

“QUICKENING OF THE SPIRIT”

(Discourse below by Pastor Russell from the 1913 Convention Report, Page 115)

I am very glad to be with you, dear friends. The text of Scripture which comes to my mind at this time particularly reads, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1.) The word “Quickened” signifies made alive, and, therefore, the text says that you whom God hath made alive were dead; not totally dead, not actually buried, but dead in trespasses and sins. And this calls our minds back to the fact that a great sentence and curse came on the world as the result of sin. Death passed upon all men. We are members of that race which were thus condemned, and therefore, we were condemned, not personally, because we never were tried personally. Our father Adam was on trial; he alone was tried; but God’s great law stands anyway. That law declares that all unrighteousness is sin, and that the wages of sin is death. When father Adam, who was created perfect and put on trial, disobeyed and was sentenced to death, and when we, his children, were born in sin, it followed naturally we would partake of the imperfection; and if the perfect man did not keep the divine law, how could imperfect men keep it? Therefore, since we were all born in that condition of sin and imperfection, we were all subject to death; as St. Paul says, Death passed upon all because all have sinned. Because we are sinners we cannot have life. And here is the proposition, then, that the Bible sets before us, so different from any proposition that has ever come from any other quarter, that it is life or death eternal. If you will be in harmony with God, and perfect, and do His will, delight to do His will, He will be pleased to give you eternal life. If you will not be in harmony with God, if you will be imperfect, then His pleasure is that you shall not live at all, that you should not have any place in all the universe. How simple a proposition it is! When we read the Bible aright as Bible Students, we come to see that it is not a question of Heaven or Hell, but a question of life or death. God’s provision for the angels, for instance, was that, being perfect, they should maintain their perfection and by maintaining that covenant of life, they would live everlastingly; and to live everlastingly from God’s standpoint, the only way God would have any of His creatures live at all, means that they should live happily, live to enjoy life, live in pleasure. So we see, in harmony with the Word of God, that all the holy angels are happy, and perfect, and blessed, because they are not sinners, and have not transgressed God’s Law. Then we see equally the reason why our text says that we were dead in trespasses, under the sentence of death. In fact, the Bible speaks of all mankind, the world in general, as being a dead world—not that there are not people able to walk about, not that all have gone down into the tomb, but those who have gone into the tomb have merely gone to the place where all the others are going, because the one sentence is upon all, for none are fit to live.

Brother Russell, do you say none are fit to live? Yes, I think you are fit to live under present conditions, I think I am fit to live under present conditions, but I admit that we

are not fit to live under the perfect conditions God has prepared according to His righteous law which we see is so reasonable. You are not fit to live with the angels and like the angels, because with your imperfections of mind and body you would be making some trouble all the time. So would I. Even with the new nature begotten in us we find it difficult as New Creatures to live in harmony with the will of the Lord. And you sometimes make mistakes, don't you? So you see, then, as natural men and natural women we could never be fit to live everlastingly, because we would always bring in trouble wherever we would be, and God says he does not want anything of that kind going on in His Universe, but He intends to have a Universe in which everybody will be happy, and everybody will be good, and everybody will be perfect.

Well, why did He make us imperfect, then, if He wants everybody to be perfect? The Bible answers that God's work is perfect. We are not God's work: God made father Adam, and then father Adam by the law of nature propagated a race, but not until he himself had become a sinner, not until transgression and sin, and unrighteousness, and the sentence of death, had come upon him; and, therefore, all of his race were born in sin, and we have been coming down all the way along—six thousand years of falling. Is it any wonder that our heads are not all right? Is it any wonder that today the very best we can do we cannot do perfectly? It is no wonder at all.

Why does God expect us to do perfectly, if we cannot? God does not expect you to do perfectly. He knows you cannot do perfectly, and He gave the Law to Israel for the purpose of showing to them, and incidentally proving to us, that by the deeds of the Law can no flesh be justified in His sight. That gives up all hope, doesn't it? God has decreed that none but the perfect can keep His Law, and none but they shall have everlasting life. He has also proved that no human being is able to keep the Law. That proved that none of us could have eternal life unless God would do something for us.

Now, how will God do something for us? It is the old, old story of Jesus and His love, and the Heavenly Father and His love. We must not forget the Heavenly Father's love. I think in the past many of us have not been inclined to think how much the Heavenly Father is love. The Father Himself loveth you, you remember Jesus says to the Church. And again we read, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." And so the proper thought for us to have is not the one that is frequently given to children, and frequently held by older people, that God is very cross and very angry, and that He was just about to smite us and send us all to eternal torment when Jesus stepped in and said, "Oh Father, please for my sake do not send all these people to eternal torment!" It makes out our Lord Jesus to be very loving, and makes the Heavenly Father to appear most evil and unjust; that He knew we were imperfect, knew we could not do perfectly, then was about to send us to eternal torment when we could not do perfectly. You see that is a wrong thought. As Bible students we are gradually getting rid of the error.

The right thought is that God from the very foundation of the world had a loving purpose in respect to our race. Did He know we would sin? Oh, yes, known unto the Lord are all His works. Did he know we would be imperfect? Yes, He knew it all. Why did He permit evil? Because He was so wise that He knew from beforehand how He could overrule the whole experience of mankind, and all these 6,000 years of sin and death, for our good. How could good come out of all this evil? What would be gained by that that could not have been better gained in some other way? Let us see what God's Word says. If He had not permitted sin, then men never would have known what would be the experiences of sin, how sinful sin is, and what evil conditions it promotes and brings about. Father Adam, we presume, had no idea what would be the result of his disobedience. He knew God had said, Thou shalt not sin, thou shalt not take of the forbidden fruit, but he did not know how it would bring all of this change of sin and sorrow, and mental, moral and physical depravity into the world. He did not for a moment think about all of the insane asylums, and all of the prisons and jails, and the weak-minded and depraved people in the world. He did not think how it would come to you and to me, and how our tendencies would all be downward because of the fall. The angels would never have known that. Nobody would ever have known the effect of sin if God had not permitted sin to come.

Now there is a difference between permitting sin and causing sin. For God to have caused the sin would have been to do evil. God does no evil; He tempts no man. He was not responsible for the sin coming into the world, but He did allow Satan to take his own way and be a rebel against the divine government. He had always treated Satan right. You know Satan's previous name was Lucifer, the morning star, the bright angel, one of the highest of the order of angels, and he, according to the Bible, became very ambitious, and thought he would like to have a power of his own to see what he could do if he had his liberty to direct things. In attempting to get that he became disobedient to God, a traitor against the Divine government. God could have stopped it at any moment; He could have arrested Satan and could have held him in restraint, so that he could not have uttered a word or done a single thing in opposition to God's plan. But God said, No, I will let Satan take his course and let all the angels see what the effect of sin amongst angels would be. So God did not hinder things, and Satan misrepresented God's character. He said to mother Eve that God had misstated things to her; that whereas God said they would die for eating of the forbidden fruit, I will tell you, said Satan, it is not true at all; you won't die; on the contrary, you will become like gods, you will just get to be like the angels. And when mother Eve was under temptation God did not interfere. God could have sent an angel to say, Beware! Remember you were warned that you would die if you ate that! But He let her alone; His Word was there; she had her full testing; she ate, disobeyed.

Then God could have said to Adam, Do not follow your wife's advice, you know what this is. I will give you another helpmate that is better than she is and if she dies it will not

make any difference to you, for I will see you through in the matter. But He did not. God permitted the whole reign of sin to come in, with the tremendous influences for evil in the world.

Then you remember how other angels were tempted to sin, and many of them fell, and you know what a terrible time they had before the flood, and how at the flood God wiped out that order of things, and then after the flood God started a new order of things and let mankind and the angels see things and try it over again under somewhat different conditions.

So God allowed this reign of sin and death to illustrate certain pictures. It illustrated what righteousness is, the necessity for obedience to God, and that there can be no happiness except in being obedient to the Creator. That is all illustrated, you have learned it, and I have learned it. And just as sure as you and I have learned there can be no real happiness contrary to the divine arrangement, just so all the holy angels see as clear as crystal that whoever sins will suffer. They all know it now. But if you had told any of the angels before hand, they would have said, Well, I don't know, how can you tell that? Where is your proof? There never had been any demonstration of sin before. The first manifestation of sin occurred when Satan became the enemy of God, then the second manifestation was when our first parents became transgressors. It looked as though God had no power. There was Satan in rebellion, why did not God stop it? I suppose the holy angels would say, Why does not God stop Satan from tempting those creatures of His, and from all these wrong things He is doing, bringing temptations in to the other angels? But God held His peace; He did not explain; He did not say anything. Then I presume—I don't know—the Bible does not say, but I presume that all the angels, or a good many of them, got the impression, Well, we thought God was able to do a great deal more than He is able to do. Surely if He were able to stop Satan and sin He would do so. And then came the temptation to doubt the Almighty's character and power. And then came the temptation to doubt God's wisdom—He did not know what He is doing, He did not know what Satan would do, He did not know what men were going to do. Everything was doubt and confusion, and all the angels would look on with astonishment as they would see the reign of sin and death progressing and running over hundreds of years,—When will it stop? What will be the end of all this? Is the whole Universe going into anarchy? What will become of this reign of sin and death? Of course some would say, Well, we have every confidence in the Almighty; we do not understand it—just as you and I said we did not understand it—it seems strange; what can it mean? Nobody seems to know. It seems an awful reign of sin and death, and apparently God is unable to cope with the situation, and does not know what to do. And God allowed it.

And then when the time of the flood came He did put a stop to things. It had gone as far as it ought to go. And yet the flood came in such a way that the angels might have said—for there was room to doubt that the flood came providentially, because it was one of

those great rings, the last one of them—Well, it so happened, that ring that was to stay up came down and drowned them all, and that let the Lord out of a bad dilemma, and let Him start it all over again.

Then we see Noah and his family start out with offering a sacrifice and saying that they wanted to serve God and in only a little while the downward tendency of sin made the whole earth full of violence again.

And then it was over 2,000 years before God said to Abraham that He intended some day to bless the world. That is the first thing God ever said about blessing the world. He never told anybody He ever intended to do anything for the world at all—just allowed it to go on, and on, and on. Now, then, if the angels heard that, and no doubt they did, they would say, God says to Abraham that He is going to bless the world. How will He do it? It is easier to say that He will bless the world than to do it. There is room to doubt, you see. Then Abraham had no child and he said, I do not see how I am to bless the world, I have not even any child, and God said it would be my child. So day after day and year after year went by and he did not even have a child; yet God said that through his posterity He intended to bless all mankind. There was plenty of room to doubt. God meant it to be so. He wanted to put it that way, that those who wanted to doubt could have as much chance as they chose, and those who wanted to believe would have as much chance for exercising faith as they chose. By and by Abraham's faith was rewarded. Isaac was born, and Abraham and Sarah looked at the little boy—Oh, yes, he is the long-promised Messiah. God is going to bless the world, here is the son of promise. Ishmael is not the one. Then Isaac grew up, and was not a very specially bright boy either. They did not quite understand it. He got to be a young man, and there was no sign of blessing the world; it seemed to be as far off as ever. There was every opportunity for the angels to doubt—another mistake, another blunder, another time God did not know what He was doing, and He promised more than He could accomplish. You see all the angels had plenty of testing.

Things went on, and by and by Isaac had two sons, and God said it would be through Jacob the blessing would come. Then Jacob's sons grew up, and they were pretty bad boys. They practically murdered their brother Joseph, and they were none too promising to bless the world. Yes, God's promise was, "In thy seed shall all the families of the world be blessed."

Then when Jacob died God indicated how all of Jacob's children would come in to be the heirs of this promise. But instead of getting up in the world where they could bless everybody else, they got right down into slavery, and sunk a little lower and a little lower, until the Egyptians had such power over them, taking away all their weapons whereby they could defend themselves, and made slaves of them, and even compelled them to kill their own children lest they should become more numerous. How was that blessing the

world? Were they blessing the Egyptians? No. Did God forget all about his promise? No. How long was it from the time He promised Abraham until He began to manifest something to Moses? Over 400 years. Just think of that, the very line that God said the blessing would come through were a nation of slaves, in slavery to the main nation of that day. It did not look much like God was keeping His promise, did it? Then what happened? The next thing was, God raised up Moses, provided him an education, trained him in the very home of Pharaoh. It looked very remarkable. Even the Israelites could not realize it. At one time Moses proposed to help some of them. They said, Who made you our ruler? They would not have him to be the ruler. Moses was obliged to flee from the very people he wanted to help and benefit, the very people he thought he was to be leader of, and he was away forty years. Why, you say, God did not care anything for time at all, did He? Oh, my dear friends, God has lots of time. When God's due time came He sent for Moses to come back from the land of Midian right to the children of Israel. Now, Moses had been courageous before, he was ready to lead out the Israelites, ready to stand up for them. He preferred to be an Israelite and stand with God's people rather than to be in the house with Pharaoh and have all the pleasures of sin for a season, the Apostle says. But now when God said to Moses, I am ready for you to deliver Israel, Moses said, Oh, Lord excuse me, I had enough of that before; I went to deliver them forty years ago, you know, and was not able to do it.

Moses, I am ready for you to deliver them. Lord, please send someone else. Now the Lord said, You are very meek and modest about the matter, and I will give you Aaron to be your mouthpiece, and he will be the one who will do most of the speaking. You will be behind him and tell him what to say, and he will be your mouthpiece to do the saying. Now go on.

So Moses and Aaron started out. Moses representing God and Aaron being the mouthpiece. What were they to do? They were to bear witness to the people of Israel that God wanted them to go out of the land of Egypt to offer sacrifice to Him, etc., and you remember how one plague after another came on the Egyptians until they finally let Israel go. Then it looked now for all the world as though things had come to the right place. The Israelites marched out. The wind blew the waters of the Red Sea back and left it dry enough for them to pass over in the night and by early morning they were on the other side. The Egyptian Army came along, the wind came the other way and the waters gradually rose on them and they were drowned. Then the Israelites said, God who has delivered us is evidently going to do for us all the wonderful things. So onward they went to Mt. Sinai. God said, Now are you ready? If you are ready I am.

They said, Yes, Lord, ready for anything. Very well, Before I will give you any work in blessing the world you will have to show that you are able to rule yourselves; you cannot expect me to put you up as teachers to instruct and guide the world unless you show that you can keep my law yourselves. That is fair enough, because we cannot teach others if

we do not know ourselves. Are you ready, then, for me to make a covenant with you? Oh, Lord, have we not been waiting for over 400 years? All right, the Lord said through Moses, I will make the covenant. They answered that all of these things they would do.

They got the table of the Law, the ten commandments, and they would keep His commandments and He would bless them. They would grow great and influential and all the world would come under their sway. But it was only a little while until they had broken the commandments and found they were sinners. Then God arranged for them to have atonement days, to cover their sins for one year. So they tried an entire year to see if they could live without sin and keep the commandments of the Lord, so they would not die, but be worthy to be His people. They could not do it. They kept on with sickness and dying just the same. What was the matter? Was not God living up to His terms, or were they not living up to the terms? Well, they found out finally that the fault was with themselves, that they had entered into a contract they were not able to keep; they had agreed to keep God's Law, and were not able to do it.

Now that is the very lesson God wanted them to learn—but not them especially. The Apostle explains that in dealing with the nation of Israel God was dealing with them in a typical way, so you and I of this Gospel Age would get the lesson, we would see where they failed, and we would know that if those Jews failed to keep the Law, and could not keep the Law because they were fallen creatures, you and I would know that if we had been in their places we would have failed just the same as they did. So this would make us cry out, Lord, we must have help or we cannot keep the Law.

So God said to them, Now, my people, I appreciate your condition and the situation of things, and that you are not able to keep the Law, and I do not want you to be discouraged; I intend by and by to bring in a different order of things. I knew in advance you were not able to keep your Law Covenant, but I intend to give you another Law Covenant, and it will be more favorable to you. What did God mean by that? Had He given them too hard a law at first? No, no, He could not give a bad law. If He would give a bad law, then He would be a bad God, you see. The only law God could give would be a righteous law. Then what kind of a new covenant would it be that would be better than the one they had? The Bible tells us that the difference would be that there would be a better mediator for the New Covenant. Was not Moses a good Mediator? Was he not a very faithful leader of his people? Did he not leave the throne of Egypt for them? Did he not try every way to be a faithful mediator between God and Israel? Yes, he did. How could God send a better mediator than Moses? This way: Moses was a member of the fallen race and imperfect. He gave all he could give, but he was only a typical character. He had no real rights to give any more than anyone else had. Because all the race of Adam was under condemnation, all imperfect, and Moses just the same as the others—not as low as some, but nevertheless imperfect. Then how would this other mediator be better than Moses? This way: Moses as a typical mediator offered typical

sacrifices, a bullock and a goat for the sins of the people, but these did not really take away the sin, they merely covered the sins for a year, but now God says, I purpose that not only the sins shall be covered, but I purpose a sacrifice that will really cancel all of those sins, blot them all out. I will make a new Covenant with you, saith the Lord, not according to that Covenant I made with you when I took you by the hand to lead you out of the land of Egypt, which covenant ye brake, but I will make a New Covenant with you, and I will remember your sins and iniquities no more. I will just forget all about them, as though you never had had them. And I will do more than that, because if I merely blot out all your past sins and leave you with the kind of heart you have now you would merely get into more sin, so I will take away the stony heart, the hard heart, the selfish heart, the heart that would take advantage of its neighbor, and brother, and servant, the heart that would do selfish things for selfish purposes, to get something for itself.

Where did we get the hard heart? We got it through sin. Did Adam have a hard heart? No, Adam had a very tender heart, because he was in the image and likeness of God. Don't you think God has a tender heart? Yes. Be ye tenderhearted, said the Apostle. Be ye like unto your Father in Heaven. So God is going to take away the stony heart and give instead a heart of flesh. Now we can see how the blessing is going to come. When God does all of that for mankind, it will be lifting them clear up out of their fallen condition. And if they get back to where they have a heart of flesh, the image of God, as Adam had, then they can do perfectly; they can keep His law, and He can give them eternal life. Then they can be used of Him in blessing anybody else who is not in that condition.

Has God done that for the Jews yet? No, not any more than he has taken away the stony heart from amongst the Gentiles. He has not taken the stony heart out of the flesh of any people. We have not found any that are back to the image and likeness of God. Why not? Because the time of that covenant has not yet come. When will all of that be, and how long will it take? It is for the antitypical Moses when he comes to bring in this New Covenant and cancel the sin and give the new heart. How long will it take? It will take the antitypical Moses exactly a thousand years. What will he reign for? To overcome sin and take away the hardness, dissolve the hard heart and give instead the warm, gentle, sympathetic heart that was lost way back 6,000 years ago.

Well, now, what is going on in the meantime? We are waiting for the antitypical Moses. Everything in the type must have an antitype. Here is the Law Covenant, and here is to be the New Law Covenant, but there could not be any Law Covenant until there was a Mediator of that covenant. Who is that to be? Christ, the Head, and the church His body. Moses could not do anything in the way of instituting a covenant until first of all he killed his sacrifices. He first killed the bullock, and then the goat, and not until he had killed the bullock and the goat was he prepared to make that covenant. And what is the antitype of that? Why, the great antitypical Moses, must make his sacrifice. Jesus first of all

sacrificed himself, then he must sacrifice the church, and that takes all of this Gospel Age. He killed the antitypical bullock when he gave up his own life, when he offered himself, sacrificially for our sins, when he said, Not my will but thine be done; when without resistance he allowed himself to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. And then at Pentecost he began dealing with the antitypical goat class, and I hope you are a member of that class, and I hope I am a member of it. How many of them are there? Perhaps 144,000. I used to think that was too few, but the more I come to think about it the more it seems to me that is a very large number. I would wonder more that there would be that many than that there would be more, as I came to see how few there are who seem to be glad to lay down their lives in the Lord's service. If all of these who would be with the Lord are to be footstep followers, copies of His spirit and zeal, I wonder where He would find 144,000. But then the Lord knows his own, and if God has fixed the number at 144,000, not one less will do, and there will not be one more in the company. The election of the church will be at an end, the body of the antitypical Moses will be completed. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." (Acts 3:22)

Now we see how God has been proceeding. Coming back to our text, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," we see the whole world were sinners, and you and I were of that same class, and just as condemned and devoid of life as the rest, but God has made us alive. How so? Through the imputation of Christ's merit in advance of the world. Why so? Because God wishes now to select a special class from the world. Not everybody has been invited to this. There are millions living today that never so much as heard of Jesus Christ; and there are thousands living right here in San Diego and in California, and in New York, and all over the civilized world, that have never heard in the Bible sense of hearing. They have heard something about it, but they did not hear in their minds; they have natural sight, but do not see with the eyes of their understanding. They do not comprehend that they are sinners and God has provided a Savior, and that he is now asking those invited to come in. How could that be? From prejudice, superstition, false teaching, false theories—some from parents and some from outside. Many of the creeds have false doctrines in them. One asks, How could a good man put bad things in a creed? The Bible says the devil put these things in the creed; the devil made part of our creeds. Is not that hard? It is pretty hard. How could he do it? Oh, he has been working at this business a long time; he is an expert hand. The Apostle says we are not ignorant of his devices, and speaks of the "wiles of the devil." He is wily; he is like the serpent; he is deceitful. He misled our forefathers, and they would think they were going to do something very zealously for God, and he would lead them way past the right mark and get them to do something very much to God's discredit and to their own; as, for instance, in the case of Brother Calvin. I can see, as I look back over the pages of history, how the devil has been working hard with all people that have ever tried to get out of darkness into light. That makes me all the more solicitous for you and

for myself—and for myself especially. It is all right for you to watch for me, but still more important that I watch for myself; and I am trying to watch out for the devil all the time. I know, he would like to do me up, and I know the Lord is willing I shall not be done up, so I am going to try to walk very near to the Lord, and if we thus walk near the Lord in humility of mind, in full confidence in his power, trusting only His Word, and if anything would seem to lead us off to do some guessing for ourselves to come right back and say, No guessing for me, I have the Word of the Lord, I will stay by what is written—thus it is written; I will walk according to the way it is written and leave out those things that I might be tempted to guess at. If you would guess at something, and bolster it up, then by and by somebody will be coming along and if it is written they will have the advantage, and your pride would say, I have said so and it is so. But the Bible says for you and for me to walk circumspectly. That means to walk looking around you. It does not mean that we are to be living in fear and abject dread; that would mean we would lose our faith in God; we are not hoping that by any strength or power of our own, we are going to come off conquerors and win the great prize; our confidence is in God; he has begun a good work in you and he is able to do it; but we are to walk with fear in the sense of having such respect for God and such respect for his promises, and such anticipations of the great outcome, that it will make us very careful.

If coming days shall bring severe trials, then coming days will also bring us increased joy; for as the Apostle says, These light afflictions which are but for a moment work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. How are they light afflictions? In proportion as you get the better balanced in your mind, they are light afflictions. Your mind balances the afflictions of this present time with the joys and blessings of God's favor now and in the future, and from that standpoint what is the trifling worth of this, that the other thing of life in comparison with God's favor, and love, and promises, and everlasting blessing in the future. The more you study it, the lighter the afflictions appear to you, until they begin to say, I dreaded those things so much and really they are not worth thinking about at all. So you will get to thinking less and less about the affairs of life. You will say, Well, let them do what they will, I do not care; my heart is fixed on the eternal God, why should I worry about these other things?

So, then dear friends, we are dead with Christ, dead to the world, and we alive toward God as New Creatures. Having begun in the spirit, let us walk in the spirit; let us not try as New Creatures to walk after the flesh, but rather put away the defilements of the flesh of every kind—the desire for wealth, fame, name, ease, pleasure. How shall we walk after the spirit? God, through the spirit of His truth, has told us if we would have His highest favor, the great favor and blessing to which He has called us, we must walk in the footsteps of Jesus—self-sacrifice. And this is our desire—may I speak for you and for myself? This is our determination, by the grace of God helping us we will go on unto perfection, and we will reach the glorious prize of our High Calling in Jesus.