

THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED

"Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." Revelation 1:5-6.

The Apostle John was in sore trouble. He was banished to the Isle of Patmos because of his devotion to Jesus and his testimony for the Lord. His heart was filled with fear for the churches he left behind in Asia Minor. In the midst of his gloom and fear, God gave him a wondrous vision of the candlesticks and the glorified Christ in the midst of them. This vision scattered his fears as the sunrise scatters the fog in a valley. Then, he proceeds to write to the seven churches of Asia which are representative of the churches elsewhere. He first salutes them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Somehow he cannot deliver his message until he relieves his heart of a joyful doxology. The very mention of the name of the Lord Jesus fired his heart and this song welled up in it. It is not a song which came down from heaven, but one which ascended to heaven from the earth. This grateful doxology lauds Christ's love and speaks of deliverance from sins. It is a cheering and comforting acknowledgement. It:--

1. Implies so much.
 - (1) A time of grace lies back of us.
 - (2) A world of grace surrounds us.
 - (3) A hope of eternal grace opens up before us.
2. Reminds us of so much.
 - (1) Our sins and redemption.
 - (2) Our trials and deliverances.
 - (3) Our evil and its mastery.
 - (4) Our low estate and the rank to which Christ has raised us.
3. Suggests so much.
 - (1) That sin enslaves the human race.
 - (2) The blood of Christ alone can release from its shackles.
 - (3) The blood of Christ is sufficient to release anyone.
4. Leads us away from self and fastens attention on another Figure.
 - (1) That Figure is Jesus Christ the:--
 - a. Son of God.
 - b. Saviour of the world.
 - c. One adequate hope for life.
 - d. One adequate hope of salvation for eternity.
 - e. Perfect Ideal of humility.
 - f. Paragon of purity.
 - g. Personification of perfection.
 - h. Only balm of the universal heart.
 - i. Only sufficient remedy for every ill.
 - (2) Characteristics of that Figure:--
 - a. His nature is Divine.
 - b. His character is perfect.
 - c. His teaching is complete.

Many things about Christ might have attracted the attention of John, but the thing that amazed him most was that such a glorious Person should love sinful men and do so much for them.

To render the word "loved" with the word "loveth" is in absolute accord with what is true concerning the love of God and Christ for us. God's love for us was not only a past love; it has not spent its energy and ceased to be, but it still continues and does so throughout all the ages of eternity. God did love us in the past, yea, from all eternity. And His love in the past was manifested and expressed in the gift of His only begotten Son and in His sacrificial death upon the Cross. John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; Gal. 2:20; Ephesians 5:1-3.

It is because of God's love and grace that we are saved. Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5. Nothing could be more certain than this, neither could anything be more clearly taught in the scriptures.

But God not only loved us in the past, but He "loveth us" now. His love for us has not ceased with its past expression and manifestation. We may rather reason from the past that since He loved us sufficiently to give His only begotten Son to die for us, and to identify us with Christ so fully and so perfectly that we have died with Him, have been quickened and raised up together with Him and made to sit together with Him in the heavenlies, He now loves us more intimately, more ardently and more passionately.

1. God loves us presently.
2. God loves us constantly.
3. God loves us unchangingly.
4. God loves us eternally.
5. God loves us passionately.

He "loveth us, and loosed us from our sins." Deliverance from sins is an actual and an accomplished fact. The believer in Christ is loosed from the bond of sin which in times past held him captive and in bondage. This deliverance is a present experience and enjoyment. It is not a matter of mere imagination, nor yet purely and simply a thing of supposition or hope so, but it is an actual present and conscious possession and reality. Yes, we are already loosed from our sins. To affirm this fact is not presumption, but it is the confession of our faith and the affirmation of a positive fact.

In this text of scripture there are three facts:--

I. Christ Loved Us.

In Christ we have love. In Christ we have loosing. In Christ we have lifting.

There is no way of describing the love of God. There is nothing to which we can compare it. Let us note certain things about His love:

1. It was unmerited.
We were not entitled to it. We had no claim to it. We had no right to expect it. There is no righteousness, no merit, nothing in any of us or in all of us put together that would recommend us to the love of God, either before we became Christians or after we became Christians. It is unmerited love.
2. It was unsought.
We were not looking for it. We were so busy about other things that we did not have any time for or any thought of the love of God. We were not thinking about God's love. We were not reaching up for God's love.
3. It was unwanted.
It is hard to understand how anybody can resist, reject, and refuse the love of God. People will listen to anything and everything except the love of God. They just don't want it. They are not interested in it, and when we begin to press upon the claims of His love they refuse to hear our talk, they refuse to place themselves in the way of His love. For those of us who are now Christians, it was not easy for the one or ones who led us to Christ to convince us of the value and the need and the necessity of the love of God in our hearts.
4. It is unending.
The love of God will follow one to the very brink of hell and stand there with bitter, mournful tears watching us sink into the burning pit.

Love is the most powerful thing in the world. It is more powerful than money, knowledge, and any other thing that human beings have, but there is one thing love cannot do. It cannot compel love. It cannot make anyone love in return. All it can do is to give itself. All it can do is to sacrifice. All it can do is to suffer. All it can do is to agonize. All it can do is to plead. All it can do is to weep. It cannot constrain. It cannot coerce.

There is no limit to God's love. It is unending. Our fathers and our mothers may forsake us. Our friends may turn against us. We may become the lowest of the low, and the vilest of the vile, but the love of God will reach down to us and seek to bestow blessings upon us.

II. Christ Liberated Us.

1. He liberated us from the penalty of sin.
"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24. By His death on the cross, Christ has loosed us from the penalty of sin. That is something to praise God for. That is something to rejoice over by day and by night.
2. He liberated us from the power of sin.
His love loosed us from the pollution of sin, from the power of sin, from the hold that sin has on our hearts and minds and souls and lives. Christ does not save us and then let us go. He keeps us. He walks with us and talks with us and abides in our hearts and minds and souls and lives. He lives in us, and causes us to will and to do after His own good pleasure. None of us could resist the devil for one minute were it not for the power and presence of the indwelling Christ.
3. He will liberate us from the presence of sin. One of these glorious days we shall be loosed from the presence of sin, so that Satan will be left far behind, so that temptations will no longer afflict us, and we shall be with our Redeemer, where we can sing His praises forever and ever.

III. Christ Lifted Us.

1. He lifted us up into salvation.
John said of Jesus, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12. When we accept Christ He lifts us. Our ambitions are changed, our aspirations are sanctified, and our hopes are lifted up until the vision of God's great glory revolves before us.
2. He lifted us up to supplies.
Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"
3. He lifted us up into service.
It is a glorious privilege to be a servant of Christ. Most people do not appreciate it. The child of God who is serving the Lord Jesus Christ has the loftiest position on this earth. The biggest job you can have, the greatest honor God can bestow upon you, the loftiest position you can be elevated to in life or death is to be a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To each and every unsaved person listening to me, God is offering you this love, this loosing, and this lifting.