

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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'Twixt Jesus and the Chosen Race
Subsists a bond of sov'reign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.

This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her center shake;
Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged His holiness.

He swore but once the deed was done;
'Twas settled by the great Three One;
Christ was appointed to redeem
All that the Father loved in Him.

Hail, sacred union, firm and strong
How great thy grace, how sweet the song,
That rebel worms should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when he triumphed o'er His foes
One when in heav'n He took His seat,
While seraphs sung at hell's defeat.

Blessed by the wisdom and the grace,
Th' eternal love and faithfulness,
That's in the gospel scheme revealed,
And is by God the Spirit sealed.

John Kent (1766-1843)

Always Triumphant in Christ

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

2 Corinthians 2:14

Do we always appear triumphant? Did Paul always have the sense of triumph? Can you triumph without being triumphant? We are to press toward the mark for the prize of the

high calling in Christ Jesus, we are to always abound in the work of the Lord, and we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. But Paul uttered these words, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” And he said, “What I hate, that do I.” Paul’s life was one of being in abundant labors, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequently, in death encounters often, in all kinds of perils, beaten with rods three times, stoned once, shipwrecked three times, in weariness, in painfulness, in hunger, in thirst, in cold and nakedness along with the burden of all the churches. His times of despondency, “Only Luke is with me.”

We must remember as Paul did that “Now” we are still triumphant. Consider the following questions: What does God do? With what frequency does God do it? Who facilitated this result?

What does God do? “God ... causeth us to triumph.” This should initiate thanks from “us.” This “triumph” has a divine causation. “Triumph” (thriambeuō) in this context is a God ordained and orchestrated victory celebration which leads in the highest form of triumphant victory. The earthly comparative is that of a Roman conqueror riding into Rome in great procession with all the accolades of victory in a long line of soldiers, decorated chariots, defeated enemies, spoils of war, etc. and with all the shouts of victory, burning of incense, trumpets blaring, people shouting, and ears ringing. But what is that to such a triumph delivered by the infinitely holy, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God?

With what frequency does God give the victory? “God ... always causeth us to triumph.” The child of God is not temporarily triumphant. The triumphant state is complete. “Always” (pantote) means at all times, always and ever so. During Paul’s darkest times as well as the other apostles and preachers the triumph is as unshakable as the omnipotent God who gave it. But do we rest in this triumph? Are we triumphant?

Who facilitated this resulting triumph? “God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” The saving union with Christ causes us to be triumphant. Oh, to be “in Christ” is to be a new creation and have old things to pass away and all things to become new. “In Christ” has reference to “union with Christ.” Paul’s phrase “in Christ” is very apropos in relation to “triumph” for He makes us to triumph over sin’s bondage. Being “in Christ” deals with the central aspect of the doctrine of salvation. “The subject of spiritual union is the most important, the most profound, and yet the most blessed of any that is set forth in the sacred Scriptures; and yet, sad to say, there is hardly any which is now more generally neglected. The very expression ‘spiritual union’ is unknown in most professing Christian circles, and even where it is employed it is given such a protracted meaning as to take in only a fragment of this precious truth” [A. W. Pink].

One should be aware of the importance of truth and especially that which relates to eternal salvation in Christ. “It is through this union to Christ that the whole application of redemption is effectuated on the sinner’s soul” [R. L. Dabney]. We become partakers of Christ’s redemption when that union is established. Jesus pictured this union to that between Him and His Father. Jesus also said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” Abiding in Christ is the point. This union is indissoluble and is not severed by death for nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Union with Christ has to do with time and eternity. “Union with Christ is a very inclusive subject. It embraces the wide span of salvation from its ultimate source in the eternal election of God to its final fruition in the glorification of the elect. It is not simply a phrase of the application of redemption; it underlies every aspect of redemption both in its accomplishment and in its application. Union with Christ binds all together and insures that to all for whom Christ has purchased redemption he effectively applies and communicates the same” [John Murray].

C. H. Spurgeon in 1855 stated, “I have often admired the 14th verse of this chapter, especially when I have remembered from whose lips the words fell, ‘Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.’ Picture Paul, the aged, the man who had been beaten five times with ‘forty stripes save one,’ who had been dragged forth for dead, the man of great sufferings, who had passed through whole seas of persecution—only think if him saying, at the close of his ministerial career, ‘Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ!’ to triumph when shipwrecked, to triumph when scourged, to triumph in the stocks, to triumph under the stones, to triumph amidst the hiss of the world, to triumph when he was driven from the city and shook off the dust from his feet, to triumph at all times in Christ Jesus! Now, if some ministers of modern times should talk thus, we would think little of it, for they enjoy the world’s applause.”