

THE SOLDIER

WHO WAS BOUGHT OUT, BUT
WAS NOT BOUGHT IN.

A WORD TO SINNER AND SAINT.

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IT happened that in the course of its journeyings a certain regiment came to, and was stationed in, one of the Channel Islands. Amongst the hundreds of soldiers was one, who had, by the power of the Holy Ghost, been born again. He had been made a new creature in Christ Jesus. He had believed in the Lord Jesus, and in believing, life and peace and joy, yea, and love, too, had flowed into his soul. It was all divine blessing, too. The life was Christ (Col. iii. 4); the peace was the peace of God (Col. iii. 15); the joy was joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xiv. 17); and the love was the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given to him. (Rom. v. 5, John xvii. 26.) According to his measure, the young man realized these great and heavenly blessings, and so was very happy in the Lord. His heart overflowed with love as he thought of the abounding love and grace of Jesus his Saviour-God, in having saved him from eternal ruin and misery. Out of the abundance of his heart he could not but show forth the praise and goodness of his Lord and Saviour, by telling his comrades of the love

of God and the great salvation by Christ Jesus. In this service for the Lord he was very active. Once he had been the zealous servant of sin and Satan, but the time passed had sufficed for the service of such hard and tyrannical masters as sin and Satan; and for the time to come, he would, by the grace of God, serve Him whose service is perfect freedom.

Now when I say it so happened that there was such a man in the regiment, it must not be thought that it is a strange or uncommon thing for a soldier to be active in the service of the Lord Jesus. Happily there are many who are truly faithful to Him who died for them. I am myself personally acquainted with a goodly number who are not ashamed to confess the Lord Jesus in the midst of the most trying circumstances. May the Lord strengthen, bless, and encourage them, and add to their number daily.

But to return to this particular young man, who was bought out of his regiment, but who was not bought in. Well it was, as his regiment tarried on the island, that this soldier came in contact with some kind and generous christians, who, seeing and admiring his great zeal for his Lord, felt that it would be a good thing to get him discharged from the army, so that he might be freer in his master's service. Under this conviction they consulted together, to see whether they could manage to collect a sum of money wherewith to purchase his discharge. They were but few, and poor as to this world's goods. Still, having ascertained the cost of the young man's release, they put their shoulders to the wheel, as we say, and succeeded in obtaining the required amount. In due course the money was paid, and the soldier was set at liberty. His first thought was, naturally enough, to

go and see his friends and relatives, that he might lead them to Jesus. He went, therefore, to London, to visit his parents, and to obtain fresh employment. Thus having been set free, he came into a new condition of things, and had to do the best he could for himself. Those kind friends who had been so good as to purchase his discharge, had not subscribed to buy him into anything else. Money of his own he had little or none. He thus would be entirely dependent upon any one who would give him employment, which he found very difficult to obtain. Indeed, no one would employ him, though he tried with great determination. His relations were all very poor, and could do but very little for him, though they were, of course, delighted to have him at home with them.

After a time, one who was interested in the spiritual welfare of soldiers, heard of him, and at once requested that the discharged soldier might be sent down to see him, as he lived in one of the outskirts of the great city. It was not long before the young man came, and one of the first questions asked was, "Well, and did the kind friends, who bought you out of the army, buy you into anything else? It seems but right that they should have done so." The reply, however, of the young man was in the negative. "No, Sir," said he, "it was very kind indeed of them to take so much interest in one—to set me free; I could not expect them to do more than they did. Indeed, as it was, I was but a stranger to them in the flesh, though I was doubtless their brother in the Lord." "That is true, no doubt, my friend, but it only reminds me again how very different the ways of men are to those of God. Indeed it is true, God's ways are not as man's, neither are His thoughts as man's thoughts. When

God purchased man's freedom, He did not send him forth to do the best he could for himself, but he bought him into something else."

Man by nature is indeed in terrible bondage. He is dead in trespasses and sins. He is carnal in mind and *sold* under sin, needing therefore REDEMPTION. He is in *captivity* to Satan, being led by him at his will, so needing DELIVERANCE. Man is in, and of, and *overcome* by, the world at enmity against God, so requiring an OVERCOMER. He is *bound* by sin, the law of sin and death has dominion over him, and thus he needs LIBERTY. He is moreover *poor, needy*, and *helpless*, so needs that one should come and proclaim GOOD NEWS to such. He is in mind and practice at *enmity* against God, and so he wants one to MAKE PEACE and RECONCILE HIM to God. Man by nature is the *slave* of sin, thus requiring one to come who is mighty to save, and to BREAK THE BONDS and give him his discharge. Thus it is indeed redemption that the poor sinner needs, but then, what is the price?

The redemption of the soul is precious, and a man can by no means redeem the soul of his brother or pay a ransom for him. He must leave that alone altogether, and for ever. The demands of the great and holy God are death, after death the judgment, and after judgment the lake of fire burning for ever and ever.

Who, then, can pay so great a debt? There is but one who could, and He no less a one than the Son of God; and such was His love—such was His unbounded love—love, deep, unfathomable, that He by the Eternal Spirit offered Himself to God as a Lamb without spot. In due time He came forth,

made of a woman, made under the law, and on the cross He died, being made sin for us, and bore all the wrath of God due to sin, and thus He paid the debt and obtained eternal redemption. (Heb. ix. 12.) He drank the cup of wrath to the very dregs, leaving not a drop for those who receive and believe in Him to drink. He paid the debt fully—to the very last fraction. Having thus died—having thus purged sin away—having thus met all the righteous demands of the just and holy God, He raised Him from the dead, and in due course received Him back to heaven, and there, seating Him on His own (the Father's) throne, crowned Him with glory and honour. The price, then, of the sinner's freedom has been paid by the Lord of glory Himself, and God is fully satisfied, and has found a place of rest therein. Redemption—blessed, glorious word—has been obtained. Jesus the Son of God has obtained it at the greatest price possible, and peace and reconciliation have been made by the blood of His cross.

Well, but what about the poor soul that is carnal, sold under sin, led captive by the devil? Oh, if he will believe in Jesus, and will accept the payment Christ has made, he shall be free. The price of his discharge has been paid fully, and that once and for ever. He, too, who is just and holy is perfectly satisfied, and can now, yea, 'tis His great delight, to bless and to set at liberty every poor bound sinner, provided he confess the Lord Jesus, and believe in his heart that God has raised Him from the dead. Then he shall be saved, and he shall have his discharge full and free. It is fully proclaimed. The trumpeter sounds aloud and declares that God is love, that love and grace have gained the victory over every obstacle.

Grace *reigns* through righteousness, and God, the holy God, is now perfectly just in pardoning, yea, in justifying all ungodly ones who believe in Jesus. (Rom. iii. 26.)

But alas, alas! that many are so deaf they cannot hear any sweetness in the message of love and mercy; the name of Jesus is no music to their ears. They are so blind, too, they see no power, no value, and no beauty in Him whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin. They are so dead, they will go on their own way, loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; hating God, and Him who shed His life's blood for His very enemies.

But while so many turn a deaf ear to the call of love, still they, who do hear and believe in Jesus, receive redemption, the forgiveness of sins, justification unto life, and peace with God. The discharge having been paid, the prison-door has flown open, and the sinner, believing in Jesus, comes out free, delivered from the power of darkness. Is the reader conscious of sins? If so, then look to Jesus, believe that He died for you, and rose again for you, and you will receive life and peace in your soul. Oh! "By this man, Christ Jesus, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) In this we differ from the christian soldier. He obtained his discharge, because he loved God and his neighbour; whereas Christ died for us when we were yet sinners. "God commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He came, the Just One, to die for us, the unjust ones. He came, the Mighty One, to save the helpless ones. He came, the

Word of God, the image of the invisible God, to tell out to His very enemies what God is, love—the God of all grace—that He is rich in mercy, and to show the great love wherewith He loved us, even when in our sins—at enmity against Him.

Well, then, He has obtained eternal redemption for those sold under sin, and has delivered those who believe in Him from the wrath to come.

But wondrously-blessed as all this is, it is not all. It is freedom from sin and death and wrath. The soldier got his freedom and a full discharge from his old standing in the army, and he was no more a soldier. His discharge was paid, and therefore he was set at liberty.

God in His grace has given believers in Jesus a full discharge. He has, however, done more than that—far more. He has made us new men, and brought us into a new position, and this is far, very far more than the pardon of sin and deliverance from hell. The price paid for the soldier was only just enough to purchase him from his old standing, but it was not enough to bring him into a new place. The price, however, that the Lord Jesus has paid for us, was not only sufficient to purchase our deliverance from hell, but it was enough to deliver us from *ourselves*, and to bring us to God. By the death of the Lord Jesus, believers are delivered from themselves, they are taken clean out of self, and put into another. The old Adam nature is crucified with Christ (Rom. vi. 6), and so perfect, in the sight of God, is this new nature, that He can and does say we are not in the flesh: “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” (Rom. viii. 9.) The old man is judged and condemned as

worthless, and the believer is discharged from himself, and is no longer before God a child of Adam. His position, too, is changed, for he is no longer of the world, though in it. The measure of his separation from it, is that of Christ Himself. He is not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. What then is the believer, and what is his position, that the blood of the Lord Jesus has made him and brought him into? The believer is a *new* creature in Christ Jesus—a new man—he is in Christ, created in Him by the workmanship of God. (Eph. ii. 10.) A member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. (Eph. v. 30.) He is a saint, separated from self to Christ. He has put on Christ, the old man being put off. (Col. iii. 9, 10.) Oh, it is of the greatest moment, that our souls apprehend what we are in Christ. We are a part of Himself, the Christ of God: and as Christ is, so are we in this world. (1 John iv. 17.)

The believer's position is no longer heir of hell, no longer of this world, but he is brought to God in Christ. Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. And we *are* brought to God. The veil of the temple has been rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, and within that veil are we brought into the holiest of all, into the presence of the living God, to hold communion with Him our Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. (1 Peter iii. 18; 1 John i. 3.) God's perfect love has cast out all fear, so that we can approach Him with all liberty and boldness within the veil. God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together *with* Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places, *in*

Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) God is indeed love, and thus He proves it. Yet such again is the perfection of the work of Christ on the cross, that God is enabled to write to us, and say, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: *because as he is, so are we in this world.* (1 John iv. 15—17.) All this is indeed marvellous, but it is true and most blessed to simple faith in God and His word. Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. We have all things in common with Christ, for all He has received, we have received too, as being one in Him. All spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ are ours. (Eph. i. 3.) His glory, which the Father gave Him, He has given us. He has withheld no blessings whatever; all things are ours. "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 Cor. iii. 21—23.) Oh! for faith and grace to know and to enjoy all things in Christ, and above all to know Him in whom all fulness dwells, and in whom we are full, and complete, and perfect, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Now we can see how different are the ways of God to those of man. Man bought the discharge of the soldier, and set him to look after himself; not so, however, with our God. Christ has indeed paid our

debt, by the pouring out His soul in bitterest agony unto death. But He has not left us to ourselves. He has brought us to God, and has taken us into partnership with Himself, given us all present spiritual blessings, and made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in His inheritance, which is in reserve, undefiled and that fadeth not away. (1 Peter i. 4.) God is our Father and we are His children, and because we are His sons, He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father; and by the Spirit we have access unto the Father by Jesus. He has brought us into this place of blessing, by the sacrifice of His own Son. Shall not we, then, who have received such a portion, who are in such a place, seek for more grace to value our privileges and live according to them, in far greater measure than we have hitherto done? The Lord help us.

I would now conclude this, by giving an extract from two letters I have recently received. I do so to shew the reader, yet further, what a great and unspeakably-blessed salvation we have in Christ.

The first is from an old workhouse man, who, having been converted by God's love, wrote to me, requesting that I would answer a number of scripture questions, for the confirmation of his soul in Christ.

He says, "You have answered my ten questions to the very purpose. It cheers my heart and makes my spirit to rejoice in God my Saviour. I give you, dear Sir, my humble thanks, for the bible you sent me, which I received quite safe. It is the book of God, and it is the book for to sound out the name of Jesus Christ to all the world. There is only one thing I can say, if I dare say nothing else, I do love

Jesus Christ. I do love His person, and His offices, His work, His name, His precious blood, His words, His example, His dear people. All these are precious to my soul. I cannot help feeling as I do, for He is my Redeemer, my Shepherd, my Hope, my Joy, my Strong Deliverer, my All, blessed be His Holy name. Please, dear Sir, give my love to all the brothers and sisters in Christ, that you meet with in London and elsewhere. Tell them I was in Egyptian bondage upwards of seventy years, which brought me to the brink of eternal death, but now, through grace, I am free, and the children of the bond-woman shall not be heirs with the children of the free."

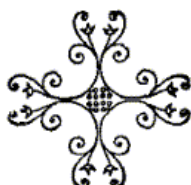
Such is the experience of an aged man; and now I give an extract of a note from a young person, under twenty years. She thanks me for letting her know of the preaching, which she attended, and which was greatly blessed to her soul. She says, "I do not know how the blessing came, but I think God took away all cloud, and let me *see Jesus*; not only as my Saviour, but as my completeness in HIM. I have been a good deal troubled about holiness, but I see it all now; I am so happy, WE HAVE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, *nothing in ourselves*. I BELONG to *Jesus*; if it were only '*Jesus is mine*,' I might fear that I should lose that confidence, but now He has shewn me that *I belong to Him*, and that He keeps my happy soul above. I know that nothing can separate us, for He says, '*I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish*.' No condemnation, no separation—all things in Christ, Oh! how I thank God for opening the eyes of the blind."

This is indeed the great secret, dear reader, to know that we belong to Christ; that He has given

the greatest possible price for us, and that the least member of His body is needful, and that He the Head, cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you. (1 Cor. xii. 21.) The Lord in His great grace enable us to go on to know Him in all His beauties, and perfections, and glories; and as we go on increasing in the knowledge of Him, may we grow more like Him, being changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.

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Christianity and the Army.

ONE has often been asked, and it is not unlikely that the foregoing may raise the question in some minds, is it consistent with the truths of christianity that a child of God should remain a soldier?

I should say to an intelligent believer in the Lord Jesus and reader of the Word of God, that it is quite unscriptural and inconsistent with a dispensation of grace, for a converted soldier to remain in so unlovely a place. This is a day of grace, in which we are to love our enemies, and I need scarcely say that it is a curious expression of love to go and stab him with a sword or bayonet. If thine enemy hunger feed him, is the injunction, but not with powder and shot surely. If he thirst give him to drink, not, however, that which will poison him. It is a day of grace, and grace teaches us to be imitators of God as dear children, and to walk in love, but to what extent? Even as Christ also loved us, and how much was that? He gave Himself for us. On the cross He drank the bitter cup of eternal wrath and condemnation, which we were by nature justly entitled to. And now we are to forgive, *because we have been forgiven*, not in order to be forgiven. (Col. iii. 13.) As to vengeance, that belongs to God, and He will repay any acts of injustice towards His children, so that if one comes and takes one's coat, the cloak is to be given also. If one smites on one cheek, are we to return it? Oh no, grace teaches us to turn the other cheek. Rather than return evil for evil, the evil is to be overcome by

good, and the christian is to submit to be defrauded rather than to go to law against his adversary. (1 Cor. vi. 7.) The law said, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Not so grace. The law was given to a worldly people in the flesh, called to an earthly calling. Grace, however, has come by Jesus Christ, and made its recipients a people *not of* the world (John xvii. 14); not in the flesh (Rom. viii. 9); a people called to a *heavenly* calling (Heb. iii. 1); to be strangers and pilgrims, having no continuing city here, Jesus having gone to prepare a place for them in the house of many mansions, and for whom He will come again to receive to Himself, and present to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Now while this is most true—blessedly true, we must be careful before we judge the christian soldier, because he remains in the army. That there are many in the army devoted to the name of the Lord Jesus, cannot be doubted for a moment, but it is *simply impossible* for them to leave, in consequence of the large sum of money needed to purchase their discharge. If, however, they who condemn them and question their christianity, would only kindly pay the money down, then there would be no longer any hinderance to their leaving. Then let me say too, that they should not only pay for their discharge, but take care to have a situation ready for the liberated one to take *immediately* on his liberation. This I feel to be of considerable moment, so that he should not be left to wander about into scenes of trial and temptation.

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