

But with the thought of this glorious ending, there is the present shout of faith,—Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Resurrection is not only a future reality, as to my hope, but it is a present reality to faith, for Christ is risen. I am victorious over death now, and can say by faith, I am risen with Christ. He was made sin for us, and put it away, so that the sting of death is gone. What is death without sin? It is merely the doorway into glory. Christ has died to sin, and in doing so not only has put it away, but taken death also out of the hands of the enemy, and made it His own. The law having been given as the perfect rule of life for a child of Adam, is the strength of sin. Sin uses the holy commandment to slay man in the flesh. Instead of checking lust it excites it, by discovering it; and then forbidding it, under the penalty of a curse: sin takes advantage, uses its curse to pay to its poor slave its wages, that is death. (Comp. Rev. vi., vii.) So that the law, instead of being man's power against sin, is sin's power against man. It uses the holy commandment to slay me, Paul says, in Rom. vii., so showing itself exceeding sinful, and making me cry out as much for deliverance from law as from sin. Christ, having fulfilled it perfectly, died under its curse, thus giving present deliverance from the law by His death, as from sin. He has risen again, the victorious Son of God, so that I, a believing sinner, now rejoice in His victory, and daily do so. The Christian thus anticipates death by faith, for, on accepting Christ's death by faith, he can say, I have died with Christ. He anticipates resurrection too, for he holds the risen Son of God by faith, and says, His life is my life; His victory my victory; His