

Seeds of Light and Gladness

Preached at Providence Chapel, Eden Street, London, on
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"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright
in heart." Psalm 97:11

True religion is not learnt in a day; in most cases, it is the slow growth of years. In grace, as well as in nature, the most lasting and solid materials are usually of the slowest growth. It takes twenty-five years to build up the body of a man; it takes near double that time to build up his mind. A gourd grows and withers in a night: the oak, the monarch of the forest, is the slow growth of a century. And thus, where there is a solid, substantial growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, it is, generally speaking, the fruit of years of trials, temptations, and corresponding mercies, favours, and blessings.

We may find, perhaps, this train of thought not altogether unconnected with the words before us; which as they consist of two clauses, I shall, as the Lord may enable me, endeavour to open up this morning, by shewing,

First.—How *light* is sown for the *righteous*.

Secondly.—How *gladness* is sown for the *upright in heart*.

I.—We have a certain character set before us in the words of our text, who is called in the *first* clause, "*the righteous*;" and, in the *second*, "*the upright in heart*." It will be my business, therefore, before we proceed any further, to describe, as the Lord may enable me, who this character is; for all depends upon that; it is the base on which the whole

superstructure stands; it is the hinge and pivot upon which the whole text turns. A mistake here is fatal throughout. Personal preaching I abhor; discriminating preaching I love. We cannot have too little of the one; we cannot have too much of the other. Individuals we should never desire to bear in mind, but characters we cannot bear in mind too much; for by describing character we enter into the very secret thoughts of God's people; and by unfolding, as the Lord may give light, their experience, we have a witness in the hearts of those who know the truth, that they are possessed of those divine marks which show that their names are in the book of life.

The word of God describes the children of the Most High under various names. They are called, sometimes, children of God, heirs of God, saints, brethren, temples of the Holy Ghost; but perhaps there is scarcely any title more frequently used, especially in the Old Testament, than that before us, "the righteous."

What, then, is meant by this word "*righteous*?" Who is the character described thereby? We may say, then, that in order to be righteous a man must be possessed of three qualifications. He must *first*, be righteous by the *imputed obedience* of the Lord Jesus Christ put to his account. He must, *secondly*, be righteous by the *implantation* of a righteous principle; and *thirdly*, he must be righteous by the *bringing forth* of this righteous principle in godly acts, in his life, conduct, and conversation. So that we may say, a person is righteous in three points of view. He is so by righteousness imputed, righteousness imparted, and righteousness manifested. And if a man is not a partaker of these three distinct kinds of righteousness—if all three do not meet in the same individual—if he is not a partaker of imputed righteousness, he is not such a character as God

himself in his holy word has called righteous.

I shall not dwell this morning upon the *imputed righteousness* which is put to his account, though it is the foundation of the whole, as it is not closely connected with my text; but shall confine myself chiefly to the second qualification, whereby a man is accounted righteous, as being made a partaker of *imparted* righteousness; for we shall find it is for him as righteous in this sense that "light is sown."

Now this righteousness, as described in the word of God, stands in various things. Thus, it stands in *light*; as we read, "Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Pet. 2:9.) It stands in *life*; "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1.) It stands in *power*; "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." It stands in *divine teaching*; for "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." (Isa. 54:13.) It stands in the *fear of God*; "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. 32:40.) It stands in *faith*; for those who are made partakers of this righteousness, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. It stands in *hope*, as an "anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast." (Heb. 6:19.) It stands in *love*; "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema-maranatha." (1 Cor. 16:22.) It stands in the *leadings* of the Spirit; for "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.) It stands in *simplicity* and *godly sincerity*, in *righteousness* and *true holiness*. In a word, it stands in the *work of the Spirit* upon the soul. Therefore all these qualifications—light, life, and power; the fear of God; faith, hope, and love; righteousness and true holiness; sincerity, and godly simplicity—all meet in the same individual; and so far as they meet in the same bosom, and a man is made a partaker of them by the power of God, so far, and so far

only, is he inwardly a righteous man.

Now we read in our text that light is sown for such. There is to my mind something very sweet and expressive in the figure; which I may observe is one of the simplest in nature. The casting of seed into the ground, and out of that seed a crop springing up, is a figure common to every country, and familiar to every understanding.

When, then, the blessed Spirit declares that "Light is sown for the righteous," he means that *seeds* of light are sown for them, which in time spring up and bear a produce.

But what is there couched in the figure? Let us examine it a little more minutely, and look into it a little more closely. Before seed is cast into ground, there must be a preparation. The soil in its natural state is not fit to receive seed. It must undergo a certain process whereby it is brought into a state suitable to receive it. In other words, there must be a seed-bed in which it must be sown, in order that it may germinate and send down a root. But, there is another thing equally necessary, which is, that the seed when sown must be covered up in the soil; for only as far as it is thus covered up and concealed, does it germinate, grow, or bring forth a crop.

Let us bear these two ideas in mind, because they are the two leading characteristics of the figure.

i. *First*, then, there must be a *preparation*; the soil must be made fit for the seeds of light to be sown in it. This we may see in various ways. For instance,

There are certain *providential leadings*. And there is scarcely any child of God who is not more or less acquainted with

them. These providential leadings are often of the greatest importance as it concerns spiritual things. Nay, I may add further, that some of the most important events of our life were connected with apparently the most trivial incidents. The most important event of my life was my going to Ireland in 1826, when a young man at Oxford; I call it the most important event of my life, because it was in 1827, now twenty-two years ago, that eternal things were first laid upon my mind, that I was made to know myself as a poor, lost sinner, and a spirit of grace and supplication poured out upon my soul. I may have had doubts and fears since as to the reality of the work of grace upon my soul; but I have never doubted, and never shall doubt that if I possess grace in my heart, it was then first implanted. That important event, connected as it is with my standing before you at this moment preaching the word of life, depended upon a very simple incident. It was this. A gentleman sleeping at Oxford, instead of going off early the next morning, remained two or three hours later. That circumstance gave me an interview with him, which resulted in my going to Ireland. Upon that simple incident, then, of a gentleman staying a few hours in a town, hinged the whole work of grace in my heart. I may mention another thing, which may excite a smile, that the foundation of my present ministry turned upon the death of a horse. When I was first a clergyman, I used to ride backward and forward to my parish from the University; but my horse dying, and it not being convenient to buy another, I was induced to go and reside in that parish. And it was during several years that I lived there in separation and privacy, that the foundation of my present ministry was laid in the exercises of mind I then experienced. It was then I began to speak to the people of God of trials and exercises; and to trace out the difference between the teachings of God and the teachings of man. I merely mention these circumstances to shew how the most important events (for what can be so

important to us as the things of God?) may depend upon apparently minute circumstances.

Now when we are in these circumstances, we have no light upon them; but light is sown in the circumstances. When I went to Ireland, I had no idea that the Lord meant there to visit my soul with his grace; I went merely from carnal motives; but light was sown in that circumstance, and has since sprung up. When my horse died, it was a trouble to me; but light was sown in that circumstance, to bring me more into an acquaintance with the inward workings of my heart, and lay the foundation of an experimental ministry. You may have experienced a similar thing. You may have gone up a street, and there met a person; and that meeting have turned out an important event in your life. You may have changed your residence, and that change may have led to most important consequences. These are *providential leadings*. Light is sown in them; seeds of light, which are as different when they have sprung up as the blade from the seed. They are sown in the bed, covered with darkness, concealed by the soil; yet they spring up and bear a crop of light.

Or, you may have had providential *afflictions*, been laid upon a bed of sickness, and this may have been made a great blessing to you. Many of the Lord's people can say with me—that it has been in sickness the Lord has exercised their minds—in sickness the Lord has brought his word with sweetness and power to their souls—in sickness the Lord tried their religion to its very foundation; that it was then he put them into the sieve, and riddled away their chaff and dust. In the affliction we saw no light sown; it incapacitated us from business, made us a burden to ourselves and our families, entailed expense, and brought pain and sorrow; yet the seeds of light were sown in that affliction, and it sprung

up in God's own time to bear a blessed crop.

Or, we may experience a providential *mercy* as well as a providential affliction. The Lord may turn our captivity in temporal things, and open a door in providence for relief in worldly circumstances. Something may turn up from a casual meeting with a stranger, some debt become paid, some friendship gained, some new acquaintance formed, some change of life connected with this providential event. In these providential mercies seeds of light are sown, which spring up and bear a crop.

Now we are as passive in the matter as the very soil in which the seeds are sown. But by these providential dealings and leadings, whether afflictions or mercies, a *preparation* is made for the seeds of light to be sown. Providential dealings are often as the ploughing, the furrowing, the removal of the weeds, the preparing a bed for the seeds to fall in. Nay more, when the seeds are sown in providential circumstances, in affliction, or mercy, they are covered and concealed in the soil, yet in due time spring up and bear a crop.

But there are not only providential leadings, afflictions, and mercies in which light is sown; there are also *spiritual* dealings, and in these more especially light is sown for the righteous. For instance;

1. When the Lord first begins the work of grace upon the soul he usually pierces the heart with deep *convictions of sin*; and thus makes us to feel what poor, lost, undone wretches we are. Now in these he is sowing seeds of light. This conviction is to issue in conversion, this guilt in pardon, this sorrow in joy, this trouble in eternal praise and glory. At the time we cannot see it; yet the seeds of light are sown in the heart in these convictions, in this sorrow, in this grief, in this trouble; they lie indeed for a season buried as it were beneath the

clouds of darkness and unbelief; but in due time, as we shall shew presently, this light springs up.

2. Again, in the various *temptations* that our soul is exercised with, light is sown. We never learn the truth so well as when we learn it in the way of temptation. But when these temptations first come upon us, we know not their end; I remember well, when infidelity, blasphemy, obscenity, and all manner of dreadful temptations first seized me, having never heard or read of such things, I did not know what the issue would be.

But what do we learn by these things, say, by the workings of infidelity, so painful and perplexing to many souls? We learn what faith is. How? Because infidelity smothers and suffocates all false faith; false faith cannot live in it; it is so strong, so powerful, it chokes, smothers, or suffocates all false faith. We are brought then to this point, that nothing but the faith of God's own giving and communicating can stand in the soul beneath the withering breath of infidelity. So with blasphemous suggestions, vile thoughts, dreadful imaginations, what Hart justly calls, 'the very masterpieces of hell;' by painful experience I know what that blessed man meant. But what do these things for us? Why, instrumentally they pull to pieces all our creature holiness; they shew us what we are; they take the deep covering off our heart, and let in the light of day upon these recesses and dens of our fallen nature, that we may see in every lurking cell some hideous monster, some poisoned fountain flowing forth in filthy streams, and thus abhor ourselves for the abominations that we see are ever ready to rush forth and swallow up the soul.

3. In *an acquaintance with the evils of our own heart*; its hypocrisy, deceitfulness, pride, selfishness, worldliness,

carnality, covetousness, and all the dreadful workings of a depraved nature—light is sown. What! Is light sown in all these things? Yes. Is there not naturally a great distinction between the seed and the seed-bed? What similarity can you find betwixt the wheat cast into the ground, and the earth that receives it? What is the earth but a dark, lumpish, lazy clod; never rising beyond its earthly nature? and yet, in that lumpish clod, in that black soil, grain grows, food is produced. So, as every child of God feels, we have a hard, lumpish nature—a stupid unfeeling heart; yet in that soil the seeds of light are sown. I mean, that in the very acquaintance we have with our fallen nature, and the evils of our depraved heart, the seeds of light are sown, which will one day spring up to the praise and glory of God.

4. And so, in the *various exercises, troubles, afflictions, griefs, and sorrows* of a spiritual kind that the Lord's people experience—seeds of light are sown in them. The man who is unacquainted with trials, temptations, the workings of an evil nature, the fiery darts of Satan, the hidings of God's countenance, the various sorrows that the Lord's people are for the most part tried with—go where you will, be in what congregation you may, you will find him to be only a light, frothy, and superficial professor. It is a certain truth that only so far as we are exercised by trials, temptations, and afflictions we come into real heartfelt religion.

ii. But we pass on to show *how* light is sown for them. Hitherto I have been speaking rather of the *preparation* to receive the seeds of light; but we now come to the springing up of light, in the germination, the striking forth of the root, the coming up of the blade, and its growth into ear.

The seeds of light, then, are sown in the very first teachings and dealings of God with the soul; in the very first cry for

mercy; in the very first pang of conviction; in the very first heartfelt prayer; in the very first sincere desire; but so covered up, so concealed, so buried, as not to be seen; and yet all the time taking root downwards, and pushing a blade upwards. And here is the difference, as the Lord himself has described it, between those who bring forth fruit, and those who do not. These latter, "because they had no root, withered away." But where the Lord has sown in the heart of the righteous—in troubles, afflictions, temptations, griefs, and sorrows—the seeds of light, a crop will come up. The root will bury itself deeper, take firmer and stronger hold; and after a time will spring up, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

To carry out the proof of this, look at the Lord's *providential* leadings. When the first providential leading took place, the seeds of light were sown in darkness; but by and by light began to spring up, and the hand of God began to appear more manifestly. You were brought through a leading in providence to sit under a certain minister, to read a certain book, to hear a certain sermon, to peruse a certain portion of God's word. Now, as grace began to work, the seeds of light began to spring up; you began to see why God placed you in that village, why you went down that street, why you came under that ministry, or met with that individual; light began gradually to spring up, and cast itself over the providential circumstance, just as the blade springs up, and casts its shadow over the ground. You begin to see now clearly the hand of God in your change of situation, in your leaving that town or village, in coming to that house, reading that book, hearing that minister, or opening that chapter. Now you can see the hand of God was in it. Here is light springing up; light sown in the very providential dispensation, now springing up and casting its blessed light on that circumstance. I see now why I went to Ireland, while a carnal young man at Oxford; I

view now the hand of God in it; light shines upon that providential circumstance; and, though dark then, it is clear now.

Or, perhaps you were reduced in circumstances, brought into temporal trouble, and through that providential difficulty were introduced to some friend or acquaintance, put into another situation of life, got into another family, met with a fellow-servant, or in some way or other—for all these circumstances differ in every case—light began to spring up upon that providential circumstance. Or, you were laid on a sick bed, and were murmuring at being taken from your business, at becoming an expense to your family, and a burden to yourself; yet the end was a solid spiritual blessing to your soul. Light now sprang up, and fell on that providential affliction.

By this the children of God are distinguished; and this is what we should be doing—watching the hand of God. Why, if we lived like Christians, we should scarce speak to a person, or leave our door, without praying and watching, or mentally lifting up our hearts that the hand of God might be with us. We should be waiting for and watching the hand of God all through the day; and tracing out his providential leadings and guidings in every event of our life. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even he shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." (Psalm 107:43.)

But more particularly in *spiritual things* do we see light sown.

1. You have perhaps in times past experienced very painful and powerful *convictions of sin*. Now what could you see when passing through these powerful convictions? Heaven, glory, bliss, salvation at the end? No: hell, wrath, terror, damnation. And yet the seeds of light, glory, bliss, and

immortality were sown in these troubles. You have sown in tears, to reap in joy; sown in conviction, to reap in conversion. When light comes, we begin to see something of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which we should not otherwise have seen, how it cleanses from all sin; and when there is some application of that precious blood to the conscience, the seeds of light are seen to have been sown in that very conviction that made the soul cry for mercy.

2. So with *temptation*. When temptation comes upon a child of God, does he see that he is to be established in faith thereby? that thereby he is to have brighter views of the Lord Jesus Christ? that he is to stand more rooted and grounded in his finished work? No more than when the oak is trembling to its very base under the storm, it can see that those very storms are giving it a deeper root in the soil. But when the Lord is pleased to open up the riches of his glorious Person, dying love, justifying righteousness, covenant characters and offices, then we see how these temptations have prepared our souls for the reception of the Lord Jesus Christ in all those covenant characters and offices. For what do I know of precious blood but through a guilty conscience? What do I know of covering righteousness, but through a naked and trembling soul? What do I know of dying love but by feeling my heart wretched without it? What do I know of the suitability, tenderness, and compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ except so far as I am brought by temptations and trials into circumstances to need him in all his covenant characters, divine offices, and blessed relations? So that light is sown in these very temptations; and when light beams into the soul to show me the mercy of Jesus, his preciousness, his blood, his righteousness, his love, his suitability; and faith is drawn out to lay hold of him in all his covenant characters and relationships, how the light that shines in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the word that speaks of him, is seen to be sown

in the temptation through which instrumentally he becomes endeared to the soul.

So with all our afflictions, exercises, sorrows, and griefs. Are not all overruled in a most wonderful way to teach us more what we are, to unloose us from the creature, separate us from the world, and bring us nearer and nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ? How in all these things light is sown! and yet such is the nature of it, that though thus sown, we can only see it as light springs up. Thus the light springs up out of the very circumstance in which it is sown. How blessed this is! Whatever circumstances may arise, however painful, however perplexing, however opposed to the natural feelings of the heart; or whatever we may pass through in our minds—still to believe that side by side with every trouble God sows the seeds of light; how this should reconcile us to all our afflictions and difficulties! Afflictions and light are sown together; and as the affliction spreads and grows, so light spreads and grows, till at last it is clearly seen rising up out of the dark clods, and by and by bears a crop, till the whole harvest of light covers the dark soil, and strangles the afflictions which once seemed as if they would strangle it.

Wherever, then, there is imparted righteousness, and the soul is possessed of light, life, and power; the fear of God; faith, hope, and love; sincerity and godly simplicity—there are the seeds of light sown. It may be in some cases long before it springs up. It is in nature as in grace. Some seeds spring up soon. Mustard and cress spring up in a day; the cone of a fir tree may be two years before it germinates. Months and months may roll over our heads before a blade of light is produced, and years more before the ear is ripened, and the harvest gathered in. But if we are righteous, with every circumstance, and especially with every painful circumstance, the seeds of light are sown; and our wisdom

and mercy is to be watching it, looking out for it, just as the farmer after his seed is sown takes his walk, and asks, 'Is the blade springing up? Shall I have a crop?' So the righteous will ask, 'Is there good coming from my affliction? Is light springing up? Is the morning approaching? Is the sun rising? Is there a blessed, holy light springing forth upon these painful circumstances that my soul has passed through?' The man that thus waits, and thus watches, shall not wait nor watch in vain; but will soon have to say, 'Thanks be to God, light is come at last! Blessings be upon his name, I can see a mercy coming out of the ground.' And if it be a mercy, if it be a blessing, it will grow and grow and grow till a crop is seen by our eyes, and all who have eyes to discern the ways and works of the Lord.

II.—Our time is nearly gone, and therefore I cannot dwell so long upon our second clause, which in fact is closely connected with it, and show how "gladness" is sown for "the upright in heart." You may say, how do these characters differ? I do not know that they do differ, or at least, not widely; but the one seems to be rather an explanation of the other. It seems to be added lest there should be any mistake who the righteous was; lest persons who produce only outward fruits of righteousness should say it was for them; therefore it is added, "for the upright *in heart*." A man may be very upright in life and conversation, who has no uprightness of heart; therefore the Holy Spirit seems to have put his mark upon it thus, "upright in heart." Now if a man is not upright in heart, it matters very little how far he is upright in conduct. I dare say one of the most upright men in Jerusalem was the pharisee who went into the temple. I have no doubt he paid tithes of anise, mint, and cummin to the last sprig; or, if he weighed them, to the very turn of the scale within half a grain. Yet was he withal a whited sepulchre, an abomination in the sight of God, a stench in his

nostrils, a smoke that burnt all day. And perhaps, the most crooked creature in all the town was his fellow sinner, who could only smite upon his breast, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He was a publican; and you know they were noted for their corrupt dealings; and hated by the Jews for covetousness and extortion, as the farmers-general of taxes. Here we have, we will suppose, side by side, two characters—the most righteous man in Jerusalem, and the most crooked as far as regards outward things. I do not say he was crooked after he was called by grace. When the Lord put that cry into his soul, it made him upright in heart; and I venture to say, afterwards he was upright in life.

But let us just mention a few particulars which seem to point out the man who is upright in heart.

1. A man who is upright in heart cannot mock God; every body else can mock him by false prayers. Presumptuous, superficial professors can mock God by saying one thing and meaning another. A man cannot do this who is upright in heart.

2. Another mark is, that he cannot take to himself any thing but what God is pleased to communicate by a divine power to his soul; for the uprightness of his heart forbids this. This is a grand distinction betwixt the truly spiritually taught child of God, and a mere carnal professor. The one can take nothing except what God himself is pleased to apply with divine power to his soul: the other can take everything. Because he reads in the Bible about Christ, and the things of God, he can take them with a daring hand, and claim them as his own: but time will prove him to be nothing but a thief and a robber. This being the case, the upright in heart will continually be the last in the race: for they can only speak as the Lord is pleased from time to time to bless their souls with

his manifested mercy and love. When these favours are withheld, they cannot press forward, and take them: their uprightness of heart forbids it.

3. Again, as the upright in heart are upright before God, so are they upright before man. They cannot take every professor by the hand, and say, 'my dear brother this, and my dear sister that,' upon a mere profession of religion. They cannot fawn on any one; they dare not give flattering titles to man. They may give offence—they will give offence; for no man can be faithful—in the pulpit, or out of the pulpit—by acts or words, without giving offence, and bringing down persecution. But the upright in heart cannot act deceitfully; there is a principle within them that forbids them to lie; they are upright in heart, and must be honest in life.

Take these three marks, and see whether you can find them in you. If you are made upright in heart, you cannot mock God; but you will have godly simplicity and sincerity as in the presence and before the eyes of a heart-searching Lord. Can you find that in you? Can you take any blessing or mercy, and call it your own, except so far as God is pleased to speak and apply it with divine power to your soul? If you cannot, then you are one of those who may be said to be upright in heart. Have you a principle in your heart that cannot flatter; that you would sooner in your right mind die than deceive any one; that you must be faithful wherever you go, so far as power is given to you? You do not wish to give unnecessary offence; you would rather be silent: but if you must speak, you must be faithful. Can you find these marks in you? I might add more; but these three may be remembered. Take them home, and see if you can lay them side by side with anything in your souls.

Now gladness is sown for these. What does that imply? That

they are for the most part a sorrowful people; because if gladness is to be sown for them, it is very plain that they are not usually glad. Their uprightness of heart makes them sad; for they see what a God they have to do with, that cannot be mocked. They feel too that they are such poor filthy, loathsome, leprous creatures. And, if they are upright in life, they will have many persecutions; the opposition of wife, husband, parents, children, ministers, friends, and relations. All will be in arms against them; and this keeps them from gladness of heart. Their very uprightness brings them many trials, because they cannot pass things lightly by. They see evil in this, and sin in that; something wrong here and something wrong there, so as to keep their minds pretty well exercised all the day long. This keeps them from gladness; and makes them for the most part "a poor and afflicted people."

An upright man cannot enter into things which others can to deliver themselves. If a man without conscience be in business, he can do things to deliver himself; he can borrow money with little expectation to repay it; he can make promises, 'Send me this, and I will pay you next week!' when he knows the next week will bring no provision for the debt to be paid, or the bill to be taken up. He can enter too into trades and businesses of anything but a godly nature; and thus do many things to deliver himself, which a child of God cannot. Many things such an one dare not touch; and therefore for the most part is kept down in a state of poverty and difficulty; and all connected with his uprightness in heart. If he were not upright in heart, how many painful things he would be delivered from! but being upright in heart, he has little else but troubles and trials. Yet in his heaviest burdens, and in his greatest troubles, there is gladness sown. Just as light was sown in darkness, so is gladness sown in sorrow.

Now gladness is sown in these very things, because he is brought by uprightness of heart to confess, mourn, grieve over, and forsake sin; and when the Lord is pleased to speak joy and peace to his soul, gladness springs up. Gladness is also sown by the very circumstance that he is upright in heart, so that he cannot mock God. So with respect to his not being able to take any blessing, or any mercy, except what God give to him. When he hears others speak of their sweet enjoyment of Christ and the promises of the great manifestations they have received, of their Gospel liberty—these things often trouble and burden his mind. Why? Because he is upright in heart, and can take nothing but what God brings with divine power into his soul. Therefore he is troubled and sorrowful; but gladness is sown in the very trouble he has about these things; and by and by it will spring up to the joy of his soul. So also in his dealing with his fellow-men; he cannot lie, deceive, and cheat. And though he is brought into providential trouble often thereby, he knows he cannot mock God; that he must not put his hand to wrong courses; God sees all, and can bring out of all. So he continues in his worldly difficulties and troubles, and under the weight of trying circumstances, simply because he cannot and will not deliver himself. He is like Daniel. He might have delivered himself. 'Why need Daniel,' some would have said, 'make such a display of his religion? Why did he not shut his door, and pray upon his bed? Why need he open his window?' He might have saved his life thereby; but he felt it was necessary to make an open confession, and to show that he believed in the God of Israel. That brought trouble upon him; but when God delivered him out of the lion's den, was there not gladness? And was not that gladness sown in the very circumstance of being cast into the lion's den? If he had not been upright in heart, he would have saved himself the lion's den; but he would also have saved himself the

deliverance from the lion's den, and the gladness it brought to him.

So that gladness is sown for the upright in heart in all their troubles, afflictions, castings down, sorrows, and exercises. There is gladness lodged at the root of all. The seeds of gladness were sown in sorrow; but when it springs up, it is true gladness; the joy which "the stranger intermeddleth not with;" the "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

Are you in trouble, sorrow, and darkness now? Light is sown in them. The seeds of light are in the trouble, in the affliction, in the temptation, in the perplexity; and you shall see light upon it; it will spring up in due time. O these seeds of light! How sweet it is to have some of the seeds of light in the soul! And the seeds of gladness and joy! Sweet smiles and heavenly favours; And for whom? "The upright in heart." That is the character. Not great towering professors, but the upright in heart. These are the persons for whom the blessing is designed; and every one in this congregation who can come in with these two characters, "the righteous," and "the upright in heart," light and gladness are sown for them, and in due time they will bless and praise God for his wisdom, goodness, and love.