

A Sermon by John G. Lake

“As He Is So Are We in This World”

1 John 4:17

(A successful businessman, John G. Lake (1870-1935) was drawn by overwhelming illness and death in his own biological family into one of the most remarkable careers as both a minister of healing and a missionary to Africa. The revival that blossomed around him in South Africa was the largest single revival on that continent for nearly 100 years.)

The mind of the world is fixed on the Redeemer. The Old Testament Scriptures, looking up to Christ, are particularly prolific in their description of His life, His sorrows, His sufferings, His death, His sacrifice. All these were the qualities of the Redeemer. All these were endured and exercised by the Redeemer in order to obtain something. That something was “redemption.”

What redemption means is best seen by following the chain of Christ’s life from the Crucifixion on—not on the back side of the cross but on this side of the cross. If you want to understand the Redeemer, see Him before the cross comes into view. That is, if you want to understand the redemption that He obtained, look on this side of Calvary.

The great majority of the Christian world is still weeping at the foot of the cross. The consciousness of man is fixed on the Christ who died, not on the Christ who lives. They are looking back to the Redeemer who was, not the Redeemer who is.

On this side of the cross we see all the marvel of opposites to what we see in the Christ on the other side of the cross. On the other side of the cross we see a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, bearing our sicknesses, carrying our sorrows. He had now here to lay His head. Poverty was one of His characteristics. Nobody ever stops to think, or rarely so, that He bore His poverty, and what for? “That through His poverty we might be made rich.” He bore our sorrows, what for? That we through His sorrows might be made glad. He bore our sufferings, for what? That we through His strips might be healed. He gave His life a sacrifice for sins, for what? That we should know no sin. Then having completed the redemption, or purchasing the redemption, the redemption becomes manifest on this side of Calvary.

I sometimes wish that I could turn the face of the believer the other way. You may observe that I very rarely turn the face of believers to the cross. The world looked to the cross until they passed it. But if they had never passed it, redemption would be no more of a reality than it was before. Redemption becomes a reality as we obtain the redemption. To obtain the fact that the Redeemer purchased is the purpose of the Christian life. On this side of the cross we see the victory, not the suffering, not the humility and dejection and rejection but the victory.

We see the first glimmer of that victory when Jesus, who was crucified as a Redeemer, steps forth as the redeemed. The Redeemer, the first fruits of them that slept, became the Redeemer of mankind or the pattern of redemption. He was not the pattern of redemption back there on the other side of the cross. He became the pattern of redemption. Paul puts it in such terse terms, "He became the author of eternal salvation." Not "was manufactured the author of eternal salvation," Not "was born," but became the author of eternal salvation." Why? Because having as the Redeemer entered into the redemption by Himself, "the first fruits of them that slept," the first Victor, the first example of victory, He became the manifestor, the demonstrator, the revealer, the embodiment of eternal salvation.

On this side of the cross is the victory of His resurrection, the marvel of all victories, the victory over death by which He took death captive. A living man, Himself, He came forth the Conqueror of death itself, having put all things under His feet. What an ascent into triumph! What a change in His consciousness! What a distinction between the Redeemer and the redeemed? No longer subject to death, but triumphing over it. No longer subject to humiliation, but now becoming the exalted One, bless God.

For in the ascension we see the exaltation of Jesus instead of the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief of sickness. We see the living, triumphant, exultant Son of God ascending to the throne of God, receiving from God the Father what Jesus and the Father considered worthy of the suffering and death and sacrifice and redemption of Jesus Christ. A reward so that Jesus Himself considered it worth all His sufferings, all His buffeting, His earth career, His humiliation, His sacrifice and death. All to obtain it, the gift of the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:16-18)

On this side of the cross we see the distributing of His new life. Not the life that was on the other side, but the life that is on this side of the life of triumph, the life of victory, the life of praise, the life of power, the life of glory-exultant, triumphant.

The other night as I lay in bed, I was thinking and praying over some of the things that were passing through my mind concerning Jesus. The scripture of Revelation 1:18 came with new force to me. Where Jesus, not as a humiliated Savior, but as a kingly Conqueror, stands forth with the marvelous declaration that, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

It seems to me that in all the Word of God there is no such soul of triumph as that. Why, it seems to me as if the very heaven and the earth and all that in them is, ringing with that exultant shout of a real Victor- "I have the keys of heal and of death." The enemies of man, taken captive by the Son of God, subject to His dictate. That is the Christ that speaks to my soul. That is the Christ on this side of Calvary. That is the Christ my soul worships.

I am going to tell you a strange thing. I am not much interested in the Christ on the other side of Calvary. Not half so much as I am in the Christ this side of Calvary. Bless God, I love the Redeemer, but I glory in His redemption.

The marvel of Christianity and the wonder of this scripture that I called your attention to, is

that it does not say that “as He was” back there, so we are to be in this world. Don’t you see, that is where the world fell down, where the Christian life became submerged in a vale of tears and shadows and darkness and poverty and humiliation and suffering. All of which Christian mankind accepted joyfully, because they believed they were exemplifying Jesus Christ and thought they were glorifying Him. They still visioned not the Christ that is, but the Christ that was. The Christ who bore and endured and suffered and died in order to obtain the privilege of the Christ who is, and to become the Christ who is.

Now if I could radically turn your minds tonight clear around from the vision of the Christ before the cross, to the vision of the Christ who is, this fact would mean that your souls must ascend in consciousness and union with the overcoming Son of God. Not bowed and bound with the humiliated Savior, but joined in holy glory triumph with the Son of God who obtained the victory and revealed it and distributes its power and glory to the souls of men.

“As He is,” not as He was, John said, “so are we in this world.” Not in the life to come. The glory is not for the life that is coming, but for the life that is now. The victory is not for the future. It is for the now. It is not for the good days by and by. It is for the now. Not for heaven to come, but for heaven on earth now.

Sin, sickness, death under His feet. Hell itself taken captive and obedient to His Word. Every enemy of mankind throttled, bound, chained by the Son of God. Mankind joined with Him by the Holy Ghost in living triumph. Why, if I receive of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, of the Christ who is, I receive the spirit of victory and power and might and dominion – of grace, of love, of power, blessed be God of all the blessed estate of which Jesus Himself is now the conscious Master. All these He gives to the Christian through imparting to him the Holy Ghost.

The spirit of the Lord says within my soul, that:
The universal sound of praise in which angels and men, all creatures in the earth, the sea, and the sky will eventually join, comes because the consciousness of the overcoming Christ has dawned upon them and possessed their soul.

Some of the final song, the song of the ages, that song of victory, we find the fifth of Revelation: “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever.”

Should I carry your soul tonight into the place of victory in God, I must carry it into the consciousness of Christ’s overcoming life. All His healing virtue, His saving grace, His transforming spirit, all the angelic communion, the heavenly foretaste, the consciousness of the estate of the redeemed, the glory-triumph of Jesus Christ is in the consciousness born from the resurrec-

tion and revealed in the revelation, "For as He is, so are we in this world."

Jesus in His earth life, reached forth into that life and kingdom and triumph and exhibited in this world, in a measure, that victory and triumph that His soul knew and visioned. But when the cross came, He entered actually into the life that His soul formerly visioned and knew through the Word of God and the consciousness of God within His heart. And so His ministry in the Spirit is a ministry in the all power, all consciousness, all knowledge, all grace, all victory, all salvation. Bless God.

I could lift your soul tonight in the Spirit of God into that glow and glory of the triumphant life. Do you know that it is only as your mind settles back into the humiliation and the suffering and the weakness and the fear and doubting of the dispensation that is past that you grow weak and sickly and sinful? But only as your soul looks forward and possesses in the present the glorious victory that Jesus acquired and exhibits and enjoys, does it rise out of its sorrows, out of its sins, into that glorious triumph of the children of God.

It would not be pleasant to always have to live with babies and imbeciles, or a lot of half grown-up folks. I want you to sympathize with God. I want you to catch the vision of the ordinary Christian conception. Think of God having to live forever and forever and ever in association with people who were not half big enough to comprehend His will. That is not God's purpose. Jesus Christ undertook the biggest contract that heaven or earth or sea or sky ever knew. He undertook the redemption of mankind and their transformation by the Spirit of the living God unto His own likeness and image and stature and understanding, in the grace and power fullness of His own nature. Jesus Christ is the associate of God, one with Him, and with every son of God. He has purposed that redeemed men, grown up in God, transformed into the very image and likeness and nature and fullness of Jesus Christ, becoming like the Sone of God shall be associates of God.

What did God create man for anyway? Answer: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

God's purpose in the creation of mankind was to develop and association of His own plane. Otherwise, God would have been eternally living with babies or imbeciles. He would have been compelled forever to associate with those who were not able to understand or comprehend His nature or character or the marvel of His being or the wonder of His power.

The wonder of the redemption of Jesus Christ is revealed in the matchlessness of God's purpose to transform man into His very nature and image and fullness. Thereby men, as sons of God become, bless God, the associates of Almighty God, on His own plane of life and understanding.

When my soul saw the vision of God Almighty's marvelous purpose, I felt like falling on my face afresh and crying out, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" For "as He is, so are we in this world." All glory and power that Jesus knows at the throne of God, all the wonders of His overcoming grace, all the marvel of the greatness of His power is yours and mine to receive through

faith in the Son of God, yours and mine to expect through the faith for the Son of God, yours and mine to possess and enjoy and reveal to the glory of God.

**“My, how the word of God reveals
not only Jesus Christ’s own triumph
over the devil and darkness,
but also the triumph of the Christian
who enters into one-ness
with Christ.”**

Quotation from John G. Lake