

Chapter Fourteen

LIGHTENING THE EARTH WITH HIS GLORY

Righteousness by Faith and the Promise of the Spirit - Part Two

We continue now with the remainder of A.T. Jones Lecture 17, 1893.

Well then, the Lord has bought us, has He not? Now as far as you and I are concerned, we need not have any more doubt as to whether we are the Lord's; that is so? [Congregation: "Yes."] But there are some people in the world who are not, really, in real experience and as a matter of fact so far as the consummation of the bargain is concerned; they have not submitted themselves to the Lord and are not practically His. He has made them His by purchase; now how can they know that they are His practically and indeed? By His word. By choosing for themselves to have it just that way. By choice.

Page 44 in Steps to Christ gives the whole philosophy of it; it tells how to make the surrender of ourselves to God. It says that your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand, and the knowledge of your broken promise and forfeited pledges, weakens your confidence in your own sincerity. And finally:

"What you need to understand is the true force of the will. You cannot save yourself; you cannot change your heart, but you can choose to serve Him."

When the man chooses to put his will on the side where God's will is, then the thing is accomplished. Then it is at a man's choice that he practically, in his own experience, becomes Lord's indeed. Then is it not by the man's own permission in choosing the Lord's way that the man becomes the Lord's in practical experience?

Then having done that, don't you see that so long as your choice is there, so long as your wish is there to be the Lord's don't you see that you are the Lord's indeed? Do you see that? Whenever we deliver ourselves up to Him, that is so. But some of you delivered yourself up long ago, but then, since that, you have been discouraged and wondering whether you were the Lord's or not.

We want people tonight to get that doubt and question forever out of the way so that whatever comes up, you will not be bothering about whether you are the Lord's. Just as certainly as your choice is there to be His, you are His, for He bought you long ago. That is the thing I am after. Is that what you are after? You are to take it if you ever get it. [Congregation:

"Amen."] *Then we can know that we are the Lord's.*

But now we sometimes hear people talk as though that was going to sanction sin. No. It will not do that. No. It will save you from sinning. When a man gets into that place and his choice is there

to be the Lord's, then God works in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and he is a

Christian. God will make him a Christian. That is the divine power there is in this thing. There is no sanction of sin about it. In fact, it is the only way to keep from sanctioning sin. Any other profession does sanction sin. Any other profession does do just what the Lord complains of--that men have made Him to serve with their sins. What does the Lord say? "You have made me to serve with your sin."

Isa. 43:24. Let us stop it. Let our will and our choice be the Lord's every moment of our conscious days, and then it is a fact.

Let us turn and read that verse that says so. 1 Cor. 6:19 and the last words of the verse: "Ye are not your own." That is so, is it not? I don't care who the man is, is he his own? [Congregation: "No, sir."] The Lord has bought him and if he does not let the Lord have him, he is robbing the Lord of that which is the Lord's own. That is the mischief of it. Though he be not consciously and practically the

Lord's, yet the Lord has bought every one and any man who refuses to let the Lord have him, he is robbing the Lord of that which he bought and for which he paid the price and he is counting the price which bought him as worth less than himself. Is not that the same satanic spirit that sought to put itself above God in heaven? The Lord gave Himself for us; then when I will not let Him have me, in that very thing I count myself worth more than the price that was paid--that is, worth more than the Lord, and that is the same self that puts itself above God all the time. Oh let this mind be in us that was in

Christ, who emptied Himself that God and man might again be united in one.

"Ye are not your own," are you? [Congregation: "No."] Are you not glad of it? Are you not glad you are not your

own? He says so, and it is so, is it not? Why is it? "For ye are bought with a price." He bought us, therefore, we are not our own, and before all people in the world who are not their own, is the man who has yielded himself to the Lord who has bought him. "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." Whose are they? [Congregation: "God's."] But I need not dwell longer on these verses, brethren. You do that, will you? You dwell on them.

Well now we have read the verses, "He gave himself for us." He bought us. How much of us?

[Congregation: "All of us."] When was it that he did it? [Congregation: "Before the foundation of the world."] What kind of folks were we before the foundation of the world? What kind of folks were we when God bought us? We were just ourselves; just as we were in this world. And He bought us, sinners, just as we are? [Congregation: "Yes."] Now did He? Honestly now? We are coming to another thought here. Now did He pay that price and buy us just as we were? Sinners? [Congregation:

"Yes."] Evil beings and willing to go into evil ways? Willing to do the evil thing? Making no profession of religion and not particularly wanting to? Did He buy us then? [Congregation: "Yes."]

What did He buy just then? He bought us, and all there was of us. And as He bought what there was of us; He bought our sins. Isaiah describes it--wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; no soundness at all. Is that so?

Here is another text--Titus 3:3-7: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing to regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." He did it;

He says so. Then do you know that that is so? [Congregation: "Yes."]

Well now let us carry that a little further. He gave Himself for our sins, but the same thought goes through all. He will not take our sins--although He bought them--without our permission. Look at it a little further, carrying the same thought forward. "He gave himself." for whose sins?

[Congregation: "Ours."] Whose were they? [Congregation: "Ours."] He gave Himself for them.

They being ours, to whom did He give Himself when He bought them? [Congregation: "To us."] He gave Himself to me, for my sins? [Congregation: "Yes."] Then the choice is forever with me as to whether I would rather have my sins than to have Him, isn't it? [Congregation: "Yes."] That is the living choice before me, is it? [Congregation: "Yes."] Is that the choice before you? [Congregation:

"Yes."] Which would you rather have, your sins or Christ? [Congregation: "Christ."] Then from this time henceforth can there be any hesitation about letting anything go that God shows is sin? Will you let it go when it is pointed out? When sin is pointed out to you, say, "I would rather have Christ than that." And let it go [Congregation: "Amen."] Just tell the Lord, "Lord, I make the choice now. I make the trade. I make Thee my choice. It is gone, and I have something better." Thank the Lord!

Then where in the world is the opportunity for any of us to get discouraged over our sins?

Now some of the brethren here have done that very thing. They came here free, but the Spirit of God brought up something they never saw before. The Spirit of God went deeper than it ever went before and revealed things they never saw before and then instead of thanking the Lord that that was so and letting the whole wicked business go and thanking the Lord they had ever so much more of Him than they ever had before, they began to get discouraged. They said, "Oh what am I going to do? My sins are so great." There they let Satan cast a cloud over them and throw them into discouragement and they get no good out of the meetings day after day.

Isn't that too bad? Isn't it too bad that a person whom the Lord has loved so much as to give Himself for Him at all, should act that way with the Lord when the Lord wants to reveal more of Himself? Brethren, if any of you have got into discouragement, let us quit. If the Lord has brought up sins to us that we never thought of before, that only shows that He is going down to the depths and He will reach the bottom at last and when He finds the last thing that is unclean or impure and that is out of harmony with His will and brings that up and shows that to us and we say, "I would rather have the

Lord than that," then the work is complete and the seal of the living God can be fixed upon that character. [Congregation: "Amen."] Which would you rather have, a character--[Someone in the congregation began praising the Lord and others began to look around.] Never mind. If lots more of you would thank the Lord for what you have got, there would be more joy in this house tonight.

Which would you rather have, the completeness, the perfect

fulness of Jesus Christ or have less than that with some of your sins covered up that you never know of? [Congregation: "His fulness."]

But don't you see, the Testimonies have told us that if there be stains of sin there, we cannot have the seal of God. How in the world can that seal of God, which is the impress of His perfect character revealed in us, be put upon us when there are sins about us? He cannot put the seal, the impress of His perfect character, upon us until He sees it there. And so He has got to dig down to the deep places we never dreamed of, because we cannot understand our hearts. But the Lord knows the heart. He tries the conscience. He will cleanse the heart, and bring up the last vestige of wickedness. Let Him go on, brethren; let Him keep on His searching work. And when He does bring our sins before us, let the heart say, "Lord, thou gavest thyself for my sins. Oh, I take thee instead of them." They are gone, and I rejoice in the Lord. Brethren, let us be honest with the Lord, and treat Him as He wants us to.

Then He gave Himself to us for our sins. Then I say again and you see that it is simply with you and me a living choice, as to whether we will have the Lord or ourselves, the Lord's righteousness or our sins, the Lord's say or our say? Which will we have? [Congregation: "The Lord's way."] There is no difference in making the choice when we know what the Lord has done, and what He is to us.

The choice is easy. Let the surrender be complete. And when these sins come up--why, they were surrendered long ago. That is all they are brought up for, that we can make the choice. This is the blessed work of sanctification. And we can know that that work of sanctification is going on in us. If the Lord should take away our sins without our knowing it, what good would it do us? That would simply be making machines of us. He does not propose to do that; consequently, He wants you and me to know when our sins go, that we may know when His righteousness comes. It is when we yield ourselves that we have Him.

It is true that the Scriptures say we are instruments of God, and don't you forget that we are always intelligent instruments--not like the instrument, a pick or a shovel, that a man would use. That is utterly senseless. That is not it, but we are intelligent instruments. We will be used by the Lord at our own living choice. Our own living choice upon His side, choosing that He will do that with us and then it is done, because His almighty power carries on the work.

Then He gave Himself for our sins, and now He comes and says, there is sin. What then?

"Lord, it is sin." That is confession. The root idea of

confession is to speak the same thing. The root idea of the Greek word translated confession is to speak the same thing. That is confession. The Lord said to David, "You have sinned and done this evil." David said, "I have sinned." That is confession.

The Bible says, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." What does God show them for anyway? The only thing that He shows men their sins for, is that He may take them away. When He shows me sins, I say, "Lord, they are sins." And what then? They are forgiven. They are gone.

Now you folks have confessed your sins since you have been here, haven't you? All that the

Lord has shown you, have you? [Congregation: "Yes, sir."] Everyone who has done that, his sins are forgiven. The Lord has said so. What do you say? [Congregation: "Amen."] But Satan says, "It is not so." He is a liar. But some folks here have been saying that Satan tells the truth upon that point.

People in this house have been telling Satan that he told the truth upon that very point. Satan says,

"They are not forgiven," and they say, "No, they are not." Let us quit that. We confess our sins that they may be forgiven, and the Lord says they are forgiven, and when they are forgiven why then in the

Lord's name, let us say so.

"Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." The Lord says, "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." What do you say? [Congregation: "It is so."] How do you know? [Congregation: "The Lord says so."] Very good. Then you know that is so, do you?

Micah 7:19: "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Then where are they?

[Congregation: "In the depths of the sea."] How do you know? [Congregation: "He says so."] Then you know that, don't you? Then how in the world is anybody going to bother you about getting your sins back to you?

Ps. 103:12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." How far are

they away from you now, you who have confessed them? How far are they away?

[Voice: "As far as the east is from the west."] Why don't you say so then? Satan comes and says,

"They are not forgiven; every sin is right there before your face; don't you see them?" Are they?

[Congregation: "No."] Says one, "I have seen them there." It is nothing of the kind. Satan is a magician and can make things appear so that are not so. But you look at them and say, "Yes, that is so." It is not so. The Lord says they are as far from us as the east is from the west. They are in the depths of the sea, and they are as white as snow. Thank the Lord.

Isa. 38:17, and that verse is the last one we need tonight. "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." How many? [Congregation: "All."] Behind his back. Where are they, then? [Congregation: "Behind his back."] We are before his face and the sins are behind his back; who is between us and them? [Congregation: "God."] And He is upon His throne, isn't He? Then when I have confessed my sins to the Lord, He and His living eternal throne stand between me and those sins, and Satan and everybody else in this universe cannot bring them back; for he has got to get the Lord and His throne out of the way before they can get those sins back to me again. And I am going to be glad of it.

Can we know these things? Can we know that we know them? How can we know that we know them? The Lord says so. When He says so, and we believe it, that is faith. Satan says, "They are not." We say, "I know they are." Satan says, "No, there they are." We say, they are not there.

They are in the depths of the sea. [Voice: "Praise the Lord."]

When the man stands there, there is something that God can put His seal on. When the Lord says, "Thy sins are forgiven," that he has "cast them behind His back" and the man will not believe it, is there anything there that God can put His seal on? No.

[Someone asked that Isaiah 43:25 be read, which Elder Jones did.] "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins."

There are many other texts like that which we might notice. One is found in Heb. 8:15: "Their sins will I remember no more," and another in Ezekiel 33:16: "None of his sins

that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him." Here the Lord says, He will not remember our sins. the Lord will never mention them. It is Satan's work to do that. Brethren, let us believe the Lord.

When we believe that, then God will give you and me the circumcision of the heart, the seal of the righteousness of the faith that we have and He can do it, because there is something there that He can put His seal upon. And when a man does that as an individual, he receives the seal of righteousness. And when we as a whole body, as a church, believe that, we can ask with perfect confidence for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit and wait patiently and confidently, knowing that it will surely come in His own good time. {1893 G.C.B – A. T. Jones Sermon no. 17}

Your Servant in Christ

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