

granted by him to every man, as his birthright. Does not this open up a most expressive view of Gospel privilege, that we have in this, the offer of divine mercy made to us as our birthright? Look, reader, to the offer of God's mercy in this light, and see how it commends it to you.

1st. As your birthright, you enjoy the offer of mercy, because you are born into the family of sinful man. If you were not a man, you would have no title to this offer, for it is only for the race of man it is provided and proclaimed. It is thus because you are not a fallen angel, but a man; it is because you are not an innocent, but a sinful man, that you have an offer of mercy made to you, as your birthright. Open your heart, then, to this glorious Gospel truth. You have this free offer of salvation from God, not on account of your circumstances, of your birth, or condition in your life. It antedates all you have done or not done. It lies back of all you are, or are not. It is a privilege of your soul, in its creation by God, as a member of our fallen human race. It is your own—a blood-bought, a God-given privilege, simply because you are a sinful man. It is yours, as your life is yours, to value it, to enjoy it. It is yours, as your liberty is yours, to welcome it for its pure joys, to glory in it for its noble ends. It is yours, to continue with you as your birthright, the badge of your union with your heavenly Father, the passport, if you will use it so, of your entrance into the celestial kingdom. Is not this the word of God himself to you from his lofty throne, "To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." "Is any man athirst, let him come unto me and drink." You observe the terms of address. It is "you, O men," you, "*any man*," whom God calls to come and drink the streams of his mercy. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." You see the extent of the invitation. It is "all ye that labor," through the misery of sin; "whosoever will" let him come and find rest. Reader, this offer of mercy from God is your birthright. It is not man that gives it you, but God, and he gives it to you that you may take it up, that you keep it, that you use it as the foundation of your hope, that you through the faith of it, be eternally saved.

2nd. As your birthright, no man can take the offer of mercy from you. In this matter of the Gospel offer of salvation through Christ, all men are on a level. You have it not from me; I have it not from you. But all of us have it alike from God; but man may preach the good tidings to others, and press it on their acceptance. But whoever repeats the joyful sound, it is God our Saviour who first of all says to every man—Come, "*Come*, take of the water of life freely." It is thus plain, man does not give this offer, and what man does not give, he may not take away from you. You have this sacred privilege given you by God. He gives it as your indefeasible, your inalienable right—the birthright of your sinful nature. No man may justly take from you your natural freedom, and reduce you to the condition of a slave. Whoever attempts this outrage on you, a rational responsible man, be the colour of skin black or white, the same is a thief and a robber. And as no man may take from you your liberty, so no one may take from you your offer of mercy in Christ Jesus. God speaks unto you the message of redemption, though shut up, as really as his angel spake to Peter the word of liberty. God comes with the invitation of grace to you, though cast out by man, as truly as Jesus came to the blind man in the temple, when the priests cast him out, bringing you the good news of salvation as your birthright. If you should ever hear men, therefore, limiting the offer so as to exclude you, or clogging the offer with conditions so as to discourage your application for the benefit, go direct to the Book that contains the title deeds of your inheritance, and listen to his word who gives this grace, as He assures you, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

3d. As your birthright the offer of mercy through Christ is your highest privilege. Peculiar value is attached to an earthly birthright by every ingenuous mind. It is a privilege bright, prized, and dearly beloved. And, reader, what immunity of your nature can be compared with the offer of mercy from