

REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

THE INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

By Pastor Brian De Jong

As the Apostle wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, he reflected on God's grace to these saints. This reflection led him to exclaim "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

What was God's indescribable gift? We might think a first it is the grace of salvation – the forgiveness of our sins and the free gift of eternal life. That is an indescribably good thing for God to bestow on unworthy sinners deserving damnation. But I believe it is something even more wonderful than our eternal salvation.

In my estimation, the indescribable gift is Jesus Christ Himself. Consider another of Paul's statements from Romans 8:32, which reads, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" This statement argues from the greater to the lesser. If God has already given us His own Son, will He not also with Him freely give us all those lesser things? The greatness of the original donation guarantees the delivery of many lesser gifts.

How is it that Jesus Christ is "given" to us, and that He is the greatest possible gift? First, He is given to us in the incarnation. He took on human flesh and became man – a man among men. This made Him our elder brother, and He is not ashamed to be called our brother (see Heb 2:10-11) He came not only to reveal the Father to us, but to bear our sins as the Man of Sorrows.

He is given to us as the healer of all our diseases. Throughout Jesus' earthly

ministry, He handled many different sorts of ailments. He showed Himself capable of healing each and every sickness brought to Him. In this He promises to restore us from all of the effects of the fall.



He is given to us as the sacrificial substitute. He took all of the punishment that was due to us for our sins, and He willingly laid down His life upon the cross for us and our salvation. He satisfied God's justice, quenched God's wrath, and made us acceptable

in God's sight. He was delivered up for us all, becoming sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

He is given to us as our great King – ruling over and defending us. Subduing our wild hearts to Himself, and waging war against all of His and our enemies. No country ever had a king like our King! Never was there one so just and judicious, so wise and so gentle, so firm and so strong as King Jesus!

Finally, He is given to us as our eternal Husband. Paul is correct in saying that this is a great mystery – the union between Christ and His bride, the church. That we are "one flesh" with the Son of God is indescribably wonderful. How could we have ever hoped for such a Husband as He is, and will be forever and ever. This takes us into eternity, as He will one day return and raise us up to glory. He will take us with Him to the New Heavens and the New Earth – that land where right-

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Mnemonics...

- *Fellowship Lunch, 6th*
- *Bowling and Pizza Party, 28th*

This Do

By the Rev. Dean W. Adair
Reprinted from the Presbyterian
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WHAT is a sacrament? A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers."

"What is the Lord's Supper? The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace."

"Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his church unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death, the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other, as members of his mystical body."

These statements from the Constitution of The Presbyterian Church of America (aka OPC) summarize the teaching of the Bible on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is a spiritual banquet in which our souls are nourished by the body and blood of Christ, just as the life of the body is supported by bread and wine. The fact about which our meditation will be centered is this: The Lord's Supper is a sacrament to be observed in His church till Christ comes again. Thus saith the Lord, "This do."

I

Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein He was betrayed, took bread and wine. Addressing Himself to the apostles and through them to all His disciples—and that includes each one of us that professes to be His disciple—He commands: "Take, eat;" "Drink ye

"The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance, but an ordinance for the converted."

all of it;" "This do in remembrance of me." The Apostle Paul writes the Christian church that was at Corinth: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you: This do in remembrance of me." The apostolic church was not disobedient to this command of our blessed Lord. God added three thousand

souls to the church through Peter's preaching on Pentecost. Luke writes, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Luke tells us that Paul observed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with the Christian church that was at Troas. Paul writes the Christian church that was at Corinth, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The Christian church down to

this hour has not been disobedient to this command of our blessed Lord. God forbid that His church ever refuse to obey the commands of her Head and Sovereign, Jesus Christ.

It is necessary for Christians to obey a direct command of Christ.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance, but an ordinance for the converted. Men may be saved without the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but it is perilous for them to neglect it. The grace of God conveyed through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be conveyed without its observance. But where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not administered we cannot say that the church really exists.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews argues that those who partook of the Jewish altars did thereby profess to be Jews. Also, the Apostle Paul argues that those in Corinth who participated in the heathen sacrifices did thereby profess to be heathen. So those who partake in the Lord's Supper do thereby profess to be Christians.

A Christian must have knowledge of Christ and of His Gospel. He must believe the record which God has

This Do Continued...

given of His Son. He must believe that Christ died for his sins; that His body was broken for him; that His blood was shed for him. He must accept Christ, as the Bible offers' Him, a propitiation for sin. If we as Christians are to partake acceptably of the Lord's Supper we must have faith not only in Christ, but also in the sacrament itself. That is, we must believe the Bible that it is a direct command of Christ laid upon each one of us. The reason why we often receive so little by our attendance on this ordinance is that we expect so little. But God, on the other hand, has given us His sure and precious promise, that in the observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper we should expect so to receive Christ through the working of the Holy Spirit as to be filled with all the fullness of God.

II

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament to be observed in His church till Christ comes again. First, Christ Himself commands it; and, also, the very nature of the sacrament demands it. Thus saith the Lord, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

The Lord's Supper is an emblem of truth. The death of the incarnate Son of God for the ransom of many is of all events the most important. He, being God, alone was able to satisfy the justice of God. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh." This should be held in perpetual remembrance.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial. The Lamb of God took your place and mine on the cross. He bore your sins and mine on the cross. He suffered the cruel tortures of the cross in our room and stead. He died that we might live. Because He died we have salvation from sin, and eternal life. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." This should be held in perpetual remembrance.

The Lord's Supper is a badge of profession. Those who partake do thereby profess to be Christians. It puts a visible difference between those that

belong to the church, and the rest of the world. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." This should be held in perpetual remembrance.

The Lord's Supper is a means of grace. It is an instrument through which is conveyed the blessings of our Lord, that is, growth in grace and knowledge. He and His people become one. He dwells in them; His life is their life; because He lives they live also. In being thus united to Christ as their common Head, believers become one body. They have one faith, as well as one Lord, and one God and Father. They are so bound together that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him. "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." This should be held in perpetual remembrance. The efficacy of the Lord's Supper does not reside in the sacrament itself, but in

the blessing of Christ and the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who partake. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace only to those who believe. "The Lord's Supper confers no advantage or profit without being received by faith; just as water, though it be poured plentifully on a vessel, yet will it overflow and be lost, unless the mouth of the vessel be open; and the vessel itself, though wet on the outside, will remain dry and empty within" (Calvin).

III

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament to be observed in His Church till Christ comes again: first, Christ Himself commands it; secondly, the very nature of the sacrament demands it; and finally, the qualifications for the participant intend it. Thus saith the Lord, "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But, let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and

“The Lord’s
Supper...is an
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veyed the
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our Lord.

This Do Concluded

drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

John Calvin, theologian *par excellence* of all time, writes, "The best and only worthiness that we can present to God, is to offer him our vileness and unworthiness, that he may make us worthy of his mercy; to despair in ourselves, that we may find consolation in him; to humble ourselves, that we may be exalted by him; to accuse ourselves, that we may be justified by him; likewise to aspire to that unity which he enjoins in his supper; and as he makes us all to be one in himself, so it should be our desire that we may all have one mind, one heart, and one tongue.

"If we have these things well considered and digested in our minds, though we may be disturbed, we shall never be subverted by such reflections as

this: Needy and destitute of every good, defiled with the pollution of sin, and half dead, how could we worthily eat the Lord's body?

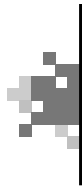
"We shall rather consider, that we come as paupers to the liberal Benefactor, as patients to the Physician, as sinners to the Author of righteousness, as persons dead to the fountain of life; that the worthiness which is required by God consists principally in faith, which attributes everything to Christ, and places no dependence on ourselves, and, secondly, in charity, even that charity which it is enough for us to present to God in an imperfect state, that he may increase and improve it; for we cannot produce it in a state of perfection."

This should be held in perpetual remembrance. Thus saith the Lord, "This do."

BOWLING & PIZZA

Pastor Brian's annual bowling & pizza party will be held on Monday, December 28th. We will bowl from 3:00-5:00 pm at Odyssey Fun Center in Sheboygan Falls, then return to church for pizza and games. Bowling will be \$6 per person, pizza will be \$3 per person.





December Birthdays



Wedding Anniversaries





Grace OPC

December 2015

Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Fellowship Lunch	7	8 Session Meeting 6:30 PM	9 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Bowling and Pizza Party 3:00 PM	29	30	31		

Homemade Snickers Bars

Bottom Chocolate Layer:

1¼ cups milk chocolate chips

¼ cup peanut butter

Nougat Layer:

¼ cup unsalted butter

1 cup granulated sugar

¼ cup evaporated milk

1½ cups marshmallow fluff

¼ cup peanut butter

1½ cups salted peanuts, roughly chopped

1 tsp vanilla extract

Caramel Layer:

14 ounce bag of caramels

¼ cup heavy whipping cream

Top Chocolate Layer:

1¼ cup milk chocolate chips

¼ cup peanut butter

Instructions

1. Thoroughly grease a 9x13 pan. (Lining it with heavy duty aluminum foil and spraying with cooking spray helps them to pop right out.)
2. For the bottom layer: Melt peanut butter and chocolate chips together in microwave or double boiler, being careful not to let the chocolate burn. Spread the layer evenly in the bottom of your 9x13 pan. Put in fridge or freezer and let it completely harden before adding next layer on top.
3. For the nougat layer: Melt butter over medium high heat in saucepan. Add milk and sugar and bring mixture to a boil. Cook for 5 minutes, whisking together occasionally. Add in marshmallow fluff, peanut butter, and vanilla, and stir until smooth. Remove from heat and fold in the peanuts. Pour over the bottom chocolate layer and spread evenly. Allow to cool completely in fridge or freezer.
4. For the caramel layer: Melt caramels and heavy whipping cream in microwave, stirring every 30 seconds until smooth. Pour over the nougat layer and allow to cool completely.
5. For the top chocolate layer: Melt chocolate and peanut butter until smooth. Pour over and spread evenly over the caramel. Cool bars completely in the fridge. Keep them in fridge until right before serving because the bars will soften. Enjoy!

“The eyes
of all look
to You,
And You
give them
their food in
due time.
You open
Your hand
And satisfy
the desire of
every living
thing.”

Emily Boss

Comments on Finance

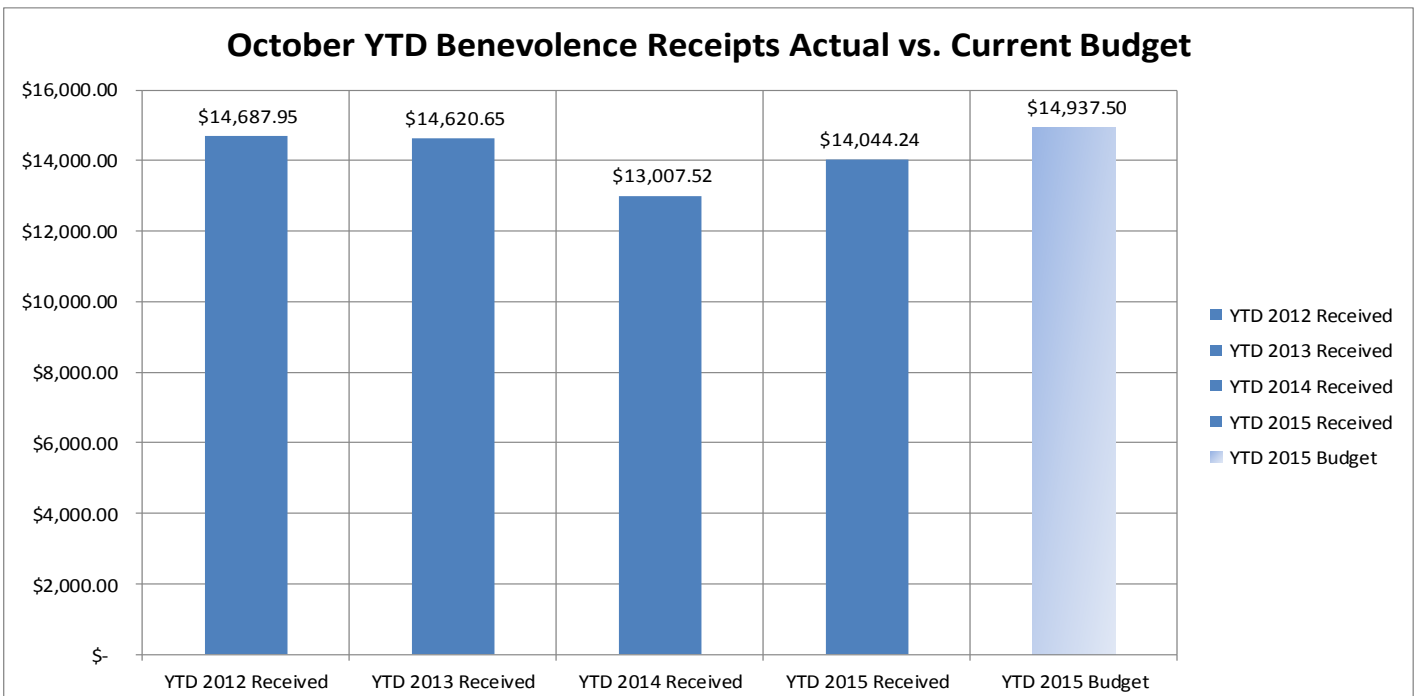
by Joel Moody

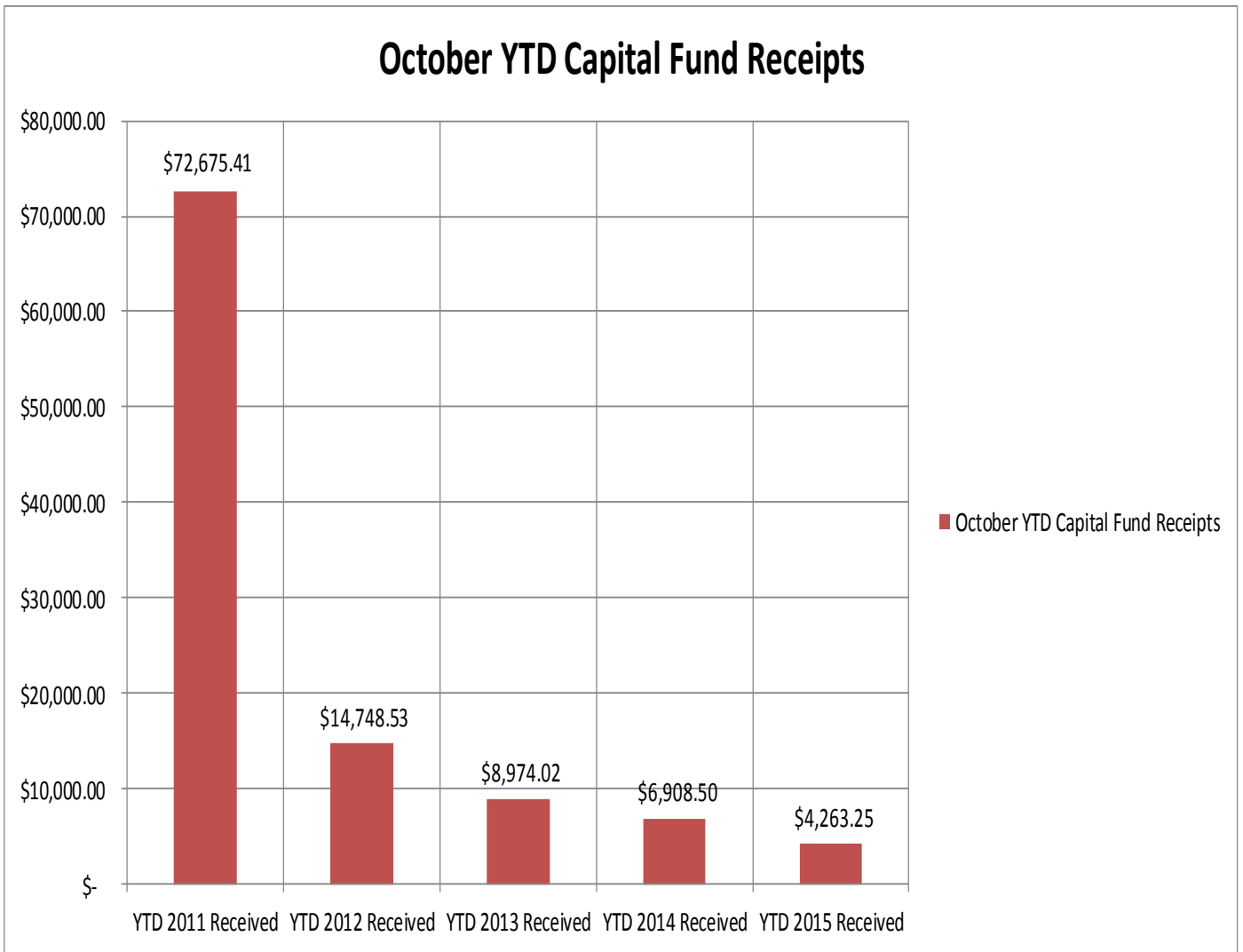
General Fund receipts for October totaled \$10,497.28 as compared to the budget of \$12,927.38, while General Fund disbursements for October totaled \$13,920.83. October year to date General Fund receipts totaled \$125,172.31 as compared to the budget of \$138,969.38 (a shortfall of \$13,797.07), while October year to date disbursements of \$131,328.68 were \$7,640.70 below budget. Through the end of October, the General Fund has decreased by \$6,073.28. Year to date General Fund receipts for October were 2.9% below last year's total on an average Sunday while disbursements were 0.4% above the prior year.

Benevolence Fund receipts for October totaled \$1,055.00 as compared to the budget of \$1,493.75 (a shortfall of \$438.75). Year to date Benevolence Fund receipts through October totaled \$14,044.24 and were below budget by \$893.26. Please refer to the graph for a historical trend of benevolence receipts as well as the current benevolence budget. During October, \$500.00 was sent to Worldwide Outreach (WVO) for the general missions outreach of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and \$200.00 was sent to the Midwest Presbytery's Church Extension Committee (CHEX).

In addition, \$900.00 was directed to the support of Sheboygan County Christian High School, \$600.00 to Pine Haven, and \$450.00 to Grace OPC families with Christian education schooling expenses.

October Year to Date giving for the **Capital Fund** was \$4,263.25. Please refer to the Capital Fund graph that shows the historical giving for the years indicated in the graph. You may contribute to the Capital Fund by marking your gift as "Capital Fund" and placing it in the offering plate. Please note that the Capital Fund is used to pay for current and future needs that may exist to purchase additional equipment (such as computers, the sound system, tables and chairs, etc.) or building-type items (such as a parking lot, driveway, furnace boiler, etc.). During October, \$965.50 was disbursed for the purchase of hearing assist devices for use within Grace Church. Since some capital needs are quite substantial in nature, resources to finance and pay for these projects can take years to pay for them. Even though capital needs may not be large in the current year, we should wisely allocate our giving not only to current needs, but also to these future needs as well.





Front Page Concluded

eousness dwells. And we will be with Him, enjoying Him forever and ever.

What a gift! Words fail to adequately describe its quality and worth! Thank you, Lord!





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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**SERMONAUDIO.COM/
GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Spurgeon Corner

*“The Lord mighty in battle.”
(Psalm 24:8)*

Well may our God be glorious in the eyes of his people, seeing that he has wrought such wonders for them, in them, and by them. *For them*, the Lord Jesus upon Calvary routed every foe, breaking all the weapons of the enemy in pieces by his finished work of satisfactory obedience; by his triumphant resurrection and ascension he completely overturned the hopes of hell, leading captivity captive, making a show of our enemies openly, triumphing over them by his cross. Every arrow of guilt which Satan might have shot at us is broken, for who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? Vain are the sharp swords of infernal malice, and the perpetual battles of the serpent’s seed, for in the midst of the church the lame take the prey, and the feeblest warriors are crowned.

The saved may well adore their Lord for his conquests *in them*, since the arrows of their natural hatred are snapped, and the weapons of their rebellion broken. What victories has grace won in our evil hearts! How glorious is Jesus when the will is subdued, and sin dethroned! As for our remaining corruptions, they shall sustain an equally sure defeat, and every temptation, and doubt, and fear, shall be utterly destroyed. In the Salem of our peaceful hearts, the name of Jesus is great beyond compare: he has won our love, and he shall wear it. Even thus securely may we look for victories *by us*. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. We shall cast down the powers of darkness which are in the world, by our faith, and zeal, and holiness; we shall win sinners to Jesus, we shall overturn false systems, we shall convert nations, for God is with us, and none shall stand before us. This evening let the Christian warrior chant the war song, and prepare for to-morrow’s fight. Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

Evening, December 3rd, by C. H. Spurgeon

