

Even such, my Christian brethren, is the condition of every one of us by nature. However much pride may spurn at the confession, the fact is as undoubted as it is sad, that we come into this world with the chains of bondage rivetted to our limbs. By nature we are the children of wrath, the enslaved subjects of the Prince of Darkness, without strength to break his yoke, and, what is worse, without inclination to disobey his commands.

Thus must all of us have lived, thus must all of us have died, wretched and hopeless, had not He, against whom only we had sinned, taken pity upon our low and lost estate. He who at first said, "Let us make man in our own image," resolved to re-create him in and after that blessed and holy similitude. In the fulness of time the Deliverer came,—God was manifested in the flesh,—the second Adam atoned for the guilt of the first Adam and his countless generations. And when on the cross Emanuel bowed his head and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, victory was wrested from death, the fetters were struck from the slave, and a new and living way, which hell itself could not shut, was opened up, by which the weary captive might have access to the Father.

But how are we to participate in the blessings of this great salvation? Enfeebled as we are by sin, how are we to walk in this glorious way? Through faith in the crucified Redeemer. Christ not only died to purchase for us freedom, but he bestows the gift upon all who come unto him. By his Spirit he forms us anew, purifies us from our natural corruptions, and gives us strength to fight with success against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, those merciless tyrants, those hard and cruel task-masters. This is LIBERTY in the full and genuine sense of the word. "If the Son shall make you free," says the Apostle, "ye are free indeed." Look at an unconverted man, what a perfect picture of a slave does he present. A slave to sense,—to covetousness,—to lust,—to unbelief,—a slave, in one word, to all that is vile, crawling, and abominable. But behold him after the blessed Spirit has caused