

"We know," he says, "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. Even we who have been redeemed from the condemnation of the law, and from the curse of sin, have not as yet been freed from its consequences. We suffer from its effects every day of our lives, and we shall so long as we live in this world. But this is not to be to us an occasion of sadness and despair, because a time of entire exemption is coming. We have been adopted into God's redeemed family through the redemption purchased by Christ. We are going where sin and suffering cannot come. Even these poor bodies, so full of aches and pains, are to be redeemed. This is our hope, and in this hope we wait with patience, confidence, and uncomplaining. "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." It is with a desire to illustrate and enforce this truth of the text, for your comfort and encouragement, that I ask you to consider two or three things further about this hope, which, in order to distinguish it, I will call Christian Hope. The first thing which I wish to say about Christian Hope is that it is

I. A SAFE HOPE.

Hope is a part and power of human nature. But all hope is not Christian, and is not safe or sure. All men have hopes, but not good hopes. Some natures are more hopeful than others, and some hopes are better than others. The Bible says bad men have hopes, some of which can never be realized. "The hope of the hypocrite shall be cut off." "The hope of the unjust man perisheth." How many men have hopes that are built on an insecure or false foundation! Life is full of blighted hopes, and yet the only thing that makes life tolerable to thousands of persons is their hope. Some are hoping, as it were, against hope. They have been disappointed times without number, yet somehow they hope again, and

when hope gives out all is gone. Then come collapse, mental disorder, madness, suicide. Oh, how many such instances there are—blasted hopes and ruined lives! Human hopes are so treacherous. They are so often ill-formed and poorly founded. They are like the house that was built on the sand. When the winds and the floods come and beat upon them, they fall, and oftentimes great is the fall of them—great in its calamity and consequences. Such, too often is the case with hopes built on human promises—on the gains, pleasures, friendships, fortunes of this world.

Christian hope is a safe hope, because it builds on the promises of God, which cannot be broken. Whatever He has promised for this life—pardon, peace, prosperity—if the conditions of the promise are met, hope is never disappointed. Experiencing so much of God's goodness here, we surely can trust Him for whatever is promised hereafter. So the Psalmist says: "Happy is he whose hope is in the Lord his God." And Jeremiah echoes the same thought when he says, "Blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is." These testimonies could be supported from the experience of thousands of God's children, showing that there are no blighted and blasted hopes when they are built on the sure promises of God's word, since all the promises of God are Yea, and Amen, in Christ Jesus.

Christian hope is a safe hope, because it has a moral basis. There is nothing in it which disappoints or demoralizes. Its uplift is heavenly. It is this hope of which Liddon speaks when he calls it "the soul of moral vitality." Any man or society of men who would live, in the moral sense of life, must be looking forward to something. Precious as must be the inheritance of the past to every true-hearted and generous man, what is the past without the future? What is memory unaccompanied by hope? In the case of the individual, as in the case of the nation