

A Saint in Disgrace

by J. Glyn Owen

Psalm 51 presents the experience of conviction and the possibility of renewal and restoration after sinning, highlighting the importance of confession, repentance, and God's mercy and grace.

Duration: 59:11

Scripture: Psalm 51:1-2, Psalm 51:10, Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:6-8, Philippians 3:1

Topics: "Weakness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for Christians to move beyond just receiving forgiveness of sins and to also seek deliverance from the principle of sin. He highlights the importance of appropriating both the death of Jesus for forgiveness and the life of the risen Lord for deliverance. The preacher acknowledges that many Christians struggle with spiritual growth and defeat, wondering why they experience so little victory. He uses the example of David, a man after God's own heart, who also faced desperate defeat and sin. The sermon concludes with a call to repentance and a reminder that true victory comes from acknowledging and addressing our spiritual need.

Transcript

The words of the 51st Psalm, and I would like to read the first two verses in that psalm, though I suggest that you might like to keep your Bibles open because we shall be referring to various verses as we proceed tonight. The opening two verses then in Psalm 51. 1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies.

Blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For somewhere around twelve long months, a skillfully made mask of pretense and of hypocrisy has succeeded in concealing the dark devilish acts perpetrated by the greatest of Israel's kings, namely David. David continued in the exercise of his kingly functions, just as if nothing untoward had taken place, just as if Bathsheba had never been molested by him, nor her husband Uriah murdered at his instigation.

He continued very much as if he was still the great God-fearing man he had generally been. Then came the shattering blow. A man specially appointed by God, skilled and prepared for this decisive hour in the history of Israel's great king, came to speak to this saint in disgrace.

Nathan tore to shreds the mask that had camouflaged the truth about this man, so that in consequence the stark naked facts of the sin of David were brought to the fore. Now, following upon that shattering

experience, David was forcibly made aware of his grave spiritual need, and he passed for some time through the crucible of a terrifying experience, in which he was made aware of the fact that he had wronged not only man, but as he tells us in this psalm, that he had especially sinned against God. And then, at last, David was brought to the place that we were reminded of last night.

You will remember that Callan Crag's last word to us last night was a call to repentance, and David was brought there. And in the mercy of God, he had a mind that was changed, concerning himself, concerning his sin. And now I want to come in and see just one aspect of the experience that follows from that, as it is woven into the warp and woof of this psalm.

I want us to look first of all at what came to David just at that point in his experience. Namely, I want us to be looking at the possibility of renewal and restoration, that now for the first time seems to occupy David's mind. This great psalm reflects, first of all, let me repeat, the excruciatingly deep sorrow with which David emerged from a prolonged encounter with the Holy Spirit, who spoke to him through his servant Nathan, pierced through the very heart by arrows of conviction, brought out into the open from his refuge of lies, torn down from the high perch of self-justification.

This man is made to acknowledge at last that he had sinned in these words. You notice in verse 1-2, he refers to my sin, my iniquity, my transgression. In other words, he has been brought to the place where he has to confess the truth concerning himself.

But now the Holy Spirit never leaves a penitent saint nor a penitent sinner just there. I think this is a most important point. One vital distinction between the work of the accuser of the brethren, the devil, and the convincing and the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit comes to the fore here.

There are times when the accuser of the brethren comes after the saints, and he accuses you of this and of that and of the other, many of the sins that have been long since buried under the precious blood of Jesus. And his aim is this, it is to cast you dear redeemed people of God into a pit of despair from which you can see no possible way of escape. Now the Holy Spirit never works like that.

Oh, he may take you through a dark night in your soul's experience. It may be as dark in patches as that through which the devil would take you. But it is never to a pit from which there is no exit.

The experience of the conviction of the Holy Spirit is always in the nature of taking us through a dark tunnel. And when we have been exercised thereby, and when we have come to the place of confession and contrition, he will always show us the way out into liberty, into life, into peace with God again, and into the place of restoration. Now David has been brought there.

And I'm really thrilled, as I see in this psalm, how some of the long lost blessings come back again within the vision of this man of God, this saint in disgrace, King David. I'd like you to look, for example, at some of the things that David sees again as possible for himself. Now I can only mention one or two very briefly.

Look at verse six, for example. David, now having come through the crucible of penitence, he sees again the possibility, notice, of integrity of heart. Thou desirest truth, he says in the inward parts.

He's very much aware of what God demands, but notice what he says next. And in the hidden parts, thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Isn't that wonderful? Here is a man that has been down living in the valley of lies and hypocrisy and deceit.

Here is a man who has been unsafe to follow these past months. And once again he sees the possibility. Thou, he says, thou almighty God, thou shalt yet make me to know wisdom.

In other words, David sees that the gracious God whom he is now praying to, is able to give him the very wisdom in the exercise of which he shall know truth. That is integrity, honesty in the depths of the soul. Look again, look at verse seven.

Not only integrity, but he sees the possibility of heart purity. I think this is very wonderful. Purge me, says this man with hyssop, and I shall be clean.

Wash me, he says, and I know I shall be whiter than snow. Oh, he's been down in the depths of despair. His sin has been weighing heavily upon him.

But you see, the Holy Spirit who brought him down is now bringing him out of the tunnel. He sees the dawn of the new day, and he sees that the God to whom he is praying is able to cleanse the sin and the filth of sin away, so that he shall be again, as he tells us, without any solitary mark of defilement upon him, whiter than the driven snow. No less wonderful was the vision of the further possibility of fullness, of joy, and of gladness.

In verse eight, but let me just mention one other. Look at verse 10. I must say this thrills my soul.

Create in me, says David, a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. He sees the possibility of becoming spiritually stable again. Now that comes out of the word that is translated, right spirit.

Probably it is much more correct to translate it in this way. Create or renew in me a steadfast spirit. David has been wandering hither and thither, morally and spiritually.

His eyes have been wandering. His heart has been wandering. And now this wandering saint, emerging from his disgrace, cries to God, and sees in the very hand of the God to whom he cries, the steadfastness that can be his again.

Now my dear friend, you who have been going through the dark experience of penitence, these last 24 hours maybe, I want you to see that the God that brings you down into penitence is a God that will never leave you there if you are exercised by the ministry of the Spirit. And I trust that even through my feeble words reminding you of this word of his tonight, you are beginning to see that even for you there are these possibilities too. All the promises of God to you tonight find their yea and their amen in Christ Jesus.

My good friend, there is the light and there is hope for the penitent yet. The possibility of renewal that began to occupy David's mind. Now that brings me to the next thing that I want to say a few words about, namely to the very urgent necessity that was recognized by David's conscience, almost instinctively of course.

The penitent king realizes his need for pardon. That's the first essential need. His very first recorded request is for such.

He prays with a profound sense of feeling here, and he cries, notice in verse one, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, he cries, blot out my transgression. That's a most expressive word, blot out my transgression. And I believe it brings right to the open the first burden upon the soul of this man.

He sees that before he can again recapture the long lost blessings, he must be pardoned. The word that is here translated blot out very graphically, expresses the experience of pardon. It's used in scripture for such things as the erasing of the name of someone from a register, or the erasing of a record from a parchment, or the wiping of the tears from the cheek, or of the complete obliteration of something from the memory, or perhaps better still for our purposes now, of the complete extermination of a people.

And this is what David cried. The Holy Spirit enables him, out of the excruciating anguish of his penitent, to look as it were into the face of Jehovah, the God of Abram, his fathers, and cry, Oh God, blot out, exterminate, completely, the very memory of my sin. And God did just that.

My good friend, my penitent brother or sister, listen to me. You need to be forgiven of your sin. Every solitary sin requires to be confessed as such.

Deal realistically with your sin, my friend, if you would know a sensitivity of fellowship with God. Don't minimize your sin. Look it in the face.

Call it by its name. Contest it before the Lord. And then, with penitence and with faith, look to him and cry to him, Oh God, blot it out.

But that's not the only need of the saint that has lost. And the real burden in this psalm is for something beyond pardon. It's for the need of cleansing.

Now, every act of disobedience, every incident that involves a Christian in sin, inevitably brings defilement upon him. There are no exceptions to this. And this is something that we Christians sometimes tend to forget.

We know that we need pardon. We know that we earn the wrath of God when we sin. And we need pardon.

We need forgiveness. My dear friend, we need something beyond forgiveness. Let me put it to you in terms of David's experience.

The eyes that looked lustfully upon Bathsheba were defiled and needed cleansing. The imagination that lusted in thought before it ever committed the act needed cleansing. The mind that planned the dastardly escapade was polluted and defiled, needed cleansing.

The will that saw the wretched business through was defiled. And the conscience that was outraged not only by the adultery and the murder, but also by the covering up processes. The conscience was defiled and needed cleansing.

I may be speaking to some young Christian that has never realized the ravages of sin upon his or her life. Listen, my friend, this may be the reason why God is so distant from you tonight, and prayer is not real, and fellowship is not vital. You've never realized that sin defiled.

And David recognized in the depth of his soul that he needed cleansing. He needed purging. He needed the defilement taken away.

So do you, my friend. Now, David, as usual, expresses his profound sense of need by the use of some very suggestive words here. I want to mention two or three which I think are really crucial.

First of all, look at the word that he uses in verse two. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, he cries. Wash me, wash me.

Now, this is a very remarkable word. Behind this word there is really a picture in the Hebrew language, and that picture would take us to an old-time Semitic washer woman. She has a bundle of very dirty clothes under her arm, and she's making probably for a brook or a river.

When she comes there, she will look for some nice clean flags on the riverbed, and then she will undo the bundle of very dirty clothes, and she will begin to wash. But she will not wash as a modern person would wash. What she will do will be this.

She will put the garments under her feet, and she will begin to trample upon them. Then she will look around her, and she will see gradually how the water, the clean flowing water, becomes polluted, discolored by the dirt that is going out of the garments, and going away with the flowing water. And she will continue the process of trampling and trampling and trampling, rubbing and trampling with her feet, until there is no further discoloration of the water.

You know, David cried to God literally, Oh God, he says, trample on me. I feel I'm like dirty linen, he says, and the pollution has gone deep into the texture of my being. Oh God, he says, get it out.

Even if it means that you have to trample and trample and trample upon me. Oh God, cleanse me from my sin. There may be someone in this tent, or elsewhere, listening to my voice tonight, who has become so desperately polluted by sin.

That's your cry too. Look at another word here. The word to cleanse, in verse two, cleanse me from my sin.

Now this again is most suggestive. In the Old Testament, it's used in two particular connections. It's used primarily in relation to the work, the miraculous work, whereby a leper was cleansed.

It's used for example of Naaman. It is also used of the declaring of the cleansed leper as ceremonially clean. And it is also used by Ezekiel of a blessing that was to be given in terms and according to the promise of the new covenant.

I don't know whether David, with the eye of faith, beheld in the distance seen the promises of the new covenant, but I do believe this. In his heart of hearts he felt himself to be a moral and a spiritual leper. He felt that he carried with him as being a deadly disease of sin, that is not only contaminating his own soul, but also others.

There were others that had been smudged and mocked. And he cries to God, Almighty God, he says, wash me as you would cleanse the leper and declare me and certify me clean again. There's another word here.

I must say a word about this. Purge me, in verse 7. This word introduces yet another thought. The thought of the costliness of the cleansing which he required.

Such a purging as David needs can only be secured at the cost of sacrifice. That's what this word tells us. One commentator puts it in this way.

He says that this word denotes purification from sin either by the actual payment of the penalty or by vicarious satisfaction. David knows he can't pay for it. I can't give you the sacrifices of thee or the offerings, he says, that would purge my sin.

But by the eye of faith, with the eye of faith, I believe it is possible from the hand of my God, nevertheless, to be purged. My dear penitent friend, I'm speaking to you particularly tonight. My dear befouled companion, you who have seen yourself in the light of the throne of God, will you not say with David of old, wash me, cleanse me, purge me? If you'd like to use the word of George Rundle Prynne, you can do that if you prefer.

You remember his words in one of our well-known hymns? So wash thou me, he cries, without within, or purge with fire, if that must be. No matter how, says Prynne, no matter how, if only sin die out in me, is that your concern? Listen, my good friend, you who have seen yourself as a deeply soiled garment, as a leper, as one who requires someone to be sacrificed, yea, the very Son of God, in order to bring you cleansing and purging and purity, I want to announce in your ear tonight that a fountain has been opened for sin and uncleanness. There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners and saints that have sinned, plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains.

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from, yes, hold your breath, my dear friend, from all sin. My dear penitent brother or sister, put your arms of faith around that tonight, will you? This is God's word to you. All sin, everything, the possibility of renewal, that begins to occupy David's mind, the necessity for pardon and cleansing that appears to his conscience.

Now I'm closing with just two or three words about one other very precious thing, the certainty that assured David's faith. I think I know the experience of some of you who are listening to me tonight. God has found you out and you've been exposed.

You know full well that you have wandered and you've lost out here and there and there. I know how you feel. I've been this way myself far too often.

Times come in the experience of a saint that has latched when he can hardly forgive himself. And you may be beginning to wonder whether God has mercy for you saints of God. You've confessed your sin so often.

I want you to look tonight at something that David pinned his all upon, namely the marvelous grace, the unspeakably great grace of God. And listen to me, David didn't know it as you and I know it, but he knew something about it. And he uses three words here which bring out several aspects of him and reveal to us how David was so confident that he could be forgiven and cleansed.

Now first of all in verse one he uses the word mercy. Have mercy upon me, O God, he cried. Mercy refers to that quality of favor that is utterly and completely undeserved.

It is that quality of kindness that is always expressed by a superior being to an inferior, by the one that has been hurt to the one that hurt him. And God is a God of mercy. And David knew that.

David was sure of that. Indeed, I want to reiterate in your yurts tonight that that is so. Do you remember the words of the prophet Micah? The Lord delighteth in mercy.

Listen my friend, God has forgiven a thousand myriad saints throughout the times and the years, but he's never once forgiven or cleansed a solitary sin with a grudge. Never. He delights in mercy.

He is glad to have mercy. He rejoices to have mercy. And David clings to that.

There's another thing here. See that word loving kindness. At the heart of that word there is the thought of absolute devotion to something.

And in the Old Testament when it is used it speaks of God's absolute devotion to his covenant promises. They froze my heart at any rate. What did David see? David saw what Professor Norman Snape calls, he saw that great loving kindness of God which speaks of his steady persistent refusal to wash his hands of wayward Israel despite their rebellion.

He always comes back to them because of his covenant. And David saw that he had a place in the covenant promises of God. Oh my dear fellow Christian tonight who wondered, you've got a place in the covenant.

And I close with this. Look at the word that translated tender mercies and to me this is the most precious of all. This comes from the Hebrew word for womb.

Mother's womb. And what it speaks of is this. The unspeakably sympathetic understanding gracious compassionate grace of God.

He's not a sovereign that speaks from his throne only. He's as close as you as a mother to the child of her womb. My dear friend will you not come to him then tonight.

Conscious of your sin and weary of it. Will you not come to the God that delights to show mercy. That has covenanted to forgive and to cleanse his people.

And that has assured you of a warmth greater than a mother could ever give. Say to him, I hear thy welcome voice that calls me Lord to thee. For cleansing in thy precious blood that flowed on Calvary and tell him with you will you.

Oh tell him with a whole heart that tonight you're coming and believing and by faith receiving what in the covenant he assures for every penitent child. May God bless you in the doing. And we pray now speak Lord for thy servant here.

Speak just now some message to meet my need which thou only dost know. Speak now through thy holy word and make me see some wonderful truth thou has to show to me for Jesus sake. Will you open your New Testament please at Romans chapter 6 and verse 6. The sixth chapter of Romans and the sixth verse.

Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed. That henceforth we should not serve sin. Do you often wonder why it is that so many of us as Christians reveal so little spiritual growth.

Why is it that we spend years in defeat? Why is it that there's so little clear cut bringing testimony to victory? David was a man of God. He became a man after God's own heart. But he knew desperate defeat in his life.

And you and I are children of God. And does not one of us here who as Christians has not had the experience at some time or other of being absolutely bowled over by the devil. Why should these things be? With the result that very often many of us are utterly disillusioned with the Christian life.

When we were converted we imagined that everything would be plain sailing. And we would find there were no more problems about sin at all. We had entered into the joy of Romans 8.1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

I remember the day of my conversion 40 years ago nearly. I was given that verse and a new bible. And I opened the new bible at that verse.

And I underlined that little word now. And by the way we had no borrow pens in those days. We owed only pens that actually wrote.

And I underlined that little word now so heavily that I went through to the epistle to the Philippians and ruined it on the first day. Oh but it was worth it for I had given three leaps for joy. And I was free from sin hallelujah.

But I want to tell you quite frankly that subsequent years have proved that view of sin a fallacy. For while I have never doubted my conversion from that day to this. I have found myself all too often engaged in a battle that has been far too much for me.

And my testimony has been silenced. We've had nothing to say some of us about Jesus as savior. Simply because we've had no real experience of deliverance from sin.

Why should these things be? I am sure that the answer to that question has got to be found. If ever we are to recover the ringing clear note of authority in our testimony. The late Dr. Graham Scroggie a great favorite on this platform used to say too many Christians live on the right side of Easter and the wrong side of Pentecost.

The right side of pardon and the wrong side of power. The right side of fellowship and the wrong side of forgiveness. They are out of Egypt but they haven't reached the land of promise and blessing.

And are wandering about in the wilderness of dissatisfaction and frustration. My dear friend Keswick is no side issue. We're not gathered here tonight in a happy little holiness huddle which isn't relevant to these critical days.

But we are here to see how the church can recover her lost power and vitality. And once again become a dynamic force which could sweep through this 20th century materialism sin and opposition and sheer defiance of the gospel with a note of authentic authority and power. But that can only be done by believing people throughout the world who are living in the joy of full salvation.

Why the defeat? What's the reason for it? Personally I'm convinced that the reason for it is that we've never really appreciated the full significance of the cross. We're tremendously concerned about experiences of the Holy Spirit these days. But the thing we need to remember above all else that the supreme work of God the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus.

And point us to him as our risen savior. And therefore tonight that's exactly what we want to do. To look again into his dear faith.

To see what he has done for us at Calvary and can do in us by his spirit every day of our lives. It isn't a question of going on to Pentecost. It's a question of getting back to Calvary.

For if we get back to the cross a personal Pentecost is inevitable. Listen, I believe that a defective view of the atonement is always due to a defective view of what sin really is. And Romans 6 in no uncertain terms gives us the definition and spells out the true character of sin.

We've no time to consider this chapter in detail but I ask you just to concentrate for a few minutes with all your ears wide open your heart open to what the Spirit of God shall say to you upon verse 6. Let me read it to you again as it appears in the living letters paraphrase of the New Testament. Your old evil desires were nailed to the cross with him. The part of you that loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded so that your sin loving body is no longer under sin's control and no longer needs to be a slave to sin.

Here we see in the first place deliverance from sin explained. In Romans 6 the subject Paul is dealing with is much more than sinful acts. It's the principle of sin itself in all of us by nature.

Sin with a capital S. The old self, a tyrant, a rebel. All that I am apart from the grace of God which is unalterably sinful. Now all of us have found it comparatively easy to understand that the Lord Jesus was wounded for our transgression and bruised for our iniquity and that he died for our sins on the cross and that as we receive him as our Savior we have forgiveness full and free.

But somehow we found that that hasn't dealt with the principle and the tyranny of sin. We see that the cross has dealt with the fruit and not with the root, with sins but not with sin, and unless we understand this other aspect of the meaning of Christ's death we simply can't help going on sinning because we haven't the resources to do otherwise. And do you mean to say the gospel is intended to leave us in that mess? Why the first verse of this chapter comes like a thunderclap from heaven? What? Shall we continue in sin that grace be abundant? God forbid.

Surely he has done more for us at Calvary than to give Jesus to die for a fruit of our rebellion and simply to offer forgiveness for sins, wonderful as that is. Certainly God wouldn't think of having in his family a company of people who are still rebels. The cross has struck at the very heart of our rebellion against his authority, which of course is at the root of all sin.

Our old self is crucified with him, says scripture. One of the founders of Keswick Convention was that great saint of God, Evan Hopkins. During the course of his long ministry at Holy Trinity Church, Richmond in Furry, he wrote a masterpiece of a book entitled, The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life.

The late beloved chairman of this convention, Fred Mitchell, writes in his foreword to that book that it could be described as the textbook of Keswick. So I think I'm fairly safe tonight in quoting just a brief paragraph for it, from it. Now ears wide open, listen.

Oh listen, this thrills my soul. Christ's death, which has separated the believer from the consequences of sin as a transgression, has also separated him from the authority of sin as a master and set him free. The believer sees that Christ, by dying for him, has completely delivered him from the penalty of sin.

So it is his privilege to see that because he was identified with Christ in that death, he is also delivered from sin as a ruling principle. Its power is broken. He is in that sense free from sin and the cross is the efficient cause of this deliverance.

Freedom from sin's ruling power is the immediate privilege of every believer. It is the essential condition, our starting point, of true service, as well as real progress. Such service and grant are as possible for the young convert as that mature believer.

Therefore freedom from sin's dominion is a blessing we may claim by faith, just as we claim pardon. We may claim it as that which Christ has purchased for us, obtained for our immediate acceptance, and we may go forth as set free from sin's dominion, and as alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord. And to all of which, excuse me, but I can't help it, I must say hallelujah, for I believe that with all my heart.

This is the freedom from sin as a ruling principle. That's the teaching of the New Testament, and that is basically why Keswick Convention was founded, to declare that tremendous truth. And that is why we are in this tent this evening, in order that we may enter in by faith to an experience of deliverance from sin's tyranny, as vital and real as at our conversion, when we received Jesus Christ as our Savior and entered into the joy of forgiveness of all our sins.

Deliverance from sin, as well as forgiveness for our sins, were both provided at the cross. But most of us have for years of our Christian life settled for a half salvation. Now look with me again, and let us see how this deliverance for sin was established.

Read part of Romans 6 verse 6, and I read it in living letters. The part of you that loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded, that your sin-loving body is no longer under sin's control. Oh, but you all say to me, as indeed my own heart wants to say to itself tonight, these old desires that have been nailed to the cross are always with me, and I am very conscious of them.

If that part of me which loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded, why is it that I am so conscious of his existence? Now just a minute, let's think again what Jesus Christ did for us at Calvary. Listen carefully, are you with me? Not only was he dying for sins, but that transaction which affected a complete forgiveness for our sins, was accepted in heaven, because it was based upon a life that he had lived, in which he had died to the principle of sin. Having died to sin as a principle in his life, he was able in his death to forgive our sin.

You remember that wonderful word of the Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 2, let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, which were, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal to God, thought it not to think to be grasped after to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, took upon himself the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, and being found in the passion of men, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. See, watch him, he's come right down from the throne to the manger and to Calvary. And all the time he was living a life which forsook his rights and refused to act independently of the will of God.

In Jesus there was no sin principle, he never rebelled, he always was submissive, and because of that life of meekness and submission against which all power on earth and in hell fought him tooth and nail, and to whom he never yielded an inch, because that life was entirely and utterly a dependent life, a submissive life, an obedient life, he had died to the sin principle and condemned it in the flesh. And he hung upon the cross as a condemned criminal, not only to forgive our sins, but as one who took to Calvary a nature that had never sinned. Listen, if I have claimed the benefit of a share and oneness in his death, in order that I might be forgiven, surely I can also claim a share in the life he lived, which he took to the grave, in order that in him I might know deliverance from the principle of sin.

If I can say he bore my sin in his body on the tree, thank you Lord, hallelujah, can't I also say that at Calvary he nailed every evil desire to the cross, and crushed and wounded that faith, that part of me that loves to sin, so that this body of mine no longer under sin's control. That should also be part of my confession experience, for the life that he lived and the death he died resulted in his perfect humanity

being raised to the throne. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess him Lord.

Of course death couldn't hold him, the grave had no power of him, he broke loose and rose into heaven and received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit. And he imparted at my conversion and at yours into our lives his nature, in which he had triumphed over every temptation to sin, and we received at our new birth a life in which there was no rebellion and no sin principle, and he's come to dwell within each one of us to make that real in our everyday experience. So you see, the experience of deliverance is a glorious liberty.

It means that we no longer try and improve the self-life, it just means we're finished with it. It has been nailed to the cross, and in its place we've all the resources and all the power of the life of the indwelling Christ, our risen Lord. How many of us have spent years on attempts at self-improvement, polishing up the flesh, and just as many of us have found all our efforts to be utterly futile.

God has never tried, never planned that we should try to improve ourselves or to make us better. He's only one thing to do with you and me, with all that we are apart from grace, not to improve us but crucify us, kill us, slay us. And he done it in Jesus, and he has a plan to replace ourselves with Christ, that we should by faith draw upon his life and power.

Now just one more thing, the most important of all, how is those who all work out in daily life, how is this experienced? Listen again to Romans 6, that the body of sin might be destroyed, might be made of none effect, that henceforth we should not serve sin. In his great commentary on Romans, a classic, Professor Godet says this, listen to it, this is the divine secret of Christian sanctification which distinguishes it from simple natural morality. The latter says to a man, become what you want to be.

The former says to the believer, become what you are already in Christ. It puts a positive fact at the foundation of moral effort to which the Christian can return and have resource renew at every instant. This is the reason why his labor is not lost in aspiration and does not end in despair.

The believer is not disentangled from sin gradually, he breaks from it in Christ once and for all. Oh but wait a minute, that deliverance from sin has no existence in us whatsoever apart from Jesus Christ himself. You put a lighted candle into a dark room and the darkness disappears.

But the tendency to darkness remains and the room has to be maintained in a state of light by continual counteraction of light to darkness. The law of the spirit of life is always in force and we're always dependent on it. This is the proof that the law of sin and death is not, is not extinct and the tendency of sin in us all is still there.

Never in this life are we free from the presence of sin. Apart from Christ as our indwelling light, even the most mature Christian would at once relapse into a state of spiritual decay. It is by his indwelling life that he sets us free from sin and counteracts the tendency to sin by the law of the spirit of life.

You see it all boils down to just this, there's only one good thing about the Christian and that is Jesus. And Jesus in you is the opposite to all that you and I are by nature. You conscious of your unholiness, I am.

40 years a Christian, I know better a man now than I was when I was converted. Potentially I'm a bigger sinner, that's all. Are you conscious of your unholiness? Oh yes, but he is holy.

Are you conscious of your own impurity? Yes, but he is absolutely pure. Are you conscious of your impatience? But he is infinitely patient. You conscious of your lack of grace? But he is gracious.

Oh what a joy to be able every moment to lay hold of him and therefore find that indeed this body of sin is made of none effect because the victorious life of the Savior has become ours in daily experience. In Christ we are dead to sin, but sin is never dead to us. It is with us and in us always and will overwhelm us the moment we cease to draw upon the life that Jesus has imparted.

That is the only holiness which the New Testament teaches and is the only holiness which Keswick teaches. Holiness by faith in Christ, by appropriation of the life of Christ and the power of Christ every day. Failed to yield and appropriate, then the Holy Spirit fails to work.

He goes out of business, not out of your heart, but out of business and our relapse into spiritual decay and defeat which has made a mockery of so many years of Christian living. But you yield and he works. Keep on yielding and he keeps on working and so in daily living you experience the dynamic of the upward pull of the Holy Spirit.

That overcomes the downward drag of a sinful nature. Oh again, hallelujah. Now listen in the closing moments of this meeting.

Just be with me one more minute. My dear friend, let's face it honestly. Haven't we settled for far too long for a half salvation? Received forgiveness of sin and never known deliverance from the principle of sin.

Perhaps we didn't know that it was provided for us at Calvary. What a miserable life it's been hasn't it? Mine was for years. How defeated, how lacking in reality and dynamic our testimony has been.

Would you make this moment tonight the moment when you not only claim by faith the death of Jesus to forgive your sins, but the life of the risen Lord indwelling you by his spirit to deliver you from the sin principle? Just as you appropriate the one by faith, so take by faith the other. My savior thou hast offered rest, oh granted then to me the rest of ceasing from myself. What release? To find my all in thee.

And that's what changes the Christian life from sweat and drudgery and toil and effort and barrenness into luxury and joy and victory and fullness. Into a raging glowing testimony to the power of the living Christ to do in you what you can't do by yourself. Will you take Jesus now to be your deliverer? Don't try to improve yourself anymore, but moment by moment take his life from above.

And just as you took the step of faith that led you to become a child of God as you believed in the cleansing power of his blood, now take the step of faith that takes you into the land of full salvation. Is that a second blessing? No it isn't. Do I believe in a second blessing? Yes I do, because I believe in a third and a fourth and a fifth and a million blessings.

But I simply say that you've taken Jesus for pardon. Oh but friend take him for power, take him for deliverance, take him for victory. For it's when a Christian has died out to himself and ceases to have any more confidence in the flesh and knows that there's no good thing in him.

The whole of his self-life has been nailed to the cross. And when he begins to lay hold of the life of Jesus, that the living Christ is revealed through him. And that's revival.

That's revival. That's how the church is going to experience a new breath of power and reality and life. But remember you must be willing to die.

He must hear your assent and the readiness of your heart to what has been accomplished at the cross. I have been crucified with Christ and of course that goes right to the root of pride and self and reduces you to an absolute minimum, but enables God to do his maximum for you.

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