

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

THE OVERFLOWING CUP.

A Sermon

DELIVERED BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“My cup runneth over.”—Psalm xxiii. 5.

THE psalm culminates in this expression. The poet can mount no higher. He has endeavoured to express the blessedness of his condition, in having the Lord for his shepherd, but after all his efforts he is conscious of failure. His sonnet has not reached the height of the great argument, nor has his soul, though enlarged with gratitude, been able to compass the immeasurable gifts of grace, and therefore in holy wonder at the lavish superfluities of mercy he cries, “My cup runneth over.” In one short but most expressive sentence he does as good as say, “Not only have I enough, but more than enough; I possess not only all that I am capable of containing, but I inherit an excess of joy, a redundancy of blessing, an extravagance of favour, a prodigality of love;—my cup runneth over.”

We do not know when David wrote this psalm. There seems, however, to be no period of his life in which he could have used this expression in reference purely to his temporal circumstances. In his youth he was a shepherd boy and kept his father's flock, and in such an occupation there were many hardships and discomforts, in addition to which he appears to have been the object of the ill-will of his brothers. He was not dandled on the knee of luxury, nor pampered with indulgences; his was a hardy life abroad, and a trying course at home, and unless he had been deeply spiritual, and therefore found contentment in his God, he could not have said, “My cup runneth over.” When he had come forth into public life, and lived in the courts of Saul, and even had become the king's son-in-law, his position was far too perilous to afford him joy. The king hated him, and sought his life many times, and if it were not that he spoke of grace and not of outward circumstances, he could not then have said, “My cup runneth over.” During the period of his exile, his haunts were in the dens and caves of the mountains, and the lone places of the wilderness, to

which he fled for his life like a hunted partridge. He had no rest for the sole of his foot ; his thirst after the ordinances of God's house was intense, and his companions were not such as to afford him solace : surely it could only have been in reference to spiritual things that he could then have said, "My cup runneth over." When he came to be king over Israel, his circumstances, though far superior to any which he may have expected to reach, were very troublous ones for a long season. The house of Saul warred against him, and then the Philistines took up arms ; he passed from war to war, and marched from conflict to conflict. A king's position is in itself a thorny place, but this king had been a man of war from his youth up, so that, apart from the grace of God and the choice blessings of the covenant, he could not even on the throne have been able to say, "My cup runneth over."

In his later days, after his great sin with Bathsheba, his troubles were incessant, and such as must have well nigh broken the old man's heart. You remember the cry, "O Absalom, my son, my son ! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !" That was the close of a long trial from his graceless favourite ; a trial which had been preceded by many others, in which first one member of his family and then another departed from the paths of right ; nor did it close the chapter of his adversities, for the troubles of his heart were enlarged even to the last, and the good old man had to say upon his deathbed that, though he rejoiced in the sure covenant of God, yet his house was not so with God as his heart could have desired. We cannot, therefore, take the text and say, "This is the exclamation of a man in easy circumstances, who was never tried ; this was the song of a favourite of providence, who never knew an ungratified wish." Not so. David was a man of troubles ; he bore the yoke in his youth, and was chastened in all his old age. You have before you, not a Croesus whose long prosperity became itself a terror, nor an Alexander whose boundless conquests only excited new ambitions, nor even a Solomon whose reign was unbroken peace and commercial gain, but David, the man who cried, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts ; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." So did the spiritual outweigh the natural, that the consolations of the son of Jesse exceeded his tribulation, and even in his most troublous times there were bright seasons of fellowship with the Lord, in which he joyfully said, "My cup runneth over."

Let us think of *some cups which never run over* ; and then consider, *if ours runs over, why it does so* ; and then, thirdly, *what then ?*

I. **SOME MEN'S CUPS NEVER RUN OVER.** Many even fail to be filled because *taken to the wrong source*. Such are the cups which are held beneath the drippings of the world's leaky cistern. Men try to find full satisfaction in wealth, but they never do. Pactolus fills no man's cup, that power belongs exclusively to the river whose streams make glad the city of God. As to money, every man will have enough when he has a little more, but contentment with his gains comes to no man. Wealth is not true riches, neither are men's hearts the fuller because their purses are heavy. Men have thought to fill their cups out of the foul pools of what they call "pleasure," but all in vain, for appetite grows, passion becomes voracious, and lust, like a horse-leech, crieth,

“Give, give.” Like the jaws of death and the maw of the sepulchre, the depraved heart can never be satisfied. At the polluted pool of pleasure no cup was ever yet filled though thousands have been broken ; it is a corrosive liquor which eats into the pitcher, and devours the vessel into which it flows. Some have tried to fill their souls with fame : they have aspired to be great among their fellow-men, and to wear honourable titles earned in war, or gained in study. But satisfaction is not created by the highest renown ; you shall turn to the biographies of the great, and perceive that in their secret hearts they never gained contentment from the grandest successes they achieved. Perhaps, if you had to look out the truly miserable, you would do better to go to the Houses of Parliament and to the palaces of those who govern nations, than to the purlieus of poverty, for awful misery is full often clothed in scarlet, and agony feasts at the table of kings. From the sparkling founts of fame no cups are filled. Young man, you are just starting in life, you have the cup in your hand, and you want to fill it, let us warn you (those of us who have tried the world) that it cannot fill your soul, not even with such poor sickly liquor as it offers you. It will pretend to fill, but fill it never can. There is a craving of the soul which can never be satisfied, except by its Creator. In God only is the fulness of the heart, which he has made for himself.

Some cups are never filled, for the excellent reason that *the bearers of them suffer from the grievous disease of natural discontent*. All unconverted men are not equally discontented, but some are intensely so. You can no more fill the heart of a discontented man than you can fill a cup which has the bottom knocked out. A contented man may have enough, but a discontented man never can ; his heart is like the Slough of Despond, into which thousands of waggon loads of the best material were cast, and yet the slough did swallow up all, and was none the better. Discontent is a bottomless bog into which if one world were cast it would quiver and heave for another. A discontented man dooms himself to the direst form of poverty, yea, he makes himself so great a pauper that the revenues of empires could not enrich him. Are you the victims of discontent ? Young men, do you feel that you never can be contented while you are apprentices ? Are you impatient in your present position ? Believe me that, as George Herbert said of incomes in times gone by, “He that cannot live on twenty pounds a year cannot live on forty,” so may I say : he who is not contented in his present position will not be contented in another though it brought him double possessions. If you were to accumulate property, young man, until you became enormously rich, yet, with that same hungry heart in your bosom you would still pine for more. When the vulture of dissatisfaction has once fixed its talons in the breast it will not cease to tear at your vitals. Perhaps you are no longer under tutors and governors, but have launched into life on your own account, and yet you are displeased with providence. You dreamed that if you were married, and had your little ones about you, and a house, all your own, then you would be satisfied : and it has come to pass, but now scarcely anything contents you. The meal provided to-day was not good enough for you, the bed you will lie upon to-night will not be soft enough for you, the weather is too hot or too cold, too dry or too damp. You

scarcely ever meet with one of your fellow-men who is quite to your mind: he is too sharp and rough-tempered, or else he is too easy, and has "no spirit;" your type of a good man you never see: the great men are all dead and the true men fail from this generation. Some of you cannot be made happy, you are never right till everything is wrong, nor bearable until you have had your morning's growl. There is no pleasing you. I know men who if they were in Paradise would find fault with the glades of Eden, and would propose to turn the channels of its rivers, and shift the position of its trees. If the serpent were excluded, they would demand liberty for him to enter, and would grow indignant at his exclusion. They would criticise the music of the angels, find fault with the cherubim, and grow weary of white robes and harps of gold: or as a last resource they would become angry with a place so completely blessed as not to afford them a corner for the indulgence of their spiteful censures. For such unrestful minds the cup which runneth over is not prepared.

Some, too, we know whose cup never will run over, because *they are envious*. They would be very well satisfied with what they have, but some one else has more, and they cannot bear it. If they see another in a better position in society they long to bring him down to their level. There are vices peculiar to the rich, but this is one of the ready faults of poverty. Now, surely, friend, if you find your own lot hard to bear you cannot wish another man to suffer it too: if your case be a hard one, you should be glad that others are not equally afflicted. It is a happy thing when a man gets rid of envy, for then he rejoices in the joy of others; and with a secret appropriation which is far removed from anything like theft, he calls everything that belongs to other men his own, for he is rich in their riches, glad in their gladness, and above all happy that they are saved. Some of us have known what it is to doubt our own salvation, and yet feel that we must always love Jesus Christ for saving other people. I charge you cast out envy! The green dragon is a very dangerous guest in any man's home. Remember, it may lurk in the hearts of very good men. A preacher may not be able to appreciate the gifts of another preacher, because they seem to be more attractive than his own. Good people when they see another useful are too much in the habit of saying, "Yes, but he does not do this," or, "She does not do that," and the remark is made, "He is very useful but very crotchety;" as if there ever was a man who did anything in this world that was not crotchety. Their very crotchets (which are uncomfortable things) God often overrules to be the power of the men and women whom he means to employ in striking out new paths of usefulness. What you call imprudence may be faith, and what you condemn as obstinacy may only be strength of mind needful for persevering under difficulties. Bless God for gracious men as you find them, and do not want them to be other than they are. When divine grace has renewed them, help them all you can and make the best use you can of them, and if their bell does not ring out the same note as yours, and you cannot change its tone, and yet you feel that your note would be discordant to theirs, pray God to tune your bell to harmony with theirs, that from the sacred steeple there may ring out a holy, hallowed, harmonious chime, through the union of all the bells and all their

tones, in the sole praise of God. Envy prevents many cups from running over.

So, once more, in the best of men *unbelief is sure to prevent the cup running over*. You cannot get into the condition of the psalmist while you doubt your God. Note well how he puts it. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." He has no fears, or forebodings, or doubts; he has given a writing of divorce between his soul and anxiety, and now he says, "My cup runneth over." What are you fretting about, my sister? What is the last new subject for worry? If you have fretted all your life, your husband, your children, and your servants have had a sad time of it. Your husband feels with regard to you, "Good woman, I know nothing in which I could find fault with her, except that she finds fault with others, and that she grieves when there is no cause for grieving." May the Lord be pleased to string your harp so that it may not give forth such jarring notes as it now does, but may yield the joyful music of praise. Your great need is a more childlike faith in God. Take God's word and trust it, and, good sister, your cup will run over too. What is your trouble, brother? You were smiling just now at the thought of how some women were troubled, for you thought, "Ah, they do not have the cares men have in business!" Little do you know. There is a burden for women to carry which is as heavy as that of their husbands and brothers. But what is your distress? Is it one that you dare not tell to God? Then what business have you with it? Is it one which you cannot tell to God? What is there in your heart that forbids your unburdening it? Is it one which you refuse to tell to God? Then it will be a trouble and a curse to you, and it will grow heavier and heavier till it will crush you to the earth. But, oh, come and tell your great Helper! You believe in God for your soul, believe in Him about your property; believe in God about your sick wife or your dying child; believe in God about your losses and bad debts and declining business. A bosom bare before the Lord is needful to perfect satisfaction. I have proved God, and I speak what I do know: I have had a care that has troubled me, which I could scarcely communicate to another without, perhaps, making it worse: I have done my best, and I have prayed over it but have not seen a way of escape, and at last I have left it with God, feeling that if he did not solve it, it must go unsolved. I have resolved that I would have nothing more to do with it, and when I have done that the difficulty has disappeared, and in its disappearance I have found an additional reason for confidence in God, and have been able again to say, "My cup runneth over."

We must walk by faith with both feet. Some try to walk by faith with the left foot, but their right foot they will not lift from the earth, and therefore they make no progress at all. Wholly by faith, wholly by faith must we live. He who learns to do that will soon say, "My cup runneth over."

I have not time to enlarge, although much more might be said, for there are cups which never have run over, and never will.

II. But now, secondly, WHY DOES OUR CUP RUN OVER? Assuming that we have really believed in Jesus, and that not with a wavering faith, but in downright solemn earnest, then joy will follow our faith.

Our cup runs over, first, because, having Christ, *we have in him all things*. "He that spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him, also, freely give us all things?"

"This world is ours, and worlds to come:
Earth is our lodge, and heaven our home."

Between here and heaven there is nothing we shall want but what God has supplied. The promise is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." As the old Puritan puts it, earthly comforts are like paper and string, which you need not go to buy, for you will have them given to you when you purchase more valuable things. Seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Our God is not like the Duke of Alva, who promised to spare the lives of certain Protestants and then denied them food, so that they died of starvation. He does not give us eternal life and then deny us that which is needful to the securing of it. He will give us manna all the way from Goshen to Canaan, and cause the gushing rock to follow us all the time we are in the wilderness. "No good thing will I withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be." I had climbed a hill the other day, and as I went down the steep side a sharp stone made a tremendous gash in my shoe, and then I thought of that promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." If the road be rough a strong shoe shall fit the foot for it. As with the Israelites, their feet did not swell, neither did their garments wax old upon them, so shall it be with you. You shall find all things in God and God in all things.

But there is another reason why our cups run over. They run over *because the infinite God himself is ours*. "The Lord is my shepherd." "My God," the psalmist styles him. One of the most delightful renderings ever employed in a metrical translation of the Psalms is that of the old Scotch version of Psalm xlii.

"For yet I know I shall him praise,
Who graciously to me
The health is of my countenance;
Yea, *mine own God* is he."

I feel as if I could stop preaching and fall to repeating the words, "Mine own God," "Mine own God," for the Lord is as much my God as if there were no one else in the world to claim him. Stand back ye angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, and all ye hosts redeemed by blood! Whatever may be your rights and privileges, ye cannot lessen my inheritance. Assuredly all of God is mine—all his fulness, all his attributes, all his love, all himself, all, all is mine, for he hath said, "I am thy God." What a portion is this! What mind can compass it? O, believer, see here your boundless treasure! Will not your cup run over now? What cup can hold your God? If your soul were enlarged and made as wide as heaven you could not hold your God; and if you grew and grew and grew till your being were as vast as seven heavens, and the whole universe itself were dwarfed in comparison with your capacity, yet still

you could not contain him who is infinite. Truly, when you know by faith that Father, Son, and Spirit are all your own in covenant, your cup must run over.

But when do we feel this? When do we see that our cup runs over? I think it is first *when we receive a great deal more than we ever prayed for*. Has not that been your happy case? Mercy has come to your house, and you have said, "Whence is this to me? I never dared to seek so great a boon." "He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or even think." You knelt down and prayed God to deliver you in trouble; he has done it, but instead of just barely carrying you through he has set your feet in a large room, and you have said, "Is this the manner of man, O Lord God? Hadst thou delivered me by the skin of my teeth I had been grateful, but now my cup runneth over." You asked the Lord to give you sufficient for the day, and, see, he has bestowed upon you a great many worldly comforts, and his blessing with them all. Must you not say, "My cup runneth over"? You asked him to save your eldest daughter; but in his infinite mercy he has been pleased to convert several of your children, perhaps all. You began to teach in the Sunday-school, and you prayed to the Lord to give you one soul. Why, he has given you a score. Will you not say, "My cup runneth over"? When I began to preach I am sure my little meeting-house seemed large enough, and my sphere sufficiently extensive; and if the Lord had said to me, "I will give thee a thousand souls as thy reward before thou shalt go to heaven," I should have been overjoyed, and cried my eyes out with weeping for delight; but now how many thousands has he given me to be the seals of my ministry! My cup runs over! My God has dealt with me beyond all my expectations or desires! It is the way of him! He gives like a king! He has outstripped my poor prayers, and left my faith far in the rear. I am persuaded, beloved, that many of you know many things concerning God which you never asked to know, you possess covenant blessings which you never sought for, and you are in the enjoyment of attainments which you did not think it possible for you to gain; so that the cup of your prayer has been filled to the brim and it runs over. Glory be to the all-bounteous Lord.

So has it been with *the cup of our expectation*, for we ask many things and then from want of expecting them we fail to receive them. But have you not indulged large expectations, some of you? Have you not had your day-dreams in which you pictured to yourself what a Christian might do? But the Lord has given you more than imagination pictured. You sat at mercy's gate and said, "Would God I might but enter to sit among the hired servants;" but he has made you to sit at the table, and killed for you the fatted calf. You were shivering in your rags, and you said, "Would God I might be washed from this filthiness, and my nakedness clothed a little!" but he has brought forth the best robe and put it on you. You said, "Oh, that I had a little joy and peace!" But, lo! he has made music and dancing for you, and your spirit rejoices abundantly in the God of your salvation. I will ask any Christian here if Christ is not a good Christ? You know when Henry the Eighth married Anne of Cleves, Holbein was sent to paint her picture, with which the king was charmed, but when

he saw the original his judgment was very different, and he expressed disgust instead of affection. The painter had deceived him. Now, no such flatteries can ever be paid to our Lord Jesus Christ, the painters, I mean the preachers, all fall short, they have no faculty with which to set forth beauties so inexpressibly charming, so beyond all conception of mind and heart. The best things which have ever been sung by adoring poets, written by devout authors, or poured forth by seraphic preachers all fall below the surpassing excellence of our Redeemer. His living labours and his dying love have a value all their own; there are great surprises yet in store for those who know the Saviour best. Jesus has filled the cup of our expectation till it runneth over. And I may say the same of every mercy that he has brought in his hand; it has been a richer mercy, a rarer mercy, a more loving mercy, a more rapturous mercy, a fuller mercy, a more lasting mercy than ever we thought it possible for us to receive.

I speak to some who live by faith in their Lord's service. You have learned to expect great things, my brethren and sisters, and you will learn to expect greater things still. But has not God always kept pace with our expectation? Has he not outrun us? Has he not prevented us with his kindness? The path of a man who lives by faith is like a gigantic staircase; it winds up, up, up, in God's sight, into the clear crystal; but as far as we are concerned it seems to wind its way amongst dense clouds, full often dark as night. Every step we take we stand firmly on a slab of adamant, but we cannot see the next landing place for our foot; it looks as if we were about to plunge into an awful gulf, but we venture on, and the next step is firm beneath our feet. We have ascended higher and higher, and yet the mysterious staircase still pierces the clouds, and we cannot see a step of the way. We have found our Jacob's ladder hitherto to be firm as the everlasting hills: and so we climb on, and we mean to do so, with the finger of God as our guide, his smile as our light, and his power as our support. The blessed voice is calling us, and our feet are borne upward by the summons, climbing on and on in the firm belief that when our flesh shall fail our soul shall find herself standing on the threshold of the new Jerusalem. Go on, beloved! God will do far more than you expect him to do, and you shall sing, "My cup runs over."

Sometimes, too, the text is true of the Christian's joy, "My cup runneth over." The other night as I sat among our young men in the ministry, and we were all singing, "I am so glad that Jesus loves me," I did not wonder that the writer of that piece made them repeat that delightful truth over and over again. "I am so glad that Jesus loves me." You can excuse monotonies, repetitions, and tautologies when that dear word is ringing in the ear "Jesus loves me," "Jesus loves me," "Jesus loves me:" ring that bell again and yet again. What need of change when you have reached a perfect joy? Why ask variety when you cannot conceive of anything more sweet? There is music, both in the sound and the sense, and there is enough of weight, and force, and power in the simple utterance of "Jesus loves me" to allow of its being repeated hundreds of times and yet never palling upon the ear. Now and then I hear of an interruption of a sermon by a person who has found the Saviour: how I wish we were often

interrupted in that way! I wonder when men first learn that Jesus suffered in their stead that they do not shout and make the walls ring again. Surely it is enough to make them. What a blessing it would be if that old Methodist fire, which flamed so furiously in men's souls that they were forced to let the sparks fly up the chimney in hearty expressions, would but blaze away in our cold, formal assemblies. Come, let us pour out a libation of praise from our overflowing cups, while we say again "I am so glad that Jesus loves me." Have you not sat down when you have been alone and felt, "I am so happy because I am saved, forgiven, justified, a child of God, I am beloved of the Lord. This fills me with such joy that I can hardly contain myself"? Why, if anyone had come to you at such a time and said, "There is a legacy of ten thousand pounds left you," you would have snuffed at it; and felt "What is that? I have infinitely more than that, for I am a joint heir with Christ. My beloved is mine and I am his. 'My cup runneth over.' I have too much joy. 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me.'"

At such times *our gratitude ought to run over too*. Our poet's gratitude ran over when he wrote that remarkable stanza—

"Through all eternity, to thee
My grateful song I'll raise;
But, oh, eternity's too short
To utter half thy praise."

I have heard cold critics condemn that verse, and therein prove their incompetence to enjoy poetry. Would they cramp the language of love by the rules of grammar? May not enthusiasm be allowed a language of its own? It is true it is incorrect to speak of eternity as "too short," but the inaccuracy is strictly accurate, when love interprets it. When a cup runs over it does not drip, drip, at so many drops per minute, it leaps down in its own disorderly fashion, and so does the grateful heart. Its utterances are as bold as it can make them, but they never satisfy itself. It labours to express itself in words, and sometimes it succeeds for a while, and cries, "My heart is inditing a good matter, I speak of the things which I have made touching," but ere long its rushing overflow stops up the channel of its utterance and silence becomes both needful and refreshing. Our souls are sometimes cast into a swoon of happiness, wherein we rather live and breathe gratitude than feel any power to set it forth. As the lily and the rose praise God by pouring forth their lives in perfume, so do we feel an almost involuntary outgush of our very selves in love which could by no artistic means tell forth itself. We are filled and overfilled, saturated, satiated with the divine sweetnesses.

"Thy fulness, Lord, is mine, for oh!
That fulness is a fount as free
As it is inexhaustible;
Jehovah's boundless gift to me.
My Christ! O sing it in the heavens,
Let every angel lift his voice;
Sound with ten thousand harps his praise,
With me, ye heavenly hosts, rejoice!

III. Now, thirdly, WHAT THEN? The first thing is, *let us adore him who has filled the cup*. If the cup runs over let it run over upon the altar. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" Remember, dear Christian friends, that preaching is not a result, it is a means to an end, and that end is the worship of God. The design of our solemn assemblies is adoration; that also is the aim and result of salvation, that the saved ones may fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb in his glory. Preaching and praying are like the stalks of the wheat, but hearty worship is the ear itself. If God has filled your cup, worship him in the solemn silence of your soul. Let every power, passion, thought, emotion, ability, and capacity, in lowest reverence adore the Lord of all, the Fountain whence flow the streams which have filled us to the brim.

The next thing is, if your cup runs over *pray the Lord to make it larger*. Does not the apostle say, "Be ye also enlarged"? Does not David speak of having his heart enlarged? There is too much of narrowness in the largest-hearted man. We are all but shallow vessels towards God. If we believed more and trusted more, we should have more, for the stint is not with God. Pray like Jabez of old, "Oh, that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast."

The next thing is, if your cup is running over, *let it stop where it is*. Understand my meaning: the cup stands under the spring, and the spring keeps running into it, and so the cup runs over, but it will not run over long if you take it from where the spring pours into it. The grateful heart runs over because the fountain of grace runs over. Keep your cup where it is. It is our unwisdom that we forsake the fountain of living waters and apply to the world's broken cisterns. We say in the old proverb, "Let well alone," but we forget this practical maxim with regard to the highest good. If your cup runs over hear Christ say, "Abide in me." David had a mind to keep his cup where it was, and he said, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." When I preach abroad I always like to go to the same house in the town, and I say to my host, "I shall always come to you, as long as you invite me, for I do not think there is a better house." If a man has a good friend, it is a pity to change him, the older the friend the better. The bird which has a good nest had better keep to it. Gad not abroad, I charge you, but let the Lord be your dwelling-place for ever. Many have been fascinated by new notions and new doctrines, and every now and then somebody tells us he has found a wonderful diamond of new truth, but which generally turns out to be a piece of an old bottle: as for me, I want nothing new, for the old is better, and my heart cries, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Until they find me a better fountain than the Lord has opened in Christ Jesus his Son my soul will abide in her old place, and plunge her pitcher into the living waters. Where my cup is filled there shall it stand, and run over still.

Once more, does your cup run over? *Then call in your friends to get the overflow*. Let others participate in that which you do not wish to monopolise or intercept. Christian people ought to be like the cascades I have seen in brooks and rivers, always running over and so causing other falls, which again by their joyful excess cause fresh

casades and beauty is joyfully multiplied. Are not those fountains fair to look upon where the overflow of an upper basin causes the next to fall in a silver shower, and that again produces another glassy sheet of water? If God fills one of us, it is that we may bless others; if he gives his ministering servants sweet fellowship with him, it is that their words may encourage others to seek the same fellowship; and if their hearers get a portion of meat, it is that they may carry a portion home. If you get the water for your own mill and dam it up, you will find that it is overgrown with rank weeds, and becomes a foul thing. Pull up the sluices, man, and let it run! There is nothing in the world better than circulation either for grace or for money. Let it run! there is more a-coming, there is more a-coming. To withhold will impoverish you, to scatter is to increase. If you get the joy of God in your heart, go and tell it to poor weeping Mary, and doubting Thomas: it may be that God sent you the running over on purpose that those who were ready to perish might be refreshed.

Last of all, does your cup run over? Then *think of the fulness which resides in him from whom it all proceeds*. Does your cup run over? Then think of the happiness that is in store for you when it always will run over in glory everlasting. Do you love the sunlight? Does it warm and cheer you? What must it be to live in the sun, like the angel Uriel that Milton speaks of! Do you prize the love of Christ? Is it sweet to you? What will it be to bask in its unclouded light? Oh, that he would draw up the blinds, that we might catch a glimpse of that face of his which is as the sun shining in his strength. What will it be to see his face, and to enjoy the kisses of his mouth for ever. The dew which distils from his hand makes the wilderness rejoice; what must it be to drink of the rivers of his pleasure? A crumb from his table has often made a banquet for his poor saints, but what will it be when the tree of life will yield them twelve manner of fruits, and they shall hunger no more? Bright days ought to remind our souls of heaven, only let us recollect that the brightest days below are not like the days of heaven, any more than a day in a coal mine when the lamp burns most brightly can be compared to a summer's noon. Still, still, we are down below. The brightest joys of earth are only moonlight. We shall get higher before long, into the unclouded skies, into the land of which we read "there is no night there." How soon we shall be there none of us can tell! The angel beckons some of us; we hear the bells of heaven ringing in our ears even now. Very soon—so very soon—we cannot tell how very soon, we shall be with Jesus where he is, and shall behold his glory. Brethren, the thought of such amazing bliss makes our cups run over, and our happiness overflows as we remember that it will be for ever, and for ever, and for ever. Eyes never to weep again, hands never to be soiled again, bones never to ache again, feet never to limp again, hearts never to be heavy again, but the whole man as full as it can be of delight ineffable, plunged into a sea of bliss, deluged with ecstatic joy, as full of heaven as heaven is full of Christ.

Dear hearer, the last word I have to say is this, do you know what it is to be filled with the love of God? Unconverted hearer, I know you are not happy. You say, "I wish my cup would run over!"

What are you doing with it? "I am trying to empty it of my old sins." That will not make it run over. "I have been washing it with my tears." That will not make it run over. Do you know the only way of having joy and peace in your heart? What would you do with an empty cup if you were thirsty? Would you not hold it under a fountain until it was full? This is what you must do with your poor, dry, empty soul. Come and receive of Jesus, grace for grace. "For as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name." Hold your empty cup under the stream of divine fulness which flows to the guilty through Jesus Christ, and you also shall joyfully say, "My cup runneth over."

The Lord pour his mercy into you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Psalm xxiii.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—725, 708, 711.
