

The Privileges of the Believer

by Thomas Reade

The sermon emphasizes the incredible privileges and assurances that believers have through their faith in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, John 14:16, John 16:13, Romans 8:16, 1 Corinthians 3:21, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 4:30

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Christian Privileges"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches on 'The Privileges of the Believer,' emphasizing the inconceivable goodness of God towards believers, assuring them of His love, protection, and provision. Believers are reminded of their amazing privilege as heirs of God through Christ, inheriting all blessings and glory. The sermon delves into the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting of sin, revealing Christ as Savior, guiding into truth, and providing comfort and strength. Believers are encouraged to seek the Spirit's presence, transformation, and sanctification, and to cherish His godly motions to avoid grieving Him.

Transcript

18. THE PRIVILEGES OF THE BELIEVER

"All things are yours." 1 Cor. 3:21

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." John 14:16

How inconceivably great is the goodness of God to his believing people! In his holy word, he assures them, that through his over-ruling Providence, all things shall work together for their good; that he loves them with an everlasting love; that they are dear to him as the apple of his eye; precious to him as the signet-ring on his right hand; that he will be to them as a little sanctuary in all countries where they shall come; that he will never leave them nor forsake them. He denounces a woe on all who offend them, and pronounces a blessing on all who give them only a cup of cold water for his name's sake.

Oh! how great is the goodness of the Lord, which he has laid up for those who fear him, which he has wrought for those who trust in him, before the sons of men! All the promises of the New Covenant are primarily made to Christ, who merited every blessing by his obedience unto death; and they are secondarily made to every believer in Him, who, standing complete in his righteousness, becomes

savingly interested in all the promises of God, both as respects this world and that which is to come. Amazing privilege!

Every believer in Jesus is an HEIR OF GOD through Christ! He inherits Him as his portion, in whom he lives and moves and has his being; by whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist. He inherits Him, who fills heaven and earth with His glory; who is the Fountain of all felicity; in whose presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore!

O! my soul, never can you thirst enough after this exalted privilege. In yourself, you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; in Christ, you are happy, and honorable, and rich, and glorious! In yourself, you have nothing but sin and misery; in Christ, you are clothed with the garment of salvation; renewed in the spirit of your mind; and filled with peace and joy. In yourself, you are an heir of hell; in Christ, O wonderful thought! you are an HEIR OF GOD. How bright, how dazzling, how surpassing the splendor of the mid-day sun, is this inconceivably great and glorious privilege to be an heir of God!

Give me, O Lord, the steady eye of faith, that as the eagle soars aloft, fixing its eye upon the sun, so I may rise in heart and affection above this lower world, looking unto Jesus the Sun of Righteousness. By faith, enable me to substantiate the things hoped for, and to realize the things not seen. By faith, may I daily anticipate that glorious period, when, aroused by the Archangel's trumpet, my sleeping dust will leave its bed of clay, and with my enraptured soul, be made a blessed vessel in your courts above, there to be filled with your everlasting love!

"All things are yours." Well might Paul say, "God is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us.... That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Well might he say- "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." A heart penetrated with a sense of the love of God, will be overwhelmed at the view of such amazing mercy. What mind can conceive the fullness of this assurance; "All things are yours." On what is this expansive declaration founded? "You are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Oh! then, my soul, rejoice if grace has united you to the Savior. To every believer, to all the churches of the saints in every age, the Apostle writes; "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

When Jesus was drawing near to the time when he would go to the Father, he promised to his sorrowing disciples another Comforter. As heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, they were not left comfortless. The bodily absence of Christ was to be more than compensated by his spiritual presence. "If any man loves me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "If I do not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." "He dwells with you, and shall be in you." "When the Comforter has come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me."

Oh! my soul! have you received this heavenly Visitant? Important enquiry! since without the Spirit of Christ, you are none of his. Contemplate the various operations of the Eternal Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Examine with minutest scrutiny, whether any of these operations have been wrought in you, thereby proving that you are indeed united to Christ, according to the Apostle "He who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;" and may the Lord assist you in this important search.

It is the work of the Spirit to convince the world of SIN; to open the eyes of the understanding, that we may see our pollution, wretchedness, and danger; to apply the Law to our consciences, and from a deep conviction of our innumerable transgressions against it, to fill our souls with anguish; to drive us to self-despair, destroying all our towering hopes of gaining heaven by our own deservings; bringing us to the borders of eternal ruin, and there, in the view of everlasting torments, forcing us to cry out with heartfelt exclamation; "What must I do to be saved? how shall I escape the damnation of hell?"

Have you ever experienced these powerful convictions of the Spirit? Have you seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin? Are you made deeply sensible of your great depravity, of your amazing distance from that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Have you been deeply humbled at the view of yourself as a fallen, guilty, polluted creature? And has this view humbled you in the dust before God? Has it filled you with true contrition? Has it emptied you of all self-dependence? Has it, in the spirit of true repentance and humiliation, made you cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner?"

It is the work of the Spirit to reveal the LORD JESUS CHRIST to every contrite sinner, as an all-sufficient Savior, willing, and able, and ready to save all that come unto him, be they ever so vile and worthless. Jesus graciously said- When the Spirit of truth has come, he shall testify of me. He shall glorify me. He will bring me glory by revealing to you whatever he receives from me. Thus the Spirit applies the reviving cordial of the Gospel to every sin-sick soul. He manifests to every trembling sinner the freeness of Christ's love, the fullness of his salvation, the greatness of his power, the riches of his grace, the efficacy of his righteousness, the preciousness of his blood, the prevalency of his intercession, and to crown all, his willingness to save, even to the uttermost, all who come unto God by him.

He kindles a flame of love in the sinner's heart; moves him to pray to God for pardon through the merits of His Son; inclines him to seek earnestly for a saving interest in this precious Savior; enables him to lay hold on Christ by faith; and transforms him from a rebel, into a humble, loving believer in the Lord Jesus. Thus the Spirit glorifies Christ, by applying the blessings of his salvation to the hearts of sinners, drawing them out of the fatal bondage of corruption, delivering them from the power of darkness, and Making them heirs of glory through faith.

Have I been thus brought to Jesus through the sweet constraining influence of the Spirit of grace? Have I had this view of Jesus as One mighty to save? And believing in him, have I experienced his saving power in my soul, inspiring me with humble boldness to draw near to the mercy-seat? Have I pleaded before God the all-prevailing merits of his dear Son; and have I felt a joy springing up in my heart from a sense of blood-bought pardon? Do I feel the terrors of the Law supplanted by the consolations of the Gospel? Are all my hopes of happiness and heaven derived from the death and sufferings of Christ, and Christ alone?

It is the work of the Spirit to guide believers into all truth; to renew their natures, to sanctify their hearts, to illuminate their minds, to rectify their wills, to purify their affections, to make them new creatures in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of holiness. Through his transforming power, the church is all glorious within, a temple prepared for the residence of the God of heaven.

Oh! how great are the privileges of the saints. They are as a royal diadem in the hand of their God. Well might angels sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Have I been led by the Spirit into the truth as it is in Jesus? Have I experienced a change of heart? Is it now my chief delight to live by faith upon the Son of God, to meditate upon his work of redemption, and to show my love by a prompt, cheerful, unreserved obedience to all his commandments? Is holiness the

element in which I move? Is sin odious in my eyes, and hateful to my heart? Am I daily seeking for a more entire deliverance from its power? Do I find the great work of sanctification progressively advancing in my soul? Have old things passed away; are all things become new?

It is the work of the Spirit to ANIMATE, COMFORT, AND STRENGTHEN the faithful in Christ Jesus. Hence he is styled the COMFORTER; the Spirit of consolation, a quickening Spirit. By his gracious influences he sheds abroad the love of God in the hearts of believers; fills them, at times, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and gives them a peace that passes understanding. He supports them under the severest trials; enables them to rejoice under the greatest tortures; preserves them from the power of evil; guards them from the attacks of Satan; upholds them on their journey through the wilderness, and brings them triumphant to the heavenly Canaan.

Have you, O my soul, experienced these delightful influences of the Spirit of grace, the Comforter? When the enemy comes in like a flood, do you experience this precious promise- "The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him?" Under the various crosses and trials of life, what have been your consolations? Have they been all drawn from the Fountain of living Waters, flowing in a sacred stream of peace and joy? Are the fruits of the Spirit exhibited in all their loveliness in your daily walk? With the Apostle can you say; "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all my tribulation?"

The Spirit of Christ is the seal of our adoption, the pledge of future glory. As all who are destitute of the Spirit of Christ, do not belong to Christ. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they alone are the sons of God. Believers, who are the temples of the Holy Spirit, are commanded to cherish his godly motions, to abstain from all appearance of evil, lest, by too near an approach to sin, they be drawn aside by its influence from the path of duty, and so grieve the Spirit of God. They are exhorted to beware of willful transgression lest they quench the holy flame, and thus provoke the Spirit to depart from them, for God has said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Am I sealed with this glorious seal of heaven? Is the image of Jesus impressed upon my soul by the Spirit of holiness? Have I received this divine pledge of the heavenly inheritance? Is the private seal of my adoption into the family of God made manifest by the broad and public seal of my sanctification? Am I afraid of offending, grieving, and quenching the Spirit of my beloved Savior? Do I cherish the godly motions, and pray without ceasing to be more faithful to the outward calls and inward convictions of the Holy Spirit?

Lord, you know all things, you know how I desire to be yours. Impart to me this blessed Spirit, without whom all profession is hypocrisy. May I never separate the precept from the promise, nor the character from the privileges of your people. You have declared, "Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Descend, blessed Spirit, into my longing soul. Take up your abode within me. Convince me of sin. Show me my true character. Lead me to Jesus Christ. Work in me faith and love and every grace. Destroy the power of evil in my soul. Infuse all good desires. Bring them to good effect. Be my guardian and guide; my support through life; my consolation in death; my everlasting portion in heaven. Oh! shine with beams of love on my soul, until I am made, through sovereign grace, to shine as the sun in the kingdom of my Father.

My soul enjoys a sweet repose,

Beneath the Savior's sheltering grace;
A solace for its direst woes,
Amid the beamings of his face.
Detached from earth's deceitful joys,
Allured by His attractive love,
I seek a world which never cloy,
A world of light and bliss above.
Instruct your servant, gracious Lord,
Your easy yoke with joy to bear;
Enlightened by your faithful word,
To shun each error's fatal snare.
Oh! may I close each passing day,
With humble love, with holy fear;
Enjoy your presence on the way,
And ever find your succour near.
By faith, it is, that I am thine,
Powerful Savior, faithful Guide;
Oh! stoop upon your work to shine,
And never let my footsteps slide.
Come, Lord, with your Almighty grace,
Confirm my faith, my strength renew.
Until I shall win the heavenly race,
And gain the glorious prize in view.
Yes! Lord, your goodness, and your love,
Already hears and answers prayer
The Light descending from above,
My soul with holy comforts cheer.

How rich the favor- how divine,
Jesus is mine, and I am his;
All glory be forever thine,
You Fountain of eternal bliss.

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