

Two Gifts from Eden

#0151

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 20, 1976

Our text this morning is James, the first chapter, and the 17th verse—a wonderful text about a wonderful subject.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” James 1:17.

Many are thinking, at this season of the year, about gifts—either *getting* them or *giving* them. Our text shows us the origin of all good gifts, wonderful gifts. With this, I'd like to put the 68th Psalm, verses 17 through 19.

This is speaking of the ascension of Christ as He left this world and returned to the Temple in Heaven and was inaugurated as Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary. Written a thousand years before Jesus' birth in this world, it beautifully described His ascension and entrance into His mediatorial work.

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the Holy Place” Psalm 68:17.

Here we have the Source of all these good and perfect gifts that come down. They come to us, dear friends, by virtue of the death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of our blessed Lord. He went to Heaven to get gifts for us.

“Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them” Psalm 68:18.

Even though I've been a rebel many times, I'm glad Jesus didn't overlook me, aren't you? Of course, He is seeking to cure us of our rebellion.

“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation” Psalm 68:19.

Every day, a new gift. Every day, fresh reminders of His love. This morning, I want to talk with you about two of these wonderful gifts. Two wonderful gifts that God has given us to remind us of His love. You know, oft-times a gift is of special value because of the sentiment connected with it. For example, my watch here was given to me by someone very dear to me. Well, it's a good timepiece. But it's more than that. It's a reminder of the one who gave it to me.

Let me tell you, when God gives you and me something, it's because He loves us and longs to show that love and wants us to remember Him as the One who gave us these gifts of love.

Now we'll turn to Mark, the second chapter, the 27th and 28th verses. I'm glad so many of you have your Bibles and are turning to these inspired pages—to receive the Word of the living God.

And He said unto them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath' Mark 2:28–29.

So this Lord's Day, the holy Sabbath is given us for our benefit. A benefit is something good. Is the Sabbath good? Oh, yes. Thank God. Who made it? Jesus made it. Who did He make it for? He made it for me; He made it for you—what a wonderful gift. And, like my watch, it has value because of the One who gave it.

I read this beautiful sentence:

"The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites God and His people" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6*, page 351.

Isn't that beautiful? It's a golden gift, a beautiful symbol of the union between God and His people.

Let's read that in Ezekiel, the 20th chapter, verses 19 and 20.

"I am the Lord your God; walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments, and do them; and hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God" Ezekiel 20:19–20.

I'm so thankful for this gift of the Sabbath this morning. And when we remember the Sabbath, we remember Him.

Now, interestingly enough, God has put the Sabbath right in His holy law—the Ten Commandments. In fact, it's the "seal" of the law. For the Sabbath reminds us of the fact that the One who gave the law is the One who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and He rested the seventh day as the sign of the fact that He had finished His work of creation. And so He gives us this day, this birthday of the world, to remember Him as the Creator—as the One who made it—and therefore the One to whom our worship is due.

Oh, I'm so glad God gave us the gift of life, aren't you? Without that, no other gift would be of any value; we wouldn't be here, for we'd be dead. It's because He's *Creator* that He's *given* us this gift. Only the Creator can impart life; only the Creator can maintain life; only the Creator can restore life; only the Creator can enlarge life. And that One who made this world by His creative Word, and who gave us the Sabbath as the sign of His creation, came down into this world, was born as a little babe and grew up, and in His ministry He said, "I have come that they might have life

and have it more abundantly.” Oh, yes. Thank God for His creation at the beginning, and for His creative power manifested in reaching down and lifting us up and restoring us to the original beauty and perfection.

So, this morning, we are thinking of this wonderful golden gift—the Sabbath.

Shall we repeat the fourth Commandment together?

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it, thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gate: for in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it”
Exodus 20:8–11.

Praise God for this wonderful gift.

You know, friends, when we get home to the Father’s house, and when He leads us at last into our eternal reward in the earth made new, from one Sabbath to another, all flesh will come to worship the Lord. I want to be there, don’t you? I want to make my dear Lord glad by welcoming, from week to week all through eternity, that day which marked the tie between Him and me—that day which is the golden clasp that unites Him and His people. Thank God we have it now, don’t we? Even though Eden was lost because of sin, the Sabbath of Eden is still with us. The Eden rest is still ours in this wonderful Sabbath institution—this holy Sabbath day.

Welcome, welcome, day of rest,
To the world in kindness given;
Welcome to this humble breast,
As the beaming light from Heaven.
Anonymous

O day of rest and gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
Most beautiful, most bright.
Christopher Wordsworth

Ah friends, remember: this is the gift, the special gift of Christ to His people, from the gates of Eden till He shall return and on through eternity.

Now let’s look at another gift He’s given—the gift of the home. And, like the Sabbath, it comes to us from the Garden of Eden. And what a wonderful gift it is. Everybody here this morning has a home. Jesus wants everybody to get the blessing of the Sabbath, and Jesus wants everybody to get the blessing of the home.

He reminded us of the Sabbath in one commandment; He reminded us of the home in three commandments.

“Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” Exodus 20:12.

That is a wonderful gift. Everybody here has a father; everybody here has a mother. And Jesus is telling you to respect and honor that father, that mother. There may be somebody here this morning who says sincerely, “But Brother Frazee, you don’t know. You never knew my mother, you never knew my father. I don’t know how to respect them.”

I’m sorry we’re living in a world where, from time to time, we meet situations like that. And I’m not here to just recite some poetry. I’m here to deal with the realities of life. And I tell you, my dear friends: God is your Father. And He intended that every child should grow up in a home where father and mother were so related to God that the influence of father and mother in the home should be like God, and that learning the love of father and mother the child would learn the love of the Father in Heaven. That’s why God established the home. But thank God, if your earthly father didn’t know God, if your earthly mother wasn’t able to reveal the love of God, God has not left Himself without witness. God has some way to reveal to you His love. In fact, we’re told that He has a thousand ways of which we know nothing.

And I have a promise for you: while in the life you may not be able to figure out what I have just said, if you will let God reveal His love to you, if you will let God use the channels of His choice to get through to you, every one of you in the kingdom of God will have satisfactorily explained all the puzzles, and enigmas, and problems, and difficulties, and perplexities, and misunderstandings of this earthly life. I can assure you of that. Jesus never leads His children in a way other than they would choose to be led if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as coworkers with Him.

One of our problems is that we sometimes do not recognize the love of God or the love of our parents in what happens.

The wise man said:

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying” Proverbs 19:18.

Can chastening reveal love? Oh yes. So the scripture says:

“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” Hebrews 12:6.

Can there be scourging without love? Oh yes. Plenty of it goes on. But my dear friends, love finds expression in discipline and even in chastisement if that’s necessary. Doesn’t it? I feel sorry for the child who grows up thinking that love is revealed only in things he likes to eat and doing things he likes to do. Jesus, when

He took our nature, while He never had to be whipped, He learned obedience by the things that He suffered. The discipline of life is indeed at times unpleasant. But thank God that every one of these experiences can be a revelation of God's love.

Now, I want to read an interesting statement for some who may never have had the opportunity of being with your father and mother—you may be an orphan. Here is a beautiful statement in volume two of the Testimonies. In fact, the name of the chapter is "Letter to An Orphan Boy."

"Wise is that young man and highly blest who feels it to be his duty, if he has parents, to look up to them, and if he has not, who regards his guardian, or those with whom he lives, as counselors, as comforters, and in some respects as his rulers, and who allows the restraints of his home to abide upon him" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2*, page 308.

So you see, God has made provision even for orphans to get the love and the discipline of a Christian home. He's made arrangements. And my dear friends, if I were an orphan and read this, and I could look up to Heaven and say, "Lord, I haven't had that gift yet. I don't have my parents. And I haven't yet had the blessing that this page is talking about," do you know what I'd do? I'd claim the promises of God and pray till I got them because everybody needs it.

Now, look at that 68th Psalm again. That's the one that says that He daily loadeth us with benefits. It's those who ask who sometimes receive in largest amount. And so these loaded benefits wait for those who claim the promise.

"God setteth the solitary in families" Psalm 68:6

Who is the solitary? What does solitary mean? Alone, all alone. But God is in the business of setting the solitary in families. I must say this, friends: whether you're born into a home or get into a family some other way, there are restrictions. Some people are so afraid of the restrictions that they miss the benefit, they miss the blessing. But, ah friends, the Sabbath is a restriction, isn't it?

Turn to Isaiah, the 58th chapter, and let's see some of the restrictions about the Sabbath:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shall honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" Isaiah 58:13–14.

A wonderful picture of delight. In God's holy Sabbath day, IF we will enter into the restriction, turn away thy foot from the Sabbath. What does that mean? Don't walk on it, but lift it up, not disregard it. And then it tells us three things not to do: not

doing thine own way. “Oh, but I *like* my own way.” God says He has something *better* for us, it’s *His* way. “You mean God knows better what would please me than I do?” Yes, He does. Some of us have learned that the hard way. Did you ever learn it the hard way? That your way is not the happiest way in this world? Well, the Sabbath reminds you that God is calling you to turn from your *own* ways and take *His* ways.

And what’s the next thing? Not finding thine own pleasure. The Sabbath is not a “fun day,” my friends. Neither is it a gloomy day. Because the next verse says, “Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” Oh, what a word ‘delight’ is. Delighted indeed, with great joy, if we keep the Sabbath. But it means turning aside from our own pleasure in seeking His pleasure.

Then what’s that third restraint? Not speaking thine own words. The Sabbath is not a day for conversation about business or our usual work. It’s a day in which, thank God, we turn aside from the usual to receive the unusual; in which we turn aside from ordinary to enjoy the extraordinary. Please tell me, friends, how is God going to give me something special if I insist on something that’s just the same as every other day? So it is in the home. There are restrictions. There is discipline. But all of it is to help us get the joy.

Sometimes when I am driving along the highway, I notice a rail at the side. Don’t you wish we could tear down those rails? Don’t they restrict us? *Sure* they restrict us. The great purpose of the rail is to restrict us from what we really want to do. It’s to keep us out of the ditch. This is true with every restriction concerning the Sabbath and the home.

Look with me at that last line:

“...who allows the restraints of his home to abide upon him”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2, page 308.

There comes a time when, if the restrictions abide, it’s because of the choice of the youth himself. I remember when I was just a little fellow. I got disciplined from time to time. I’m sorry that I had to *have* it, but I’m glad now that I *got* it. But there were times when thoughts like these would come into my mind: “Oh, I wish I could grow up.” Do you know what I had in my mind? I could do as I pleased, and I wouldn’t have to be punished. Did you ever feel that way when you were a child? But you’re never grown up as long as you feel that way, even if you get to be 60 years old. You’re not grown up at all. That’s an immature mind. In the first place, none of us ever get so big but what we’re under authority.

There was a man who sat in the White House who thought he was above authority. Did he find out he wasn’t? What a sad story. I don’t know about his childhood and youth. Maybe he didn’t learn some of these lessons we’re studying this morning. I can’t tell you. I know this: every one of us, somewhere along the line, we must learn that the law of the Lord is perfect and that every life in this universe is to be under law, under authority, under restriction—not cruel, not domineering, but, oh, to bring us all together in unity. This is what the church is for; this is what the home is for; this is what every experience of life is for.

And so, I trust that each one here this morning is enjoying the blessing of the Sabbath, and enjoying the blessings of home. If there's anybody that isn't, ask God to give you these blessings—the blessings of love and discipline, of sharing here on earth the order and love of Heaven.

Now suppose we've broken the Sabbath. It's sin to transgress God's law. Suppose we've broken the Fifth Commandment. Thank God, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus died upon the cross to cover and take away my sin of Sabbath-breaking, to cover and take away my sin of disobedience in the home, in the school, in the church, wherever. Thank God for these words:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
and sinners plunged beneath that flood
lose all their guilty stains.

[Testimony service follows]

Heavenly Father, thank Thee for Thy wonderful gifts, that Thou dost daily load us with benefits. And we join in thanksgiving to the Father and the Son for these presents from the courts above. We unite in prayer, especially for these who stood this morning. We thank Thee for the dear ones who have expressed their desire to come back to God. And we know that the Father's heart above joins with our hearts here in glad welcome. Assure them of Thy love.

And then, Lord, there are these, who have, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, discovered some idol standing between them and a closer walk with Thee.

Take us all, in a very special way, close to Thy loving heart. And may we go from this chapel glad in the knowledge that Christ is our Savior and that we are His people. For His sake, amen.

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