

Likeness to Jesus in Death and Resurrection

Preached at North Street Chapel, Stamford, on Lord's Day Morning, Jan. 3, 1864

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."
Romans 6:5

With what noble conclusions, as full of truth and power as they are of beauty and eloquence, does the great apostle of the Gentiles often gather up his forcible arguments, and put as it were upon them a crowning glory. As an illustration of my meaning I will mention two or three examples. That noble chapter Rom. 8 will afford us at least two of them. Thus, after the apostle had been speaking of the high and special privileges of the saints of God in being predestinated, called, justified, and glorified, he crowns the whole with this grand and forcible conclusion: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" We have another instance in the close of that glorious chapter, where, having challenged all creation to separate us from the love of Christ, he sums up the whole argument in those glowing words, full of the deepest truth and the sublimest eloquence: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Another instance you will find in 1 Cor. 3, at the close of the chapter: "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;" (what an enumeration!) "all are

yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." With what majesty and power, with what a rapid yet extensive glance over all things in heaven and earth, does he sum up the glorious conclusion that "all things" are the inheritance of the saints of God. We have another instance at the end of the 15th chapter of the same epistle, that noble and glorious chapter which has carried consolation into thousands of mourning hearts, where having shown that "this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality, he adds, "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." How these grand conclusions which I have thus quoted sum up the argument; how they put upon it a heavenly crown, carrying us far beyond the changing scenes of this weary life, and illuminating the very grave with a blaze of eternal glory. The words fall upon our mind like a noble stream terminating in a majestic waterfall; or as a grand piece of music, such as Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," closing with a crash of harmony, which crowns as with swelling beauty the melodious strains which have already ravished the ears. We have another of these beautiful conclusions, and if not so sublimely eloquent yet not less full of truth and beauty than those which I have already quoted, at the end of Romans 5: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." In these grand and glorious words the apostle sums up the whole of the preceding chapters. They are the crowning conclusion of those powerful arguments whereby he has shown the utter ruin of man in the Adam fall, and his recovery and justification by the blood-shedding and obedience of the Son

of God.

But immediately that he had thus summed up the whole of his argument in that grand and glorious conclusion, that "where sin abounded grace did much more abound," a possible, and if it could be sustained, a most powerful objection to the truth of his conclusion at once strikes the mind. And as he was a warrior armed at all points, he comes forward immediately and without delay to meet that objection face to face; for it was an objection so formidable in its strength, that, could it once be established on a firm basis, it would be fatal to every argument which he had advanced and every word which he had uttered in favour of sovereign, superabounding grace. What is this objection? Let us look at it fairly in the face; let us see this Goliath rearing itself up in all its stature and gigantic strength. We find it fully and fairly stated in the opening verse of the 6th chapter; for we must bear in mind that this division into chapters is a mere arbitrary separation, made for convenience of reading and reference, and often seriously interferes with the course of the argument, which, in this epistle especially, is very close and sustained. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Under the form of an interrogation, he here starts a most formidable objection to the conclusion at which he had arrived, and one which I think you will fully admit must be fatal to its truth if it could be fully established. This, then, is the objection, as put into the mouth of an enemy. "Well, if what you say is true, Paul; if where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, what is the necessary, legitimate consequence? What is the conclusion we must draw from your argument? Why, simply this: that the more we sin, the more we shall glorify the grace of God; for if grace is to superabound over the aboundings of sin; if the tide of God's favour is to rise in proportion to the tide of our transgression, then of course the more we sin the more we shall glorify

God, and the better we shall please him; for by the increasing magnitude of our iniquities the more will his mercy and goodness be magnified in justifying us freely from them." Now if that doctrine could be established as a fair and legitimate conclusion from the superabounding of grace over the abounding of sin, it would be a fatal objection to salvation by grace; for it is evident that that teaching, even were it that of an apostle, must be wrong which saps the very foundations of morality; that doctrine must be a lie that overturns the very foundations of the throne of God itself, which are based on righteousness and judgment. The apostle, therefore, felt himself bound to meet the objection fairly and fully, and either beat it down, or himself be beaten down by it. How then does he meet it? First, he wards off the hostile blow by a solemn rejection, as though he would shake it off with the same abhorrence as he shook off the viper which fastened on his hand when he had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire (Acts 28:3): "God forbid!" Then when he has warded the blow by the solemn rejection of the accusation with all the abhorrence of his spiritual mind, he deals a stroke with his keen Damascus blade that lays the objection dead at his feet: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" That is the way in which he answers the objection—an answer, too, of most triumphant power and truth.

But his argument may not be obvious to your mind perhaps at this moment in all its force and power. Let me then endeavour in a few words and by a few simple figures to point it out to you more clearly. This you will observe is the foundation of the argument, that if a person be dead to a thing, he can no longer live in that thing; for death has altogether deprived him of the power to do so. Take a few examples. Look at that officer urging on his troops to battle, like Col. Gardiner at the battle of Preston Pans, when, to

save a regiment of infantry from being cut to pieces, though he was in the cavalry, he dismounted and took the lead; or, like Hedley Vicars in the Crimea, when he rushed forth cheering on the soldiers to take the Redan. He draws his sword, he rushes forward, but at that moment he is cut down by the scythe of a Highlander, or a bullet strikes his heart. Where is all his fighting now? He was living in it; for it was then his life. But can he live in it now? No, for down he drops dead on the plain. Take another instance: a man suddenly or gradually loses his sight, and eventually becomes stone blind. His previous life might have been a life of seeing sights—travelling from place to place to see the wonders of other climes and the beauties of nature and art. But where is his sight-seeing now? where is the life that he led in roaming about to feast his eyes with beauty? It is dead. His sight-seeing ended with the death of his eyes. Take another case: here is a man swallowed up, as many are, some of them I have personally known, in the love and practice of music. He eats music, he drinks music; with music he sleeps, and with music he wakes. But through the advance of years, or what is called accident, he became deaf. Where is his music now? his Handel, his Mozart, his concerts, his operas? The sweetest sounds or the most discordant cries are now one and the same to him. He is dead to sound, and sound is dead to him. He once lived in it, but death has seized both it and him. Take another case, that of an artist, a man who lives by his pencil, his painting brush, or his chisel. He becomes old, blind, paralysed: where is his brush or his chisel now? Dropped from his withered fingers. Where is now his life as an artist, as an exhibitor? Dead. This, then, is the argument of the apostle, and, though very simple, yet a most forcible argument it is; that if a man is dead to a thing he cannot live in it. But how does he apply it? He first assumes that a Christian is dead to sin, a subject which he more fully opens up in this chapter, and in which, with God's blessing, I shall

follow him this morning; and then from that assumption he draws the conclusion that if he be dead to sin, he cannot live in it; and if he cannot live in it, then he cannot commit evil that sin might abound, and so grace superabound. That is the argument whereby he meets the objection; and nearly the whole drift of the chapter before us is to expand it and trace it out in a fuller and clearer development. But this will become more evident to you if I am enabled to open up the text in which, in a very short compass, he has embodied the whole arguments.

You will observe that in it the death and resurrection of Christ form its two leading features. I shall, therefore, divide my subject into two leading branches corresponding with those two features. But in order to present it before you with more striking contrast, I shall subdivide each branch in a similar manner, so as to make their comparison more plain and evident.

I.—My *first* leading branch, then, will be the *death* of Christ, the *likeness* of that death, and the being *planted together* in that likeness; corresponding with the words, "For if we have been planted in the likeness of his death."

II.—My *second* will be the *resurrection* of Christ, the *likeness* of that resurrection, and our being *planted* in the likeness of that resurrection; corresponding with the second clause of our text: "We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

And as all preaching to be profitable must be practical as well as experimental, I shall, if the Lord enable,

III.—*Thirdly*, draw some *practical conclusions* from our union with Christ in his death and resurrection, such as the apostle

deduces when he urges that we are to "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I.—The death and resurrection of Christ are not only two grand gospel doctrines, but are two grand, indubitable gospel facts. They are no so much truths revealed from heaven—doctrines which we have to believe upon the testimony of God, as they are solid facts, actual circumstances which took place before the eyes of many witnesses, upon whose credible testimony we believe them. We may, therefore, call them the pillars of our most holy faith, the Jachin and the Boaz of the temple of mercy. Be it ever borne in mind that our holy religion is built not upon suppositions, but upon facts which were cognisable by the human senses; and that no two facts could be more clearly established than that Christ died upon the cross, and that he rose again from the dead. If, then, these two pillars of our most holy faith, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, could be removed, or shaken, as Samson shook the pillars of the house of Dagon, the noble fabric of the Christian religion would fall into ruin; and its dust and rubbish might be swept into the kennel as easily as you might sweep into the street the sprinkling of snow which has fallen this morning. But as long as Christ's death and Christ's resurrection stand upon their basis as gospel facts, you may as well attempt to push the Alps away from their base with a broom as to move Christianity from its place.

i. I shall first, then, direct your thoughts to the *death* of the Lord Jesus Christ, and show you that not only Christ's death was a most blessed and indubitable gospel fact, but that as we penetrate into its causes, it is a truth pregnant with most heavenly fruits. *Why* then did Christ die? There must have been a reason for his dying. There must have been a strong necessity either in the nature of things, or according to the

will of God, that his dear Son should suffer, bleed, and die. What was that reason? What was that necessity? In order to see this point more clearly, we must take a view of the *covenant of grace*. Man, we know, had forfeited by sin the favour of God; had incurred the penalty of his transgression, natural and spiritual death. Now if he were to be restored to the favour of the Almighty; if the sentence of death were to be repealed; if his sins were to be pardoned, and the image of God in which he had been created renewed, it could only be by the unmerited favour of him against and before whom he had sinned. Herein, then, lies the foundation of that covenant of grace, which is sometimes called "the new covenant," as distinct from the old. But of this new covenant it was necessary there should be a Mediator, that is, an intervening Person between God and man, with whom it should be made, and in whom it should be valid. Jesus, the Son of God is this Mediator, as the apostle says: "Ye are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant." (Heb. 12:14.) Now that the new covenant of which he was thus the Mediator required the death of its Surety; for Jesus, as the Mediator, "was made a Surety of a better testament," or covenant. (Heb. 7:22.) But we know that it is an established principle in law that the surety or bondsman should endure the same penalty or punishment as the person for whom he is bound, if that person cannot endure it himself. If a man were sentenced to death and the law allowed a substitute, as I believe is the case in China, and was sometimes permitted of old, it would not be sufficient if that substitute were imprisoned. Unless he actually died as the criminal had been adjudged to die, the majesty and dignity of the law could not be satisfied, nor would justice have its full claim. But take it on lower ground. If you are a bondsman for £1,000 to oblige a friend, and your friend unhappily becomes a bankrupt, his creditor will not let you off by your paying only £50. No, they will exact the utmost sum of the bond with the severest

rigour, and rather sell you up stick and stone than not have the full amount. If it were not so, of what value would any bond be? It may seem hard upon the bondsman, and so it is individually, but in no other way can there be satisfactory security. Now take this argument with you into the domain of grace. Man by sin had come under the penalty of death, and brought himself under the execution of that forewarned threat, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Unless, therefore, the Surety had in the eternal covenant engaged to die in the sinner's place, he could not and would not have been an available surety; the penalty adjudged to man would not have been submitted to by him. His mediation, therefore, would have fallen short of what was demanded. If you offer yourself as a surety for a friend, and the bond is drawn up for £1,000, and you can only offer £500, your offer will not be accepted. It must be all or none. Upon these simple principles, therefore, if our blessed Lord was the Surety of the new covenant, it was needful for him to die, for everything short of actual death would have fallen short of the required penalty. We must bear in mind that our gracious Lord, as the Surety of the new covenant, undertook to suffer death that he might accomplish three purposes; first, that by laying down his precious life, and particularly by shedding his blood, he might redeem the Church by *a price*. We, therefore, read, "Ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20); and again, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. 1:18, 19.) The second thing for which he died was to *offer a sacrifice*, and thus put away sin; and thirdly, to endure the *punishment* which was due to us. We therefore read, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isai. 53:5.) The *price* we have considered; now view the *sacrifice*.

2. If, then, our Lord could only put away sin by the once offering of himself, it was needful for him to die, in order *to complete the sacrifice*. The very essence of a sacrifice consists in the death of the victim, and that by a violent and bloody death inflicted upon it by the sacrificer. We may easily see this by casting a glance at the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which we know were instituted as types and figures of the sacrifice of Christ. Supposing that, through the casual or wilful mistake of the priest, the lamb, or the bullock, or the goat had not been actually slain, or had escaped by flight from the hand of the sacrificer, the sacrifice would not have been complete; indeed it would not have been a sacrifice at all. So unless our gracious Lord had actually died upon the cross, the sacrifice would not have been complete, nor would the sins of the Church have been put away. It is a primary, a foundation principle, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) Thus, unless our blessed Lord had actually shed his precious blood and laid down his life for us, not a single sin could have been pardoned.

3. But again, as I have just hinted, the Lord Jesus Christ by his death endured the *punishment* which was due to us. He "was made a curse for us." The wrath of the Almighty, which was due to us, fell in all its crushing weight upon his sacred head when "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree," for "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all."

4. But there is another reason still why the blessed Lord must needs die. Not only is the new covenant a covenant in the strict sense of the word, that is, a compact or agreement, but is also, as the Greek word signifies, a *will* or *testament*. Now we know that a will, as the apostle argues, "is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." "Where then a testament is

there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." This is a principle not only of law but of common sense. The book which we hold in our hands is called the "New Testament," as being the will of Jesus to the Church. But to make that will valid the testator must die.

5. But again, unless our gracious Lord had died, there could have been *no resurrection*. But his ascension to the right hand of God to be the enthroned King of Zion was as needful as his death, and as important a part of the new covenant; for it was a part of "the joy set before him for which he endured the cross, despising the shame." But where would have been his resurrection and his ascension unless he had died and been laid in the silent tomb?

6. Nor, again, would he have been our *forerunner and blessed example* in dying, unless he had meekly bowed his head in death. We have to die, and he died to teach us how to die, that his blood sprinkled upon our conscience may take away the fear of death, and that we, supported by his rod and staff, may not fear to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death. For these and other reasons, which I cannot now stop to name, there was a necessity that our Lord should die.

ii. But now let us, having cleared the ground a little, show *how* our Lord died; that is, take a view of the *circumstances* under which he died, because we have to be planted in the likeness of his death, and in some if not all of these circumstances we are to resemble him.

1. Our gracious Lord, then, first died under the curse of *the law*. Death, and nothing less than death, was the penalty of the law as prescribed and adjudged in Paradise, and as repeated on Sinai's blazing top. "The soul that sinneth, it

shall die," is the very voice of God, and is re-echoed in every living conscience. Unless, therefore, our gracious Lord had died under the law, he could not have redeemed us from the curse of the law. But by his being made a curse for us, for "cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree," the curse was removed off our head as being transferred to his. Bear this in mind, then, that our Lord, in a mystical and spiritual sense, died under the curse of the law.

2. But again, our Lord died under the *weight of imputed sin*. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." All our sins were made to meet, as it reads in the margin of Isaiah 53:6, upon his sacred head. Under the weight, then, of our sins, so to speak, he sank and died. We must not suppose that the blessed Lord merely bore the weight or sin as if he supported it with all the majesty and power of Godhead. O no; he most deeply felt it. The sorrows of his bruised soul, the pangs and grief of his broken heart and agonising spirit, were beyond the conception of men and angels; so that, mystically speaking, he sank away and died beneath them. In this suffering death was much of the virtue and validity of the sacrifice.

3. But again, our gracious Lord, in a mystical and spiritual sense, *died under the anger of God*; for the wrath of the Almighty due to us as transgressors was transferred to him; and as he stood fully and thoroughly in our place and stead, enduring the anger that we must have endured, and bearing the curse which must have otherwise rested upon us to all eternity, the wrath of God was poured out upon him, and under that wrath he sank and died.

But here I must explain myself lest I lead you into error. When I say that our gracious Lord died under the law, under

the weight of sin, and under the wrath of the Almighty, I should greatly deceive you if I led you to think he died actually under the weight of these terrible realities. Bear in mind that he was still the Son of God, notwithstanding his state of humiliation and death; that there was no wrath against him as God's dear Son, for he voluntarily put himself under it for our sakes; so that there never was any separation between his Father and him. On the contrary this very act of his suffering obedience was but a pledge and a proof of the love of God to him and of his love to his Father. Men have said very vaguely, very erroneously, that Christ died in the dark—that he died under the wrath of God. Now you might think from the language that I made use of in describing the nature of the death of Christ, that I hold the same erroneous notions. God forbid. Though our Lord died mystically and visibly under the law, under sin, under the wrath of God, he did not die actually under the wrath of God, any more than he died a felon, because he died a felon's death, or was a transgressor, because he was numbered with the transgressors. When, then, he had endured all that it was needful for him to endure of the wrath of God due to us; when he could say, "It is finished," the cloud cleared away: he could say to the dying thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" and with his last breath exclaim, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." He did not then die in the dark, but under the shining in of the Lord's countenance. He did not die forsaken of God, under his eternal displeasure, as a reprobate dies, and as the Jews believed that he died. Thus, though in a mystical and spiritual sense, as visible to the eye of men, he died under the divine displeasure, yet it was not really so, for though his God forsook him for a while, he restored to him the light of his countenance before his holy soul ascended into Paradise.

iii. Now our Lord, in dying *under* these things—and this is the

point to which I would next draw your attention—died *to* them. The force of the apostle's argument, as I have already explained, lies in this, that if a man is dead *under* a thing, he is dead *to* a thing. Is not this the case in the instance of the officer stopped by a bullet as he is rushing on at the head of his men? He is not only dead *under* the bullet, but he is dead *to* the battle in which he was fighting. So when our gracious Lord died *under* the law, he died *to* the law. The law could do no more. It had cursed him, condemned him, and spent its wrath upon him. What more could it do? It is so in human laws. A man commits a murder: he is tried, condemned, and executed. The law can do no more to him; it has done its worst. As he hangs upon the gallows he is dead to the law, and the law is dead to him. So when our Lord died under the law, the law had done its duty, and died in doing it. Like a bee or a wasp, it killed itself in stinging him to death. So with sin *imputed*; when our Lord died under imputed sin, he died unto it; sin was no more charged against him or imputed to him. Similarly, when he died *under the wrath of God*, there was no more wrath: it had spent itself. So when he died under the law, he died unto the law; when he died under sin, he died unto sin; when he died under the wrath of God, he died unto the wrath of God. As the apostle says, "Death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Our gracious Lord died also under the power of death, for death had dominion over him; but he died unto death by dying under it also.

iv. Now, having thus showed you the nature and circumstances of the death of Christ, I now pass on to show you the *likeness* of that death. For you will bear in mind that the chief force of our text consists in this: that "we are *planted in the likeness* of that death." We cannot die *actually* as Christ died, even were we literally crucified as he was; for

even in that case we should only die for ourselves, but he died for the Church. If, therefore, we are to be crucified with Christ, we are crucified, not actually and literally in our bodies, but in the likeness of that death in our souls. Let me explain this a little more plainly and fully, and you will then see how, if we are to be planted in the likeness of Christ's death, we must die under the same things under which Christ died, or else there will be no likeness.

1. First, then, we are to die *under the law*, or else in that point there is no likeness to Christ's death. But when do you die under the law? When you feel its solemn curse in your conscience; when you are condemned by it, and brought in guilty before God; when by its killing sentence in your heart you are cut off from all hope, and sunk almost into despair under a sense of what the law requires and your inability to perform it. Now if you have never died under the curse and condemnation of the law, you have never been planted in the likeness of Christ's death, which we have seen was under the curse.

2. Again, Christ died *under sin* charged upon his sacred head when he was made sin for us. Now you must die in the same way, or else you are not planted in the likeness of his death. Some of you perhaps may see this dying under the weight of your sins more clearly than the point I have just handled in dying under the law. I fully believe that many of the children of God can trace in their experience more plainly what they have felt of the weight of sin crushing and slaying them as to all legal hope, than the strict curse and condemnation of the law as I have pointed out. Crucifixion, we know, was a lingering death. So many die a lingering death under the burden of sin who do not die, at least in their own feelings, a rapid death under the curse of the law. Now has sin ever lain upon your conscience as a very heavy burden? Were you

ever brought in guilty before God? Were your sins ever mountain high and oceans deep in your estimation? Were you ever cut off by a sense of your awful sins from all hope of being saved in yourselves? Then you have died under them charged upon you, and by this dying you have been planted in the likeness of Christ's death.

3. Again, you must die *under a sense of God's wrath* due to your sins, feel the displeasure of the Almighty in your conscience, and die under it, so as to have no hope of salvation by putting away that wrath by anything you can do; or else there is no likeness of Christ's death. We are to be planted in that likeness. But if there is no such dying as I have described under the law, nor under the weight of sin, nor under the anger of God, where is the likeness? A person brings me a photograph of a friend to look at. "Who is that?" I ask: "I don't think I have ever seen him." "O yes, you have; it is so and so." "O no; it cannot be. It must be a mistake: there is no likeness." He brings me another to look at. "O yes," I exclaim, "I see in a moment who it is. What a wonderful, what a striking likeness." Now apply the figure. If you have never been planted in the likeness of Christ's death, by dying under the law, under the weight of sin, and under the anger of the Almighty, you bring me your experience: I look at it; but where is the likeness? I can't see Christ there; there is not in it one feature of his suffering image. But if you have experienced a dying under the law, under the weight of sin, and under the anger of the Almighty, there is a likeness: there is Christ in his suffering image reflected in your soul.

v. But now apply this to the argument of the apostle as being dead to sin. In the same way, then, as when Christ died *under* these things, he died *unto* them, so that neither law, nor imputed sin, nor the anger of God, nor death itself had

any more dominion over him, there is a likeness also in this point in Christian experience. We never die *to* the law until we die *under* the law. "I through the law," says the apostle, "am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." (Gal. 2:19.) "Through the law" means being killed by it. So when the law has killed you, it has done its worst; and when you die under the law, the law died unto you. It goes after another then to kill him. The soldier in battle, when he has killed his man leaves the corpse on the ground and goes after another. So when the law has killed the child of God, it leaves him and goes after another victim to bury its sword in his heart. Again, if you die *under* the weight of sin, you die *to* sin. This is the apostle's argument: "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:2.) If you have felt the crushing weight of sin upon your soul, can you go the next moment and do those very things which your conscience is bleeding under, and from which you have obtained deliverance through the blood of the Lamb? "He that suffereth in the flesh," says the apostle, "hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." Where the burden of sin is felt, and where there is a union with Jesus as bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, there is a death *unto* sin, both by a feeling of misery and a sense of mercy.

So with dying under the anger of God. By dying *under* it, you die *unto* it. If you feel the anger of God in your bosom and die under it, pining away in your iniquities, and obtain deliverance by union with Christ crucified, you will die unto the wrath of God, and be able to say, "Though thou was angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." (Isai. 12:1.) This, then, is the "likeness of Christ's death."

vi. But there is *a being planted* in that likeness. What is this

planting, and how is it effected? It is by virtue of baptism, as the apostle declares: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death." But what baptism? Water baptism or spiritual baptism? Here there has been a great controversy. Some have said "water baptism has no place here." Others have almost said "spiritual baptism has no place here." And thus, like angry combatants, they have torn the text to pieces. I believe in my own judgment that spiritual baptism is the chief thing intended, but that water baptism is used as a representation of it. So I take both interpretations, and endeavour, as far as I can, to put each into its right place. Nothing is more evident to me than this, that water baptism, be it by immersion or be it by sprinkling, cannot plant us into the likeness of Christ's death. It may be a representation of it; but is no more the thing itself than a picture is a man, or a likeness of a thing the very thing itself. The instance of Simon Magus is sufficient of itself to prove this; and no doubt thousands have been baptised in water who were never baptised by the Holy Ghost. A mere immersion of the body in water, though a gospel ordinance, cannot give spiritual regeneration. But spiritual baptism, which is the work of God upon the soul, does plant us in the likeness of Christ's death. The very language also of the apostle would seem to indicate that he drew a distinction betwixt the two baptisms. "Know ye not," he says, "that *so many of us* as were baptised into Jesus Christ." Observe the expression, "so many of us," as if he would imply that there might be those amongst them who had been baptised in water, but had not been baptised into Jesus Christ. It is true, that of this spiritual baptism, water baptism is selected by him as a type and representation, for it visibly and manifestly represents burial with Christ and resurrection with Christ; for as the candidate is buried in the water, so are we buried with him by virtue of a spiritual baptism into his death. But the only value of the ordinance of

baptism consists in its being a representation; and it would indeed be a sad mistake to elevate what is but a figure into the place of the especial work of the Holy Ghost upon the soul.

But now let us more closely observe the word "*planted*." The idea is either that of a tree planted in a soil, or else of a bud or scion grafted into a stock. Take either, or take both, for they are alike scriptural figures; and take first the idea of a young tree planted in the ground as most agreeing with the expression. By regenerating grace, the soul is made alive unto God; and by being made alive unto God, it is taken out of the rank, coarse soil of nature, and transplanted into the rich, fertile ground of grace. There it finds a suitable soil in which to thrive and grow. It is thus planted in the likeness of Christ's death by virtue of a spiritual baptism; for it is the Holy Ghost who gives it this living union with the Son of God, for "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." The Holy Spirit, therefore, takes the soul and plants it into the mystical body of Christ, as in baptism the body is immersed into water. Thus the very first work of grace upon the heart is to separate the heart and affections from the world, to pluck and root up the soul from that soil of sin and death in which it was naturally planted, as springing out of the Adam stock. But by this implantation into Christ, it is implanted into the likeness of Christ's death. What this likeness is I have shown you before. I have now to show you how the Holy Spirit implants and roots the soul into that likeness. This likeness consisted in dying under the law, under sin, under the anger of God. It is, then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that the curse of the law, the condemnation of sin, and a feeling sense of the wrath of God are spiritually applied and made known to the conscience. By this work of grace, then, upon the heart, there is a rooting up, and a tearing out of the soul from the old, corrupt, worldly, self-righteous ground in which it grew, and a transplanting of it into the garden of gospel

grace. This is a rough and painful work: but there is no other way by which the soul can be conformed to the likeness of the death of Christ. Did he die easily, without pain or suffering? If you then die, that is, spiritually, without pain or suffering, where is the likeness to his death? I do not mean to say but that when the work first begins upon a sinner's conscience, the soul may be as weak and as feeble as a young tree taken out of the nursery. But there is life in it: it is not a dead tree; and there being life in it, it takes root downward and grows upward, in proportion to the goodness of the soil and the strength of the plant.

Or take the figure of grafting. When God the Spirit takes you and buds you into the likeness of Christ's death by making you feel the condemnation of the law, the weight of your sins, and the wrath of the Almighty, it is a planting you in the likeness of Christ's death. And as in nature the scion, as it gets stronger, is more incorporated into the very body of the stock, coalesces with it more closely, and draws more sap and virtue out of it, so this implantation gives you more and more, through affliction and trial, of a resemblance to a crucified Jesus; to be more and more crucified with him, and thus to bear about in the body more continually the dying of the Lord Jesus.

II.—But we must now pass on to consider what we proposed as the second leading branch of our subject, the *resurrection* of Christ, the *likeness* of that resurrection, and the being *planted* in that likeness.

You will remember my pointing out to you just now, that the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ are the two grand gospel facts, and that as such they are held up by the Holy Spirit in the word of his grace as the objects of faith. The resurrection, especially, of our gracious Lord is that

standing miracle which will ever be a pillar of truth to the Church of God, effectually resisting every attempt to remove it from its base. But as we proposed to examine the nature and circumstances of the resurrection of our gracious Lord, we may now ask what instruction and consolation does it hold forth to believing hearts.

1. First, then, the resurrection of our blessed Lord from the grave is the grand standing *attestation to the truth of his mission*. I speak it with all reverence, for I would not drop a word to speak with the slightest shade of disparagement to that most blessed name; but I would say this, if our gracious Lord had not risen from the dead, he would have been plainly manifested as an impostor, and the Jews would have been fully justified in crucifying him as a blasphemer in declaring he was the Son of God. But the resurrection of our gracious Lord from the dead put God's own attesting stamp upon the truth of his mission. But you may say, "What evidence have we that he did rise again? Might there not have been some mistake or some deception?" How could this be? How could the disciples to whom he repeatedly showed himself after the resurrection have been deceived in that solemn fact? Could eleven men, who had walked with him in the closest intimacy for three years, be deceived in his features, in his voice, in his general appearance, in that meek dignity and holy majesty, in that heavenly grace and divine glory, which were so familiar to them? Even upon lower ground, could you, could I, associate day after day with an individual, and not know, after three days, whether it was the same person or not with whom we had so intimately lived? Now our gracious Lord showed himself on several occasions to the eleven disciples after the resurrection, ate and drank with them, showed them his hands and feet and side, and thus convinced them, "by many infallible proofs," that it was he, even he himself. Nay, did they not visibly see him ascend on

high when he was taken up, and "a cloud received him out of their sight?" They could, therefore, not have been deceived, and we may feel equally confident that they would not have deceived us. By his resurrection, therefore, he was declared to be the Son of God with power. He said he was the Son of God; he was crucified because he said it. When, then, he was raised from the dead, it was God's own attestation that he was his dear Son.

2. But connected with the resurrection and ascension of our gracious Lord, there are certain *benefits* and *blessings* which we must not pass by. If he had not risen from the dead and gone up on high, where would have been the Head of the Church? The Church would have been without its Head—a dead and lifeless corpse. Where, too, would have been the completion of the work of the High Priest, who, on the day of atonement, took the blood within the veil? How could our gracious Lord be interceding for us unless he had gone within the veil into the immediate presence of God? Again, if our gracious Lord had not risen, where would have been his universal government? How could he have been the enthroned King of Zion? How, too, could he have received gifts for the rebellious, or sent the Holy Spirit into the hearts of his people? How could he stand as the Mediator between God and men, or been our advocate with the Father, or been able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him? Thus we see that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is as blessed, as important, as influential a doctrine to the Christian as his death upon the cross.

ii. But now look at the resurrection of Christ as bearing more immediately upon our subject. We have seen *how* he died; now let us see *how* he rose again.

1. When our gracious Lord rose from the dead, he rose *from*

under the law. The law had no more charges against him. He rose justified from all law charges, for he had completely fulfilled all its demands: its voice, therefore, was hushed and silenced. It could not stop the resurrection, or keep shut the stone rolled against the tomb, for he was no longer its prisoner, having borne its curse and taken it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. He was therefore "justified in the Spirit." (1 Tim. 3:16.)

2. So also when our Lord rose from the dead, he rose *from under the weight of sin* in which mystically he had sunk. Sin was rolled off his head, for it was put away, blotted out, and removed in one day.

3. So also when he rose from the dead, he rose from under the *wrath of God*. There was no more wrath for there was no more law, no more sin, no more vengeance due to sin.

iii. Now the *likeness* of this resurrection is to be made ours; for as we are planted in the likeness of his death, so we are to be planted in the likeness of his resurrection. What, then, is this likeness, the spiritual likeness of this resurrection? Analogous to and resembling the likeness of his death. Did I not show you how he died under the law, and by dying under the law, died unto the law, and that this was being planted in the likeness of Christ's death? Now we have to *rise from under the law*, free from law charges and its curse and condemnation. And how is this? By being planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection; by the Holy Ghost, the spiritual baptiser, revealing Christ to our souls in the power of his resurrection, and thus raising up a living faith in our hearts, whereby he is received into our bosom as the Christ, the Son of God. When, then, we rise from under the curse and condemnation of the law by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we rise free from all law charges, as he rose free from

them. So again we have to rise *from under the weight and burden of sin* upon our conscience—a load sufficient to crush us into dust. And how? By being planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, so as to receive the benefits and blessings of that resurrection into our soul; and this we do by the blessed Spirit giving us some manifestation of the love and mercy of God in his dear Son, and thus raising up a spiritual faith in a risen Christ. Then again, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have to rise from *under the wrath* of God into the enjoyment of the mercy, love, and favour of the Most High. And lastly, by being planted in the likeness of his resurrection, we have to rise also unto a knowledge of our sonship; for as the gracious Lord was manifested to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, so we have to rise with Christ into a spiritual apprehension of our own sonship by adoption. Thus by rising from under the condemnation of the law, the weight of sin, and the wrath of the Almighty, and by being brought out into a knowledge of our sonship, there is the likeness of Christ's resurrection as well as the likeness of Christ's death.

iv. But we have to be *planted* in this likeness. We cannot do this ourselves. The Holy Spirit must take us, so to speak, just as we are, and, by the power of a spiritual baptism, plant us into the likeness of that resurrection. This he does by giving us faith in Christ; by manifesting him with power to the soul; by applying the blood of the covenant to the conscience; and shedding the love of God abroad in the heart. This is the likeness of Christ's resurrection, because as Christ rose we rise; as Christ was not left under the curse of the law, the sentence of sin, and the wrath of the Almighty, so by faith in Christ we rise from under this weight of guilt and condemnation, and become manifestly sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

But many of the dear children of God can go with the former part of this discourse who cannot go so easily with the latter. They know what it is to have the likeness of Christ's death in the condemnation of the law, the weight of their sins, the displeasure of the Almighty, and the fear of death; but they cannot rise up to a sensible apprehension of a risen Christ so as to rise from under the condemning law, an accusing conscience, and the felt displeasure of God. But they will do so in due time, for the same Spirit who baptised into the likeness of the one, will baptise them into the likeness of the other; and as they mystically die with Christ and are buried with him in baptism, so they will mystically rise with Christ in the apprehension of the benefits and blessings of his resurrection.

III.—But now let us look at some of the *practical effects* which this implantation into Christ produces in the heart and in the life. On a late occasion (see No. 71 of the "Gospel Pulpit.") I dwelt upon the bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and I intimated I might take an occasion of considering more fully that part of the subject. This, then, I have in some measure done in bringing before you how we are planted in the likeness of Christ's death. Now all through the course of our spiritual life we must be more or less in the experience of these two gospel facts, these two pillars of all gospel truth. The apostle therefore says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." As crucified with Christ, he was planted in the likeness of Christ's death; as living with Christ, he was planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. Bear then in mind, that every pang of a guilty conscience; every distressing sense of the displeasure of the Almighty; every sensible dying to our own strength, our own goodness, our own wisdom, our own righteousness, is a being planted in the likeness of Christ's death. This is the crucifixion of the world and of the flesh with its affections and lusts.

Remember also that every rising hope, every sweet prospect, every kind intimation, and every act of faith, hope, and love wherewith your soul is indulged, is a being planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. This, then, is the experience of the Christian: "As dying and behold we live." He is ever dying and yet ever living; he is ever being crucified in a conformity to Christ's death, and yet ever living by the power of Christ's resurrection.

But now observe how by these divine truths, the objection is fully answered to which I drew your attention in the beginning of this discourse. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised unto his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." You see how the apostle shows here the crucifixion of the old man; that henceforth we should not serve sin, but walk in newness of life. Thus, Christ's death and resurrection gives power and motive. It crucifies sin and revives grace; mortifies the flesh, and gives life to the spirit. And you will find that just in proportion to your death will be your life; that the lower you sink, the higher you will rise; that the more you enter into Christ's death, the more you will enter into Christ's resurrection. Is not the objective fully, nobly, gloriously answered? What! shall we continue in sin, when sin is made a daily grief and burden? Shall we continue in sin, when sin crucified our Lord and Master, and we are spiritually planted in the likeness of that death so as to resemble him?

But again, am I risen with Christ? Am I planted in the likeness of his resurrection? Then let my affections be set above where he sits at the right hand of God. Am I risen with Christ? Then let me live a life of faith upon him. Am I risen with Christ? Let me walk in all manner of godliness and holiness as becomes the gospel. Did Christ bleed and die for me that I might crucify him afresh? Did Christ suffer untold agonies that I should trample his blood under foot? These are motives to crucify the old man. Again, did Christ rise for me? Am I risen with him? Then I am "a new creature; then old things are passed away and all things become new." I must not live as before; I must live agreeably to the gospel, adorn the doctrine, walk as becometh holiness, glorify Christ, and make it manifest I am a living member of a living Head, one with him in death, one with him in resurrection.

Can you find a more prevailing argument not to continue in sin? The apostle appeals to the experience of God's people, and tells them that they carry in their own bosom a practical solution of the oft-repeated objection, a standing denial of the standing libel. Are not we, then, in our day and generation bound to make it equally manifest in our life and conversation? The objection is not dead. Many still say that we hold licentious doctrines, pernicious to society and dangerous to the foundations of morality. Disprove it by your life, walk, and conversation: they will speak if you are silent. Men can see our lives who cannot see our hearts; understand our walk who cannot understand our doctrine. But if we allow ourselves to do things or live in practices that draw upon us the world's just censure, can we wonder if the objection is still revived? Are we not bound, then, by every motive to disprove the libel by our godly conversation; and to make it manifest that the doctrines of grace are the doctrines of godliness? Christ and conformity to Christ is the whole breathing of the gospel: in this channel run all its precepts,

to this end tend all its promises, and out of this precious root
grow all true gospel fruits.