

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

A GREAT DELIVERANCE.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 26TH, 1863, BY

MR. JAMES WELLS,

AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE, BOROUGH ROAD.

"Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and showeth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore."—Psalm xviii. 50.

THE Saviour hath assured us that the Old Testament Scriptures are they that testify of him. I think, therefore, that the first clause of our text refers to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's king, and that resurrection was that deliverance realized by his king. He was also God's anointed, and God showed him mercy in the way we shall try to describe when we come to that part. So that in our text we have, if we condense it, these three things: first, *the deliverance*; second, *the mercy*; and third, and last, *their continuation*; "to David, and to his seed for evermore."

We have then, first, *the deliverance*. "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king." And remember that this deliverance is our deliverance. He was delivered in a way none others can be, but still his entire deliverance is our deliverance. And all we want is faith and the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to realize that great deliverance which the dear Saviour himself realized. Let us take then, very concisely, a fourfold view of his deliverance, and I think it will, as we go along, speak for itself, and show that it was a great deliverance. First, then, that all (and the Scriptures are clear upon it)—that all the sins of sinners were penally imputed to the Lord Jesus Christ; that he hath laid on him the iniquities of us all; and he, in the greatness of his love, became the Surety of the covenant, and responsible to God for all our sins. I do think that this one view of the Saviour, when at all realized, must exceedingly endear him. For where is our danger? Why, in sin. Where is our condemnation? In sin. From what arise all our agonies and troubles? Why, sin. And what is it that causeth death itself? Sin. And what is it that hath lighted up a hell of never-abating despair? It is sin. Then, have we not much to bless the Lord for, not only that Jesus was the sin-bearer, that he bare our sins in his own body on the tree; but that this is a truth that is made in the Holy Scriptures exceedingly clear? What, then, must have been the deliverance that the Saviour realized, after atoning for our sins,—after putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself; after casting,—for there are a variety of forms of speech to impress upon our minds the delightfulness of the same truth,—after casting our sins as into the depths of the sea; after casting them as behind his back; after blotting them out as a cloud, and as a thick cloud, and establishing both forgiveness and forgetfulness of sin? for so it is by Jesus Christ that these delightful truths of forgiveness and forgetfulness are brought about, and "I, even I, am he, saith the Lord, that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins;" so saith the apostle, and a very sweet thought it is that the Lord hath given us by his servant, "There

is no more remembrance of sin ;" the Lord will remember us, but not our sins. Now, then, this is one part of the great deliverance. Here is the dear Saviour risen from the dead. And he could rise from the dead only on this as well as on the other grounds we have to name, namely, the perfection of his atonement. And so for us to realize this deliverance, to realize pardoning mercy, is indeed to enter into the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works. Now just hear what David saith in the confidence of this deliverance that Jesus Christ realized by his atonement, and that we realize deliverance thereby; just hear what the Psalmist in the 32nd Psalm saith on the ground of this wondrous work. He says of the Lord—and sweet the words are; but then you must be brought into something like real soul-trouble, and sometimes circumstantial trouble as well, to understand the full force of such scriptures—"Thou art my hiding place," and this is said on the ground of what Jesus Christ hath thus done; "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble." I apprehend the word *trouble* there means final trouble, or fatal trouble—and thou shalt preserve me from all final trouble. My trouble cannot last long, let it be what it may; our troubles must die, let them be what they may, or be caused by what they may. Thou shalt preserve me from final trouble, and thou shalt preserve me from fatal trouble. There is no trouble can overtake the Christian that can be fatal to him; there is not any trouble can lead to the spiritual death of the Christian, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified. "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Here, then, is this deliverance realized. "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king." He gave this deliverance to Christ as a matter of right on the Saviour's part, and as a matter of right on God's part to bestow. It was a matter between God and Christ of right on both sides; it was right that Jesus Christ should rise, and it was right, or a matter of righteousness, that God the Father should raise him from the dead, and that the Holy Spirit should quicken him, for we read he was quickened by the Spirit. But between Christ and us it is not a matter of right on our part, as having any title whatever to this deliverance; here it is a matter of mercy; "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

The second part of this great deliverance which the King of Zion realized was deliverance from the curse of the law. He was made a curse for us, made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And so it is written, and a very sweet declaration it is, that "there shall be no more curse." The throne of God and the Lamb are established, and so there is no more curse to reign. The curse has reigned over the whole human race, and will reign over the lost for ever; they are cursed, and cursed for ever. But here, if we are brought to see and know something of the curse that we are under, and to see that it is Jesus, and Jesus alone, that could take this curse, that could bear this curse of the law, and that could redeem us from this curse of the law; brought to see this, and the Holy Spirit enabling us to lose sight of everything else, and to look simply to Jesus, and to receive him as the end of the curse; there stands the declaration, "There shall be no more curse." So that here, again, the Saviour rose from the dead, and hath a cloudless eternity before him. Truly, truly, he is a morning without clouds. And if he hath a cloudless eternity before him, that is not for himself only, but for his people, for they are one; and so we have by him before us a cloudless eternity; there our sun will always shine. Great deliverance, then; what a great deliverance it is to the soul! when we feel as though God would curse us, as though God was wroth with us; when some parts of his holy word are like poisoned arrows that drink up our spirits; when some parts of his dealings with us seem as though he has, in the background which we have not yet seen, some tremendous purposes

of judgment and wrath towards us, and we tremble, as saith one, "I heard thy voice, and was afraid; yea," he saith, "my lips quivered, and rottenness entered into my bones." He was afraid from the appearance of things there was some tremendous purpose that would burst forth upon him as a destructive judgment; but, bless the Lord, he found it to be the contrary. And so, happy is the man that is brought into such an experience as this; for "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Well, now, then, Jesus has drunk this bitter cup; he was made a curse; but he hath endured all that was to be endured; loosed from the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be holden of it. Here, then, is a great deliverance. So, if we get deliverance from judgment, and from wrath, and from the threatening of God's word, it must be by faith in Jesus Christ. See him as the end of the curse; there is nothing but blessing in him; he hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; so that there is no more curse. "Great deliverance," then, "giveth he unto his king." And if the Lord were pleased—but he wisely orders it otherwise,—if he were pleased to show what our standing really is in Christ, wherein we are free from sin as he is free from sin, and to show us more clearly and powerfully the blessedness of that destiny, the blessedness of that state and place where the Saviour is, I am sure that would spoil us for human life; we should starve our bodies to death without knowing it. Hence the apostle Paul, when the Lord granted him, in a peculiar way, such a revelation of his future state and destiny, the blessedness he had in Christ, he says, "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell." So that if he had remained in that state of divine ecstacy, rapture, and glory, he would have lost all sense of bodily needs, and the body might have dropped and died, and he hardly would have known it. No one knows but he who realizes it what the presence of God can do; what the Holy Spirit can do when, by the resurrection of Jesus, he thus sets the soul free; and we can turn round spiritually, as the Israelites did literally, and see our enemies all drowned in the depths of the sea, not a dog to move his tongue against any of the children of Israel; but there they stand upon victory's vantage-ground, there they stand upon the borders of the prepared paradise, there they stand upon the margin of the land, just about to take possession of a blessedness that even angels in perfection can never reach; for though they are angels of God, they are not heirs of God, nor joint-heirs with Christ. But, third, a great deliverance, because he was delivered from Satan and all his adversaries. The inspiration of Satan is truly wonderful. Although Satan, as a person, is confined within certain limits, yet there are vast numbers of fallen angels with him, and they, no doubt, receive their mission from him, stirring up the profane world against godliness, stirring up the professing world against the truth, and stirring up the people of God one against another. I say it with great pain of mind, that I have seen among those that even are people of God, as much spite, and rage, and malice, and demoniacal hatred one to the other, as ever a mere professor has shown to God's truth. I am sure that the apostle James's words would here apply,—“My brethren, these things ought not to be so.” But where the people of God are, there Satan also presents himself in the midst of them. And his inspiration is wonderful. He worketh not only in the children of disobedience, but among the people of God. We see him stirring David up to calculate upon human power, and number the people. We see him stirring Peter up to deny the Saviour's sufferings, and after that to deny the Saviour's name. So, my hearer, the adversary followed the dear Saviour about. Wherever he went, there was Satan as near as possible. And all that men did unto the Saviour was under the inspiration of hell, and under the inspiration of Satan. "Now is your hour and power of darkness." And what a fearful description of character did the Saviour give to those men who were thus in malice enraged against him!

He said, "Ye generation of vipers, ye serpents, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" No one knows what the Saviour suffered from Satan and from men. Here was his holy and his righteous reputation torn all to pieces, and he was represented as a friend of publicans and harlots, represented as a wine-bibber, as a blasphemer, and as a devil, and everything that was bad. And yet he bore it all, and was led at last like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. But, bless his holy name! when he rises from the dead, ah, Satan, thou mayest try in vain to reach him now; ah, Pharisee, ah, enraged mob, Herod and Pilate, and all the rest that mocked him, now you may all seek in vain to find him; for though he is on earth, and dwells on earth six weeks, yet none but those that loved him were visited by him. No more the cruel spear, no more the cross, the nails no more. "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king." His path was rough, his life was a trying life; a man of grief, a man of sorrow, and, you may depend upon it, the dear Saviour did not at all lament, tremendous as the scene was he had to go through, when the hour came. Yes, his heart and soul were set upon the glorious victory that he wrought, and the deliverance he should realize. He knew after that there should not be adversary or evil occurrent. "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king." So, my hearer, if you would come to that happy end, here it is that your enemies will be found liars unto you by your being one with Jesus in what he hath wrought—entire deliverance from all adversaries, and from all adversity. But then, don't get dreaming that you are to have a paradise after the flesh. There stand the two opposite declarations; "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" there it is. And yet, when it comes, it always comes at the wrong time, and in the wrong way, and from the wrong source, and in the wrong form; and we think if it had come at any other time, from any other quarter, in any other form, we could have borne it then; we think it would not have been so bad. Yet it comes in the way the Lord intended it should, for he hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. "But in me ye shall have peace." Realize this in the meaning of his resurrection; realize him in his having put the curse away; realize him as the end of all trouble; there you have peace. Why, I do not wonder at the apostle desiring to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. But then he had an interest in earth also, though not an earthly interest; he had an interest in the church of God that was on earth; therefore he says, "It is more needful for you that I tarry still in the flesh." The fourth part of this deliverance is deliverance not only from the sin he had to bear, and from the curse he had to endure, and from the adversaries he had to encounter, but deliverance also from death. "He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." And so, saith Jesus, "He that believeth on me shall never die; believest thou this?" Now let me throw in a few remarks here, though I must keep as straight on as I can; still, just a remark or two here relative to the character in which the Saviour here appears. "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king." You will recollect that when the dear Saviour was on the cross, people mocked him blasphemously, and thought within themselves, He a king! pretty king that! Come to such an awful end as that; crucified between two malefactors; dying, in the eyes of the world, in public dishonour; a pretty king that! If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. Oh, poor besotted and blinded man, to judge not after the order of God's truth, but after the appearance of things. So, my hearer, however much thou art cast down, however much tried, and however much power the devil, by his agents, may have over you, you are not to conclude from that that you are not a king, that you are not a Christian, that you do not belong to the Lord. Jesus Christ was as much a king, and I make no hesitation in saying that the Saviour was

reigning in as much majesty—if not in more,—in as much power, in as much sovereignty, with as much accuracy, when he was dying as he is at this moment. Was there anything that gained dominion over him? Could they take his life from him? No; he laid it down; and he reigned over sin, and reigned over the curse, and reigned over men, and reigned over Satan, and reigned over hell, and reigned over death, and, as Watts nicely expresses it, “conquered when he fell.” Bless his holy and dear name! we do see, then, that he was king when he was born; he was born king, he lived a king, he was king in death, he was king in the grave, a king when he rose, a king on his throne, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever. He, therefore, being unconquerable, his people must in oneness with him be unconquerable too.

“Great deliverance giveth he unto *his* king;” to God’s king, the king that God hath chosen. Now there is no king that God ever chose, or no person God ever chose for a king, as he did Jesus Christ. And you see in the 17th of Deuteronomy how the dear Saviour answers to the character of the king the Israelites were to have. I will mention but two things: one was that the king that the Lord should choose was one whose heart should not be lifted up above his brethren. So, at the last tremendous day, when down the parting skies the King of Zion shall appear, and myriads of angels marshalled at his right hand, and his people with him, even then, in the infinite revelation and majesty of his glory in his high character as King of Zion, he shall own the humblest of his brethren. “Then shall the King say, Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.” That is one characteristic, then; his heart never was and never will be lifted up above his brethren. The other was that he was to prolong his days, he and his children. How true this is! He hath prolonged his days. Bless his holy name! he not only did no sin, but he put sin, the cause of death, away; so that he has prolonged his own days, prolonged our days, brought us into new days; old days and old things are passed away, all things are become new. Such, then, is the deliverance; such is the way, and the only way, for a soul to escape from death; such is the way to draw nigh to God; such is the way to hope in God; such is the manner of the great God with dying, mortal men.

I come now to the next part, “and showeth mercy to his anointed.” Now we are not to understand, at least I think not, that Jesus Christ, in any shape or form, needed mercy for himself. I should be sorry to say that, lest I should be wrong; I would not. I would rather die this morning before I leave the pulpit, than live to see the day that I should say anything, at least knowingly, unbecoming concerning the sacred name and wonderful person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit help us to honour him, to exalt him, to glorify him, to hallow his name; seeing there is no name like it. The Lord help me, therefore, a few moments to speak upon this part of the subject in a way I hope you will see to be consistent. “And showeth mercy to his anointed.” Now here the Saviour is introduced as the anointed. And I am strongly disposed to think that the anointing here is his missionary anointing. He was anointed in the counsels of eternity, that is, appointed; and he is anointed now with the oil of gladness in his exaltation. But I think that the anointing here referred to was his missionary anointing, and that will help us to understand what is meant by mercy being shown to him. Hence, what is done to his brethren is done to him; and, therefore, the mercy shown by the Father to his brethren he looks at as shown unto him. And we find even among men, those that give to his disciples, even if it be only a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, it shall in no wise lose its reward. So that the mercy that God the Father shows to Christ’s brethren, Christ considers as shown unto himself. We will come to the definition of the several parts of this mercy presently. And

then, if we come to closer quarters still, one, perhaps, of the most lovely figures in the Bible the Lord is pleased to use, namely, that the church is his bride; the church is his wife; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, and that "no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it." And so Christ never did and never will hate his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it. "This is a great mystery," saith the apostle; it is a mystery, and a glorious mystery, that we should thus,—

"That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity."

"But I speak concerning Christ and the church." And having loved the church as he has, what is done to her for good or for evil is done unto him; you cannot sever the two. Now let us enter a little definitely into this mercy. "And showeth mercy to his anointed;" not for himself, not for Jesus Christ, at least I cannot understand that Jesus Christ in any shape ever needed mercy; and if you understand that he did, then, of course, you can see farther into this matter than I can. I feel, I hope, a very proper cautiousness here, lest I should represent the Righteous One in any wrong light. But if I understand it, according to that scripture in the 89th Psalm, "My mercy shall be with him;" and then if I go to the 2nd of the Hebrews, "A merciful and a faithful high priest," then I can understand that the mercy shown to Christ is not what he needed, but what his people needed. Now let us hear how he ministers this mercy; let us see if we know anything of the characteristics that distinguish those who are interested in this mercy from those who are not. The Saviour speaks of his missionary anointing thus:—"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings unto the meek." In the quotation in Luke it is, "unto the poor." Put the two together; the one will help us to understand the other. The one calls the man meek, the other calls him poor. Take the poverty. Here is a poor creature feels he is as a sinner considered without Christ, and without hope, and without God in the world; and perhaps has, in connection with this, his trials and his troubles. He is bowed down: he says, What a poor autumnal leaf I am; what a poor piece of stubble I am; what mere chaff I am; what a poor creature I am! Now, then, what could be glad tidings unto such? Why, nothing but that which the Saviour hath done. For the man that is meek in the gospel sense of the word, and that is brought so low that nothing can gladden him but what the Saviour has done, then nothing can gladden that man but the salvation of God. "Let thy servant depart in peace; mine eyes have seen thy salvation." "Restore to me the joy of thy salvation." "I am poor and sorrowful; let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." And thus we realize a little of the gladness of the tidings of salvation. For such an one is afraid, as I have already hinted, that the Lord will certainly condemn him. "Glad tidings unto the meek." So, if we have the poverty, Christ hath the riches to meet that poverty; if we have the meekness, and are broken down in our carnal quibblings and enmity against God, and are brought into the simplicity of children, and are, as the apostle Peter expresses it, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby, he hath the remedy for us. And then, "He hath sent me"—that is a beautiful expression—"he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted." As though the dear Saviour should say, He hath sent me to do this, and shall I not do it? Here is a poor, broken-spirited, broken-hearted, comfortless, wandering, groaning, sighing, mourning, poor creature, and finds that in all the regions of nature there is no balm, there is no healing medicine, there is not anything can put him really right but myself. And when Jesus Christ comes in and fills such a heart with gladness, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord;" when he comes in with "What aileth thee? peace be unto you,"

oh, how it binds up the broken heart! O Lord, I am happy now; I can bear the burden now; I can face my lot now; I can bow my shoulder to the cross now; I can press forward now; I can give up now, Lord, the dearest object I have ever known; I can loose, as it were, now all my ties from earth, and feel that all my blessedness is in heaven, and ready to say with the poet,—

“ Oh that my anxious mind were free
From this vile tenement of clay,
That I might view the immortal Word,
And live and reign with Christ my Lord!”

Such is the effect of these glad things and the binding up of the heart. Here is mercy; it is mercy that doth it. God the Father showeth mercy unto Christ by what he hath done for his people. And will the Saviour withhold that mercy? Why, “He hath *sent* me,” and shall I not go? He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; shall I be an unfaithful priest? shall I be a physician of no value? shall I be a forger of lies, like men? No, no, bless his holy name; he is a merciful and a faithful High Priest. “And to proclaim liberty to the captives.” “Loose him, and let him go.” The Christian struggles sometimes in his captivity, and says, I cannot get out; I seem shut up, and cannot come forth into the house of the Lord. Some ministers in our day, they speak to us concerning our captivity as though we could shake off our troubles as easily, as the saying is, as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane. But we who know something of being shut up do not find it so. We find the truth of the Saviour’s words, “I open, and none can shut;” and if God hideth his face, whether it be done against a nation or against a man only, who can behold him? and if he give peace, who can make trouble? Here, then, is the mercy; bringing glad tidings to the meek, binding up the broken heart, and setting the captive free. “And the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Yes, the Lord lifts the head up out of the prison-house, and speaks kindly unto such; takes away the prison garments, clothes him in change of raiment, sets his throne above the princes of Babylon, above all the thrones of this world; for the Christian being thus raised up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, is there a monarch’s place on earth with which he would change? No, no, no; the brightest monarchy, even that of Solomon, is a mere toy, a mere bubble, that soon bursts and is passed away for ever, leaving nothing but desolation behind. But here, in oneness with Jesus, we live, and live for ever; reign, and reign for ever; rejoice, and rejoice for ever. What were all the ministrations of forgiveness to sinners when Christ was on earth? What were all the miracles he wrought—and they were all kindly miracles—what were they? The carrying out of this text,—“And showeth mercy to his anointed.” God sent his dear Son, and gave him plenty of mercy to go with; and so he dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, full of compassion. Just so now; when God sends a minister to preach, he gives that minister plenty of mercy to go with. He turns that man into a broken-hearted sinner, humbles him deeply in the dust, makes him know what it is to be poor, to be broken-hearted, to be bruised, to be in prison. Mercy rolls in and brings him out, and the man stands amazed at that mercy. Keep it to himself he cannot, and away he goes, and preaches that mercy to others which he himself hath found. That is one way I test a man, whether he is sent of God or not. If he does not bring mercy enough to meet me in all my necessities, such a man is with me a thing of nought, and I turn from him. As to his religion before God, I leave it. If all the Roman Catholic priests, and all the Puseyites, and all the free-willers, and all the duty-faith men in the world, if they are all born of God, and all of them on their way to heaven,—if that be the case, I only say, what they preach is no use to me. But when I come to the Bible, I find mercy there. When I look to the Lord Jesus

Christ, I do not find that he met in the days of his flesh with any case so miserable that he had not mercy to fill up that valley, or power enough to level that mountain, and make it a plain. He had mercy enough to pardon the greatest sin; great mercy, eternal mercy, and the Gentiles shall glorify God for his mercy. Thus, then, it is a great deliverance which Jesus achieved, a great deliverance for us; it is a great salvation. "He showeth mercy to his anointed." So all his appointed ministers, all that he sends, he is sure to show them great mercy; they deal in great mercy. And so all his anointed ones, his children—for they are all anointed by the Spirit of truth—they all deal in great mercy; only the worst is, they are apt sometimes to forget it, and to be very merciful to themselves, but very unmerciful to others.

But to avoid being tedious, I will now come to the last part of my subject, passing by a great many things included in the middle part, namely, that of mercy. "To David," saith our text, "and to his seed for evermore." David here, of course, must be taken mystically, and so we must take the meaning of the word David to guide us; that word meaning *beloved*; and that, as you are aware, is a name belonging to Jesus Christ. He is God's beloved Son, and he is our beloved Saviour. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." Now just notice one thing wherein, indeed, lies all our blessedness, that in this duration of this deliverance or salvation, and in this duration of his mercy, David and his seed, that is, Christ and his people, are put together. Now, first, the deliverance. The deliverance that was wrought from Egypt benefited the people only a little while, and that conditionally. Some of them lost the benefit of that deliverance as soon as they were out of Egypt; but this salvation wrought by Jesus Christ is an eternal salvation, and the people saved can never lose the benefit of it. Saved to-day, you are saved to-morrow, and saved for ever; so that this salvation continues by Christ Jesus. Hence, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Thus this salvation continues, because that which Christ hath wrought is like himself, it is eternal, and because Christ himself is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. If, therefore, I understand this salvation, and have that salvation; if I understand this covenant mercy, and this way of mercy, these sure mercies of David, and love the Lord in this, then I am one of his spiritual seed; and so, while he lives, I cannot die; while he is holy, I cannot be reckoned unholy; while he is righteous, I cannot be reckoned unrighteous; while he is beloved, I cannot be hated; and while he is in heaven, I cannot stop long on earth; and I shall never be sent out of heaven when I get there, until Christ be first sent out. It all continues with him. Here is David and his seed, Christ and his people, together: he is the substance thereof. There is no continuation without Christ. As soon as ever a church gives up the true Christ of God, or as soon as ever a church gives up the work of the Holy Spirit of God upon the heart, by which alone Christ can be savingly known; any church that gives up in any measure the dignity and perfection of Christ, or the ancient counsels of the Father, that church becomes an antichristian church directly. Fallen from its first love, the candlestick shall be removed, as the Lord said to the church of Ephesus. So the continuation is by the Lord Jesus Christ. To me there does appear great beauty that Christ is here the beloved. God loveth him with an everlasting love; loved him before the foundation of the world; and the people continue by him. The Holy Spirit carries on his work by the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father still interested in, delighted with Jesus Christ. If, therefore, we continue in this freedom, if we continue in this mercy, it must be by Jesus Christ.