself exclaimed, “Now is the crisis of this world; now must the prince of darkness be cast out.” From the table of communion the Redeemer arose at midnight, and marched forth to the battle. How dreadful was the contest! In the very first onset the mighty conqueror seemed himself to be vanquished. Beaten to the earth at the first assault, he fell upon his

knees and cried, "My Father, if it be possible let this cup passd from me." Revived in strength, made strong by heaven, he no longer quailed, and from this hour never did he utter a word which looked like renouncing the fight. From the terrible skirmish all red with bloody sweat, he dashed into the thick of the battle. The kiss of Judas was, as it were, the first sounding of the trumpet; Pilate's bar was the glittering of the spear; the cruel lash was the crossing of the swords. But the cross was the centre of the battle; there, on the top of Calvary, must the dread fight of eternity be fought. Now must the Son of God arise, and gird his sword upon his thigh. Dread defeat or glorious conquest awaits the Champion of the church. Which shall it be? We hold our breath with anxious suspense while the storm is raging. I hear the trumpet sound. The howlings and yells of hell rise in awful clamour. The pit is emptying out its legions. Terrible as lions, hungry as wolves, and black as night, the demons rush on in myriads. Satan's reserve forces, those who had long been kept against this day of terrible battle, are roaring from their dens. See how countless their armies, and how fierce their countenances. Brandishing his sword the arch fiend leads the van, bidding his followers fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel. Terrible are the leaders of the battle. Sin is there, and all its innumerable offspring, spitting forth the venom of asps, and infixing their poison-fangs in the Saviour's flesh. Death is there upon his pale horse, and his cruel dart rends its way through the body of Jesus even to his inmost heart. He is "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Hell comes, with all its coals of juniper and fiery darts. But chief and head amongst them is Satan; remembering well the ancient day Christ hurled him from the battlements of heaven, he rushes with all his malice yelling to the attack. The darts shot into the air are so thick that they blind the sun. Darkness covers the battle-field, and like that of Egypt it was a darkness which might be felt. Long does the battle seem to waver, for there is but one against many. One man—nay, tell it, lest any should misunderstand me, one *God* stands in battle array against ten thousands of principalities and powers. On, on they come, and he receives them all. Silently at first he permits their ranks to break upon him, too terribly enduring hardness to spare a thought for shouting. But at last the battle-cry is heard. He who is fighting for his people begins to shout, but it is a shout which makes the church tremble. He cries, "I thirst." The battle is so hot upon him, and the dust so thick that he is choked with thirst. He cries, "I thirst." Surely, now, he is about to be defeated? Wait awhile; see ye yon heaps; all these have fallen beneath his arm, as for the rest fear not the issue. The enemy is but rushing to his own destruction. In vain his fury and his rage, for see the last rank is charging, the battle of ages is almost over. At last the darkness is dispersed. Hark how the conqueror cries, "It is finished." And where now are his enemies? They are all dead. There lies the king of terrors, pierced through with one of his own darts! There lies Satan with his head all bleeding, broken! Yonder crawls the broken-backed serpent, writhing in ghastly misery! As for sin, it is cut in pieces, and scattered to the winds of heaven! "*It is finished,*" cries the conqueror, as he came with dyed garments from Bozrah, "I have

trodden the wine-press alone, I have trampled them in my fury, and their blood is sprinkled on my garments.”

And now he proceeds to *divide the spoil*.

We pause here to remark that when the spoil is divided it is a sure token that the battle is completely won. The enemy will never suffer the spoil to be divided among the conquerors as long as he has any strength remaining. We may gather from our text of a surety, that Jesus Christ has totally routed, thoroughly defeated once for all, and put to retreat all his enemies, or else he would not have divided the spoil.

And now, what means this expression of Christ dividing the spoil? I take it that it means, first of all, that *he disarmed all his enemies*. Satan came against Christ; he had in his hand a sharp sword called the Law, dipped in the poison of sin, so that every wound which the law inflicted was deadly. Christ dashed this sword out of Satan’s hand, and there stood the prince of darkness disarmed. His helmet was cleft in twain, and his head was crushed with a rod of iron. Death rose against Christ. The Savior snatched his quiver from him, cut them in two, gave Death back the feather end, but kept the poisoned barbs from him, that he might never destroy the ransomed. Sin came against Christ; but sin was utterly cut in pieces. It had been Satan’s armour bearer, but its shield was cast away, and it lay dead upon the plain. Is it not a noble picture to behold all the enemies of Christ?—nay, my brethren, all your enemies, and mine, totally disarmed? Satan has nothing left him now wherewith he may attack us. He may attempt to injure us, but wound us he never can, for his sword and spear are utterly taken away. In the old battles, especially among the Romans, after the enemy had been overcome, it was the custom to take away all their weapons and ammunition; afterwards they were stripped of their armour and their garments, their hands were tied behind their backs, and they were made to pass under the yoke. Now, even so hath Christ done with sin, death, and hell: he hath taken away their armour, spoiled them of all their weapons, and made them all to pass under the yoke; so that now they are our slaves, and we in Christ are conquerors of them who were mightier than we.

I take it this is the first meaning of dividing the spoil—total disarming of the adversary.

In the next place, when the victors divide the spoil they carry away not only the weapons but all the treasures which belong to their enemies. They dismantle their fortresses, and rifle all their stores, so that in future they may not be able to renew the attack. Christ has done the like with all his enemies. Old Satan had taken away from us all our possessions. Paradise, Satan had added to his territories. All the joy, and happiness, and peace of man, Satan had taken—not that he could enjoy them himself, but that he delighted to thrust us down into poverty and damnation. Now, all our lost inheritances Christ hath gotten back to us. Paradise is ours, more than all the joy and happiness that Adam had, Christ hath brought back to us. O robber of our race, how art thou spoiled and carried away captive! Didst thou despoil Adam of his riches? The second Adam hath rent them from thee! How is the hammer of

the whole earth cut asunder and broken, and the waster is become desolate. Now shall the needy be remembered, and again shall the meek inherit the earth. "Then is the prey of a great spoil divided, the lame take the prey."

Moreover, when victors divide the spoil, it is usual to take away all the ornaments from the enemy, the crowns and the jewels. Christ on the cross did the like with Satan. Satan had a crown on his head, a haughty diadem of triumph. "I fought the first Adam," he said; "I overcame him, and here's my glittering diadem." Christ snatched it from his brow in the hour when he bruised the serpent's head. And now Satan cannot boast of a single victory, he is thoroughly defeated. In the first skirmish he vanquished manhood, but in the second battle manhood vanquished him. The crown is taken from Satan. He is no longer the prince of God's people. His reigning power is gone. He may tempt, but he cannot compel; he may threaten, but he cannot subdue; for the crown is taken from his head, and the mighty are brought low. O sing unto the Lord a new song, all ye his people, make a joyful noise unto him with psalms, all ye his redeemed; for he hath broken in sunder the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron, he hath broken the bow and cut the spear in sunder, he hath burned the chariots in the fire, he hath dashed in pieces our enemies, and divided the spoil with the strong.

And now, what says this to us? Simply this. If Christ on the cross hath spoiled Satan, let us not be afraid to encounter this great enemy of our souls. My brethren, in all things we must be made like unto Christ. We must bear our cross, and on that cross we must fight as he did with sin, and death and hell. Let us not fear. The result of the battle is certain, for as the Lord our Saviour hath overcome once even so shall we most surely conquer in him. Be none of you afraid with sudden fear when the evil one cometh upon you. If he accuse you, reply to him in these words:—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" If he condemn you, laugh him to scorn, crying:—"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather hath risen again." If he threaten to divide you from Christ's love, encounter him with confidence:—"I am persuaded that neither things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord." If he let loose your sins upon you dash the hell-dogs aside with this:—"if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If death should threaten you, shout in his very face:—"O grave where is thy sting" O death, where is thy victory?" Hold up the cross before you. Let that be your shield and buckler and rest assured that as your master not only routed the foe but afterwards took the spoil, it shall be even so with you. Your battles with Satan shall turn to your advantage. You shall become all the richer for your antagonists. The more numerous they shall be, the greater shall be your share of the spoil. Your tribulation shall work patience, and your patience experience, and your experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed. Through this much tribulation shall you inherit the kingdom, and by the very attacks of Satan shall you

be helped the better to enjoy the rest which remaineth to the people of God. Put yourselves in array against sin and Satan. All ye that bend the bow shoot at them, spare no arrows, for your enemies are rebels against God. Go ye up against them, put your feet upon their necks, fear not, neither be ye dismayed, for the battle is the Lord's and he will deliver them into your hands. Be ye very courageous, remembering that you have to fight with a stingless dragon. He may hiss, but his teeth are broken and his poison fang extracted. You have to battle with an enemy already scarred by your Master's weapons. You have to fight with a naked enemy. Every blow you give him tells upon him. for he has nothing left to protect him. Christ hath stripped him naked, and divided his armour, and left him defenceless before his people. Be not afraid. The lion may howl, but rend you in pieces he never can. The enemy may rush in upon you with hideous noise and terrible alarms, but there is no real cause for fear. Stand fast in the Lord. Ye war against a king who hath lost his crown; ye fight against an enemy whose cheek-bones have been smitten, and the joints of whose loins have been loosed. Rejoice, rejoice ye in the day of battle, for it is for you but the beginning of an eternity of triumph.

I have thus endeavoured to dwell upon the first part of the text, Christ on the cross divided the spoil and he would have us do the same.

II. The second part of our text refers not only to the dividing of the spoil, but to THE TRIUMPH. When a Roman general had performed great feats in a foreign country, his highest reward was that the senate should decree him a triumph. Of course there was a division of spoil made on the battle-field, and each soldier, and each captain, took his share; but every man looked rapturously to the day when they should enjoy the public triumph. On a certain set day the gates of Rome were thrown open; all the houses were decorated with ornaments; the people climbed to the tops of the houses, or stood in great crowds along the streets. The gates were opened, and by-and-bye the first legion began to stream in with its banners flying and its trumpets sounding. The people saw the stern warriors as they marched along the street returning from their blood-red fields of battle. After one half of the army had thus defiled, your eye would rest upon one who was the centre of all attraction: riding in a noble chariot drawn by milk-white horses, there came the conqueror himself, crowned with the laurel crown and standing erect. Chained to his chariot were the kings and mighty men of the regions which he had conquered. Immediately behind them came part of the booty. There were carried the ivory and the ebony, and the beasts of the different countries which he had subdued. After these came the rest of the soldiery, a long, long stream of valiant men, all of them sharing the triumphs of their captain. Behind them came banners, the old flags that had floated aloft in the battle, the standards which had been taken from the enemy. And after these, large painted emblems of the great victories of the warrior. Upon one there would be a huge map depicting the rivers which he had crossed, or the seas through which his navy had found its way. Everything was represented in a picture, and the populace gave a fresh shout as they saw the memorial of each triumph. And then, behind,

together with the trophies, would come the prisoners of lesser rank. Then the rear would be closed with sound of trumpet, adding to the acclamation of the throng. It was a noble day for old Rome. Children would never forget these triumphs; they would estimate their years from the time of one triumph to another. High holiday was kept. Women cast down flowers before the conqueror, and he was the true monarch of the day.

Now, our apostle had evidently seen such a triumph, or read of it, and he takes this as a representation of what Christ did on the cross. He says, "Jesus made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Have you ever thought that the cross could be the scene of a triumph. Most of the old commentators can scarcely conceive of it as true. They say, "This must certainly refer to Christ's resurrection and ascension." But, nevertheless, so saith the Scripture, even on the cross Christ enjoyed a triumph. Yes! while those hands were bleeding, the acclamations of angels were being poured on his head. Yes, while those feet were being rent with the nails, the noblest spirits in the world were crowding round him in admiration. And when upon that blood-stained cross he died in agonies unutterable, there was heard a shout such as never was heard before for the ransomed in heaven, and all the angels of God with loudest harmony chanted his praise. There was sung, in fullest chorus, the song of Moses, the servant of God and of the Lamb, for he had indeed cut Rahab and sorely wounded the dragon. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

I do not feel able, however, this morning, to work out a scene so grand, and yet so contrary to everything that flesh could guess as a picture of Christ actually triumphing on the cross—in the midst of his bleeding, his wounds, and his pains, actually being a triumphant victor, and admired of all. I choose, rather, to take my text thus: the cross is the ground of Christ's ultimate triumph. He may be said to have really triumphed there, because it was by that one act of his, that one offering of himself, that he completely vanquished all his foes, and for ever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. In the cross, to the spiritual eye, every victory of Christ is contained. It may not be there in fact, but it is there virtually; the germ of his glories may be discovered by the eye of faith in the agonies of the cross.

Bear with me while I humbly attempt to depict the triumph which now results from the cross.

Christ has for ever overcome all his foes, and divided the spoil upon the battle field, and now, even at this day is he enjoying the well-earned reward and triumph of his fearful struggle. Lift up your eyes to the battlements of heaven, the great metropolis of God. The pearly gates are wide open, and the city shines with her bejewelled walls like a bride prepared for her husband. Do you see the angels crowding to the battlements? Do you observe them on every mansion of the celestial city, eagerly desiring and looking for something which has not yet arrived? At last, there is heard the sound of a trumpet, and the angels hurry to the

gates—the vanguard of the redeemed is approaching the city. Abel comes in alone, clothed in a crimson garb, the herald of a glorious army of martyrs. Hark to the shout of acclamation! This is the first of Christ’s warriors, at once a soldier and a trophy, that has been delivered. Close at his heels there follow others, who in those early times had learned of the coming Saviour’s fame. Behind them a mighty host may be discovered of patriarchal veterans, who have witnessed to the coming of the Lord in a wanton age. See Enoch still walking with his God, and singing sweetly—“Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints.” There too is Noah, who had sailed in the ark with the Lord as his pilot. Then follow Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, all mighty men of valour. Harken to them as they enter! Every one of them waving his helmet in the air, cries, “Unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, unto him be honour, and glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever!” Look, my brethren, with admiration upon this noble army! Mark the heroes as they march along the golden streets, everywhere meeting with an enthusiastic welcome from the angels who have kept their first estate. On, on they pour, those countless legions—was there ever such a spectacle? It is not the pageant of a day, but the “show” of all time. For four thousand years, on streams the army of Christ’s redeemed. Sometimes there is a short rank, for the people have often been minished and brought low; but, anon, a crowd succeeds them, and on, on, still on they come, all shouting, all praising him who loved them and gave himself for them. But, see, *he* comes! I see his immediate herald, clad in a garment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins. The Prince of the house of David is not far behind. Let every eye be open. Now, mark, how not only the angels, but the redeemed crowd the windows of heaven! He comes! He comes! It is Christ himself! Lash the snow-white coursers up the everlasting hills; “Life up you heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in.” See, he enters in the midst of acclamations. It is he! but he is not crowned with thorns. It is he! but though his hands wear the scar, they are stained with blood no longer. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns, and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. He stands aloft in that chariot which is “paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.” Clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, he stands confessed the emperor of heaven and earth. On, on he rides, and louder than the noise of many waters and like great thunders are the acclamations which surround him! See how John’s vision is become a reality, for now we can see for ourselves and hear with our ears the new song, whereof he writes, “They sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;



saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” But who are these at his chariot wheels? Who are these grim monsters that come howling in the rear? I know them. First of all there is the arch enemy. Look at the old serpent, bound and fettered, how he writhes his ragged length along! his azure hues all tarnished with trailing in the dust, his scales despoiled of their once-vaunted brightness. Now is captivity led captive, and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. With what derision is the chief of rebels regarded. How is he become the object of everlasting contempt. He that sitteth in the heavens doth laugh, and the Lord doth have him in derision. Behold now how the serpent’s head is broken, and the dragon is trampled under foot. And now regard attentively yon hideous monster, *Sin*, chained hand in hand with his satanic sire. See how he rolls his fiery eye-balls, mark how he twists and writhes in agonies. Mark how he glares upon the holy city, but is unable to spit his venom there, for he is chained and gagged, and dragged along an unwilling captive at the wheels of the victor. And there, too, is old Death, with his darts all broken and his hands behind him—the grim king of terrors, he too is a captive. Hark to the songs of the redeemed, of those who have entered in Paradise, as they see these mighty prisoners dragged along! “Worthy is he,” they shout, “to live and reign at his Almighty Father’s side, for he hath ascended up on high, he hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.”

And now behind him I see the great mass of his people streaming in. The apostles are the first to arrive in one goodly fellowship hymning their Lord; and then their immediate successors; and then a long array of those who through cruel mockings and blood, through flame and sword, have followed their Master. These are those of whom the world was not worthy, brightest among the stars of heaven. Regard also the mighty preachers and confessors of the faith, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine, and the like. Witness their holy unanimity in praising their Lord. Then let your eye run along the glittering ranks till you come to the days of Reformation. I see in the midst of the squadron, Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, three holy brothers. I see just before them Wickliffe, and Huss, and Jerome of Prague, all marching together. And then I see a number that no man can number, converted to God through these mighty reformers, who now follow in the rear of the King of kings and Lord of lords. And looking down to our own time I see the stream broader and wider. For many are the soldiers who have in these last times entered into their Master’s triumph. We may mourn their absence from *us*, but we must rejoice in their presence with the *Lord*. But what is the unanimous shout, what is the one song that still rolls from the first rank to the last? It is

this: “Unto him that loved us, washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever!” Have they changed the tune? Have they supplanted his name by another? Have they put the crown upon another head, or elevated another hero into the chariot? Ah, no: they are content still to let the triumphant procession stream along its glorious length; still to rejoice as they behold fresh trophies of his love, for every soldier is a trophy, every warrior in Christ’s army is another proof of his power to save, and his victory over death and hell.

I have not the time to enlarge further, or else I might describe the mighty pictures at the end of the procession; for in the old Roman triumphs, the deeds of the conqueror were all depicted in paintings. The towns he had taken, the rivers he had passed, the provinces he had subdued, the battles he had fought, were represented in pictures and exposed to the view of the people, who with great festivity and rejoicing, accompanied him in throngs, or beheld him from the windows of their houses, and filled the air with their acclamations and applauses. I might present to you first of all the picture of hell’s dungeons blown to atoms. Satan had prepared deep in the depth of darkness a prison-house for God’s elect; but Christ has not left one stone upon another. On the picture I see the chains broken in pieces, the prison doors burnt with fire, and all the depths of the vasty deep shaken to their foundations. On another picture I see heaven open to all believers; I see the gates that were fast shut heaved open by the golden lever of Christ’s atonement. I see one, another picture, the grave despoiled; I behold Jesus in it, slumbering for awhile, and then rolling away the stone and rising to immortality and glory. But we cannot stay to describe these mighty pictures of the victories of his love. We know that the time shall come when the triumphant procession shall cease, when the last of his redeemed shall have entered into the city of happiness and joy, and when with the shout of a trumpet heard for the last time, he shall ascend into heaven, and take his people up to reign with God, even our Father, even for ever and ever, world without end.

Our only question, and with that we conclude, is, have we a good hope through grace that we shall march in that tremendous procession? Shall we pass under view in that day of pomp and glory? Say, my soul, shalt thou have an humble part in that glorious pageant? Wilt thou follow at his chariot wheels? Wilt thou join in the thundering hosannas? Shall thy voice help to swell the everlasting chorus? Sometimes, I fear it shall not. There are times when the awful question comes—what if my name should be left out when he should read the muster roll? Brethren, does not that thought trouble you? Can you answer it? Will you be there—shall you see this pomp? Will you behold him triumph over sin, death and hell at last? Canst thou answer this question? There is another, but the answer will serve for both—dost thou believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Is he thy confidence and thy trust? Hast thou committed thy soul to his keeping? Reposing on his might canst thou say for thine immortal spirit—

“Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on thee?”

If thou canst say that, thine eyes shall see him in the day of his glory; nay, thou shalt share his glory, and sit with him upon his throne, even as he has overcome and sits down with his Father upon his throne. I blush to preach as I have done this morning on a theme far beyond my power; yet I could not leave it unsung, but, as best I might, sing it. May God enlarge your faith, and strengthen your hope, and inflame your love, and make you ready to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, that when he shall come with flying clouds on wings of wind, ye may be ready to meet him, and may with him ascend to gaze for ever on the vision of his glory.

May God grant this blessing, for Christ's sake. Amen.