

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GLORIOUS INVENTORY.

A Sermon

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DELIVERED BY

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“Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.”—1 Corinthians iii. 21—23.

It appears, from this Epistle, that the Christians at Corinth were very much divided on account of certain ministers who had at different times preached amongst them the Word of God. Some of them felt a deep attachment to Paul, and they said, “We are of Paul;” others preferred Cephas, and they cried, “We are of Cephas;” while another portion followed after Apollos, and declared, “We are of Apollos.” So that the church, which ought to have been one body, was sadly rent and divided by several parties who started up, following different leaders. Paul wrote this first Epistle to the Corinthians in order to remove their strifes; and, if possible, to bind them again in the bonds of love and unity, to make of them one church, to serve one Master, and strive together for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Now, beloved, the same thing that occurred in Corinth, has happened in London and elsewhere many a time. It is but right that persons should feel an attachment to those who preach the gospel to them; but when this grows to an overweening adoration, when it becomes almost a worship, and persons are led to despise all other ministers, and will hear none beside that one man whom they believe to be sent from God, then, indeed, they need a solemn reproof as did these Corinthians, and it is requisite to say unto them, “Therefore, let no man glory in men. For all things are yours.” To love the man by whose means we are brought to know the truth, to have respect to him who speaks wondrous words, as God makes utterance by him, is indeed nothing but natural and just; but if we at any time exalt that man above the level he ought to stand upon, or put him above all others, so that we despise them, and say, “I am of Paul, and will not hear Apollos;” or, “I am of Apollos, and therefore cannot hear Cephas,” then it becomes a sin and iniquity, a transgression against God, against

his Church, and against his ministers; and the apostle's solemn reproof comes home with an emphasis: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come." Paul was a wise reprove, and he did not reprove too sharply. After he had said, "Let no man glory in men," mark how he reproveth them: "For all things are yours." He used no hard words. We have heard of ministers who are perpetually whipping and scolding their hearers. It is an old saying of those who understood horses as well as men, "The best way is to put the whip in the manger." Feed people well, and they will work well; give them plenty of sound doctrine, and it will make them practical. It is not the way to make a practical people to be always talking about practice. Feed them with the manna that comes down from heaven, and with some of the honey out of the rock, and they will always be willing to strive for their Master, and to labour for his cause.

Now, Christian, rise and walk through the length and breadth of the land, this morning, and view your possessions. Nothing will tend so much to lessen your undue reverence for men, or to check your glorying in them, as a vision of what you are yourselves worth. If you see your own property, your own possessions, you will not then be so much inclined to place too high a value upon one certain thing, though it may be in itself exceedingly precious.

First of all, we have before us *an inventory of the Christian's possessions*: "All things are yours." Secondly, we have *the title deeds*: "Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's;" and, thirdly, we have *the conduct expected from a man who is so exceedingly rich*: "Let no man glory in men."

I. First, I said, we have AN INVENTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN'S POSSESSIONS. The apostle sets down at the top the total of the whole, and then he proceeds to mention the possessions one by one. The sum total is "*all things*;" but as these two words are said very quickly, and are very general in their meaning, he particularizes, and gives each of the things in its proper place. First he says, "all things," and then he gives us a list which includes "all things."

And, first, he says, that *all ministers are yours*. As a Christian man, all kinds of ministers are yours, "whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." All preachers are not Pauls, all are not like Apollos, and all cannot speak like Cephas; but ministers of all kinds are yours; they are not their own, they belong to the Church at large. There is Paul; he has a clear, logical mind, he preaches good doctrine, and proclaims it powerfully, too; he is yours, go and hear him. There is Apollos, who preaches with eloquence; he is not so much a logician as an orator; he cannot reason, perhaps, but he puts his thoughts into beautiful shapes, and delivers them well; go and hear Apollos. There is rough Cephas, a plain, blunt, honest, outspoken man; he never minces matters; what he says, he says out of his heart, *con amore*; his whole soul goes with every word. Do not despise him. You may like Paul better, and Apollos may be more to your taste, but Cephas has his work to do as well; and all are yours,—their talents, their station, whatever they possess,—all are yours.

You sometimes speak of "my minister." Yes, you have a particular minister, but then all ministers are yours; not only that special one, but all who are called of God; whatever may be their peculiar mode of preaching, they are yours to profit by, if indeed they are God's servants. There is Boanerges; he preaches, in a thundering manner, of the wrath to come; his sermons alarm you; he drags a harrow across your soul; he speaks as if he had just come from the top of Sinai, where the thunders of God were pealing, and the lightning flashing beneath his feet; he speaks like a man impressed with solemn awe, as if he had for a while traversed the lake of fire and brimstone, and had descended into the abyss of hell, and seen the horrid pits where the wicked lie, and bite their bonds. Hear him, *he is yours*. Here is another, a Barnabas, who speaks words of gentle comfort. You seldom hear thunder from him; his preaching is like the soft evening breeze. He is like the sun that has healing beneath his wings; gently he speaks to the broken-hearted, and bindeth up their wounds. You love to hear him; he is quite as useful as Boanerges, and Boanerges is as useful as Barnabas; *and they are both yours*. One is a loving John, sweet in his disposition. You can read love in his eyes; he hath leaned his head on the bosom of Jesus; and when he speaks, he says, "I beseech you, love one another." Another is like Peter; he speaks terribly of the last days wherein shall come scoffers, and of the fire which shall consume the ungodly. Both Peter and John have their special province, *and they are both yours*.

When God has blessed a man, when there is an unction from the Holy One resting on him, when he can trace his descent from the apostles by being a follower of the apostles, and preaching apostolic doctrine in an apostolic manner, then indeed you may say he is yours, for "all are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." "Then how little and narrow-minded am I," perhaps the Christian will say, "that I have not cared for this or that man, because he was not exactly after my mode!" O dear creatures, would you have the making of God's ministers? A sorry lot they would be, if you had. God makes them as he pleases, and sends them into the world after his own fashion, each with his own work to do in his own manner; but they are all yours. There is a minister who preaches very sweetly; well, he is yours, he is your servant, your waiting-man; he is not a lord and master over you, but your servant: "Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Whoever he is, if he be a true minister of God, he will profess himself to be the servant of the Church, your positive property. Make all the use you can of him, then. Try and recollect all the good things he may say; whatever choice utterances, whatever golden sentences and silver words come from his lips, treasure them up, for they are all yours, whether they be the words of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. This is the first entry in the inventory.

And, next, "*the world*" is ours. This great world, considered naturally, the home wherein we live, is all ours. Men have carved it out for themselves; worldlings have said, "So much is mine, and so much is thine. Yonder fields belong to that rich man, and the houses there, and that park, belong to such another." They may call it theirs if they like, but the world is yours. It is yours as much as if you

had a legal title to it here below ; it is yours, not in imagination, or conception, but in reality. Do you ask me how it is ? I tell you, the world only exists for you. If you and all your fellow-Christians were gone out of it, if the righteous were departed, the world would at once be a desert. "Ye are the salt of the earth," the conservers, the preservers of it ; it abides for your sake. Take *you* away, and the world would be turned into rottenness, and perish. The world is but the scaffold of your soul's salvation ; it is but the place where you prepare yourselves to enter into the world above. This world would have been consumed by fire long ago, if it had not been for the righteous. God bids the flames tarry till he has taken all his children home ; he only keeps the world in existence for the sake of his elect. It is a debased world, the trail of the serpent is over it all ; it is spoiled, its beauty is marred, it is a fair world but a false one, its glory is departed. God would utterly destroy it but that he intends his Church to be fostered in the wilderness, and he will not sweep the wilderness away till he hath carried his people through it.

This world is yours ; there is not a speck of it which is not yours ; the whole of it is yours, from the East to the West, and from the North to the South. The lands of untrodden snows are yours ; the wide, expansive ocean is yours ; yon blue sky with all its gems of stars is yours. "All things are yours." One man says of a certain part, "That is mine !" He knows not what he says ; it is yours. It is let to him for a little while ; he occupies it as a tenant ; he is only the man who takes care of your house for you. It is *your* house, though he lives in it, and enjoys the comfort of it. He stretches himself upon the couch, but the house is yours ; and it shall be yours, by-and-by, when Jesus Christ shall come a second time, without sin unto salvation, and shall reign upon the earth with his ancients gloriously. Then shall you wear a crown, and shall be made a king and a priest unto your God, and shall reign with Christ upon the earth for a thousand years.

This world is yours now. "Nay, but," sayest thou, "I am poor, and have but little of it." It is thine, notwithstanding, only thou art not yet come of age. The son, before he is of full age, is as truly the heir of all the property as he will be when he comes into full possession of it. He has enough for his necessities, but not more ; still, he says, "It is mine ; and when the day shall come that I am twenty-one, I shall have it all." So, Christian, thou art at present only a child, and it would not do to give thee all thy property at once ; thou art not come of age ; but when thou hast passed through thy time of probation, thou shalt say, "It is mine." But did I hear thee say that thou hast not enough of this world's necessities ? Hush, be silent, or else the promise is broken, "Bread shall be given him ; his waters shall be sure." I know thou hast enough ; or, if thou hast not enough at present, yet it is coming to thee. God will not leave thee ; if he bring thee ever so low in poverty, still trust him, for his promise is engaged to supply thy wants. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Try thy Lord by faith. If thou hast no situation, no means of providing for thyself, yet ask him, and he will give thee all

thou needest. If thou hast no place to lay thy head, God will provide it for thee. However deep thy distresses may be, he will never let thee perish. His honour is engaged on thy behalf, and he will take care of thee. Poor as thou art, this world is thine. Draw, then, on thy Heavenly Banker; go and ask thy God for what thou needest, and as truly as he is God, he will hear the cry of the destitute, and will not despise thy prayer.

And, next, "*life*" is ours. Have you never heard a person say, "Oh! if I might but die, and depart, and be with Jesus"? And you have heard him sometimes repeat the psalmist's wish, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove!" Now, if he had wings like a dove, what would he do with them? Where would he put them? "Oh!" he says, "that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest." No; you would not be at rest, for if you were to fly away before your work was done, you could not rest even then. But when your work is done, then you will be at rest without needing the wings of a dove. Therefore do not make such a silly request any more, but be content to wait and tarry the Lord's time. Moreover, look not upon life as an evil thing; it is one of the good things we possess. It is a glorious life, after all, when a man knows how to enjoy it, and how to improve it. What! be ashamed to live here when you have such means of doing good and glorifying God, and such pleasant seasons of communion with Jesus, and such preparations for eternity? What! count life nothing? It is one of the greatest blessings we possess; and to stop here till our portion of labour shall be done, is a blessing; nor would we wish to have our lives shortened by a single hour, for God has predestinated the time for its end. I think *that* man has morbid views who does not reckon life a blessing. With all its trials and sorrows, it is still a precious gem; it may be set in a ring of iron, but it is a gem notwithstanding. Life may be hidden in the depths, like a rare pearl; but he that, by faith, can act the part of a diver, will fetch the pearl up, and see its value. Methinks an angel in heaven might be glad to live on earth for the good he might do. If I may be the means of saving souls from hell, if I can wipe away the mourner's tear, if God shall help me to bind up the broken in heart, and to set free the prisoner, if my fellow-man, by my means, can be led in the paths of righteousness, if souls can be snatched from perdition, and heirs of earth be made heirs of heaven, by my staying here, then, O God, let me live! Methinks, the life of Methuselah were well purchased, and that we might well brook even such a long delay from heaven, if we could serve God better by staying here. Do not look upon life as a curse, Christian! Count it a blessing, and seek to make it so. It will be full of weeds and thistles to thee if thou dost not plough it; but if thou plougest life with persevering industry and earnestness, thou wilt make it like a garden of the Lord. Thou canst make the wilderness blossom like Eden, and the desert shall be a very Carmel for joy; so that the mountains and hills shall break forth before thee into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Yes, Paul was right when he wrote of life as a blessing, for a blessing it certainly is.

The next thing does not seem to be of any value at all: "*or death.*"

But, beloved, what would life be worth if it were not for death? There are some books that have only plain black letters till you come to the "Finis," which is illuminated; so it is often with life, it is printed in black letters till you come to the last leaf, and that page is lit up with glory,—for that page is death! O life! I would call thee a curse if I could not see death behind thee. To live here always, who would wish it? To walk perpetually upon this earth, and to dwell here absent from the Lord, and present in the body, that were indeed a curse. But life is a blessing because after life cometh death. Yea, death itself is a blessing to the Christian! Usually, we look at death, not so much as what it is, as what it appears to be. Death is an angel, the fairest in creation; but death sometimes dresses itself in terrible garments. It *appears* to be terrible, but it is not. Moreover, we think death to be dreadful because we do not see the whole of death. You know why Belshazzar trembled when he saw the handwriting on the wall; it was because he could see nothing but the hand, he could not see the body. That is why we are afraid of the hand of death, because we see nothing but the hand. If we could see the whole of death, we should count it a cherub. Death, indeed, is not a dreary thing to those who believe in Jesus; those who know how to commune with death from day to day will never be afraid of talking or thinking of it. It is the gate to endless joy; and do we dread to enter there? What is it? The grave is a bath where my body shall, like Esther, bathe itself in spices, until its Lord shall say "Awake!" and I shall rise from my grave, clothed in immortality and glory, to dwell with him for ever.

Death, I have often trembled at thee! In midnight hours, I have thought it must be terrible to die, and I have shaken at thy pale apparition. O Death! thy ghastly appearance hath sometimes frightened me, I have striven to run away from thee; but thou art my slave now, and I will not tremble at thee any more. Death, thou art mine! I write thee down among my goods and chattels, a part of my own property. Take heed how thou triest to make thy master tremble; thou art not *my* master, Death; but I am thine! Come here, give me thy hand, O Death! Be it mine to talk with myself every day, and to talk with thee, too. It does us good to see the crossbones and skull, and to note in the graveyard the remnants of mortality. It is beneficial to our spirits to look down and see that, however high our powers, our heads must be laid low; however lofty our appearance, we must bend down, and our body must become a carnival for worms, and must be scattered like the dust of the highway to the four winds of heaven. It is good to think of that, and then to think, with all its gloom, with all that is dismal about it, death is ours.

Oh, it is pleasant to think well of death! I have heard of a good Christian who was asked if she was afraid to die. She replied, "I have dipped my foot in the river Jordan every morning before breakfast for these forty years, and I am not afraid of the current now." It is good to die at last when we know what it is to die every day. Paul said, "I die daily." Well, if we die every day, it will not be hard to die in our last day. You will not be afraid of death if

you love the Lord. If you knew death, believer, you would not be afraid of it, but you would feel it to be a joyous thing. You are thinking of that lonely chamber where the friends stand by your side when you bid them all adieu; you are thinking of the pains and groans and strife, and the dread solemnity of that last hour; but think not of such things. Think that the Lord will come to meet thee, for he will come; and your soul will stretch its wings in haste, and fly away to heaven. Would you be afraid to die with Jesus? You would not be afraid if you stood where I sometimes stand, by the bedside of the dying saint. I have taken the hand of such an one, and he has said to me, "Brother, this is the place to prove that the Lord is gracious. I am going to be with Jesus; my heart and strength fail me, but he is the strength of my life, and my portion for ever." And his eyes have flashed with the very fire of glory, his lips have breathed sonnets, his looks spoke volumes, his heart seemed overflowing with the bliss of eternity, and his whole soul radiant with immortality. Oh, it is a cheering thing to stand by when a Christian dies, to see him stand on the precipice of life, clapping his wings ere he takes his flight, not into a vast unknown, but into a sea of light and love, in which he floats until he reaches the gates of paradise! It is doubly sweet and blessed to witness such a spectacle of joy. Death is ours, then, so we will not fear it, for it is indeed a privilege one day to die.

Then, next, "*things present*" are ours. Come, beloved, let us see what are our "*things present*" to-day. One says, "*Prosperity* is one of my things present; the Lord is blessing me in this world, and I have many joys, many comforts, nothing to complain of, everything to be thankful for." Well, that is thine; but take care, my brother, that thou makest it thine to profit by. Alas! prosperity has something of the same effect upon the soul which the holidays of Capua had upon the Roman soldier; it weakens the soul, and takes away its power. Do not let it be so with thee; it need not be so; for if, by the working of God's Spirit, thou art sanctified, prosperity may be of use to thee, for it is one of the "*things present*" that is thine.

"Ah!" says another, "*adversity* is present to me. I am suffering in body excruciating pain, and my circumstances are not what I should wish them to be. I am exceedingly pained, and driven to and fro. I am like a poor sea-bird, lost in the wide ocean, tossed up and down, from the base of the waves to the billows' crown." Adversity is thine. It will do thee good, man; it will help to gird up thy loins, and brace thy nerves and sinews; it will strengthen thee for labour. God has put thee in the furnace "thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine." Look on adversity as a blessing. In everything give God thanks, as much for thy trials as for thy joys, as much for thy temptations as for thy deliverances, as much for the bitters in thy cup as for the sweets, for the same loving hand that put the one there, mingled the other. All "*things present*" are thine.

Then there is *Providence*. That is always present, and it is yours. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Then there is *justification*. That is a present mercy: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

That is yours. Then here is *the Bible*, that is a present thing, and it is yours. There is not a precious promise in it, from Genesis to Revelation, but is yours; there is not a single choice sentence in it, but is yours. All "things present" belong to you. What else is there? Why, there is *adoption*, for ye are now children of God. That is yours. There is *final perseverance*, which God promises even now. He will keep his children, and preserve them to the end. That is yours, and whatever ye can conceive that is glorious, which is present with you now, is yours.

But now comes the climax: "*things to come.*" These also are yours. What! art thou trembling at the "things to come"? Art thou saying, "I dread the future; my poor ship hath borne so many storms, I fear to go forward"? Oh! tremble not, the future is thine; and, if it should be a future of storms and hurricanes, and tempests and rocks, and quicksands and shoals, it is thine. Thy Captain will steer thee through. Let *death* be in the future, with its shade and gloom, it is thine; it is one of the "things to come." Then, after death, the lying in the grave for a time is thine. The *resurrection*, when thou shalt arise from the grave, is thine; the awful trump that shall startle the world, the books that are to be opened, the blazing lightnings, the terrific thunders are thine; the trembling universe, with all the dread accompaniments of *judgment*, is thine; the Judge himself, is thine, thy Brother, thy Friend; and the great conflagration, the flying away of heaven and of earth, the falling of the stars from heaven, like withered fig leaves from the tree, all these are thine; the rocking of creation, the tossing to and fro of matter, the earthquake, the trembling spheres, the shaking universe, the dissolving orbs, all these are thine; all that is terrible, majestic, sublime, terrific, all is thine. Let thine imagination gather around it all the dread things which are to come; all these are thine. Thy soul, enshrined in immortality, shall say, "It is all mine." The great dread drama which shall receive its terrible consummation after death, is thine. If there be a hell that is horrible to the wicked,—as there most assuredly is,—it is not for thee; but if there be a heaven, glorious and great as it is, it is for thee. There is a harp in heaven which is thine, a crown in heaven which is thine; think ye of the streets of gold, they are thine; for they are "things to come." Think of the Most High God himself; he is thine, and thou shalt feel him to be so. O Christian! *heaven* is thine; try, beloved, to picture heaven to thyself. I think I hear thee say, "Is this heaven, and am I there? Have I a crown upon my head? Am I clad in white? O glorious world! I never conceived heaven to be like this. I had pictures, I had dreams, I had imaginations; but this far outshines all that I ever conceived. O wondrous heaven, how glorious thou art! and there is my Christ!" I know not what thou wilt say of him; it were almost blasphemy to try to utter words about him; but when thou art with him, lying on his breast for aye, feeling his heart palpitating against thine, and knowing that the God-Man has loved thee with an everlasting love, and feeling that his heart is for ever thine, by the sweetest tie of blessed relationship,—then wilt thou find that "things to come" are thine, for heaven has become thine actual possession. This, then, is the

Christian's glorious inventory. He is rich indeed, who owns all these things, and who can take up this language: "all things are mine; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come."

II. Now, we come to THE TITLE DEEDS. They are drawn up in the name of Christ: "ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

As I am, by nature, apart from Christ, none of those things are mine; they are all against me. Death would not be mine without Christ; it would be indeed a terrible doom. Life is not mine without Christ; that were dangerous indeed, to live here without him. All I have, comes to me through Jesus. Come, then, let me look at the title deeds, and see if I am interested in them. They consist of two parts. First, "ye are Christ's;" and secondly, "Christ is God's."

"*Ye are Christ's.*" Come, Christian, soliloquize thus with thyself: "My soul, art thou Christ's? Canst thou say that thou art his in a threefold sense? Art thou Christ's by the Father's donation of thee to Christ? Art thou Christ's by the purchase of his blood? And art thou Christ's by thine own consecration of thyself to him? Am I Christ's *by eternal donation*, because God the Father gave me to the Son? Can I look back, and see my name in life's fair book set down? Can I, with holy faith, look back, and see the roll of destiny, and read my name therein? Have I a humble, holy faith that I was given to the Lord long ere the foundations of the earth were builded, or the pillars thereof were piled? Am I his? Can I say, 'This covenant, made of old, doth stand for ever fast'? Can I say that I was given to him? Do I rejoice in that sovereign electing love which gave me to the Saviour for no reason whatever in me, but simply of his own free grace? If so, that is one proof that I am Christ's."

"But again, my soul, canst thou look back, and see thyself to be Christ's *by the purchase of his blood*? When thou goest to Gethsemane, do those drops of gore fall upon the ground for thee? When thou goest to Gabbatha, canst thou think that ignominy and plucking of the hair was for thee? And at Calvary, canst thou feel that all its agonies and terrors were for thee?"

Do *you* feel, dear friends, that you are Christ's by the purchase of his blood? At a Primitive Methodist prayer-meeting, a brother was not able to pray, and somebody else, further down in the meeting, according to their rather disorderly manner, called out, "Brother, plead the blood, plead the blood; then you will be able to pray." The brother understood him well enough; he began pleading the blood of Jesus, and then he could indeed pray. O my soul, canst thou plead the blood? My hearer, canst thou plead the blood? My brother, my sister, canst thou say that the sacrifice of Jesus was for thee? Dost thou feel that he bought thee, and paid for thee, that his sacrifice was made for thy guilt, that he died especially for thy sins? Canst thou appropriate Jesus to thyself? If so, thou canst appropriate everything, since "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But, further, we are Christ's *by consecration*. Beloved, are *you* thus Christ's? "Dost mind the place, the plot of ground, where Jesus did thee meet?" Ah! some of us can look back, and tell to an inch the spot where we first gave our hearts to Jesus; many of the Lord's

people cannot do it, and it is not necessary that they should; but yet they can each one say, "I am my Lord's, and he is mine." Dost thou feel, this morning, that thou hast given thyself to the Lord Jesus; that thou art not thine own, but, being bought with a price, thou hast willingly given thyself to him? Hast thou taken Christ for thy All-in-all, and hast thou given up all to Christ? If Christ were to walk up this aisle, and come to each one of you, and say, "Sinner, lovest thou me?" what answer would you give him? If he were now to step from pew to pew, and look at each of you, showing you his scarred hand with the print of the nails, and saying, "Wilt thou give thyself for me?" what would be your answer? Do you wish to give yourselves up wholly to Christ? Have you done so? Then, "all things are yours;" because you are Christ's, by consecration you have given yourselves to him.

If you consecrate yourselves to Jesus, you will never find him a hard Master. I have known him some little while, and he hath been exceedingly kind to his unworthy servant. I have nought to find fault with him, but much with myself. He is a blessed Master. O youth, or maiden, if thou wouldst love him, thou wouldst find him worthy of thy love in all respects! Why, methinks, his very name is enough to make you love him. "My Master! How sweetly doth 'my Master' sound!" Yes, he is my Master, and your Master, if you have become his servant, and have given yourselves to him. But, if thou art not Christ's, thou hast nothing, thou art a poor miserable creature. How canst thou live if thou art not Christ's? How wilt thou face grim death, how wilt thou stand before Christ when he shall sit on his throne? Dost thou think that thou shalt be able to hear his thundering voice say, "Depart, ye cursed"? Are thy ribs of steel, and bones of brass? If they be, they will be broken when he speaks in his wrath. O then, beloved, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

I must only hint at the other portion. In order to link us thoroughly with God, there is something else besides our being Christ's, and that is, "*Christ is God's.*" With one hand Christ links himself to men, with the other he is joined to God; and thus God and men are united. Oh, think of this! There is a link between thee and the Godhead. The God that thou canst not conceive of, the skirts of whose garments are dark with ineffable light, too splendid for man to view, that mighty God, filling immensity, the Infinite, the all things in one, is linked with thee, for Christ giveth thee his hand,—thy Brother, flesh and blood like thyself,—and he giveth God his hand, for he is the equal of the eternal, the infinite God, very God of very God; and yet, very man of very man! Oh, what a glorious thought, that my deed is stamped by the Father and by the Son! It has the seal of them both. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's:" and having Christ, and being Christ's, I have all things in him. "All things are yours. For ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But before I come to the third point, let me ask you, dear friends, now to put this question to your conscience, *Are you Christ's?* Oh, how many there are who attend God's house, and never feel any

personal application of the truth! How many are there of you who sit Sunday after Sunday, and week-day after week-day, hearing sermons, and never getting any profit by them? O sirs, preaching is not child's play! Some persons say, "I will go and hear Mr. So-and-so;" and they go,—just to amuse themselves. But, do you think that a true minister will preach to amuse you? Is it his business so to do? Oh, believe me, it is solemn work to stand and speak for God, and in his name! Did you ever think what it is to preach God's Word? Oh! if at the last great day it shall be shown that we have not preached faithfully to you, if we have not declared the whole counsel of God, you indeed must perish, but your blood will be required at our hands! And, then, do you know what solemn work it is to hear? Oh! if the damned spirits in hell could come to earth, they would let you know what solemn work it is to hear the gospel. Think not that thou canst hear the gospel without having thy salvation or damnation affected thereby; there is not a word of the gospel that ever enters into man's ear for which he shall not be brought to account. I beseech you, as you believe in the Bible, as you believe that there is no salvation out of Christ, to lay these things to heart. They are not trifles, they are not imaginary things, they are not that which concerns your body, but they concern your eternal existence. You are rich, or else you are poor; you are Christ's or the devil's; you are on the road to heaven or to hell,—which is it? Oh, let the question ring through your ear,—*Which is it, heaven or hell? Which is it, HEAVEN OR HELL?* Oh, let not that word, if it be e'er so harshly spoken, be rejected by you; but answer the question to your soul; and if honestly you are obliged to say, "I fear I am on the road to perdition," then, remember, if you feel *that*, if you confess your sin, Jesus Christ hath come into the world to save sinners: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Not everybody, but "sinners"—all those who will acknowledge and confess their title, shall be saved by divine grace. If you are a sinner, and you trust him, he will most assuredly and certainly save you.

III. Now, lastly, WHAT IS THE DUTY OF A MAN WHO HAS SUCH LARGE POSSESSIONS? "Let no man glory in men. For all things are yours."

If a man has everything, he has no need to glory in some one little thing. If a man has only one gold ring, you will see him wearing it on his finger every day, and putting his hand in such a position that everybody may see it; but he who has far more, need not be particular about just one ring being seen. Does the Queen care that other people shall know what plate and jewels she has at Windsor? Everybody knows that she is rich, that she has an abundance, and therefore it is not necessary that she should display a portion of it. Whenever you find a person glorying in some little thing, you may be sure he is acting contrary to what he should be. I cannot conceive how a Christian man, who has everything, can be proud because he has a little talent, or a little wealth, or position, or station. Do not be proud of that, but say, "That is one stone in my estate; it is one little pebble that lieth in one of the brooks in my large domains. True, it is mine; but it is nothing to boast of." "Let no man glory in men. For all

things are yours." Do not be boasting, then, about one thing when all things are yours. The little child, when it has some present, shows it to every person who comes into the house; but when the child becomes a man, he shows not everything that he has, yet he has more possessions than he had before. Thus the worldling may glory in his riches, and boast of his strength; but, Christians, you are too far advanced for this, you are too wise, "for all things are yours," and surely you will not attach undue importance to one.

Now, what says this subject practically to you? One of you has lost a friend; you are weeping and saying, "I have lost everything." No, you have not; "for all things are yours." He may have been a precious friend, a most loving one that you have lost; it is a deep trial, but *bethink thee what thou hast*. Thou hast God; thy sins are forgiven; thou hast the righteousness of Christ; thou hast not lost that. It is only some pence which are gone; thy gold is safe, thy jewels are not taken away. "But I have lost my jewels," say you. Have you? Ah! then, you do not know Christ; for you would not venture to call anything a jewel save the precious Lord Jesus. Is it not wrong for you to bemoan and weep so perpetually when "all things are yours", and you have not lost everything yet? Another one is expecting such-and-such a relative to be taken away, and is weeping over an expected loss. Now you have no promise to help you, for you weep before your trouble comes. God does not promise that he will help you who manufacture your own troubles. Remember, you cannot lose the title deeds of your possessions. If you have lost your copy, you can get another, for the old deed is up in the ark in heaven.

Now, by way of a practical hint, I might say, if "all things are yours," *how willing you ought to be to give something to the cause of God!* A man who is poor, and has nothing, is never expected to give; but a man who has "all things," should give like a prince. There are many princes in Israel who have all things in their possession, and I am sure I may ask them to give something for the Lord's cause.

But I again come back to this all-important question; we must not put it away; we must give an answer to it; either now, or at God's bar,—*Are we Christ's?* Some of you, I fear, are not Christ's. You are none of his, because your conversation is carnal, your actions are worldly, your behaviour is inconsistent, and your lives are reproachable. Then, you are not Christ's. Some of you are not Christ's, because you are trusting in your own righteousness, and not leaning on the blood and righteousness of Christ alone. But we hope that there are some of you who have stripped yourselves of everything, and have taken Christ for your All-in-all. If, devoid of all goodness, you make Christ your goodness; if, devoid of everything, you take Christ for all, then he is yours. Hence, you may revel in delights, and let your heart leap for joy, let your melancholy be dissipated, and your tears be all dried up; and you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, for this world is yours, the world to come is yours, and heaven shall be your happy home for ever. The Lord grant that it may be so with all of you when he shall make up his jewels! Amen.
