

The power of sin overcome by the power of God

(Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] As you sang that hymn, my mind went back over many years to the time when that hymn was given out to be sung and I felt terribly guilty.

The time came when, blessed be God, that feeling was taken from me. As the Lord drew me by his love, enabled me to put on Christ in an open profession of his name, I knew when I did that that I wasn't fit to look into the future with any confidence in myself.

But looking to the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a confidence, well grounded and well founded, because trust in the Lord is salvation.

And my friends, I look back from 1948 to the present moment of time and appreciate that through the grace of God, I've been kept.

Now, I no doubt in my remarks this evening, I'm going to tell you quite a measure of my own weakness. Bear with me.

[1 : 33] I don't trust in myself. I don't look for the future and say, I'll be a good Christian. I'm dependent upon the grace of God.

And I do say sometimes, with a measure of comfort and confidence, he that hath helped me hitherto will help me all my journey through.

And I know not the power existing which is sufficient to wrest a believing soul from the hands of a precious Christ.

My friends, he is God over all and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Well now, I don't know why I do this. It's not my usual practice to make a little speech before, preaching in the morning and again in the evening.

[2 : 33] But as I've been unable to sing with you the hymns, these thoughts have been passing through my mind and I deliver them to you in hope that there is a need to be for what I've said, to be said for the glory of God and the good of your precious souls.

My text this evening is taken from the chapter that was read to us, the seventh chapter in Paul's epistle to the Romans. I'm going to read by way of text from verses 18 down to 20.

For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

[3 : 54] Can you think of any power but the power of God that's stronger than the power of sin?

Look at what sin has done from the garden of Eden down to the present moment of time. See what is a consequence of the judgment of God against sin that has beset the world within us and the world round about us.

Sin is the cause of all the woe the world has ever seen. And my friends, sin is a fearful power.

I don't feel able to exaggerate because I haven't got a mind to comprehend what sin really is and what sin has done and what sin will continue to do until the Lord conquers in his victorious power and purpose over the threefold enemy of mankind the world the flesh and the devil.

Now, the Apostle Paul was writing a most constructive truth when he wrote this seventh chapter in the epistle to the Romans because he was identifying what is of the flesh and what is of the spirit.

[5 : 52] And those two are contrary the one to the other but the people of God have two natures. they have in common with the whole human race a fallen nature.

They received it by natural generation. We were born in sin. We were shaped in iniquity and in sin did our mother conceive us.

It's a contagion that comes down generation by generation and how sad it is when we look around and see some of the fruits of sin in our children to realize that we were the means by which that terrible power was communicated to them by natural generation.

Oh, my friends, there's much in fatherhood and motherhood to humble us when we think of the awful passing down through the chain of life those things which bring such sorrow such pain such terrible forebodings if our children are brought to understand themselves and know something by the spirit of the consequence of sin that is in them for the wages of sin is death and my friends, if left to that which we were, that condition wherein we were born there is a terrible future, a terrible future that I don't attempt to exaggerate in any way and from when I say the perfection of God is manifest against the wicked for their life of rebellion against God and I cannot question the righteousness of God in sending sinners into eternal hell because of their transgressions against their maker.

well now yes and I'm going to stop at this point and ask a question do you fear sin?

[8 : 27] do you fear sin? we all have a reason in us to fear sin there's only one that can take that fear out of our hearts that is the Lord Jesus Christ himself he can say fear not and my friends it's the word of truth as it falls from his sacred lips fear not little flock for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom that kingdom is the portion of the people of God now the apostle Paul in this chapter he makes very clear the distinction that exists between the saved and the lost those that are forsaken of God to perish in their sins they have one nature and one nature only they're born with it we all have it all the whole human race has it there's not a man jack in the whole universe that is an exception to the rule all have sinned and come short of the glory of God what a world this is what a world this is but nevertheless born into it but it's not a condition without a remedy the Lord

Jesus Christ manifested when in the flesh his all sufficiency to meet every challenge that was brought to him in the nature of sickness disease even to the point of death itself and in preaching the gospel one is essentially directed to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ as the perfect saviour the perfect saviour he saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him you say well why why ever is anybody lost if the way of salvation is so simple that the sinner must go to the Lord Jesus Christ and confess their sins and plead for an interest in his precious sin atoning blood then matters are made straight peace is proclaimed in the heart of God for Jesus sake and heaven is a prepared place for saved sinners my friends the natural heart of man is at enmity to God it's not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be and if we're here tonight in the state of the flesh that's the state that prevails that's the condition that we're in and if there are those here present tonight that are in such a state my burden is this may

God have mercy upon you before you die otherwise you'll never know anything like the measure of happiness and comfort that is known on earth you'll never know it in the bottomless pit forever I'm not exaggerating I'm seeking in love for your souls to put the truth before you well now I want to come to Paul's teaching the apostle is very plain he says for I know that in me that is in my flesh that's the old nature that's what we are by nature in my flesh we're clothed with a body of flesh which is a body of sin and of death now he says

I know in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing no good thing that's very comprehensive and conclusive in its import upon our minds no good looking to myself you say well what about your good deeds what about the fact that you've always been to chapel what about the fact that you read a chapter out of the Bible every day what do we think about the fact that you've never jumped into bed at night without kneeling at the bedside and asking the Lord for his help well my friends the apostle says does he not that there's no merit in creature righteousness in the flesh whatever we may do there's no merit in it there's no commendation to

God in it we do not look to the flesh because in the flesh dwelleth no good thing the hymn writer sums it up like there's no help in self I find though oft have sought it well the native treasure of my mind is sin and death and hell a lost cause a lost soul if left to that position and condition but the apostle says I know that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing for to will is present with me but how to perform the thing which is good I find not he got a will he got a will you notice for to will is present with me now where where is that will that is opposed to the alienation of nature that is as it were in contradistinction to the terrible consequences of man in his fallen nature oh what a mercy if

[15 : 30] God has brought our will into harmony with his sovereign purposes of love and of grace for to will is present with me but how to do the thing sorry for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not there's not such a thing as acceptable fleshly repentance is there oh you can be sorry you can be sad the presentation of the truth can produce in your heart a kind of dread of the consequence of being a sinner

I remember the time when I looked over the garden fence to the cattle in the field and wished I'd been brought into this world as one of those animals because that animal hasn't a soul and I've got a soul and the Lord brought me to that point where oh I wish to be saved above every other consideration because I knew that my sin would bring eternal death upon me unless the Lord showed mercy and gave me the knowledge of the one way of salvation but my friends there is that will for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good

I find not sometimes in the beginnings of spiritual experience when the new man of grace is bestowed by God's sovereign mercy upon a precious soul that soul desires to do good that soul would live sinless if it was possible he struggles as it were with his old nature to try and improve the situation but how to do the thing he wishes to live uprightly he wishes to live in the light of God and of godliness but he fails and he fails and I put this to you sin is a greater power than man in the flesh can conquer my friends if we know the power of sin we shall know what the apostle meant when he said the thing that I would

I do not and the things that I would not that I do and sometimes there's a terrible conflict you would not do that which is evil but when you come to the crisis when you come as it were into temptation you find that your strength of resistance is not sufficient to save you from doing it yet again and doing it yet again and doing it yet again salvation is of the Lord my friends the Lord is the master of sin and by his spirit it can deliver us from its power but to wrestle against sin in the flesh is no promise a victory because our weakness our helplessness is complete now how he says for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good

I find not oh sometimes I've resolved that no I won't do that anymore or I won't say that again and then something arises and like Peter he says let all men forsake thee yet will not die he really meant what he said but when it came to the crux down he fell and there he was denying his Lord with oaths and curses and my friends he was learning that in the flesh he was insufficient to do that which in the will he knew to be right the conflict between the flesh and the spirit and my friends the spirit is only strong enough to overcome the fleshly desire when God gives of the fullness of his grace that enables sinners to flee from sin whatever the interest and inclination of the flesh might be to the opposite now for the good which

[21 : 18] I would not for the good that I would I do not sin oh you know if I would I'd never sin again I've said that to the Lord Lord I so hate sin that if it were possible I wouldn't sin anymore but I've learned this I've got to carry this body of sin and death with its sinful inclinations and weaknesses to the grave it's going to be corruptible when it's put off and buried it's going to be incorruptible when the Lord in the magnitude of his grace resurrects this body that's sown in corruption to be raised in incorruption sowed in mortality because the wages of sin is death but raised in immortality never to sin again never to merit the just sentence of God for the committal and transgression of his holy law

I hope you're following me I hope I'm saying clearly the truth that conveys the principle the true meaning to your mind my friend don't think you can get to heaven in your own strength don't think you can conquer sin don't you think you can be a match for the devil don't think as it were you can prepare your own soul for acceptance before God there's only one place it can be done at the feet of Jesus that's the only place we're more than conquerors through him that loved us and as the Lord by his grace enables you to do what you would do then it's a true mark of precious evidence that the

Lord loves you and that he has so ordained deliverance for you that he brings his spirit and truth in sanctifying grace upon your heart now that the things that you would do he enables you to do and some of the things that you wouldn't do are overcome and I've got rather tangled the things that you wouldn't do them you're unable to do the things that you wouldn't do the Lord save you from doing and the things that you would do bring mourning sorrow and repentance to your heart and sometimes to the very tears of your eyes yes he says now if I do that

I would not my mind is subject to the law of God that's the way I want to walk that's the way I would choose to go but I find another power of the flesh in me warring against the spirit of my mind but now if I do that which I would not it is no more I that do it I'm a new creature in Christ Jesus my mind is toward the things of God the ways of God the keeping of his commandments the obedience of his law this is my desire this is my prayer that the Lord will enable me to walk humbly with himself and yet in the flesh we fall short in the flesh we have solemn reminders as Peter had that he couldn't do it independently he couldn't do it self-sufficiently he needed the grace of God continually to enable him to walk up rightly with the

Lord and to walk according to that desire of his heart that is in the steps of the Lord Jesus and the ways of godliness now he says now if I do that which I would not it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me but sin that dwelleth in me and sin dwells in us but it's not sin that will remain so free and condemning as to ensure our departure from god in the great day of decision the sins of those that trust in

[27 : 19] Christ whose wills are to walk in obedience and in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus my friends their sins were nailed to the tree of calvary it's no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me and that sin that dwelleth in me is pardoned the Lord Jesus Christ went to the cross to pay the penalty of those transgressions he went as it were to redeem me from the just consequences of my sin and guilt and the two natures one is in harmony with the law and the mind of God and the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who was the perfect example of righteousness and true holiness and it is only as in the flesh this awful power of sin that's in us by nature that causes us from time to time to stumble and to fall to bring guilt on our conscience and to send us back to the one remedy for this malady of sin which is the precious atoning blood of the

Son of God and I believe that the influence of the knowledge of sin in a quickened soul in one awakened to the solemnity of our condition by nature even that sin is overruled to drive us back again and again to the tree of calvary to wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the lamb now it's no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me and God has dealt with that sin God's dealt with that sin he's dealt with it by making his dear son the Lord Jesus Christ sin for his people he was made sin for us that knew no sin the sins for which

Christ died were not sins committed by Christ but sins committed by his people and imputed to him and he paid the penalty of them by in his own suffering death and in the awful agonies that he had to pass through to bring pardon to his blood-bought people what think you of Christ what future is there before you if you live and die a stranger to the son of God to know my Jesus crucified by far excels all things beside that's no exaggeration that's no exaggeration all earthly things I count but dross and triumph in my saviour's cross you and I have a condition that if

Christ doesn't remedy that condition that condition will destroy us in hell forever but there is an answer looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is set down now at the right hand of God pleading for the salvation and deliverance of every one of his people well now let me just draw to a conclusion for the good that I would I do not and the evil which I would not that I do I'm a failure I'm a failure I've got no confidence in the flesh

I can't see any possibility of a holy God receiving me into his presence as I am in myself for in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing well then what about the future well the future as in the hand and purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ could not be better could not be better heaven has entered into and enjoyed by the blood washed and blood bought people of God is the best that God could ever bestow upon anything anywhere I go in my father's house and many mansions if it were not so

[33 : 14] I would have told you I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am ye may be also my friends the world is a wonderful place under the creator God isn't it we all have to admire the beauties and wonders of this sin cursed world but there's no curse ever entered heaven it's the perfection of God's provision without anything to mar or spoil it whatsoever I hath not seen neither ear heard neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him oh to be a Christian oh to have that indwelling of life in our souls to understand the danger of being in a body of sin and death with a future reckoning to be given and oh the wonder of knowing that everything regarding our need has been comprehended by the free mercy goodness and grace of God and being perfected in the blood and righteousness of the

Son of God we're heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to go into heaven at last and partake of the perfection of divine love the perfection of divine wisdom the perfection of divine being everything suitable to our peace enjoyment pleasure joy to a never ending eternity why will man not listen to the gospel why this good news from a far country is so easily rejected well it's the fallen heart of man and if we're left to the ignorance of our fallen nature perish we must and perish we will but my friends what a mercy to be born again of the spirit enlightened and enlivened to seek salvation in God's way of saving neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved but those that enter into Christ by faith for salvation they're safe they're secure they're heirs of an eternal kingdom that is the best that God could provide according to his love according to his wisdom and according to his power for those whom he has chosen to be with him in paradise eternally for now the apostle

Paul obviously was making a distinction between those that were indifferent to spiritual things those that treated Christ as of no value those that turned away from the call of the gospel and chose their own imaginations and the devil's temptations rather than to take heed to the voice of God speaking through his word and through his anointed servants both in the old dispensation and again now in this gospel day but have you listened have you listened I know I struggle to make the position clear though I do commend to you with all my affections for your eternal well-being that you will consider your need as a sinner and that you'll consider that there's only one who can save and that you will seek in this day of salvation and interest in the precious blood and righteousness of Jesus that your last day on earth will be your best day on earth because as you close your eyes on the effect of sin in the universe you'll enter into a place where nothing has ever been marred or spoiled but everything is perfectly harmonious and congenial with your happiness your peace your joy forever more my friends the world is saying come thou with us and we will do thee good some of us have to say thankful we are that God has delivered us made his warnings known and felt in our hearts and consciences and caused us to choose the better part

Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her no not by death itself thus enemy insufficient to rob the blood bought people of God from the joy and inheritance eternal that the Lord has reserved for them may the Lord hear your prayers that you might be saved may he hear my continual prayers that I might be saved because salvation is the most important consideration that ever can exercise our minds and our hearts in this present world Amen Amen