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"I WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME."

"The love of Christ constraineth [draweth] us." – 2 Cor. 5:14.

Nearly two thousand years have passed since the ransom price for sinners was paid – since the Son of man was lifted up – and even in this most favored day we see that the vast majority of men are still in ignorance of this great gift of God; and that they have not been drawn by the Lord even in the remotest sense conceivable. And when we think of the still greater mass of mankind who have died during the centuries past without being drawn, our faith in the Master's promise compels us to look to the Millennial age for its fulfillment. And why not? If infinite wisdom permitted four thousand years to elapse from the time that sin entered the world, and death, the penalty of sin, was inflicted with all its train of woes, before the ransom was given, why should we not presume that a long period might [R1055 : page 3] elapse after the ransom had been paid, before the general drawing promised should take effect.

Our Heavenly Father loved his creatures all those four thousand years before sending the Redeemer, and he sympathized with them in their fallen and dying condition just as much as he does to-day; for he changes not. Now he has allowed almost two thousand years more to elapse, and yet the drawing power of Christ, we might say, has not begun to affect the world. Strange! says human shortsightedness, if God so loved the world as to give his Son to redeem all, and if Christ so loved us as to freely deliver himself up for us all, wherefor this tardiness in bringing to pass the promised blessings? Why should two thousand years intervene before the drawing of all men begins?

Careful study into the wonderful plan of God discovers both love and wisdom even in this seeming tardiness; for all this time the drawing power of Christ has been exerted upon a special class – a class in whom the love of God and of Christ, as manifested in this lifting up, awakens

such a sense of gratitude as to draw them to follow in his foot-prints at any cost of tribulation, distress or persecution. And this class of zealous, devoted faithful souls the Lord designs to associate with himself in the great work of blessing, drawing and saving all his purchased possession.

Thus Christ does draw some now – a "little flock," he terms it, in comparison with the masses of men. And these shall be his bride, and the first fruits of his great sacrifice. As the Apostle expresses it, it is the love of Christ that constraineth or draweth us now; and how strongly that cord of love has drawn the saints, has been wonderfully manifested in their sufferings, self-denials and self-sacrifice, even unto death: and that often in the most revolting forms. Many in the days of Papal persecution rather than deny their faith or walk according to the spirit of the world were so drawn by the love of Christ as to submit to all sorts of indignities and ignominious deaths by cruel rackings, burnings and tortures of every description.

What a wonderful power is the love of Christ, made manifest to us through his lifting up on the cross for our redemption! It has not lost its power yet to draw some, and to hold them in loyalty and fidelity to Christ even against all the subtle and deceptive influences of this "evil day," and these perilous times. Yes, the love of Christ still draws the saints, so that they do not seek to do their own pleasure but the will of God. And this will of God in them controls in all the little affairs of life – in the house-keeping and the training of families; and into business life, at the counter, the office, and the workbench; it influences them when seen and when unseen, in the light and in the dark, in thought as well as in action and word. The love of Christ is thus constantly constraining a faithful few, restraining all evil propensities and strengthening, ennobling and beautifying character, while affecting all their relationships with families, friends, neighbors and business associations.

The power which constrains or draws the saints into harmony and union with Christ, and through him with our Heavenly Father, is the truth. Hence the more clearly we discern the truth, the more it can influence or draw us. The truth shows us our condition in sin and condemnation; and by showing us God's provision for our recovery, the truth discloses to us the love of God and our Lord Jesus. A little truth draws a little; and the full clear truth, received into good and honest hearts, is a power, – *the power of God, working in us to will and to do his good pleasure*. Without this power of the truth we cannot even *will* aright; the truth directs our wills; and to such as have consecrated wills in harmony with God, the truth is the greatest motive power to good deeds. A knowledge of this same truth of God, of which the lifting up of Christ is the foundation principle, will be the drawing and moving power of the Millennial age also, and in a similar manner, only there will no longer be besetments, or drawings of the adversary in contrary directions. Satan will then be bound, restrained from deceiving and drawing away from God. It will no longer cost what it now does, and what it has cost in the past, to will and to do right; for not only is Satan to be bound, but a highway (a public thoroughfare) is to be cast up, and all the stumbling stones are to be gathered out, and no ravenous beasts of prey (no fierce temptations) shall go up thereon, but the ransomed of the Lord shall walk there with none to molest or make them afraid. They shall go forth with joy and be led forth with peace, with every influence toward righteousness in their favor. – Rev. 20:2; Isa. 35:8; 62:10.

There are various reasons why the number drawn in this age is comparatively few: Some indeed are willful sinners, "children of the devil," who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. **[R1055 : page 4]** And then the god of this world has so blinded the minds of a better class with doctrinal errors that they do not recognize and cannot appreciate the truth; and the deceptive aspect of the things of this present life deceive others, drawing and constraining them to such an extent as to offset the drawing power of the truth. Even where the seeds of truth fall into hopeful soil and begin to spring up

they are often choked by weeds and thorns such as the absorbing cares of this life, the love of this world's approval, and the deceitfulness of riches, or the alluring hope of acquiring them.

While the whole world is in this condition of imperfection, weakness and sin, we cannot expect otherwise than that the vast majority would be influenced by their surroundings, their appetites, and the deep degradation into which they have fallen. What hope is there then that the time will ever come when Christ will draw all mankind unto him? If the truth is unchangeable, and if it does not draw the masses of men now, what prospect is there that it will ever draw them? None whatever from a human standpoint. We have no such assurance except in God's Word. Our Lord has promised not only that he would draw a "little flock" in the present time (John 6:37,44; Luke 13:32), but that in due time he will draw all men; and that for this purpose this little flock shall be exalted and associated with himself, that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and that the power of the adverse influences of the present time shall be broken. The chains that now bind men, as slaves to sin, shall be snapped assunder; and all will then have power (liberty) to become sons of God.

Sin is represented in the Scriptures as a great tyrant compelling mankind to do his bidding; and the fallen race is so fettered by inherited weaknesses that none can do otherwise than obey him except such as hear the truth and appeal to Christ to have their shackles broken, to obtain liberty from him. Such are freed from further service of the tyrant, Sin, and may become sons of God, servants of righteousness, and have everlasting life.

This matter of returning to harmony with God through Christ, being moved or drawn by the truth whose centre is the cross is therefore a liberty, a privilege, granted to believers in Christ – a privilege that men are incapable of appreciating or using so long as they are bound in ignorance, under the power of evil and their own inherited weaknesses. We sometimes say that men are free moral agents, free to

choose good or evil, yet evidently this is the case only to a very limited extent. The first man indeed was created a free moral agent, but since the fall all have been measurably under bondage to sin, and are held in this slavery by their own inherited as well as cultivated weaknesses, under circumstances which none is able to control, until, under God's arrangement, Christ shall take the power into his hand. The Redeemer of all is to take the kingdom and dominion of earth, and is to break off the shackles that are now fettering the world, and hindering even those who desire to love and serve the Lord from being drawn thereto.

It was needful that our Lord should die to redeem men, but more is necessary to the complete success of God's great plan. According to that plan the Ransomer must also be the Deliverer to free those purchased with his own precious blood from the shackles of sin – ignorance, prejudice, perverted tastes and inherited weaknesses, and many from the tomb itself. He could not deliver one, until he had redeemed them, but the object of redeeming them was that he might set them free from the bondage of sin and its penalty, death. The Prophet Isaiah foretold the ultimate object of our Lord's great work which began with his sacrifice for our sins, when, speaking for Christ, he said, "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isa. 61:1.) Those who have learned of God's great plan of the ages can see much more than others in this reference to the opening of the prison to them that are bound. We see that all the living generations of men are prisoners of Satan, fettered and bound for the tomb, the same great prison in which he has confined all the generations past, and that the great Deliverer who redeemed them must set them free, before even the willing can be drawn to him.

For this great work of giving liberty to the captives of sin and death, God has appointed the Millennial age. He not only had a due time for sending his only begotten Son into the world, and a due time

in which he was to give his life a ransom for us, but he has also a due time for this liberating of sin's prisoners. That age of deliverance will be earth's great jubilee year, the antitype of that jubilee which Israel observed every fiftieth year. **[R1056 : page 4]** In that type, the setting free of every debtor, and the return of every one to his home and possessions and privileges, foreshadowed the return of all mankind to liberty – to freedom from sin and its tyranny, to liberty such as Adam had to decide for righteousness or sin knowingly.

The great Deliverer has the emancipation proclamation all ready: it is written in his own precious blood, and the hour for its special announcement is the dawn of the morning of the Millennial day.

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