

A New Creation

by Thomas Bradbury

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of Christ, where the old is passed away and all things become new, and it highlights the importance of spiritual equality and communion with God.

Scripture: John 11:25, John 17:21, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:4

Topics: "New Creation", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches on the transformative power of being in Christ, emphasizing the newness of life and the spiritual contrasts found in the epistles. He delves into the deep connection believers have with Christ, highlighting the removal of old things like sin, condemnation, and fear of death, and the privileges of possessing a new nature, immortality, and oneness with the Triune God. Bradbury challenges traditional views of salvation and urges a focus on the spiritual reality of being a new creation in Christ, experiencing a life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the heavenly realms.

Transcript

Preached in Grove Chapel, Camberwell, Sunday Morning, August 18th, 1878

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

THE epistle in which our text appears abounds in contrasts from the beginning to the end. The apostle, as led by the Holy Ghost, maintains this style of teaching in a striking, and telling manner. Turn with me to chap. 1:5. Here he contrasts the sufferings of Christ abounding in the child of God with the consolations which abound by Christ. At the close of the 2nd chap. we meet with a very solemn contrast which is seen by the enlightened and spiritual eye throughout the whole of God's most Holy Word.

The carnal mind objects to and hates the contrast drawn between the living and the dead, the elect and the reprobate, the redeemed and the unredeemed, the regenerate and the unregenerate. Paul's testimony invariably wrought this contrast. See! "Now, thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." "Happy man!" some of you may be ready to say, "if he was always able to triumph in Christ." But it so happened that he did not always have occasion to triumph feelingly in Christ; no, not even when blessed with the clearest and brightest evidences of his union to Him.

When the sufferings of Christ were abounding in him, there was no experience of triumph, though the sufferings were spiritual indications of the possession of Divine life, light, and love; Read this portion after this fashion, which is perfectly correct: "Now, thanks be unto God which at all times leadeth us in triumph in Christ." You see, God in Christ is our triumphant Leader. He always triumphs over Satan, sin, and self in the very experience of His child, whether that experience be of life or of death.

"And maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we " - not our testimony, but we through the testimony - " are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death: and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" The burden of the word of the Lord caused Paul to feel his insufficiency, while he knew that his sufficiency was of God.

The third chapter is full of contrasts. Man's commendation with God's. Man's writing with the Spirit's. Man's insufficiency with God's sufficiency. The Old Testament with the New. The letter with the spirit, condemnation with righteousness. The fourth chapter contains many wonderful contrasts and paradoxes. Look at the 8th verse: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." I think I hear a tried one say, "That is not me!" Look at the margin, my friend.

We who are distressed and perplexed are "not altogether without help or means," "Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." We do fall, but not from grace, being upheld by a loving, omnipotent hand. At the end of the chapter we see wonderful contrasts between present afflictions and future glory, temporal and eternal things. The fifth chapter abounds with spiritual contrasts. Each of them appears to lead us to the contemplation of the glorious truths and spiritual realities set forth in the words I have read as my text:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all-things are become new."

In considering this vast and all-important subject, we will endeavour to notice -

I. THE CONNECTION - "Therefore."

II. THE CHARACTER - "If any man be in Christ."

III. THE CONDITION - "A new creature."

IV. THE IMMUNITIES ENJOYED - "Old things are passed away."

V. THE PRIVILEGES POSSESSED - "Behold, all things are become new."

I. The CONNECTION - "Therefore." This is the conclusion of the apostle's argument, or of the truths he had declared for the instruction, comfort, and edification of the Corinthian Christians, and through them of the Church of God in all succeeding generations. His conclusion is, that all old things, even those of Divine appointment, having served their purpose and waxen old, must pass away for ever as of no value whatever to the new creation work in Christ Jesus. "Therefore." This word directs our minds to the preceding context. Look at ver. 14: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." In these words we have a figure of speech setting forth the irresistible power of the love of Christ. Like the current of a mighty river, it bears the souls of God's elect to life, and peace, and joy, found only in the ocean of Divine affection. Turn to Psalm 46:4, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Again, Rev. 22:1,

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." The progress of this river of eternal love is beautifully expressed in the language of Kelly, -

"All victorious is its course,

Nothing can, withstand its force."

The course of this river of God's eternal, uninfluenced, invincible, and irresistible love is hidden from the view of the carnal mind. Its sovereignty is seen in its proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It runs to the full extent of a redeemed sinner's necessities, coming just where he is, sweeping away like a flood all his transgressions, sins, and iniquities, overcoming his old prejudices, slaying his natural enmity to God's way of saving him, and bringing him into association and communion with the great and glorious Three-in-One. "For the love of Christ constraineth us: because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." A precious and glorious truth. When Christ died, all His members were dead in Him. Dead to the law which had exhausted all its claims upon them. Dead to sin which lost its damning power over them when Christ their Surety died. Sin as they may, and here I will tell you something more, sin as they must, their sins can never damn them. God's love is too vast, His grace too rich, His compassions too great to admit of the thought for a single moment. See! "And He (died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." To live to Christ and not to self is the order of the Gospel day. But, say you, I do not find that to be the fact. Neither do I. Why is this? Because in our so-called Gospel Churches and causes of truth, amongst those who profess to be separated from the world by the Gospel of Christ, there is more seen of the spirit of the first Adam than of the last; there is more of the temper of the old man manifested than the meekness of the new man; there is a greater exhibition of self than of the exaltation of Christ; there is so much determination to have one's own way, to gain one's own points, and to work one's own will; there is so much of "Thy will be done" on the knees, and "My will be done" on the feet. But as the redeemed sinner is brought by the power of God the ever-blessed Spirit into communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, and into experimental oneness with Him in His sufferings, he lives not to himself, but to Him who loved him, died for him, rose again for him, appears in heaven for him, and is ready in every season of temptation and trial to minister to his necessities and succour him with His richest consolations.

Now notice verse 16: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh." What a mercy! We are not on the look out for the infirmities and failings of the tried and tempted brethren of Christ. We are not ready to judge the halting children of God after the sight of our eyes or according to the outward appearance. We are not eager to sit in the judgment seat to condemn those who, though sinning, are so near and dear to Christ, who has compassion upon the ignorant and upon them that are out of the way. Possessing His Spirit, we are brought down to the footstool of sovereign mercy to know and own ourselves the chiefest of sinners and the vilest of the vile. I know that the pietist, the very precise and proper, will be ready here to call me to order and question the truth of all this; but I know it is so by painful experience, and every God-begotten, Spirit-quickened child of God will cry with Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing;" for there is in me a concentration of all that is abominable, bad, and depraved in connection with fallen humanity. Yes, this is a solemn and terrible fact, and when I know and feel it by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, how can I sit in judgment upon the weak, the erring, and the fallen? Indeed, I cannot. Yet ofttimes I find myself on old covenant ground speaking in old covenant terms, acting according to old covenant law and not according to new covenant liberty, judging according to wrath and not according to love, not realizing the blessedness set before us in this precious portion, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh." I like this when I am enabled to see it in the light of the action

of the two sons of Noah. Mark! "To the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." (Titus 1:15) I do not ask you of depraved tastes to look this way, you whose delight is to seek out what you consider to be the impure portions of this blessed Book. To me there are no such portions, for "every word of God is pure." (Prov. 30:5) You remember the scene in the vineyard. Noah was drunk. His son Ham saw and reported his father's shame, but the other two sons took a garment, went backwards and covered their father's nakedness. They would not see it. They made as though they knew it not. Ah, my dear friends, it is something after that manner that God, in His rich and sovereign mercy, deals with His poor, weak, and erring children, and He brings them into the sweet enjoyment of that grace through which He will not and cannot see the failures, falls, and imperfections of his people in covenant union with Him. Thus favoured and blessed, they will be ever ready to walk backward, cast their eyes another way, and lend their ears to other tales altogether than those of the failures, falls, or inconsistencies of the living children of God.

"Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." The Jew who had been brought by grace from Judaism to spiritual life in Christ might boast of Christ belonging to his nation after the flesh. Christ Himself ignored all this, and owned all those who heard and kept the Word of God, irrespective of their nationality, as His true relatives. This is laying the axe of Divine truth at the root of all fleshly and sensuous religion. We have sought after a fleshly manner, and with fleshly emotions we have oftentimes embraced Him; but now we are taught to know Him, approve of Him, and appreciate Him in a heavenly and spiritual manner.

Mary Magdalene received a precious lesson in this, as recorded in John 20:11 - 18. She sought her Lord in the regions of death, but He revealed Himself to her in the regions of life. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." She knew His voice, and said unto Him, "Rabboni; which is to say, Master." The very One who had "won her affections and held her heart fast." She evidently was about to embrace him, when He kept her at a distance on nature's ground, saying: "Touch Me not: for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and to your God."

The heart of Christ was in heaven with His Father, and He would have Mary's there also. He would have her not linger in selfish gratification with Him, but go and tell His brethren of His ascension to the home and the glory He was going to possess for them. Let me ask you, Where is the place for true communion with our Lord Jesus Christ? Paul found it in the third heaven. (2 Cor. 12:2) See how he leads the mind to this in Phil. 3:20: "For our conversation is in heaven." Our citizenship, our home is there.

This is set before us throughout the whole of that precious family epistle, the Epistle to the Ephesians. Blessed with Christ in the heavenlies; (chap. 1:3) glorified with Christ in the heavenlies; (chap. 1:20) resting with Christ in the heavenlies; (chap. 2:6) revealing the mystery of redeeming love to the angels in the heavenlies; (chap. iii. 10); and wrestling with wicked spirits in the heavenlies (chap. 6:12) The heavenlies form the scene for Divine communion. Just turn to that 12th chap. of 2nd Corinthians: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth), such an one caught up to the third heaven," there to enjoy a blessed revelation of grace too wonderful for him to relate.

With this revelation "a thorn in the flesh" and "the messenger of Satan" must be encountered. But see! The place for Divine communion is up yonder. Mary must not linger amid the shades of darkness, desertion, and death. While her body was upon earth her spirit must ascend with the risen and glorified body of her Lord to His home, and to her's. Know ye anything of an experience so blessed as this? I do not

ask, Is this your lot every hour of the day! but I do ask, Is not this a spiritual reality according to the written Word, according to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and according to the judgment He has given you, how ever much you may be buffeted by Satan, burdened by sin, or bowed down under the body of sin and death?

Ay, indeed it is. Look here! There is no true place of worship nor true acceptable worship, but in living identification with the glorified God-Man up yonder. My dear friends, we may meet together to sing sweet hymns, we may be moved by prayerful words from fluent lips, and endorse the enunciations of a faithful preacher of God's truth; but if the heart is not lifted up by the power of the Holy Ghost, if Christ is not spiritually present in the midst; if there is no identification with Him in the new life, in the new creation, there can be no real worship in God's account.

"Therefore." Another word upon this. Someone has well said, that the cross of Christ is God's monument erected over the grave of all carnal ordinances, sensuous ceremonies, fleshly sacrifices, earthly types, and fleeting shadows; but I say, that the cross of Christ is God's monument over the grave where He has buried all human distinctions, all human modes, all human means in matters pertaining to Himself. There you have something to think about. You may meet with a Churchman who has more of the steeple in his head than of grace in his heart, or you may come in contact with that pest of society, a political Dissenter, who is full of strife and contention; mark you, there is not a pin of difference between the two in God's estimation, or in the estimation of the spiritually-minded and Spirit-taught child of God. These will be ever looking at their order, rules, rites, regulations, and ceremonies, but can have no true apprehension or appreciation of the glorious truth revealed in the words of the text: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "Therefore," because the revelation of God to His people through Christ, in Christ, with Christ, and by Christ, makes a clean sweep of the creature altogether, drives away all his plans, schemes, doings, and dealings, and makes known to us the glorious fact, that the salvation of elect man is God's work from first to last. God the Father for me in purpose before the worlds were framed, and to all eternity. God the Son with me in His life of suffering and sorrow here below. God the Spirit in me, regenerating, restoring, and refreshing. "Therefore," all that I may have, and everything I can have as the means of grace, or as the hope of glory, must be wholly of God and by God.

II. THE CHARACTER-"If any man be in Christ." Notice the word man was not used by the apostle when he penned this precious portion. It is: "if any in Christ" This excludes all human means, modes, and distinctions. Truth, by the Holy Ghost, is a mighty leveller, as seen in many portions of Paul's epistles. Turn to Gal. 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free there is neither male nor female for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." In Christ, and spiritually one with Him, there is no assertion of the authority of the stronger over the weaker vessel - -nothing about your lords of creation there.

The Holy Ghost graciously leads the mind into realization of glorious equality in Christ Jesus. All of one mind. All of one spirit. You see this also in Gal. 6:15, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision aveileth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The new creation does not consist in an acknowledgment of a form of sound words, or delight in a clear creed, or prizing the so-called outward means of grace, or ten times more than these. We will come a little closer home than this, which, I expect, will not suit some of you.

The other day I saw an announcement in connection with "The Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews." Let me tell you, I am very suspicious concerning what are called converted Jews and converted Papist. I cannot help it. It may be a little of my old Adam cropping up, but there it is. Where is there a

necessity for such a society as this? The Holy Ghost, by Paul, tells very plainly that the middle wall of partition, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances which stood as a barrier between Jew and Gentile, was broken down by the death of Christ, and now God looks upon mankind as divided into two classes only - the elect and the reprobate - the redeemed and the unredeemed.

See Eph. 2:15, "To make in Himself of twain (elect Jew and Gentile) one new man." Blessed be God, there is now no distinction whatever between the two. In Christ all outward distinctions for ever cease. Here I would ask, What room is there, on this ground of spiritual privilege, for the Churchman to assert his superiority over the Dissenter, or for the Dissenter to throw his stones at the Churchman? The cross of Christ forbids unseemly squabbles. Some may ask, What do I mean by the cross of Christ?

Well, I do not mean that empty bauble which is worshipped and adored by Popish and Protestant idolaters. I do not mean a material cross, or a visible sign, but that which every one in Christ must take up and bear in spiritual union with Him. What is the cross? You will find it in John 17:14, "I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them." Look at John 15:18, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." Because of the sovereign and eternal decree of election is brought home to the heart, and confessed with the lips, because the Word has been received in much affliction, because the cross of Christ is understood in its spirituality and power, therefore the world, both pious and profane, religious and irreligious, will hate the child of God. In the word of the truth of the Gospel we see God's monument upon the grave where all human distinctions, commandments, sacrifices, and offerings lie buried.

"In Christ." A glorious position. I hear sometimes from the lips of those whom I believe to be spiritually taught, express contrary to Scriptural facts. Such have spoken of being put in Christ. Let us cling to chapter and verse. There is nothing so convincing as a "What saith the Scripture?" Put into Christ? The people of God were eternally in Christ, so there can be no such thing as putting into Christ. Turn to 1 Cor. 1:30, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus." Not in Him according to that Popish figment and vain delusion, by baptismal regeneration.

A friend once asked me whether I had seen Dean Alford's translation of the New Testament. I at once directed his attention to the Dean's translation of the words in Titus 3:5, "the washing of regeneration," which he renders, "the font of regeneration." Poor Dean! This discovers the lamentable fact that he believed in that delusion of the devil, that a child is put into Christ and received into Christ the very moment a few drops of polluted water are sprinkled or poured upon it.

You ask, Why do you call it polluted water? Because the very moment the fingers of a clean-handed priest (?) touch the water, you would look at it a few times before you would be tempted to drink it. Water is polluted the very moment it receives a human touch. There are thousands so besotted with error and beguiled by Satan as to believe that carnal means will produce spiritual effects. This is contrary to our Lord's words to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6) Yes, there are thousands who believe when a child is brought to the font, the water applied to it, and a few words pronounced over it, that moment it becomes a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

There are those also who hold that without adult dipping there can be no regeneration. When I say this, I do desire not to be understood as referring in any way to our friends the Particular Baptists, because I know and thank God for it, that these brethren in Christ hate and scout such a wretched delusion as much

as I do. I allude to the Mormons and to a pestilential sect who style themselves, Christian Brethren, and pretty brethren they are! These hold that the moment a brother or sister goes through the water every sin is left behind in the bath.

But there you have the truth, that not "of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (John 1:13) ay, wholly of God from first to last the election of grace is found in Christ Jesus. Look here! This is living union. It is not in a mere profession of true religion. It is not in self condemned, but in Christ justified and accepted. (Eph. 1:6) It is not in Adam dead, but in Christ alive. (1 Cor. 15:22) In Christ the last Adam with sin put away, death abolished, and life and immortality brought to light through the Gospel. Not living in the flesh for fleshly gratification; but living in Christ to enjoy the blessings stored up for me in Him.

In Christ by sovereign purpose. In Christ by sacred purchase. In Christ by spiritual power. Thus in Christ a redeemed sinner is a new creation. We will now look at -

III. THE CONDITION - "A new creature," or a new creation. What is it to create? It is not to make or form a new thing out of an old one. It is not to change, it is not to transform, it is not to convert. "A new creation" is not the old nature renovated, adorned, and beautified. It is not the flesh with its corruptions and lusts trimmed and trained; but it is the new and Divine nature with its spiritual blessings, immunities, and privileges. It is not taking old Adam and washing, clothing, and adorning him, making him religious and very pretty to the outward eye. It is not that. It is a new creation altogether. Therefore if I am in Christ Jesus, I am a partaker of a new nature - a partaker of the Divine nature, a partaker of His resurrection life, and all this according to the Father's promise before all worlds. See Titus 1:2, In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Life was promised to Christ for His people, and at the set time of favour He communicates it through the ministry of His own Word. How this is brought about, the poor child of God oftentimes finds not, and when questioned in reference to it, can only answer in the words of the blind man as recorded in John 9:25: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Once I was blind and dead to God's Christ, to God's covenant, and to God's salvation; I was dead to all interest in precious atoning blood, justifying righteousness, regenerating grace, restoring mercy, and to that peace of His which passeth all understanding; but now in union with the Lamb and in blessed association with His redeemed worshippers, I love to dwell upon those glorious verities which are found alone in Him, by Him, and through Him. I love the company of those who delight in electing love, redeeming grace, and regenerating mercy. I love to experience those restorings which flow through the wounds of Jesus by the power of the Holy Ghost to my heart.

"A new creation" is alone to be found in union with Him who was made sin for His people, that they "might be made the righteousness of God in Him." A new, Divine nature, (2 Peter i. 4) not a mere influence, but a real existence in living union with a risen, exalted, and glorified Jesus. This is always attended by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, but it is not the Holy Ghost any more than He, in the formation of the sacred humanity of Jesus in the womb of Mary, was to be confounded with the body of Christ. What a glorious union! One with the Person of a glorified Christ. We cannot find words better suited to describe this than the words of our most glorious Christ in His prayer to the Father, as recorded in John 17:21-23: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." This is glorious oneness. As the Divine Three are equally, eternally, and essentially One, so are the members of Christ one with Him, their living Head. This is a marvellous and mysterious oneness which can never be

fully known until we stand perfect and complete in the light of His glory. Then we shall know even as we are known. As the Three Persons in the Godhead are One, so are the partakers of the new creation one with Christ. He appears in heaven for us, and blessed be His holy name, "as He is so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17) If we are one with Him by His Father's electing love, His own redeeming blood, and His Spirit's regenerating grace, then His Father is our Father, His righteousness our righteousness, His nature our nature, His home our home, and His glory our glory.

IV. THE IMMUNITIES ENJOYED-"Old things are passed away." Blessed be God, that old thing SIN, which, in my unregenerate state, maintained its authority over me, is gone, passed away. How did it pass away? I can only answer you in the language of God's blessed Word. See Isa. 53:6, "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. 9:26) By the faith of God's own giving I see by the Father's own act, all my sin passed away from me to my adorable Surety and Saviour, and an end made of it by His sin-atonement death. That old thing, THE CURSE OF THE LAW, passed away. How? "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) In thus becoming a curse for His people He became the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4) "The end of the law." What an expressive term! What does it mean? It means that He went to the end of all the law's requirements in the perfect obedience He rendered to its precepts, that He went to the end of all the law's penal threatenings which He silenced by the sufferings He endured. What is the end of a debt? The payment. Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, took and paid every debt owed by His bride, and in the sweet experience of this I can sing,-

"Complete atonement Thou hast made,

And, to the utmost farthing, paid

Whate'er Thy people owed;

How, then, can wrath on me take place,

If sheltered in Thy righteousness

And sprinkled with Thy blood!"

By the application of that precious blood to my heart, every question of sin between me and my God is settled, every transgression over which my chastened spirit has grieved is removed, is passed away. That old thing, CONDEMNATION is passed away. All this due to me was borne by my sinless Surety by Him who said, to sin, law, condemnation, and death, which sought and found Him, "If ye seek Me, let these go their way." (John 18:8) That old thing of fleshly fear. DEATH, passed away. "Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel; and when Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4; 2 Tim. i. 10) Death may be dreaded, but can never be felt by a sinner in living union with Christ. "Old things are passed away." My old notions of salvation by merit, salvation by my fleshly co-operation, salvation by my doing something and Jesus doing the rest, passed away. My old degrading views of Christ passed away, and now in the light of His glorious Gospel, I see Him altogether lovely, His salvation perfect, His righteousness complete, His intercession all-prevalent, and His glory sure. He is the Beginner and the Finisher of my faith, and the Performer of all things for me in the presence of His Father and mine. We now notice, -

V. THE PRIVILEGES POSSESSED - "Behold, all things are become new." Yes, a Christian is a new man, with a new life, in a new world. He experiences life in a risen and ascended Christ, and immortality in spiritual oneness with Him. This is the truth which the Lord Jesus spake to Martha recorded in John 11:25,26: "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Martha experienced in herself, "deaths oft;" but in her living and loving Lord she was blessed with many spiritual and sweet revivings. In the words of Christ to Martha we have a wonderful paradox - -a dead believer, yet in possession of a life that can never die. The time of dissolution will and must come to all those who are not to remain until the coming of the Lord; but this will be to them a ceasing to die and a beginning to live unfettered and free in the eternal embrace of a covenant God in Christ. It is this which cheers the living child of God under many a dark and trying dispensation, which gives him many a gracious lift in the midst of his bondage, and causes him to rejoice in spirit when the hearts of all around him are sad. Then the living in Jerusalem shall know that neither law, sin, Satan, condemnation, death, nor hell, nor all combined, can ever affect his interest in God, nor God's interest in him. In Christ Jesus the new creature enjoys the blessings of this world, even of a world in ruins, yet possessing beauties and blessings rich and rare to the sanctified mind and spiritually illumined eye. The possessor of life in oneness with Christ, though he may not possess a pennyworth of this world's goods, can look upon the broad lands and beautiful estates of the nobility and say, -

"My Father made them all"

"All things are became new." LIFE instead of death! Salvation instead of slavery! RIGHTEOUSNESS instead of sin! JUSTIFICATION instead of condemnation! ACCEPTANCE instead of banishment! PEACE instead of enmity! New affections fixed upon things above. New hopes entering within the veil. New relatives. God my Father. Christ my Brother. The Holy Ghost my Friend and Companion. The saints my associates. Heaven my home. JEHOVAH Three-in-One and One-in-Three my exceeding and eternal joy. And blessed be His holy name, He has put a new song in my mouth and given me a new heart, by which I can praise Him for bringing me up from the pit of corruption, setting my feet upon the Rock of eternal ages, ordering my goings, holding my hand, and keeping my feet in the way.

May the Lord add His blessing for his name's sake. Amen.

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