

The Broad Wall

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that Christians must maintain a broad wall of separation from the world to preserve their holiness, security, and joy as God's distinct people.

Scripture: Nehemiah 3:8, John 15:19, 2 Corinthians 6:17, Hebrews 13:12, Matthew 25:32-33, Psalm 23:4, Romans 8:31, Isaiah 37:19

Topics: "Separation", "Sanctification", "Christian Living"

Description

In 'The Broad Wall,' C.H. Spurgeon expounds on Nehemiah 3:8 to illustrate the vital importance of separation for Christians. He emphasizes that believers must maintain a clear and broad distinction from the world in conduct, character, and pleasures to preserve their holiness and witness. Spurgeon also highlights the security and joy that come from living within God's protective care. This sermon challenges Christians to live distinctly for Christ and uphold their spiritual integrity in a conforming world.

Transcript

"The broad wall." Nehemiah 3:8.

IT seems that around Jerusalem of old, in the time of her splendor, there was a broad wall which was her defense and her glory. Jerusalem is a type of the Church of God. It is always well when we can see clearly, distinctly and plainly that around the Church to which we belong there runs a broad wall.

This idea of a broad wall around the Church suggests three things, separation, security and enjoyment. Let us examine each of these in its turn.

I. First, the SEPARATION of the people of God from the world is like that broad wall surrounding the holy city of Jerusalem.

When a man becomes a Christian, he is still in the world, but he is no longer to be of it. He was an heir of wrath, but he has now become a child of Grace. Being of a distinct nature, he is required to separate himself from the rest of mankind, as the Lord Jesus Christ did, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." The Lord's Church was separated in His eternal purpose. It was separated in His Covenant and decree. It was separated in the Atonement, for even there we find that our Lord is called "the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." An actual separation is made by Divine Grace, is carried on in the work of sanctification and will be completed in that day when the heavens shall be on fire

and the saints shall be caught up together with the Lord in the air—and in that last tremendous day He shall divide the nations as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats! And then there shall be a great gulf fixed, across which the ungodly cannot go to the righteous, neither shall the righteous approach the wicked.

Practically, my business is to say to those of you who profess to be the Lord's people, take care that you maintain a broad wall of separation between yourselves and the world. I do not say that you are to adopt any peculiarity of dress, or to take up some singular style of speech. Such affectation genders, sooner or later, hypocrisy. A man may be as thoroughly worldly in one coat as in another—he may be quite as vain and conceited with one style of speech as with another. No, he may be even more of the world when he pretends to be separate than if he had left the pretense of separation alone. The separation which we plead for is moral and spiritual. Its foundation is laid deep in the heart and its substantial reality is very palpable in the life.

Every Christian, it seems to me, should be more scrupulous than other men in his dealings. He must never swerve from the path of integrity. He should never say, "It is the custom—it is perfectly understood in the trade." Let the Christian remember that custom cannot sanction wrong and that its being "understood" is no apology for misrepresentation! A lie "understood" is not, therefore, true. While the Golden Rule is more admired than practiced by ordinary men, the Christian should always do unto others as he would that they should do unto him. He should be one whose word is his bond and who, having once pledged his word, swears to his own hurt, but changes not. There ought to be an essential difference between the Christian and the best moralist, by reason of the higher standard which the Gospel inculcates and the Savior has exemplified. Certainly the highest point to which the best unconverted man can go might well be looked upon as a level below which the converted man will never venture to descend!

Moreover, the Christian should especially be distinguished by his pleasures, for it is here, usually, that the man comes out in his true colors. We are not quite ourselves, perhaps, in our daily toil, where our pursuits are rather dictated by necessity than by choice. We are not alone—the society we are thrown into imposes restraints upon us. We have to put the bit and the bridle upon ourselves. The true man does not then show himself—but when the day's work is done, then

the "birds of a feather flock together." It is with the multitude of traders and commercial men as it was with those saints of old, of whom, when they were liberated from prison, it was said, "Being let go, they went unto their own company." So will your pleasures and pastimes give evidence of what your heart is and where it is. If you can find pleasure in sin, then in sin you choose to live and, unless Grace prevents, in sin you will not fail to perish! But if your pleasures are of a nobler kind and your companions of a more devout character. If you seek spiritual enjoyments. If you find your happiest moments in worship, in communion, in silent prayer, or in the public assembling of yourselves with the people of God, then your higher instincts become proof of your purer character and you will be distinguished in your pleasures by a broad wall which effectually separates you from the world!

Such separation should be carried, I think, into everything which affects the Christian. "What have they seen in your house?" was the question Isaiah asked of Hezekiah. When a stranger comes into our house, it should be so ordered that he can clearly perceive that the Lord is there! A man ought scarcely to tarry a night beneath our roof without gathering that we have a respect unto Him who is invisible and that we desire to live and move in the light of God's Countenance. I have already said that I would not have you cultivate singularities for singularity's sake, yet as the most of men are satisfied if they do as other people

do, you must never be satisfied until you do more and better than other people, having found out a mode and course of life as far transcending the ordinary worldling's life as the path of the eagle in the air is above that of the mole which burrows under the soil!

This broad wall between the godly and the ungodly should be most conspicuous in the spirit of our mind. The ungodly man has only this world to live for—do not wonder if he lives very earnestly for it. He has no other treasure—why should he not get as much as he can of this? But you, Christian, profess to have immortal life, therefore your treasure is not to be amassed in this brief span of existence. Your treasure is laid up in Heaven and available for eternity. Your best hopes overleap the narrow bounds of time and fly beyond the grave—your spirit must not, therefore, be earthbound and groveling, but soaring and heavenly! There should always be about you the air of one who has his shoes on his feet, his loins girded and his staff in his hand—the air of a pilgrim ready to be off and away to a better land! You are not to live here as if this were your home. You are not to talk of this world as though it were to last forever. You are not to hoard it and treasure it up as though you had set your heart upon it—but you are to be on the wing as though you had not a nest here and never could have—but expected to find your resting place among the cedars of God, in the hilltops of Glory!

Depend upon it, the more unworldly a Christian is, the better it is for him. I think I could mention several reasons why this wall should be very broad. If you are sincere in your profession, there is a very broad distinction between you and unconverted people. Nobody can tell how far life is removed from death. Can you measure the difference? They are as opposite as the poles. Now, according to your profession, you are a living child of God, you have received a new life, whereas the children of this world are dead in trespasses and sins. How palpable the difference between light and darkness! Yet you profess to have been "sometimes darkness," but now you are made "light in the Lord." There is, therefore, a great distinction between you and the world if you are what you profess to be! You say, when you put on the name of Christ, that you are going to the Celestial City, to the New Jerusalem—but the world turns its back upon the heavenly country and goes downward to that other city of which you know that destruction is its doom—your path is different from theirs. If you are what you say you are, the road you take must be diametrically opposite to that of the ungodly man. You know the difference between their ends. The end of the righteous shall be everlasting Glory, but the end of the wicked is destruction. Unless, then, you are a hypocrite, there is such a distinction between you and others as only God, Himself, could make—a distinction which originates here and is to be perpetuated throughout eternity! When the social diversities occasioned by rank and dependency, riches and poverty, ignorance and learning, shall all have passed away, the distinctions between the children of God and the children of men, between saints and scoffers, between the chosen and the castaway, will still exist! I pray you, then, maintain a broad wall in your conduct, as God has made a broad wall in your state and in your destiny!

Remember again, that our Lord Jesus Christ had a broad wall between Him and the ungodly. Look at Him and see how different He is from the men of His time. All His life long you observe Him to be a stranger and a foreigner in the land. Truly, He drew near to sinners—as near as He could draw—and He received them when they were willing to draw near to Him. But He did not draw near to their sins. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." When He went to His own city of Nazareth, He only preached a single sermon and they would have cast Him headlong down

the hill if they could. When He passed through the street, He became the song of the drunkard, the butt of the foolish, the mark at which the proud shot out the arrows of their scorn! At last, having come to His own and His own having received Him not, they determined to thrust Him altogether out of the camp, so they

took Him to Golgotha and nailed Him to the tree as a malefactor, a promoter of sedition. He was the Great Dissenter, the Great Nonconformist of His age! The National Church first excommunicated and then executed Him. He did not seek difference in things trivial, but the purity of His life and the truthfulness of His testimony roused the spleen of the rulers and the chief men of their synagogues. He was ready in all things to serve them and to bless them—but He never would blend with them. They would have made Him a king. Ah, if He would but have joined the world, the world would have given Him the chief place—as the world's prince said on the mountain—"All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me." But He drives away the fiend and stands immaculate and separate even to the close of His life! If you are a Christian, be a Christian! If you follow Christ, go outside the camp! But if there is no difference between you and your fellow man, what will you say to the King in the day when He comes and finds that you have on no wedding garment by which you can be distinguished from the rest of mankind?

Moreover, dear Friends, you will find that a broad wall of separation is abundantly good for yourselves. I do not think any Christian in the world will tell you that when he has given way to the world's customs, he has ever been profited thereby. If you can go and find an evening's amusement in a suspicious place and feel profited by it, I am sure you are not a Christian, for, if you were really a Christian, it would pain your conscience and unfit you for more devout exercises of the heart! Ask a fish to spend an hour on dry land and I think, did it comply, the fish would find that it was not much to its benefit, for it would be out of its element—and it will be so with you in communion with sinners. When you are compelled to associate with worldly people in the ordinary course of business, you find much that grates upon the ear, that troubles the heart and annoys the soul. You will be often like righteous Lot, vexed with the conversation of the wicked—and you will say with David—

"Woe's me that I in Mesek am

A sojourner so long!

That I in tabernacles dwell

To Kedar that belong."

Your soul will pine and sigh to come forth and wash your hands of everything that is impure and unclean. As you find no comfort there, you will long to get away to the chaste, the holy, the devout, the edifying fellowship of the saints! Make a broad wall, dear Friends, in your daily life! If you begin to give way a little to the world, you will soon give way a great deal. Give sin an inch and it will take a mile. "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves," is an apt motto of economy. So, too, guard against little sins if you would be clear of "the great transgression." Look after the little approaches to worldliness, the little giving in towards the things of ungodliness—and then you will not make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Another good reason for keeping up the broad wall of separation is that you will thereby do most good to the world. I know Satan will tell you that if you bend a little and come near to the ungodly, then they also will come a little way to meet you. Yes, but it is not so! You lose your strength, Christian, the moment you depart from your integrity. What do you think ungodly people say behind your back if they see you inconsistent to please them? "Oh," they say, "there is nothing in his religion but vain pretense! The man is not sincere." Although the world may openly denounce the rigid Puritan, it secretly admires him. When the big heart of the world speaks out, it has respect to the man that is sternly honest and will not yield his principles—no, not a hair's breadth! In such an age as this, when there is so little sound conviction, when

principle is cast to the winds and when a widespread tolerant laxness, both of thought and of practice, seems to rule the day, it is still the fact that a man who is decided in his belief, speaks his mind boldly and acts according to his profession, is sure to command the reverence of mankind! Depend upon it, woman, your husband and your children will respect you none the more because you say, "I will give up some of my Christian privileges," or, "I will go sometimes with you into that which is sinful." You cannot help them out of the mire if you go and plunge yourself into the mud! You cannot help to make them clean if you go and blacken your own hands. How, then, can you wash their faces? You young man in the shop, and you young woman in the workroom, if you keep yourselves to yourselves in Christ's name, chaste and pure for Jesus, not laughing at jokes which should make you blush, not mixing up with pastimes that are sus-

picious, but on the other hand, tenderly jealous of your conscience as one who shrinks from a doubtful thing as a sinful thing, holding sound faith and being scrupulous of the Truths of God—if you will so keep yourselves, your company in the midst of others shall be as though an angel shook his wings and they will say to one another, "Refrain from this or that just now, for So-and-So is here." They will fear you in a certain sense. They will admire you in secret. And who can tell but that, at last, they may come to imitate you?

Would you tempt God? Would you challenge the desolating flood? Whenever the Church comes down to mingle with the world, it behooves the faithful few to fly to the Ark and seek shelter from the avenging storm! When the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair to look upon, then it was that God said it repented Him that He had made men upon the face of the earth—and He sent the deluge to sweep them away! A separate people God's people must be and they shall be! It is His own declaration, "The people shall dwell alone; they shall not be numbered among the nations." The Christian is, in some respects, like the Jew. The Jew is the type of the Christian. You may give the Jew political privileges as he ought to have. He may be adopted into the State as he ought to be. But a Jew he is and a Jew he must still be. He is not a Gentile, even though he calls himself English, or Portuguese, or Spanish, or Polish. He remains one of the people of Israel, a child of Abraham, still a Jew, and you can mark him as such—his speech betrays him in every land. So should it be with the Christian! Mixing up with other men, as he must in his daily calling. Going in and out among them like a man among men. Trading in the market. Dealing in the shop. Mingling in the joys of the social circle. Taking his part in politics, like a citizen, as he is. But, at the same time, always having a higher and a nobler life, a secret into which the world cannot enter and showing the world, by his superior holiness, his zeal for God, his sterling integrity and his unselfish truthfulness—that he is not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world! You cannot tell how concerned I am for some of you that this broad wall should be kept up, for I detect in some of you, at times, a desire to make it very narrow and, perhaps, to pull it down altogether! Brothers and Sisters, beloved in the Lord, you may depend upon it that nothing worse can happen to a Church than to be conformed unto this world! Write "Ichabod" upon her walls, then, for the sentence of destruction has gone out against her. But if you can keep yourselves as—

"A garden walled around, Chosen and made peculiar ground"— you shall have your Master's company, your graces shall grow, you shall be happy in your own souls and Christ shall be honored in your lives!

II. Secondly, the broad wall round about Jerusalem INDICATED SAFETY.

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to his foes! That soul, though all Hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

The Christian is surrounded by the broad wall of God's power. As God is Omnipotent, Satan cannot defeat Him. If God's power is on my side, who shall hurt me? "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

The Christian is surrounded by the broad wall of God's love. Who shall prevail against those whom God loves? I know that it is vain to curse those whom God has not cursed, or to defy them whom the Lord has not defied, for whomever He blesses is blessed, indeed! Balak, the son of Zippor, sought to curse the beloved people and he went first to one

hilltop and then to another, and looked down upon the chosen camp. But, aha, Balaam, you could not curse them, though Balak sought it! You could only say, "They are blessed, yes, and they shall be blessed!"

God's Law is a broad wall around us and so is His justice. These once threatened our destruction, but now the justice of God demands the salvation of every Believer. If Christ has died instead of me, it would not be justice if I also had to die for my sin. If God has received the full payment of the debt from the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, then how can He demand the debt again? He is satisfied and we are secure!

The immutability of God, also, surrounds His people like a broad wall. "I am God, I change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed." As long as God is the same, the Rock of our salvation will be our secure hiding place.

Upon this delightful Truth of God we might linger long, for there is much to cheer us in the strong security which God has given in Covenant to His people. They are surrounded by the broad wall of electing love. Does God choose them and will He lose them? Did He ordain them to eternal life and shall they perish? Did He engrave their names upon His heart and shall those names be blotted out? Did He give them to His Son to be His heritage and shall His Son lose His portion? Did He say, "They shall be Mine, says the Lord, in the day when I make up My jewels," and shall He part with them? Has He who makes all things obey Him, no power to keep the people whom He has formed for Himself to be His own peculiar heritage? God forbid that we should doubt it! Electing love, like a broad wall, surrounds every heir of Grace!

And oh, how broad is the wall of redeeming love! Will Jesus fail to claim the people He bought with so great a price? Did He shed His blood in vain? How can He revive enmity against those whom He has once reconciled unto God, not imputing their transgression unto them? Having obtained eternal Redemption for them, will He adjudge them to everlasting Hell? Has He purged their sins by Sacrifice and will He then leave them to be the victims of Satanic craft? By the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, every Christian may be assured that He cannot perish, neither can any pluck him out of Christ's hands! Unless the Cross was all a gamble, unless the Atonement was a mere speculation, those for whom Jesus died are saved through His death! Therefore "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

As a broad wall which surrounds the saints of God is the work of the Holy Spirit. Does the Spirit begin and then not finish the operations of His Grace? Ah, no! Does He give life which afterwards dies out? That is impossible! Has He not told us that the Word of God is the incorruptible Seed which lives and abides forever? And shall the powers of Hell or the evil of our own flesh destroy what God has pronounced immortal, or cause dissolution to that which God says is incorruptible? Is not the Spirit of God given to us to abide with us forever—and shall He be expelled from that heart in which He has taken up His everlasting dwelling? Brothers and Sisters, we are not of their mind whom are led by fear or fallacy to hazard such conjectures! We rejoice to say with Paul, "Being confident of this very thing, that He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." We delight to sing—

"Grace will complete what Grace begins, To save from sorrows or from sins. The work that wisdom undertakes Eternal mercy never forsakes." Almost every Doctrine of Grace affords us a broad wall, a strong bastion, a mighty bulwark, a grand munition of defense! Take, for instance, Christ's suretyship engagements. He is Surety to His Father for His people. When He brings home the flock, do you think that He will have to report that some of them are lost? Not so!

"Here am I," will He say, "and the children that You have given Me. Of all whom You have given Me, I have lost none." He will keep all the saints even to the end! The honor of Christ is involved in this matter. If Christ loses one soul that leans upon Him, the integrity of His crown is gone—for if there should be one believing soul in Hell, the Prince of Darkness would hold up that soul and say—"Aha! You could not save them all! Aha! You Captain of Salvation, You were defeated here! Here is one poor little Benjamin, are Ready-to-Halt that You could not bring to Glory, and I have him to be my prey forever!" But it shall not be! Every gem shall be in Jesus' crown! Every sheep shall be in Jesus' flock! He shall not be defeated in any way, or in any measure, but He shall divide the spoil with the strong, He shall establish the cause He undertakes, He shall eternally conquer! Glory be unto His great and good name!

III. The idea of a broad wall—and with this I close—SUGGESTS ENJOYMENT.

The walls of Nineveh and Babylon were broad—so broad that there was found room for several chariots to pass each other. Here men walked at sunset and talked and promoted good fellowship. If you have ever been in the city of York, you will know how interesting it is to walk around the broad walls there. But our figure is drawn from the Orientals. They were accustomed to come out of their houses and walk on the broad walls. They used them for rest from toil and for the manifold pleasures of recreation. It was very delightful, when the sun was going down and all was cool, to walk on those broad walls. And so, when a Believer comes to know the deep things of God and to see the defenses of God's people, he walks along them and he rests in confidence. "Now," he says, "I am at rest and peace. The destroyer cannot molest me. I am delivered from the noise of archers in the place of the drawing of water and here I can exercise myself in prayer and meditation. Now that salvation is appointed for walls and bulwarks, I will sing a song unto Him who has done these great things for me. I will take my rest and be quiet, for he that believes has entered into rest. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Broad walls, then, are for rest, and so are our broad walls of salvation!

Those broad walls were also for communion. Men came there and talked with one another. They leaned over the wall and whispered their loving words, conversed of their business, comforted one another, related their troubles and their joys. So, when Believers come unto Christ Jesus, they commune with one another, with the angels, with the spirits of just men made perfect, and with Jesus Christ their Lord, who is best of all! Oh, on those broad walls, when the banner of love waves over them, they sometimes rejoice with an unspeakable joy in fellowship with Him who loved them and gave Himself for them! It is a blessed thing, in the Church of Christ, when you get such a knowledge of the Doctrines of the Gospel that you can have the sweetest communion with the whole Church of the living God!

And then the broad walls were also intended for prospects and outlooks. The citizen came up on the broad wall and looked away from the smoke and dirt of the city within, right across to the green fields, the gleaming river and the far-off mountains! They delighted to watch the mowing of hay, or the reaping of corn, or the setting sun beyond the distant hills. It was one of the common enjoyments of the citizen of any walled city to come to the top of the wall in order to take views afar. So, when a man once gets into the altitudes of Gospel Doctrine and has learned to understand the love of God in Christ Jesus, what wide

views he can take! How he looks down upon the sorrows of life! How he looks beyond that narrow little stream of death! How, sometimes, when the weather is bright and his eyes are clear enough to let him use the telescope, he can see within the Gates of Pearl and behold the joys which no mortal eye has seen and hear the songs which no mortal ear has heard, for these are things, not for eyes and ears, but for hearts and spirits! Blessed is the man who dwells in the Church of God, for he can find on her broad walls places from which he can see the King in His beauty and the land which is very far off!

Ah, dear Friends, I wish that these things had to do with you all, but I am afraid they have not, for many of you are outside the wall! And when the destroyer comes, none will be safe but those who are inside the wall of Christ's love and mercy. I would to God that you would escape to the gate at once, for it is open. It will be shut—it will be shut one day, but it is now open. When night comes, the night of death, the gate will be shut and you will then come and say, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But the answer will be—

"Too late, too late! You cannot enter now."

But it is not too late yet! Christ still says, "Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it." Oh, that you had the will to come and put your trust in Jesus, for if you do, you shall be saved! I cannot speak to some of you about security, for there are no broad walls to defend you. You have run away from the security. Perhaps you have been patching up with some untempered mortar a righteousness of your own which will all be thrown down as a bowing wall and as a tottering fence. Oh that you would trust in Jesus! Then would you have a broad wall which all the battering rams of Hell shall never be able to shake! When the storms of eternity shall beat against that wall, it shall stand fast forever!

I cannot speak to some of you about rest, and enjoyment, and communion, for you have sought rest where there is none. You have got a peace which is not peace. You have found a comfort which will be your destruction! God make you to be distressed and cause you by sore stress to flee to the Lord Jesus and so to get true peace, the only peace, for, "He is our peace." Oh, that you would close in with Christ and trust Him! Then you would rejoice in the present happiness

which faith would give you! But the sweetest thing of all would be the prospect which should then unfold to you of the eternal happiness which Christ has prepared for all those who put their trust in Him!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: PSALM 71.

Verses 1-8. In You, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. Deliver me in Your righteous, and cause me to escape: incline Your ear unto me, and save me. Be You my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: You have given commandment to save me; for You are my rock and my fortress. Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man. For You are my hope, O Lord God, You are my trust from my youth. By You have I been held up from the womb: You are He that took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You. David had enjoyed the mercy of God from his very birth. We are apt to forget the tender care of God over our infancy, but we ought to remember it—and it will be a great comfort to us if we come to a second childhood, to remember how kindly God took care of us in the first!

7-11. I am at a wonder unto many, but You are my strong refuge. Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your honor all the day. Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength fails. For my enemies speak against me, and they that lay wait for my soul. They take counsel together, saying, God has forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him. Surely that ought

to have been the reason for letting him alone! With right-minded persons it would have been so, but the devil and his children are arrant cowards and their argument is, "Persecute and take him: for there is none to deliver him." You might as well expect tenderness in a wolf as anything like bravery and chivalry in a persecutor!

12-14. O God be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help. Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered with reproach and dishonor that seek my hurt But I will hope continually, and will yet praise You more andmore. [See Sermons #2318, Volume 39—GOD'S PUPIL, GOD'S PREACHER—AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY and #3271, Volume 57—GOD, THE CHILDREN'S TEACHER.] How was he going to do it?

Already his mouth was filled with God's praise, so, surely he would fill his whole life with it, and his actions which would speak more loudly than his words, would bear daily testimony to the goodness of God.

15, 16. My mouth shall show forth Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof I will go in the strength of the Lord God—"This shall be my praise; my very movements, my goings, my progress shall be in the 'strength of the Lord God.'"

16, 17. I will make mention of Your righteousness, even of Yours only. O God, You have taught me from my youth. Here is the same kind of argument again—"O Lord, I went to school to You, so I must teach others what You have taught me."

17, And until this time have I declared Your wondrous works. "You made me a preacher, and I have stuck to my word. Until this time have I declared Your wondrous works."

18-20. Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not until I have showed Your strength unto this generation and Your power to everyone that is to come. Your righteousness, also, O God, is very high, who has done great things: O God, who is like unto You? You, who have showed me great and sore troubles, shall quicken me again. "You shall not merely deliver me from my great and sore troubles, but You shall give me more life, You 'Shall quicken me again.'" Divine quickening is the best remedy for a troubled heart.

20. And shall bring me up again from the depths ofthe earth. "Though I seem to be like a man buried in the depth of the earth, You will bring me up again."

21, 22. You shall increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side. I will also praise You—God blessing us and we in return blessing Him—so it ought to be. The more God does for us, the more we ought to do for Him! Is it not so, Brothers and Sisters? Is not this a good argument? Are you carrying it out? Let your conscience answer.

22. 23. With the psaltery, even Your Truth, O my God: unto You will I sing with the harp. O You Holy One of Israel. My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto You. Singing unto God ought to be the happiest of exercises! When it is done in a doleful, dolorous way, it is not singing, but groaning.

23. And my soul, which You have redeemed. "The sprinkled blood is on my soul and, therefore, it shall leap for joy. Rescued from captivity, bought back from slavery, "my soul, which You have redeemed, shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto You."

24. My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the daylong: for they are confounded, for they are brought

unto shame, that seek my hurt. [See Sermon #998, Volume 17—MORE AND MORE.]

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