

The Wonders of Calvary

GREAT God, there was a time when we dreaded the thought of coming near to Thee, for we were guilty and Thou wast angry with us, but now we will praise Thee because Thine anger is turned away and Thou comfortest us. Ay, and the very throne which once was a place of dread has now become the place of shelter. I flee unto Thee to hide me.

We long now to get right away from the world, even from the remembrance of it and have fellowship with the world to come by speaking with Him that was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty. Lord, we have been worried and wearied oftentimes with care, but with Thee care comes to an end, all things are with Thee and when we live in Thee, we live in wealth, in sure repose, in constant joy.

We have to battle with the sons of men against a thousand errors and unrighteousnesses, but when we flee to Thee, there all is truth and purity and holiness, and our heart finds peace. Above all, we have to battle with ourselves and we are very much ashamed of ourselves. After many years of great mercy, after tasting of the powers of the world to come, we still are so weak, so foolish, but oh! when we get away from self to God, there all is truth and purity and holiness and our heart finds peace, wisdom, completeness, delight, joy, victory.

Oh! bring us, then, we pray Thee, now near to Thyself. Let us bathe ourselves in communion with our God. Blessed be the love which chose us before the world began. We can never sufficiently adore Thee for Thy

sovereignty, the sovereignty of love which saw us in the ruins of the Fall, yet loved us notwithstanding all.

We praise the God of the Eternal Council Chamber and of the Everlasting Covenant, but where shall we find sufficiently fit words with which to praise Him who gave us grace in Christ His Son, before He spread the starry sky. We also bless Thee, O God, as the God of our redemption, for Thou hast so loved us as to give even Thy dear Son for us. He gave Himself, His very life for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and separate us unto Himself to be His peculiar people, zealous for good works.

Never can we sufficiently adore free grace and dying love. The wonders of Calvary never cease to be wonders. They are growingly marvellous in our esteem as we think of Him who washed us from our sins in His own blood. Nor can we cease to praise the God of our regeneration who found us dead and made us live, found us at enmity and reconciled us, found us loving the things of this world and lifted us out of the slough and mire of selfishness and worldliness into the love of divine everlasting things.

O Spirit of God, we love Thee this day, especially for dwelling in us. How canst Thou abide in so rude a habitation. How canst Thou make these bodies to be Thy temples, and yet Thou dost so, for which, let Thy name be had in reverence so long as we live.

O Lord, we would delight ourselves in Thee this day. Give us faith and love and hope that with these three graces we may draw very near to the Triune God. Thou wilt keep us, Thou wilt preserve us, Thou wilt feed us, Thou wilt

lead us, and Thou wilt bring us to the mind of God, and there wilt Thou show us Thy love, and in the glory everlasting had boundless, there wilt Thou make us know and taste and feel the joys that cannot be expressed.

But a little longer waiting and we shall come to the golden shore. But a little longer fighting and we shall receive the crown of life that fadeth not away.

Lord, get us up above the world. Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove, and mount and bear us on Thy wings, far from these inferior sorrows and inferior joys, up where eternal ages roll. May we ascend in joyful contemplation and may our spirit come back again, strong for all its service, armed for all its battles, armoured for all its dangers, and made ready to live heaven on earth, until by-and-by we shall live heaven in heaven. Great Father, be with Thy waiting people. Any in great trouble, do Thou greatly help. Any that are despondent, do Thou sweetly comfort and cheer. Any that have erred and are smarting under their own sin, do Thou bring them back and heal their wounds. Any that this day are panting after holiness, do Thou give them the desire of their hearts. Any that are longing for usefulness, do Thou lead them into ways of usefulness.

Lord, we want to live while we live. We do pray that we may not merely groan out an existence here below, nor live as earthworms crawling back into our holes and dragging now and then a withered leaf with us, but oh! give us to live as we ought to live, with a new life that Thou hast put into us, with the divine quickening which

has lifted us as much above common men as men are lifted above the beasts that perish.

Do not let us always be hampered like poor half-hatched birds within the egg. May we chip the shell today and get out into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Grant us this, we pray Thee.

Lord, visit our church. We have heard Thy message to the churches at Ephesus. It is a message to us also. Oh! do not let any of us lose our first love. Let not our church grow cold and dead. We are not, we fear, what once we were. Lord, revive us! All our help must come from Thee. Give back to the Church its love, its confidence, its holy daring, its consecration, its liberality, its holiness. Give back all it ever had and give it much more. Take every member and wash his feet, Sweet Lord, most tenderly, and set us with clean feet in a clean road, with a clean heart to guide them, and do Thou bless us as Thou art wont to do after a divine fashion.

Bless us, our Father, and let all the churches of Jesus Christ partake of like cause and tenderness. Walking among the golden candlesticks, trim every lamp and make every light, even though it burneth but feebly now, to shine out gloriously through Thy care.

Now bless the sinners. Lord, convert them. O God, save men, save this great city, this wicked city, this slumbering dead city. Lord, arouse it, arouse it by any means, that it may turn unto its God. Lord, save sinners all the world over and let Thy precious Word be fulfilled. "Behold He cometh with clouds." Why dost Thou tarry? Make no

tarrying, O, our Lord. And now unto Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be glory forever and ever. Amen.