

# Lecture on Hebrews 2

by John Nelson Darby

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*Christ's sufferings and death were necessary to maintain God's majesty and righteousness, and to bring glory to God through His sacrifice.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 8:4

**Topics:** "Human Dignity", "Christ's Redemption"

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## Description

John Nelson Darby explores the profound question from Psalms 8, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' He emphasizes the contrast between man's insignificance and God's grand design, revealing that through Christ, humanity is elevated to a position of glory and honor. Darby explains that while angels are powerful beings, they do not share in the redemptive grace that God extends to humanity through Jesus, who became a man to redeem and associate us with Himself. He highlights the importance of Christ's suffering and how it enables Him to sympathize with our weaknesses, ultimately leading us to glory as joint-heirs with Him. The sermon concludes with the assurance that Christ, as our High Priest, understands our trials and provides grace in our time of need.

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## Transcript

A wonderful inquiry is this which is quoted from Psalm 8, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" - an inquiry founded on the nothingness of man in himself, but bringing out, as God's answer to it, all His counsels in Christ. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Such is his littleness. And then the answer comes, not according to what man is, but according to the counsels of God, in which we find Christ is the Man in whom the wisdom of God is to be displayed. I speak not merely of the display of power - creation shews us that - but also of the display of all those qualities in God in which His nature comes out; and these are more than His attributes.

Divine power can assert itself, and the thing is done; very wonderful it is, of course; but we find here a great deal more than that. Christ is the One in whom angels have to learn what God is, His ways and in His counsels, for the simple reason that He who is the Word of God has become a Man, in keeping with those counsels, so that He who created angels has taken up the cause, not of angels, but of man.

Necessarily, then, all the ways and all the qualities of God (I use this word to distinguish from mere attributes, such as power and the like), His holiness, His love, His righteousness, all these things have come out in man, because they are associated with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is this that gives man such a wonderful position, quite unlike that of angels. Glorious creatures they are, preserved unfallen by the

power of God, and which shews His ways, in that respect, His power to do so, and the like; but men have been taken up, when sinners, in order to display the glory of God in them, and that is another thing altogether. The things that are in the highest degree a revelation of the character of God do not come out in connection with angels; no doubt angels in a certain sense need mercy, for no creature can stand by itself without being sustained by the Creator; that is quite true, and I am sure we all know this. But angels do not need redemption. So that as regards grace, mercy, love, redemption, and the unfolding of righteousness; where it is called in question, all that comes out in man, as Paul says, in carrying this out, "We are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men."

236 Man was made in the image of God. This is never said of angels. But we get special testimony as regards the responsibility of man as a fallen creature; and then, after he had fallen, we find grace and power coming in and connecting him with the Creator Himself, so that He is not ashamed to call them brethren. That is brought out so wonderfully by this question, "What is man?" It is a testimony to man's lowliness, looking at man as he is in himself, "crushed," as Job says, "before the moth"; but the moment I reach the thoughts of God as to man, I see God setting him over the works of His hand, and crowning him with glory and honour. That has put man into a wonderful place.

Angels excel men in glory, and strength, and so on, but they are not said to be made in the image of God, and there never was, till Adam, a being set up to be the centre of an immense system that was to turn around himself; but that system is now a fallen one, and everyone is seeking to be a centre for himself.

The whole system is, therefore, fallen under the bondage of corruption; but man, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, will yet be the centre of everything that God has created. He has put under Him all the works of His hands. Yet, when He said, "all things," it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him. God alone is the one exception to this statement, which exception proves that all else is put under Him.

In the Person of Christ, Man is Lord of all. There we see the Lordship of Christ is over everything; it is not only dominion, but it is dominion in a Redeemer, i.e., in the One who keeps it safe, the One who descended first into the lower parts of the earth, to death and the grave, but who descended that He might ascend up far above all heavens, so that He might fill all things. He will fill all things in the power of the redemption He has wrought. He gathers together in One, i.e., in Himself, all things which are in heaven, and which are on earth. All things were created by Him, and for Him, but while He is actually Head, He will not take them until He takes them as Man; and then, what is further revealed is, that we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, just as He says in John 17, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." There we come in, though, of course, he is the Firstborn amongst the many brethren. He brings us in every respect into the relationship in which He stands Himself as Man. Being Son Himself, He makes us sons; and this place He has taken that it might be made ours. So He tells us, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God."

237 Then let us remember another thing which is so wonderful, viz., it is by redemption. How could He take sinners, and put them in such a place with Himself? He could not do this to sinners, as such; so He came down to where the sinners were, and He put Himself - sinless, of course - into their place.

Therein I learn where I was: "If one died for all, then were all dead." God "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin . . ." He came down to the place of death and judgment, passing through all the toil and difficulty of this world, as we do, but perfect in it all, that He might take our hearts up to where He is, giving

us a title by redemption, and a condition by grace, in which we can be associated with Him as the Firstborn among many brethren.

It is not merely the fact that we are saved - that is true - but He has associated Himself with us down here, in order that, by the love that He has brought into our hearts, He might lead us into the very place where He has gone, making the Father's love known to us, for "Thou . . . hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Not only have we a place in glory, in consequence, but Christ has come for the very purpose of associating us with Himself, in heart, in spirit, in love, and in mind, so that He should not be ashamed to call us brethren. But He might well have been ashamed, if He had taken us as we were. We see thus the various characters of the way through which God has brought Him. He Himself could say, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." Besides the putting away of our sins, He was in Himself a sweet savour to God.

In this chapter, God gives us the reasons for which Christ had to pass through this place of sorrow, so that we might have this blessing with Him. It became God, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. All is founded upon this great, original truth, that Christ Himself, i.e., the Wisdom of Proverbs 8, was rejoicing in the habitable parts of God's earth, and His delights were with the sons of men. There we see Christ as the Wisdom of God, and as God's delight before all eternity: "I," i.e., Christ, "was daily his delight rejoicing always before him." There, too, we see the link formed in counsel with the eternal object of the Father's delight.

238 Where did His delight go out? To the habitable parts of His earth before ever they were made. "I was by him, as one brought up with him"; and there His heart went out to the sons of men.

Then Christ became a man; and that is the source and foundation of everything to us. He took up the seed of Abraham, i.e., those who are the heirs of faith. And then we find that the divine purpose and plan is to gather together in One the things which are in heaven and on earth, and to put them under the hand of Christ as Man.

In the previous chapter, the ground given for this is, that He is Son; in Colossians 1 it is, that He created them; and in Psalm 8, and in Ephesians and 1 Corinthians, it is, that all things are put under Him, according to God's counsels and plan; that is to say, as Son; as Creator; and according to God's counsels. "Unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak," but "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." That is the purpose and intention of God. But then there comes in another thing, "We see not yet all things put under him." One half of Psalm 8 is already fulfilled, for He is crowned with glory and honour. But the "all things" are not yet put under His feet; He is still waiting for His joint-heirs. Now is the time of the gathering, by the gospel, the joint-heirs, ere He takes His power, and reigns. As Paul says, "I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." There was a distinct set of promises belonging to this earth, and you get that in Psalm 2, where God sets His King in Zion, and says, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." That is the "world to come," but it is not the higher position of Him who is to have the "world to come." And therefore in that connection we read of Christ's rejection, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed." This is the very passage Peter quotes in Acts. But, being rejected, Christ takes another place, and that is upon His Father's throne, where He now is; He is not yet seated upon His own throne, but, as He says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

239 He sits as Man at the right hand of God, but not yet upon His own throne, which He does not take until the joint-heirs are ready. Then Psalm 8 comes in, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth."

Nathanael owned Him, Son of God, and King of Israel, but our Lord replied to him, "Thou shalt see greater things than these . . . . Henceforth" (So it should read, "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man," i.e., My title in Israel is a small thing, but you shall see Psalm 8 fulfilled.

Rejected as the King of Zion, He was cast out by the world in order that God's righteousness might be accomplished; He was then answered, according to the virtue and value of what He had done, by God's setting Him at His own right hand; and so He says, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." That time has not come yet, and therefore we must suffer with Him, because His enemies are not made His footstool. The world is all around us, and Satan is not yet bound; everything that God set up as good has been spoiled; and so it will be until Satan is bound. So that you see, Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, not having taken His own throne, but yet with tide over everything, both as Creator and also in redemption, having first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. I repeat, He has title over all things, but, with His enemies still in power, He has not yet taken possession of them; but He Himself will rise up, more dreadful than ever, and all then will be put down.

Now this is where people are so deceiving themselves, and even Christians, too; they are seeking to improve man and the world. Why, when Christ was in the world He could not improve it! But Christians are attempting to do so, and that shews the folly of even real Christians, that when Christ has been rejected by the world, they will try and make it all right! Now it is only the time for gathering out of this world those who are to be Christ's companions.

240 Of course, in one sense, light does improve the world; men are ashamed to do in the light what they do in the darkness; but that is all, they are themselves the same, no better. Now we see that this Blessed Man, of whom Adam was in this respect a figure, is going to be the centre of all things, though not yet. Made a little lower than the angels, and for the suffering of death, He is now crowned with glory and honour. And the next point is, the way in which He is bringing others into full association with Himself.

The glory is all His, but He does not take His place at the right hand of God, as Man, until He had accomplished redemption, tasted death, and gone down to the lowest place and condition to which man can descend; I speak now of sufferings, rather than atonement, though that also is in this chapter. He tastes death, and goes down to that in which the curse was expressed upon the first man, and a great deal more besides. But here it is the great and blessed testimony to the way in which He has taken man in His own Person up into glory He came into the world, and left it to go to the Father, not, however, by the aid of twelve legions of angels; but by going through as Man where we were, on His way as Man to glory I speak of the road He took. He tasted death. I find the great general fact, that He who created everything, and who is now sitting at the right hand of God, did not take such a place, until He had gone down to the lowest place - down to death - and I am not now speaking of atonement.

We have, then, the fact of the death of Jesus, and of the life of Jesus spent where hatred and death reigned.

And observe, that Christ came to redeem us and bring us to God, to destroy Satan's power, and to glorify God; and further, He came to be able to sympathise with the trials, and the difficulties, and the sorrows that our hearts meet with while trying to walk rightly here below.

These are the four great purposes of His sufferings - the glory of God - the propitiation for sin - the overcoming the power of Satan - and the entering into all our sorrows. This last is what He now does as Priest; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. It became God, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. The moment this Blessed One had undertaken our cause,

He was perfect Himself, He came from God, and went to God, and still He was the Son of man who is in heaven; but He had come to obey, to save us, and to bring us there also, and if that were the case, then He must take the consequences. So it became God to deal with Him, according to this place He had taken.

241 The majesty and the righteousness of God must be maintained, and none but Christ could have vindicated these.

There never could otherwise have been security for God's glory. It became God to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings, "perfect," that is, perfected in the full result of glory; if He would bring sons to glory, He must bring Christ into the state of a glorified Man. In Himself, He was the perfect One; He was always in the bosom of the Father, and all that He did was the Father's delight; so that, if I may reverentially use the expression, the Father could not be silent, but opens the heavens, and says, "This is my beloved Son."

Now, in Hebrews, it is a question of the majesty of God, and so you never get "Father." God's glory had to be maintained. And if Christ takes up these sinners, He must bear the consequences of taking them up.

Before He could clear us from our sins, He must deal with God about them; He must die and be "made sin" for us.

His own blessed grace led Him, but through the Eternal Spirit, to offer Himself without spot to God. It is not spoken of here, as clearing us, but as being called for by God's glory. And the more we look at the cross, the more we shall see that God could not have been glorified, as to us, any other way. If God had cut off all men as sinners, there would have been no love in that, but the moment Christ gives Himself up for the glory of God, there you get the perfect dealing with sin in righteousness, and the perfect dealing with the sinner in love. In that sacrifice for sin, infinite love and infinite righteousness were displayed. Of course, all that was there displayed, was in God's nature; so that there is nothing like the cross. No man, in what he is in himself, could ever be found in the glory with Christ. But at the cross we find expressed all that God is, every character of His, and Christ giving Himself up in perfect love to His Father, and in perfect love to us, and in perfect obedience to God. He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but He is made perfect through sufferings. He goes through the effect and consequence of having taken up our case, so that He could say, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." He has now the place of a glorified Man, for God has straightway glorified Him, and He will be displayed in glory when He comes again. Only faith sees this. The world will be judged when He comes again, but faith sees this now, before it is displayed. As Christ glorified God perfectly on the cross, so He is gone as Man into the glory of God.

242 It became God to deal with Him in this way; and what a thought it gives of the depth of the place among sinners that Christ has been in, that there He was making good the glory of God! It was among sinners, yet He was the sinless One.

"It became him . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." And there you get the association of these people with Himself. "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one." This is in resurrection, not simply the fact of incarnation; they are all of one after death, for He was heard from the horns of the unicorns.

After having accomplished redemption, He declares God's name. He says, "tell my brethren," not in a vague way, but He now expressly calls them "brethren." He had not done this before; and He speaks of "My Father, and your Father," this name being only fully declared after redemption was accomplished.

There they are, made all of one with Him! We have it here in poor earthen vessels, but it is so. Those who are made one, are all set as one with Him before God. They are Christ's brethren, associated entirely and for ever with Himself; they, the redeemed, and He the Redeemer; we, the recipients, and He the exerciser of the grace. Quite true; but that is what is done. "All of one." The more you look at it, the more striking you will see it to be. All through the life of Christ, He does not once say, "My God." He lived in the perfect relationship in which He was, and says, "My Father"; but on the cross, when drinking the cup of wrath, He says, "My God." That was His perfectness; it was not the expression of His full relationship, but it was the expression of infinite suffering of infinite claim. When all was accomplished, so that we could be brought in, then He uses both names; and all our blessing rests on these two names of God. If we look to God as He is, we can delight in that name, for we are made partakers of His holiness. We are made the righteousness of God in Christ, and as such, of course, we are suited to God; while we have also the blessed relationship of sons, and say, He is our Father.

243 So we read of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of course Christ is a Man, and so God is His God; and because He is God's Son, God is His Father. Grace has brought us perfectly to God, and that is the blessedness which has been wrought for us. Our whole place before God is perfectly settled. I do not say that we may not have trembling faith in our hearts, but the place is settled, "My God, and your God." We have not yet got the full results of it all, but we have the grace that gives us the consciousness of our place.

This may be seen in three ways. If we take John, Christ is in us, and we in Him; chap. 17. If we take Paul, we are members of Christ's body; but if we take the question of our coming to God, which Hebrews treats of, then we can go into the holiest. I do not call that priesthood, but it is the place where we go through redemption. And it is important to understand that, because it is often used as if priesthood was to bring us there, and therefore persons go to the priest. Surely He will hear them in His mercy, though they go wrongly. But it is not right; we are there already, accepted in the Beloved. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." But is that all? It is not all the truth. Did not Christ live upon earth? Was He not perfect upon earth? Are you not living upon earth? Are you perfect upon earth? That is another story. It is not all the truth to say, I am in Christ before God; it is the foundation of all, but it is not all the truth as to what is passing in our hearts.

Have you not difficulties? Do you not find that you give way sometimes through want of faith? And that is not suited heaven. The more you belong to heaven, the more unsuited it is. And God deals with that. It is a tremendous mistake to think that because I have a place in heaven in Christ, God is not concerned in my

path down here.

In this respect, I am present in the body, and absent from the Lord; and so God deals with me in this condition. He brings practical death upon all that is in us, upon the flesh, I mean; and not only when there is failure (that is met rather in 1 John 2), but we have the blessed sympathy of Christ with us in our weakness here, in all that through which we are passing, and where we need the help which He obtains for us. We are before a throne of grace, there in righteousness truly, for grace is reigning through righteousness; but what is the confidence we have? "That, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

244 We are talking to God, and we are getting answers and supplies from God. That is not a state of perfection, but of imperfection.

Sure, if there was not perfection in Christ for us, and for our own, we could not go on. But mark what chapter 4 unfolds to us in verses 14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest . . . let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace . . . and find grace," etc., etc.

We have, there, a standing witness of righteousness and of propitiation. This is because Christ is there, and He is both. Then, in 1 John 2, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father," etc. Christ is our righteousness, and so all is settled; if it were not, we should have sins imputed to us, but we stand in Him as our righteousness before God, and He is there according to the value of His propitiation; then, if we fail, He takes up our cause there, and grace comes to deal with our hearts and spirits, to restore us, without our righteousness ever being touched. It is because our righteousness never can be touched that we can go on. This is not our highest place, which we have as members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones; in one word, as being "in Christ"; but it is the highest character of His grace now to help us when we are in weakness, and in infirmity. If God commended His love towards us, it is when we were sinners, and as we learn this, we joy in God; He loved us when there was nothing in us to love. The grand testimony to absolute divine love is that God loved sinners. Well, it is the same way as to the graciousness of God. The grace of Christ is not, after all, our highest place; but it is the highest place of Christ. It makes us little and Christ great. To be put into Christ makes us great.

To find Christ going the same path as myself, so that He may understand every feeling I have, makes His grace great; and that is so precious.

This brings us to the next point; and that is, Christ suffered that He might sympathise. It was part of His perfection that He was ever dependent upon His Father, "I will put my trust in him." In this way it was that He went through the whole scene. Before going to appoint the twelve disciples, He prayed all night, and so He acted all along the path of opposition and insult that He trod. I know therefore that I have not One who cannot be touched with the feeling of my infirmities, so that in the midst of my infirmities, as Paul says, I can glory that Christ's power may rest on me. You remember what Christ says to him there; He had sent Paul a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, but now He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He answers him, deals with him, understands him, and that is all he wanted.

245 With Paul, it was thus the humble weak place of the believer; but there was the constant and touching exercise of Christ's grace towards him.

A third reason why He took this place of humiliation and suffering (not exactly a part of His priesthood, though the priest took it), was, that through death He might annul the power of Satan.

First. It "became" God to lead Christ through this pathway of suffering with regard to God's own glory.

Second. Christ was there putting his trust in God, while going through it, and so is now able to sympathise.

Third. He destroys Satan's power.

Then, in verses 16, 17, 18 of chapter 2, we come to the more proper and immediate exercise of priesthood. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham," etc. The children were first partakers of flesh and blood, and were in trial and difficulty (it does not say sin, though they might sin). Then He calls them His brethren, and He sings in the midst of the church.

Think what that is! Not, you may sing now that I have accomplished redemption, true though that is, but, I will sing. Christ leads our praises. He has so associated us with Himself now, that He takes up all our thoughts and feelings. Praise for redemption it is, and also every thought and feeling which I can express to God. For Christ is a man. He knows what it is to bear God's wrath, as none of us will ever know. That is over; it is gone for Him on the cross, and it is gone for us by reason of His having borne it. And then He declares the Father's name to His brethren, and leads their praises.

It is from down here that the praises, founded on redemption and atonement, go up to God; but the expression of every thought and feeling that can be in our hearts, as exercised down here, goes up likewise in praise.

246 All that which enters into this, Christ has gone through; and now He sings in the midst of the church; this is a figurative expression, but it is true that He is the Person who leads every feeling and thought of exercised persons, because He has gone through it all Himself, and He leads the praises up to God.

When it comes to the accomplishment of the way, it is the same thing: "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." It is not here a question of our perfectness or of our acceptance before God, but that the heart of the Lord understands and enters into every trial and difficulty we have.

Just as if He might ask us, "Do you think I have not been tempted, and that I have not gone through sorrow?" He could say, "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say?" there was with Him the constant passing through this world with all that is in it. And there He is on high, but understanding every one of the exercises through which we pass as belonging to God. He belonged to God, and as such was made perfect through sufferings; and if we belong to God according to His acceptance, we must pass through sufferings. It is in that respect that He helps and succours them that are tempted.

Our weakness and our dependence, and the trials and exercises which we go through here, find an echo in Christ's heart, and they become thus a link between our hearts and His.

It is not a question of righteousness, but of what belongs to the righteous, that is the difference; nor is it a question of sin, but of having our whole hearts down here brought into the tune and tone of Christ's feelings, the One who went through it here, that He might lead our hearts into the channel of His own heart.

Fourth. He is a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. To make reconciliation. This was not strictly a priestly act; it was not going between God and the people at all; it was the high priest who did it on the day of atonement, but it was for himself as well as for the people. In different ways Christ fulfils all the shadows. He was Victim as well as high priest. But Christ could not take up on earth the ordinary exercises of His priesthood, for if He were on earth, He should not be a priest; but the people must have a ground on which they could stand in such a place. Before beginning His ordinary exercises as high priest, Christ made propitiation, and there He stood as representative of the people. He was both Victim and also the priest who confessed the sins. We find in this the blessed truth of the perfectness of the work of atonement, and of the full confession of the sin. We get Christ owning all our sins upon the cross. He was the Victim and the Scapegoat who carried them all away, and the high priest who confessed them. He charges Himself with them all, and then deals with them in atonement; that act is the basis of all the rest, and now He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.

247 Then we see that He suffered being tempted; that is not atonement. It was part of His trial, and it enables Him to succour them that are tempted. And, I repeat, it is not that we go to Christ as priest; God does not, of course, make anyone an offender for a word if the heart is right; but Christ goes to God for us, and we go to God by Him.

The Spirit of God groans in us. We have an Advocate, which is the same word as Comforter. The Holy Ghost, as dwelling in us, occupies Himself in divine sympathies, with all our sorrows, whilst Christ takes them up for us in the presence of God; and the effect is that blessing comes down to our souls by the Holy Ghost. In this connection, it says, He is able to save to the uttermost, i.e., unto the end. He is talking, in all this, about our going through the wilderness. You do not find union spoken of here in the wilderness, but exercises and trials. Christ enters into all this, and we get grace to help in time of need. His death has perfected us for God; His life carries us on with God until we reach Him. Christ ever lives for that. We have the blessed consciousness of our weakness, and quite right, too; but with the weakness, we learn to look to One, and to lean on One who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Do you believe that this is Christ's heart now? I do not believe that this has its proper place with us until we have righteousness; and it is a mistake to suppose that we get righteousness by the priest. Christ is there; and believing in Him, we are made the righteousness of God in Him.

This leaves us free, in perfect acceptance with God in Christ, to learn all that He is for us by the way.

248 God is thinking of us, too, in His own heart, and we have a Man sitting at His right hand touched with the feeling of our infirmities, One who takes every sorrow, every weakness, and every difficulty as an occasion of ministering grace to us, bringing us thus into the presence of His faithful love. It is not merely righteousness; it is a Christ that I can trust. And I admit, and I would press it too, it is not our highest place; but it is blessed, perfect, precious grace that I learn. My weakness makes me learn what the grace and tenderness of Christ are. By Him, I am perfect before God, but while I am absent from Him, I never lose the exercises of His heart for me before God, to secure for me grace and strength. This carries our souls to Him. I would have you feel that it is a low place, but it is true. You are weak and infirm, there may be a thorn in the flesh, but it is to put you in the place where the grace of Christ can meet you, and where His strength can be made perfect in weakness.

It is a great thing to learn the constant exercise of grace, as it is our highest duty to shew the life of Christ; but the daily exercise of Christ's grace is that which obtains grace for us to help in time of need.

The time of need is the time of grace.

The Lord give us to know it in power!

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