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REVIVAL

ADDRESSES

BY

R. A. TORREY

AUTHOR OF

"What the Bible Teaches," "How to Work for Christ,"

"How to Pray," etc. etc.

CHICAGO NEW YORK TORONTO

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INTRODUCTION

REQUESTS have come from many quarters for the publication of some of

the sermons which God has been pleased to so greatly use in Japan,

China, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, India, England, and Scotland.

This volume is published in response to this request. The author hopes

that the sermons may be used as greatly in their printed form as they

have been when spoken. The sermons when delivered, as here published,

were taken down in shorthand, but have been carefully revised by the

author. Each one of them has many sacred memories connected with it.

When one of these sermons was delivered through an interpreter in a

Japanese city, eighty-seven Japanese came forward and declared publicly

their acceptance of Christ. After the delivery of another in Shanghai,

a large number of Chinese men and women walked out from their places

among their heathen companions and publicly professed their acceptance

of Christ. On some occasions in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand,

hundreds of men and women came forward and with their own lips publicly

confessed their acceptance of Christ as their Saviour and their Lord.

Reports of some of these sermons have been given in religious and

secular papers, but these reports have been necessarily fragmentary and

inaccurate, as they have never been revised by the author. I have

abundant proof that even these unsatisfactory reports have done good,

but it seems desirable that a full and accurate report of what I have

said be given to the public.

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REVIVAL ADDRESSES

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I. GOD

"The fool hath said in his hearts there is no God"-Psalm xiv. 1.

I have taken, or rather God has given me, for my text tonight a very

short one. I do not think you ever heard a sermon from a shorter text.

I will not tell you where to find the text. It occurs several hundred

times in the Bible. Indeed, open your Bible at random almost anywhere

and you will find my text somewhere on the page. It consists of but one

word; but it would take all eternity to exhaust its meaning, and then

it will not be exhausted. It is "God" - a word the height and depth and

length and breadth of whose meaning no philosopher has ever fully

apprehended.

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I. GOD Is

The first thing the Bible teaches us about God is that God is. "God

is"-two short words. Tremendous significance! "God is." If that simple

truth gets hold of your mind and heart it will move and mold your

entire life. It will determine your science, it will determine your

philosophy, it will determine your daily life, it will determine your

eternity. "God is." The psalmist tells us in Psalm xiv.-"The fool hath

said in his heart, There is no God." Please note where he says it - "in

his heart." That is, he says there is no God simply because he does not

wish to believe that there is a God. Now, there is a God, and a man

that denies a fact simply because he does not wish to believe it is a

fool.

There is abundant proof of the existence of God, so abundant that no

man can sit down and consider the proof thoroughly and candidly without

acknowledging the existence of God. Nature proves the existence of God.

All through Nature there are marks of creative intelligence. Everywhere

in Nature you find order, symmetry, law. You can study Nature in the

minute, or you can study Nature in the vast, it makes no difference;

everywhere you find the marks of intelligence and creative design. You

may take your microscope and turn it down upon the minutest forms of

life; everywhere there is adaptation to end, to purpose, to design. The

man of science will tell you that in the minutest structure discernible

by the most powerful microscope he finds perfect beauty, and most

perfect adaptation of means to end. Or take your telescope and turn it

towards the vaster Nature. Everywhere you see order, symmetry, law,

intelligence, design, all proving an intelligent Creator of the

material universe in which we live. Suppose I show you my watch, and

ask, "Do you believe it had a maker?" you would say, "Certainly." "But

why? Did you see it made?" "No." "Did you ever

see a watch made?" "No!" "Why, then, do you believe it had a maker?"

"Because everything about it indicates an intelligent maker- hands,

figures upon the face, case, winding apparatus, everything about the

watch proclaims that it had an intelligent maker. Suppose I replied,

"You are mistaken; the watch had no intelligent maker; the watch came

to be by accident; by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms dancing around

through endless ages, until at last, in the age in which you find it,

they danced into the present form; thus the watch came to be." Your

remark would be, "That man may think he is highly educated, but he

talks like a fool;" and you would be right. Yet there are no such marks

of intelligent design in that watch as in this material universe. One

very small part of Nature, your own eye, is a far more wonderful

structure than any watch. But if some man should stand up and say that

this wonderful universe in which we live came into being by a

fortuitous concurrence of atoms which danced around through the endless

ages until they danced into their present form any would call him a

philosopher. In the ordinary affairs of life he would be called a

foolosopher.

But, Some one may say, "The doctrine of evolution does away with the

whole force of the argument from design." Not at all. I formerly

believed that the doctrine of evolution was true, but gave up the

belief, not from theological but from scientific reasons, because it

was absolutely unproven; there is not a single proof of the hypothesis

of evolution. People talk about the missing link; they are all missing;

there is not a single link. There is not a single place where one

species passes over into another species. There is not one single

observed instance of the evolution of a higher species from a lower.

Development of varieties there has been, but of evolution of a higher

species from a lower not one single case. The hypothesis of the

evolution of species, and especially of the highest forms of life from

the lowest, is a guess pure and simple, without one scientifically

observed fact to build upon. But suppose the doctrine of evolution were

true, it would not for a moment militate against the argument from

design. If there were originally some unorganized protoplasm that

developed into all the forms of life and beauty as we see them today,

it would be a still more remarkable illustration, in one way, of the

wisdom and power of the Creator, for the question would arise, Who put

into the primordial protoplasm the power of developing into the

universe as we see it today? It would take a more wonderful man to make

a watch-hand which would develop into a watch than it would to make a

watch outright. And, in one way, it would be a more marvelous

illustration of the creative wisdom and power of God, if God had

created some primordial protoplasm that developed into the world we now

see than if God had made the world at once as we now see it. Nature

proves that there is a God.

History proves that there is a God. You take one little patch of

history, the history of a single nation or of a few nations, for a few

years, and it sometimes seems like a jangle without meaning, only

portraying the conflicting ambitions and greeds of men. Might, right,

and the weakest going to the wall. But take history in a large way, the

history of centuries, take all history, and you will see that back of

the jarring and conflicting passions, ambitions, combats and struggles

of men, there is an all-governing, all-superintending, all-shaping

Providence. You see that throughout all history "one increasing purpose

runs," "a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." History

proves that there is a God.

But there is one special history that proves that there is a God, that

is the history of Jesus of Nazareth as recorded in the gospels of

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Great efforts have been put forth to

disprove the authenticity of that history; men of the most remarkable

genius, of the profoundest scholarship, of untiring activity, have

struggled to pull to pieces the history of Jesus Christ, as recorded in

the four gospels, and every effort of that kind has met with utter

failure. The strongest, the ablest, the most remarkable and scholarly

effort ever made was that of David Strauss, in the Loben Jesu. It

seemed to some for awhile, as if David Strauss had succeeded in taking

out of the life of Jesus of Nazareth many things commonly believed. But

when the life of Jesus Christ by the great German rationalist was

itself subjected to criticism, it went to pieces, until there was

nothing left. It was utterly discredited. It would not bear careful and

candid examination. Renan, with rare subtlety and literary deftness,

endeavored to succeed where Strauss had failed. But his own attempt to

eliminate the supernatural from the life of Jens was less able in

almost every way than that of his German predecessor and failed

completely. And every other similar effort to pull to pieces and

discredit the life of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the four gospels,

has failed absolutely. And today it stands established beyond the

possibility of candid question that Jesus lived and acted, at least

substantially -I believe far more than that- as recorded in the four

gospels. It is absolutely impossible for a man to sit down before the

four gospels with an unbrassed and bonest mind, determined to find out

the truth, and come to any other conclusion than that this four gospel

record of the life and words and works of Jesus is substantially

accurate history.

If Jesus lived as this Gospel says He did, if He wrought as this Gospel

says He wrought, healed the sick, cleansed the leper, raised the dead,

fed the five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, and if,

above all, having been put to death, He was raised from the dead, it

proves to a demonstration that back of the works He performed, back of

the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is God. There is a God.

The history of the individual Christian proves the existence of God. I

do not depend upon the argument from design or from history- I once

did; I do not depend even upon the argument from the life of Jesus

Christ-I once did. I know there is a God because I have personal

dealings with Him every day of my life. Some subtle philosopher might

construct a very specious argument to prove to me that there is no such

person as Charles Alexander; but after all is said I still know that

there is, for I have the most intimate relations with him everyday of

my life. But I have had more intimate dealings with God than with Mr.

Charles Alexander. I know that there is a God before I know that there

is such a person as Mr. Charles Alexander. I started out years ago on

the hypothesis, that there was a God, and that God acted as the Bible

records that He acts. I determined to put this hypothesis to the most

rigid test to see if it worked. I have put that hypothesis to the test

during a quarter of a century, and it has never failed. If there had

not been a God, or if there had been a God different from the one of

whom the Bible tells us, I should have made shipwreck of everything

years ago. But the hypothesis has never failed; I have risked my life,

reputation, work, everything upon the fact that the God of the Bible

is. And, friends, I risked and won. THERE IS A GOD. Therefore the man

who says that there is no God is a fool; for any man who denies a fact

is a fool. He who denies the supreme fact is a supreme fool. Not only

is there a God; but He is the supreme fact of nature, of history, of

science, of philosophy, of personal life. Look at the first four words

of the Bible, and you will read the profoundest philosophy. "In the

beginning, God." In the beginning of nature, God; in the beginning of

science, God; in the beginning of human history, God; in the beginning

of individual experience, God; in the beginning of everything, God.

That is the supreme fact; and he who denies it merely because he does

not want to believe it is the supreme fool.

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II. GOD IS GREAT

GOD IS GREAT That thought comes out in the Bible, from the first verse

to the last. Oh, the majesty of God, the infinite greatness of God!

This whole universe, about which we are learning such wonderful things

every day, is His creative work. The supreme difference between the

teaching of the Bible and the teaching of modern thought is this-the

teaching of the Bible is an infinite God and an infinitesimal man,

except as God's goodness makes him great. The teaching Of modern

literature and modern thought is- an infinite man and an infinitesimal

god. We live in a day that bas a very great man and a very small god.

Stop and think. There are one billion four hundred million people like

you on this earth to-day. You are just one out of that vast number. Not

very big- are you? But wait. Take the whole earth on which these one

billion four hundred millions live; it is a very small part of the

universe. If the sun were hollow and a hole bored into it, one million

four hundred thousand earths could be poured into the sun, and still

leave room for them to rattle around. But the son is only one sun out

of suns. Our whole solar system is but one out of many. I was reading

an article the other day, on my way from India, in which an eminent man

of science said that there are probably at least a million suns as

large as ours. Wait a moment! You are only one out of one thousand four

hundred million persons on this earth. Of earths such as this upon

which we live it would take more than one million four hundred thousand

poured into the sun to fill it. Yet the sun is only one out of a

million suns;. And there may be a million universes such as ours. And

God made them all. That God whose name you dared take upon your lips in

vain last night; that God whom you dare philosophies about and say how

He ought to act. Take one and divide it by fourteen hundred million

multiplied by one million four hundred thousand multiplied by one

million multiplied by many millions and that is you. Multiply fourteen

hundred million by one million four hundred thousand, and that by one

million, and that by many millions, and that by infinity, and that is

God. And yet you venture to say how God ought to act. If ever a man

appears like a consummate idiot, it is when he tries to tell you how

God ought to act. God is infinite, and no number of finites will ever

equal the infinite, and the Infinite God is of immeasurably more

importance than the whole race of infinitesimal men who inhabit this

little globe. Yet you venture to say how God ought to act. Thou fool!

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III. GOD IS HOLY.

GOD IS HOLY. How the Bible in every page brings that out! How it labors

with all its types, sacrifices, ceremonies, explicit teaching, to

impress upon men and women that God is holy. Take the supreme

expression of it in I John i. 5, "God is light and in Him is no

darkness at all." In the Scripture lesson tonight I read a passage from

Isaiah in which he gives us a bit of his own biography. He was,

perhaps, the best man of his time, but when he got one glimpse of God

in His holiness, when he saw even the seraphim (the burning ones,

glowing in their own holiness) covering their faces and their feet in

the presence of the infinitely Holy Jehovah, he was overwhelmed, and

cried, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips,

and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes

have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." Men and women of London, if

there should burst upon this audience to-night a real vision of God in

His holiness, this whole great gathering would fall on their faces and

cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone." Not one of you could keep your

seats.

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IV. WE MUST ALL MEET GOD.

Last thought. You and I some day must meet this holy God. The prophet

Amos cries, "Prepare to meet thy God!' (Amos iv. 12). Every man and

woman here must some day meet God. The rich man must meet God! The

beggar must meet God! The scholar must meet God! The illiterate man

must meet God! The nobleman must meet God! The king must meet God! The

emperor must meet God! Every one must meet God! The supreme question of

life, then, is this: Are you ready to meet God? None of us can tell how

soon it may be that we shall meet God. The king of Spain, as the

bulletins flashed across the wires to-night, has been very near meeting

his God to-day. Some of us may meet Him within the next twenty-four

hours; more within the year; many more within five years; and within

forty years almost every man and woman in this audience will have met

God. Are you ready? If not, I implore you to get ready before leaving

this hall tonight.

How can we meet God with joy and not with dismay? There is only one

ground upon which man may meet God with joy and not with despair. That

ground is the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. God is infinitely holy,

and the best of us is but a sinner. The only ground upon which a sinner

can meet the holy God is on the is on the ground of the shed blood, the

blood of Christ. Any of us, no matter how outcast or vile, can go

boldly to the Holy of Holies on the ground of the shed blood, and the

best man or woman that ever walked this earth can meet God on no other

ground than the shed blood. There is only one adequate preparation for

the sinner to meet God, that is the acceptance of Jesus Christ as our

personal Saviour, who bore all our sins on the Cross of Calvary, and as

our risen Saviour who is able to set us free from the power of sin.

Men and women, are you ready to meet God? If it be the will of God, I

am ready to go up into His presence, and meet Him face to face

to-night. Do you say, Have you never sinned? Alas, I have. Sinned so

deeply as none of you will ever know, thank God. But, thank God still

more, when Jesus Christ was nailed to yonder Cross of Calvary, all my

sins were settled. I like a sheep had gone astray. I had turned to my

own way, but God laid on Him my sin (Isaiah liii, 6), and the sacrifice

God provided I have accepted. I am ready to meet God face to face

to-night and look into those eyes of infinite holiness, for all my sins

are covered by the atoning blood.

Are you ready to meet God? Let me sum it up. There is a God. God is

great. God is holy. You and I must meet Him. There is only one adequate

preparation -the acceptance of Christ as our Sin-bearer, our Saviour,

Deliverer from the power of sin. Will you accept Christ tonight?

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THE GREATEST SENTENCE THAT WAS EVER WRITTEN

"God is Love."- 1 John iv. 8.

My subject is the greatest sentence that was ever written. Of course,

that sentence is in the Bible. All the greatest sentences are in the

one Book. The Bible has a way of putting more in a single sentence than

other writers can put in a whole book. Yet there are some who would

tell us that the Bible is no more God's Book than other books. Either

they have not read the Bible, or they have resa it with their eyes

closed.

This sentence has in it but three words. Each word is a monosyllable.

One word has four letters, one three, and one only two; yet these nine

letters, forming three monosyllables, contain so much of truth that the

world bas been pondering it for eighteen centuries, and has not got to

the bottom of it yet. Whole volumes are dedicated to the exposition of

this wonderful sentence- thousands of volumes.

1 John iv. 8., "`God is love." That is the greatest sentence that was

ever written. That sentence is the key-note of the mission that begins

to-day. Everything that you will hear in song or in word for the next

four weeks in this mission revolves round that one central truth, "God

is love." That sums up the whole contents of the Bible. If I were asked

for a sentence to print in letters of gold on the outside of our Bible,

a sentence that summed up the whole contents of the Book, it would be

this one, "God is love." That is the subject of the first chapter of

Genesis, it is the subject of the last chapter of Revelation, ana it is

the subject of every chapter that lies in between.

The Bible is simply God's love story, the story of the love of a holy

God to a sinful world. That is the most amazing thing in the Bible.

People tell us the Bible is full of things that it is impossible to

believe. I know of nothing else so impossible to believe as that a holy

God should love a sinful world, and should love such individuals as you

and me, as the Bible says He does. But impossible as it is to believe,

it is true. There is mighty power in that one short sentence, power to

break the hardest heart, power to reach individual men and women who

are sunk down in sin, and to lift them up until they are fit for a

place beside the Lord Jesus Christ upon the Throne.

When Mr. Moody organized the church in Chicago, of which I am pastor,

he was so anxious that everybody should always hear this one truth, and

was so afraid that some preacher might come and forget to tell it, that

he had it put on the gas jets right above the pulpit, to that the first

thing you would see when you went in there on an evening was that text

shining out in letters of fire.

One stormy night, before the time of the meeting, the door stood ajar.

A man partly intoxicated saw it open, and thought he might go in and

get warm. He did not know what sort of a place it was, but when he

pushed the door open he saw the text blazing out, "God is love." He

pulled the door to, and walked away muttering to himself He said, "God

is not love. If God is love, He would love me. God does not love a

wretch like me." But it kept on burning down into his soul, "God is

love! God is love! God is love" After a while be retraced his steps,

and took a seat in a corner. When Mr. Moody walked down after the

meeting, he found the man weeping like a child. "What is the trouble?"

he asked. "What was it in the sermon that touched you?" "I didn't hear

a word of your sermon." "Well, what is the trouble?" "That text up

there." Mr. Moody sat down and from his Bible showed him the way of

life, and he was saved.

I hope it will break some of your hearts. I am not going to tell you

what I think of the love of God. I am going to give you the Bible's

plain statements about it. There are people who start out with this

text as a foundation, and build a superstrncture of speculation that

contradicts the plain teaching of the very Book from which they have

taken their foundation-stone. Now, nothing can be more illogical than

that. One of two things is certainly true. Either the Bible is true, or

it is not true. If the Bible is not true, we have no proof that God is

love, so that all these universalist schemes, built on the foundation

that "God is love," crumble away. If the Bible is true, these schemes

which contradict its plain teaching are false. You can take whichever

horn of the dilemma you please. Whichever you take, the shallow

universalism of the present day crumbles away.

What does the Bible tell us as to how God shows His love?

1. That God shows His love, by pardoning Sin. -Isaiah Iv. 7: "Let the

wicked foroake his; way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let

him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him; and to our

God, for He will abundantly pardon." God tells us plainly in His Word

that He is willing to forgive any sinner that lives, no matter how deep

down he has gone, if he will only turn from sin and turn to Him; and He

will forgive him the very moment he does so. Of course, God cannot

forgive a man while he holds on to his sin, and retain His own moral

character.

I have a boy. I love that boy, and I would give a great deal to see him

now. I believe there is nothing that boy could do but, if he repented

and turned from it, I would forgive him. But I could not forgive him if

he held on to his evil way. I could continue to love him and seek to

save him, but I could not forgive him. And God cannot forgive us, and

remain what He is- a holy God-until we are ready to quit our sin. But

the moment we are, He will have mercy upon us, and He will abundantly

pardon. If the wickedest man or woman in Edinburgh should have come in

tonight-and I hope they have-and should here and now turn from sin, the

moment they did so, God would blot out every sin they ever committed.

I knew a millionaire in New York City who turned his back on all his

business and money-making to save the perishing. When he was going down

one of the streets one night, a poor woman came out of an underground

den of infamy and groaned as he passed. My friend stepped up to her and

told her of the love of God. At first she would not believe, but he

persuaded her that God loved her. He gave her a shelter. She did not

live long- only about two yean- but before she died, Nellie Conroy

stood up before a great audience in Cooper State, and told them how God

had saved her. - Tears were streaming down the faces of all. A little

while after she lay dying, and as my friend came into the room, she

said: "Uncle Charlie-he was not her uncle, but she called him so for

the love she bore "I will soon see, in a few hours, little Florence,

and I will see Jesus." And Nellie Conroy, The pardoned and blood-washed

sinner, went up to belhold the King. There is not a man or woman in

Edinburgh that God will not save the moment they turn from their sin.

2. God shows His Love by taking account of Sin, and punishing

it.-Hebrews xii. 6: "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and

scourgeth every son whom, He recieveth." People think God win allow sin

to go on unchecked, unrebuked, unpunished. "God is love " and therefore

He takes account of and punishes sin. There are fathers who are so

selfish that they will not punish their children when it is necessary

for their good. It hurts their feelings, as it does to all true

fathers; and they are so selfish that they sacrifice the welfare of the

children in order to spare their own feelings. That is not love but

consumate selfishness.

One of my children disobeyed me. I said to myself, "That child must be

punished." Oh, how I studied it find some way out, but I could not do

it. I knew that for the child's highest welfare, punishment must be

administered, and the child was punished. I suffered a great deal more

than the child, but I loved the child enough to sacrifice my feelings

for the child's welfare. God suffers when you and I are punished; but

He loves us so much, that when we need to suffer He atiministers the

suffering Himself.

A gentleman with whom I was staying said to me one day, "Would you like

to take a drive?" We went out to a cemetery, and came to a place where

there were three graves. One was long; it was an adult one, and in it

his wife was buried. In the two short graves were the bodies of his two

daughters, all he had except a baby boy. We knelt and prayed by the

side of the graves. As we were driving back to town the gentleman said,

"I pity the man that God has not chastened." What did he mean? He meant

that he had been a man of the world, an upright man, but not a

Christian. One night when he came home his wife said, "Porter, one of

the children is sick." In a few days she was cold and dead; and, as she

lay in the casket, he knelt down and promised God to take Christ as his

Lord and Master. But he lied to God, and forgot all about his

resolution. Some time after he came home again, and his wife said,

"Porter, the other child is sick." In a few days she also lay cold and

dead. Once more he knelt down and promised God that he would become a

Christian, and accept his word. All the holiest, deepest, purest joys

of life had come from his great sorrow.

Are you in sorrow? It is because God loves you. Are there some here

resisting the entreaties of God's mercy and grace? I beseech you to

repent. I tremble for some men and women, for those who know the way of

life, with whom God is striving by His Holy Spirit, but who will not

come to Him. I tremble for them, because I know that God loves them.

You think that is a very strange reason for trembling for a man. No, I

know God loves you, and so loves you that, if He cannot bring you in

any other way, He will bring you by sorrow and heart-ache.

A friend of mine in Chicago, Colonel Clark, spent his fortune in saving

the lost. He went down every night to preach the Gospel in a mission.

There was one man who had been attending and resisting God's entreaties

of mercy for a long time; and one night as he came along Col. Clark

said, "George, if you do not turn from sin pretty quick, I believe God

will take away your wife and child from you, and will lock you up." The

man was very angry, and said, "Colonel Clark, you mind your own

business; I will mind mine." One month from that night George woke up

on the floor of Rochester Jail. His wife was dead, his child had been

taken away from him to be put into better hands than his. Right there

he took Christ as his Sariour, and now he is a preacher of the Gospel.

Remember, God loves you, and "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."

3. God shows His love for us by sympathizing with us.-Isaiah Ixiii. 9:

"In all their affliction He was afflicted." That is one of the

wonderful sentences of this book. The prophet is speaking about the

children of Israel. Their afflictions were appalling, and the direct

consequence of their own sin, a judgment sent by the hand of God, and

yet the prophet said God suffered with them in their sorrow. It is

true. There is not a man or woman here who is in trouble but God

sympathizes with you. It may have come in any way, but if you have any

trouble God sympathizes with you in it.

Some of you may know what it is to have a child sick for a long time.

At first friends came and sympathized with you, but their sympathy has

grown cold; and, as you have watched day and night by that fading life

you have said: "There is no one who sympathizes with me." Yes there is.

God sympathizes with you. There are men and women who have a sorrow of

such a character that they cannot confide it to any human ear; and they

say: "Nobody knows it. Nobody sypathizes with me." Yes, there is One

who knows, and He sympathizes with you-God.

4. God shows His Love by His Gifts.-I cannot dwell upon that. I just

want to speak of one gift 1 John iii. 1, 2: "Behold, what manner of

love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the

sons of God." Oh, that wondrous gift that God bestowed upon you and me,

that men and women like us should be called children of God! Oh, what

love! Suppose on his coronation day King Edward, after all the the

ceremonies were over, had taken his carriage of state, and had ridden

down to the East End of London, and had seen some ragged, wretched,

profane boy, utterly uneducated and morally corrupt. Suppose his great

heart of love had gone out to that boy, and, stepping up to that poor

wanderer, he had said: "I love you I am going to take you in my

carriage to the palace. I am going to dress you fit to be a king's son,

and. you shall be known as the son of King Edward the Seventh." Would

it not have been wonderful? But it would not have been so wonderful as

that the infinitely holy God should have looked down upon you and me in

our filthiness and rags and depravity, and that He should have so loved

us that He should have bestowed upon us to be called the sons of God.

5. God shows His Love by the Sacrifice He has made for us.-Sacrifice;

after all that is the great test of love. People tell you that they

love you, but you cannot tell whether they really love you til the

opportunity comes for them to make a sacrifice for you. I have a friend

in the university- We thought a good deal of each other; but i did not

know how much he loved me. Years after, one night when I was away

preaching, this friend turned up at my house and got to talking with my

wife. He asked a good many leading questions, and finally got out of

her that I was in a position in which I needed fifteen hundred dollars.

He did not say any more at the time, but next day he came to me and

said: "You think of doing so and so." "Yes." "That costs money!' "I

have a scheme to get it?" "What is it?" "I have plans." "Well, what are

they?" i did not think it was his business, but finally I told him. He

said: "It will not work at all. See here. Just let me give you that

fifteen hun&g dollars!" "Well," I said, "I am not going to let any man

give me fifteen hundred dollars." "Oh, you can pay it back" "I don't

know about that." "I will take my chances." He insisted, and would not

take "No" for an answer; he gave me that fifteen hundred dollars, and I

have paid it back, but he did not know I would. I knew then that man

loved me. God has proved His love. "God so loved the world that gave"

-gave what?- His only begotten Son" -the best He had, the object of his

eternal love- gave Him to suffer and die upon the cruel cross for you

and me.

God looked down upon this lost world, upon you and me. He saw that

there was only one price that would save us; and He did not stop at

that sacrifice. He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have

everlasting life.?" That is the most amazing thing in the Bible. You

and I sometimes dwell upon the love of Christ, to give up Heaven for

us. We look at Him in the courtyard of Pilate, fastened to the

whippingpost, with His bare back exposed to the lash of the Roman

soldier. We look at Him as the lash cuts into His back again and again,

and again, till it is all torn and bleeding. Oh, how He loves us! But

looking down from yon throne in heaven was God; and every lash that cut

the back of Christ cut the heart of God. We see the soldiers with the

crown of thorns, pressing it on His brow, and we see the blood flowing

down. Oh, how he loved us! But every thorn that pierces His brow

pierced also the heart of God.

Through the durk of that awful day we see Him on the cross. We hear the

last cry, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" We see how He

loved us. But yonder, looking down from the throne of light and glory,

was God; and every nail that pierced His hands and feet pierced the

heart of God, because He loved you, and you, and you, every one of you.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." 0h, it was

wonderful! What are you going to do about this love?

I once heard a story which brought me such a glimpse of God's love as I

never had before. I do not know whether it is true or not. A man was

set to watch a railway drawbridge over a river. He threw it open and

let vessels through. He heara the whistle of a train up the track, and

sprang to the lever to bring the bridge back into place, and as he was

doing so he accidentally pushed his boy into the river. He heard tbe

cry, "Father, save me; I am drowning." What should he do? The man stood

at the post of duty, brought the bridge back so that the train could

pass over in safety. Then he jumped into the river to save his boy, but

it was too late. He sacrificed his boy to do His duty. When I heard

that story I wondered, if it had been my boy, what I would have done.

That man owed it to those on the train to do what he did. God owed you

and me nothing. We were guilty rebels against him, but "God so loved

the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth

in Him sbould not perish, but have everlasting life."

What are you going to do with His love? Accept it, or trample it under

foot? Accept Christ, and you accept that love; reject Christ, and you

trample that love under foot. I cannot understand how any man or woman

in their right senses can harden their hearts against the love of God.

I remember one night at the close of our service we had an

after-meeting. The choir were still sitting, and the leading soprano

was unconverted-a thoroughly worldly girl. Her mother rose in the

meeting, and said, "I wish you would pray for my daughter." I did not

look around, but I knew intuitively how that girl looked at that

momcnt. I made it my business to meet her as e was passing out and

said, "Good evening, Cora." Her eyes flashed and cheeks burned; she was

very angry. She said, "My mother ought to have known better. She knows

it will only make me worse." I said, "Sit down"; and turned to Isaiah

lii!. 5: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our

iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His

stripes we are healed." I did not say another word. It was not

necessary. The anger faded out of those eyes, and burning tears of

penitence ran down her cheeks- I went from home next day, and when I

came back some one said, "Cora is sick." I found her very sick, but

rejoicing in Jesus. A few days after her brother came and said, "We

think Cora is dying." I went at once, and looked on the whitest face I

ever saw. She had not opened her eyes all the morning; but, after I had

finished praying, there came from those lips-still without opening her

eyes-the most wonderful prayer I ever heard. She thanked God for giving

His son to die for her. She told Him how she longed to live to sing to

His glory, as she had sung in the past for herself; but "if it be not

Thy will that I live and sing for Christ, I shall be glad to depart and

to be with Christ." And depart she did, with a heart conquered,

tralasformed, by the love of God. What are you going to do with the

love of God?

I have here a story cut from a paper to-day. Mrs. Bottome, of New York

City, says that she had a friend in her girlhood of whom she lost sight

completely for eighteen years. Going back to New York she was passing

along a street, and up in a second story window she saw her friend's

face, surrounded by prematurely grey hair. She ran up to the door of

the house and said to the maid, "Take that card to your mistress." "She

is not at home," was the answer. "Oh yes, she is: I saw her at the

window"; and Mrs. Bottome rushed past the maid up into the room, and

they fell into one another's arms. "What has become of you for all

these years?" asked Mrs. Bottome. The answer was, "Come into the other

room, and I will show you." In a room magnificently fitted up there sat

an idiot boy of seventeen years of age, saucely able to talk a

driveling idiot. His mother said "My duty lies here, with my darling

boy." Mrs. Bottome says that in a moment of thoghtlessness she asked,

"How can you endure

it? I do not wonder you are prematurely grey." I knew you would not

understand my love for my sweet boy," said her indignant friend. "It is

no burden, no care, to live and serve my boy; and if, some day, he will

only give one sign that he recognizes me as his mother, I will feel

re-paid for all the years of love I have lavished on him."

That was but a faint image of the love of God. What are you going to do

with this love of God? That boy did not repay his mother's love; for,

as Mrs. Bottome says, he was an idiot and did not know any better. You

are not idiots. You know God's love: how are you going to repay it?

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III. FOUND WANTING

"TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

DANIEL v. 25.

Any one who loves the drama should read the Bible, for the Bible is the

most dramatic book that was ever written. There is nothing to compare

with it in Eschylus or Sophocles or Euripides among the ancients, or in

Shakespeare among the moderns, in striking situations, in graphic

delineation, and in startling denouement.

One of the most intensely interesting and at the same time suggestive

scenes in the Bible is that described in Daniel v. -Belshazzar's feast.

Belshazzar was not the supreme King of Babylon. Nabonidus, his father,

was king, and had associated him with himself on the throne; Belshazzar

was second ruler in the kingdom. The critics used to tell us there

never was such a king as Belshazzar; but Sir William Rawlinson dug up a

tablet from Nabonidus himself, on which he speaks of his son

Belsharuzzar; and again the critics, as so often before, were brought

to grief by the discoveries of modern archeology.

But now Belshazzar was in supreme command in the city. His father

Nabonidus had been shut outside the city walls by the forces of Cyrus.

Puffed up by the pride of his newly-gotten power, Belshazzar makes a

great banquet. The palace is a blaze of light. The long tables are set

for more than a thousand guests. They are brilliant and dazzling with

plates and cups and tankards of silver and gold, many-jeweled,

reflecting back the light from countless candelabra. Reclining at the

tables are the guests, with fingers and arms ringed and jeweled. The

air is heavy with perfume and tremulous with the music of harp and

dulcimer and sackbut. Between the tables the oriental women weave

through the contortions and distortions of the Asiatic dance. Back and

forth across the tables fly jest and repartee.

In the midst of this hilarity a strange and daring conceit enters the

mind of the royal entertainer. Belshazzar whispers to his chief steward

a secret command. The guests are all agog with curiosity to know what

the mysterious mandate may be. Their curiosity is soon gratified; for

the chief steward, followed by a host of retainers, comes in bearing in

their arms the cups of gold and silver which Nebuchadnezzar had carried

away from the temple of Jehovah after the sack of the city of

Jerusalem. Belshazzar commands that the cups be filled with Babylonian

wine, and passed from lip to lip -while he and his guests sing the

praises of the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood,

and of stone.

The hilarity becomes more boisterous. Louder and louder thrum the

instruments, faster and faster spin the feet of the dancers, swifter

and swifter fly jest and repartee. Suddenly a hush like death fans upon

the banqueting hall. One of the revelers, lifting his eyes to the wall,

sees the fingers of a man's hand writing. As he gazes in wonder he

becomes the centre of observation, and all eyes turn in the same

direction. Now the king turns and looks also. There, writing in

characters of fire, are the mysterious angers of an armless hand.

Terror freezes Belshazzar to the very soul in the graphic language of

the prophet Daniel, "the king's countenance was changed, and his

thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and

his knees smote one against another." In a few moments pulls himself

together and hoarsely cries, "Bring hither the astrologers the

Chaldeans, and the soothsayers."

In come the magi of Babylon, splendidly appareled, with proud and

stately tread. Expectation rises high in their hearts. They think that

by their cunning arts they can deceive the King and gain new

emoluments; but only for a moment. The look of confidence fades from

their faces. The writing is beyond their art.

Again terror lays hold on Belshazzar Again his countenance was changed

in him. The queen-mother hears the confusion. She walks in with stately

tread, and tries to reassure her royal son. "O king, live for ever: let

not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

there is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods"

And she proceeds to sing the praises of Daniel. "Let Daniel be called,

and he will show the interpretation." Daniel is summoned. Behhazzar

turns to him, and says, "O Daniel, I have heard of thee, that the

spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and

excellent wisdom is found in thee. And I have heard of thee, that thou

canst make interpretations., and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst

read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou

shalt be clothed with scarlet., and have a chain of gold about thy and

shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Daniel with noble pride, scorns the proffered gifts. "Let thy gifts be

to thyself, and give thy rewards to another. I will have none of them;

but I will read writing, and make known to thee the interpretation."

But first Daniel proceeds to rebuke the blasphemous daring of

Bebhazzar. He recalls the history of Nebuchadnezzar, his grandfather,

and how God had humbled his stout-hearted pride. Then he says "The God

in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways hast thou not

glorified though thou knewest all this: then was the part of the hand

sent from Him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing

That vas written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN. This is the

interpretation of the thing:

"MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

"TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art

found wanting.

"PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the

Medes and Persiam."

Belshazzar calls for the royal robe, and it is placed on Daniel. A

chain of gold is cast about his neck, and he is proclaimed next to

Belshazzar, third ruler in the kingdom. The royal banquet goes on. The

hilarity increases; but, hark! the tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp Of

soldiers' feet in the streets of Babylon. The armies of Cyrus have

turned the waters of the Euphrates, and have come in by the river-bed

and the two-leaved gates of Babylon.

There is a crashing sound at the gate. The guests look round for a

place to flee. But it is too late. Tramp, tramp, tramp, up the palace

stairs, with a crash and a rash, the Persian and Median soldiers come

in. Swords flash in air for a moment. Belshazzar looks up, and sees the

sword over his head. It fans. Belshazzar is a corpse. "That night was

Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" I call your attention to

one word on the wall:

"TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting!"

In whose balance was Belshazzar weighed? The balances of God. Not in

the balances of his own estimation of himself: he would never have been

found wanting there. Not in the balances of public opinion: the men of

Babylon would have said, "Belshazzar is the greatest of our statesmen,

and the coming man." Not the balances of human philosophy. In the

balances of God.

Every man and woman here tonight is to be weighed the same balances,

the balances of God. How much you suppose that you weigh in the

balances of God? do not ask you how much you weigh in your own opinion

of yourself. That is of no consequence, for a man who thinks most of

himself is of least in the mind of God. I do not ask how much weigh in

the balances of public opinion. You may a leading citizen and a chief

magistrate, whom all to honour; but oftentimes that which is highly

esteemed in the sight of God.

How much do you think you weigh in the balances of God? There are

some of us who set much store by moralitv, our culture, and our

refinement; but if knew how little we weighed in the balances of the

eternal and all holy God we would fall on our knees and pray, "God be

merciful to me a sinner."

Is there any way in which we can tell how much we weigh in the balances

of God? There is. God has given to us the weights wherewith He weighs

us.

Turn to Exodus xx. and you will get the weights by which God weighs men

-the well-known Ten Commandments. Let me read them.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me!" What is a man's god? A man's

god is the thing he thinks moat of. If a man thinks more of money than

anything else, then money is his god; and many a citizen of Edinburgh

worships Plutus, the god of wealth. Many a man is sacrificing

conscience, sacrificing honour, and obedience to God to gain money. You

do things in business that you know are not according to the teachings

of the Bible, that you know are not pleasing to a holy God, because

there is money in them. Gold is your god, and you are found wanting by

the first of God's commandments. There are men who worship gold just as

really as if they had a sovereign hung up in their bedchamber, and said

their prayer to it.

Many worship social position. How many are doing things in matters of

dress and in matters of social life that are disapproved by conscience!

But it is what society does; and they think that if they do not do the

same they will lose their position in society. You are putting society

before God. Society is your god. You are weighed and found wanting by

the first of God's laws.

Major Whittle once went, in Washington, to call upon a man who had been

prominent in public and social life. He was showing Major Whittle over

his beautiful new house. They came to a large and beautiful room, and

Major Whittle asked, "What is this for?" The man was silent at first.

"What is this for?" asked Major Whittle again. The man hung his head,

and said, "Well, Major, if you must know, this is a ball-room." "What!

a ball-room. Do you mean to tell me that you have sunk so low that you

have a ball-room in your house?" "Well, Major, I never thought I would

come to this; but my wife and daughter said we were in society now,

that this was the thing in Washington, and that we must have it to keep

our position in Washington society?" Social position was their god; and

that man paid for it dearly in the wreck and ruin of his home.

Many a man worships whisky. How many a man is sacrificing his

brain-power, his business capacity, the respect of his fellow-citizens,

the reverence of his wife and children, in devotion to the cursed

whisky. I saw many a hideous god when I was traveling in India, all

sorts of beastly images which men bow down before and worship, but I

know no god more beastly, no god more disgusting than this god of

whisky, upon the altar of which men are offering as a sacrifice their

children and their interests.

How many a young man and young woman worships the god of pleasure. They

are doing things for pleasure that their conscience disapproves of,

things that hinder communion with God. They are sacrificing everything

that they may have amusement and pleasure. Amusement is their god.

Weighed, and found wanting by the first weight of the ten commandments.

I have no time to dwell upon the second command: "Thou shalt not make

unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in

heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water

under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them or worship

them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous Go, visiting the iniquity of

the fathers upon the children until the third and fourth generation of

them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love

Me, and keep My commandments"

The Third Commandment- "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy

God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his

name in vain." How much do you weigh when you are weighed by that law!

Oh, how many a man on your streets brakes that law! And men not only

break it, but they think it a light matter. They think that law is of

no consequence. When you approach men and speak to them about Christ,

they will say, "Well, but I do not know that I need Christ. I am not a

very bad man. I have never stolen anything. I have never killed

anybody. I have never committed adultery. Oh, I do sware occasionally."

They think it a light matter, but God does not regard it so. "Thou

shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will

not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

If them is any sin which shows that the very foundation of a man's

character are honey-combed and rotten, it is the sin of profanity. You

can not trust a profane swearer anywhere. A profane swearer is ripe for

any crime. What is the only foundation for a sound character? Reverence

for God; and when that is gone the foundation of character is gone.

Character may not crumble away at once, as a building does not always

fall the moment its foundation is rotten, in a measure, but it win

fall. The foundation is gone. No man can swear profanely until he has

gotten very, very low in the moral scale. A man has to go down pretty

low (has he not?) to speak disrespectfully of his mother. We have seen

men go pretty far into sin and yet have so much manhood left that, when

others spoke insultingly about their mother, they would resent it. A

man has fallen very low who will speak lightly of his mother; but a man

has got immeasurably lower before he will speak profanely of God. The

purest mother is nothing to the all holy One. No mother ever loved a

child, no mother ever-sacrificed for a child, as God has loved you and

made sacrifices for you; and if you can take God's name upon your lips

in profanity you are a vile wretch. I beseech of you get on your face

before the eternal God before you sleep and cry to Him for mercy.

But there are other ways of taking Gods name in vain besides profane

swearing. Much that we call praying is taking God's name in vain. Every

time you have knelt down to pray and have had no thought of God in your

heart while you take His name upon your lips, you have taken God's name

in vain. In the Church of England you go through those marvelously

beautiful prayers in the ritual, but when you do it as a mere matter of

form, with no thought of God in your mind, you have taken God's name in

vain. You repeat that wonderful prayer that the Master Himself taught

us: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom

come. Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven. Give us this

day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those

that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver

us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever." All the time you recite it you have not one thought

what you are saying. It is downright appalling profanity.

The Fourth Command- "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six

days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day" -not

the seventh day of the week, as some men say, daring to put into God's

Word what He did not put in, but the seventh day for rest after six

days of work, without specific which day of the week it should come. Of

course it was the seventh day of the week with the Jew, in

commemoration of the old creation; but with the Christian it is the

first day of the week, in commemoration of the new creation through a

Risen Lord. "The seventh day it 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 manservant nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger

that is within thy gates: 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 Sabbath day, and hallowed it!" There was

a day when Scotchmen kept

that law. It may be you do now; but, alas, in India I saw a thing that

stirred my blood and sickened my heart. I saw Scotchmen- not merely

Englishmen and Irishmen\_-I saw Scotchmen, from the land of the

Covenanters, on holy day, not in the house of God, but off playing

gold, riding on their wheels, engaging in all manner of amusement. I do

not know whether you do it at home or not, but the land, the city, the

individual who forgets the Sabbath day has undermined the foundations

of God's favour and its own prosperity.

The Fifth Command-"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may

be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. I wish I had

time to dwell upon that; for we are getting into a day when the young

think they know more than their parents, speaking lightly about "the

old man" and "the old woman." They think father and mother are old

fogies, and that the young people know it all. They disobey their

parents. The child who disobeys a parent will bring upon his own head

the curse of God. There is only one law superior to the law of father

and mother; and that is the law of God. Even those who are grown up,

and do not treat the father and mother with the respect and

consideration which they should, will reap what they sow. God have

mercy upon the one, young or old, who breaks that commandment.

The Sixth Command-"Thou shalt not kill. "How much do you weigh by that

law? You say "I'll am all right by that law. We have no murder here."

Are you absolutely sure? "Why, certainly. Where do you think you are

talking? Down in the Grassmarket?" No, I am talking in the Synod Hall;

but there are other ways of killing people besides driving a dagger

into their heart or firing a bullet into their brain. A husband can

kill his wife by neglect, and cruelty, and unfaithfulness. How many a

woman is hastening to an early grave, with a broken heart, because she

has learned that the man who swore to be true to her is unfaithful.

One day I was talking with a very brilliant man, who was under the

influence of liquor. I said to him, "John, you ought to take Jesus

Christ." "Oh," was his reply, "you know I do not believe as you do. I

am one of these new theologians. I have a broader theology than you

have. I am one of those believers in the eternal hope. You do not

believe that old-fashioned theology, do you? Now, honestly, suppose I

should drop right down here now, what would become of me?" I said,

"John you would go straight to hell, and you would deserve to go!"

"What have I done?" "I will tell you. You have got your wife's heart

under your heel, and you are grinding the life out of it. What is

worse, you are trampling under foot the Christ of God, who died on the

Cross of Calvary to save you."

How many a son is killing his mother by his wild, dissolute life. I

remember staying in a beautiful home, where there was everything that

wealth, could buy. - One would have thought that the of that home must

be a perfectly happy woman. But she would rise in the riddle of the

night, and walk up and down the halls of the beautiful home with a

breaking heart. A few mouths after she died. Why? She had a wandering

boy. She did not even know where he was; and as I was by her grave,

with that wandering boy, who had come to her dying bed, I thought in my

heart, "Murdered by her wayward son!"

Some of you are hastening your mother's footsteps to the grave. You

have not written your mother for six months. In Melbourne a man came

rushing down the hall and said, "Oh, I have killed my mother." He

rushed into the inquiry room, and was led to Christ. Is there a man

here who is killing his mother? Repent, take Christ; write to your

mother tonight that you are saved.

There are other ways of murdering people. I do not know whether it is

common in Scotland. I think and I certainly hope not. But it is common

where Scotch men have gone. How shall I describe it? The most appalling

kind of murder in the world. Mothers murdering their own helpless

babes, to escape the responsibility of what is one of the greatest

privileges in the world, a large family. If there is any hand in the

world that is scarlet with the blood of murder, it is that of the woman

who murders her own unborn babe; and there are men who call themselves

physicians who will act as helpers in this hellish business. Such a one

ought not to put "M.D." after his name, but "D.M." damnable murderer.

In our country they hang them, which is just. Alas, they do not always

catch them. I said this in an Australian city, and the wife of a

physician was very indignant about it. But her indignation did not

alter the truth of what I said. It only exposed a guilty party.

The Seventh Command-"Thou shalt not commit adultery."- I cannot dwell

on that. It needs to be dwelt upon, but not here. Simply let me say

that there is no class of sins upon which God has set the stamp of his

disapproval in a plainer way, by the fearful consequences that

immediately follow the sins covered by this commandment. The woman

untrue to her husband, the husband untrue to his wife: the curse of God

always follows them. It may be done by legal means, under the cover of

divorce laws that controvert God's laws, but it does not lessen the

sin. The meanest scoundrel that walks the earth, the meanest man alive,

is the man who steps in, under any circumstances, between a man and his

wife; and the meanest woman on earth is the one who steps in between

and woman and her husband. Remember, furthermore, that our Saviour

interpreted this law as applying not only to the overt act but to the

secret thought of the heart, when He said, "Whoso looketh on a woman to

lust after her hath committed adultery with her in his heart."

The Eighth Command- "Thou shalt not steal." -How, much do you weigh,

weighed by that law? Wait a moment. What is it to steal ? To steal is

to take property from another without giving an adequate equivalent in

either property or money. For example., every man who sells goods under

false pretenses is a thief. The man who sells a piece of cloth as being

"all wool" when it is part cotton, is a thief. The man who employs

labour, and takes advantage of the poor man's necessity, and does not

give him in pay a full equivalent for his labour, is a thief. Every

labouring man who does not give to his employer, in good honest work, a

fair equivalent for the wages paid to him, is a thief. The gambler who

gambles and wins is a thief. Every time you bet on cards, on a horse

race, on a boat race, every time you invest in pools or in a lottery,

whether it be a public lottery or a church lottery, and win. You are a

thief. The man who gambles and wins is a thief, the man who gambles and

loses is a fool. So every gambler is either a thief or a fool.

The Ninth Command-"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy

neighbour. "I know you do not like what I am saying, but that does not

alter it; and you will not escape God by trying to forget what I say.

But if you do not pay attention to my words, as far as they are true,

they will rise up against you in the day of judgment.

How much do you weigh, weighed by that commandment? "Well," you say, "I

am all right by that, because I was never in court." Does it say

anything about court? Every time you tell anything about another that

is derogatory to them, and is not true, you have broken this law of

God. You hear a story, and do not take pains to find out whether it is

true or not. Perhaps you add a bit to it, and go on and tell it, and it

is not true. You have broken the law of God. You say, "I thought it was

true." It is not what you think: it is the fact. Whenever you hear

anything against a neighbor, do not believe it until it is proven

absolutely to be true; and even when it is, keep it to yourself, unless

duty

dearly demands the of it, which is very seldom.

Some of you say, "Did you hear that awful story about Mrs.----? I was

awfully sorry." You lie. You were glad to hear it. or you would have

kept it to yourself. The gossip, the slanderer, is viler than the

vilest thief that walks your streets. The thief only steals money: the

slanderer steals what money cannot buy -reputation.

The Tenth Command-"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou

shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his

maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy

neighbour's." God's law covers not only the overt act, but the covert

thought of the heart as well. Many of you would not steal your

neighbour's horse, but you wish it was yours. You would not run off

with your neighbour's wife, but you wish she were yours. You would not

rob your neighbour of his money, but you wish it was your money. You

have broken the law of God.

How much do you weigh, weighed by the law of God?

There are two other weights heavier than these. Matthew vii. 12: "All

things whatsooever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to

them." The so-called Golden Rule. How many talk about it, and how few

keep it.

One day I was talking to a sea-captain. I asked "Captain, why are you

not a Christian?" "The Golden Rule is a good enough religion for me,"

he replied. "Do you keep it?" He dropped his head. He talked about it,

but he did not keep it. Talking about it will not save you. Do you do

it? Mind it does not merely put it negatively, "Do not do to others

whatsoever ye would not that they should do to you. That is

Confucianism. The Christian rule is positive. "Do these things to

them." Sell goods to other people just the way you want other people to

sell goods to you. Talk about other people behind their back just as

you want them to talk about you behind your back. Do you do it? Always?

Then you are weighed and found wanting.

The heaviest weight of all is in Matthew xxii. 37, 38. "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with

all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." How much do

you weigh by that law? Put God first in everything-in business, in

politics, in social life, in study, in everything. Do you do it? Have

you always done it? No, you say, I have not. Then you are weighed and

found wanting, not only by breaking a law of God, but this is "the

first and great command'" you have broken the first and greatest of

God's laws.

A minister asked me to talk to a young man who wanted to go into the

ministry. He was a splendid looking fellow. When he came to me, I said,

"You want to go into the Ministry. Are you a Christian?" "Why, of

course I am. I was brought up a Christian and I am not going back on

the training of my parents." "Have you been born again?" "What?" "Jesus

says, `Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'"

"Well," he said, "I have never heard of that before." "Did you know

that you had committed the greatest sin a man can commit?" "No, I never

did." "What do you think it is?" "Murder" "You are greatly mistaken.

Let us see what God's Word says." I turned to Matthew xxii. 37, 38, and

read: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all

thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great

commandment." "Which command is it?" I asked. "The first and greatest"

"Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your heart, and all your

soul, and all your mind? Have you put God first in everything- in

business, in pleasure, in social life, in politics?" "No sir, I have

not." "What have you done then?" "I have broken this commandment."

"Which commandment is it?" "The first and greatest" "What have you done

then?" "I have broken the first and greatest of God's commandments. I

have committed the greatest sin a man can commit. But I never saw it

before."

How much do we weigh, every one of us including the preacher? Every one

of us is weighed and found wanting. What shall we do then? This is

where the Gospel comes in. I have preached up to this point nothing but

law. God has weighed the whole world in the balances and found it

wanting, and in Christ He provided salvation for a wanting world.

God sent His Son, who kept that law, and then died for you and me and

me who have broken it; and all you and I have to do is to take Christ

into the balances with us. Christ can weigh up all the weights. When we

take Christ into the balance with us, then we are weighed, and found

not wanting.

Will You take Jesus Christ into the balances with you to-night?. Woe to

the man who is weighed in the balances of God for the last time without

having Jesus Christ with him. This may be the last opportunity for

some; it may at all events be the last opportunity which some will ever

take. The time will come when you will be weighed and found wanting;

and you will look back and say, "Oh, why did I not listen to the

preacher?" You will remember this sermon and the text; and you will say

"Oh, if I only had improved the opportunity."

Mr. Moody told a story I shall never forget. A man was set to watch a

drawbridge. He had orders not to open the draw until a special train

passed. Boat after boat came up and urged him to open the bridge and

let them through. "No, I have my orders to wait until the special

passes." At last a friend came and he encouraged him and allowed

himself to be persuaded. He drew the draw open. No sooner was the

bridge well open and the vessels beginning to enter. than he heard the

whistle of the special. He sprang to the lever but he was too late. The

train came on with lightning speed. He looked on as it dashed into the

open chasm, he heard the shrieks of the injured and saw the corpses of

the dead, and went mad. He never recovered his senses, but walked up

and down the padded cell of the asylum, crying, "Oh! if I only had! oh!

if I only had." Had what? Obeyed orders. Men and women reject Christ

for the last time, and you will walk up and down the eternal madhouse

wringing your hands, and saying,, "Oh! if I only had; oh! if I only

had!" Had what? Obeyed God, and accepted His son as your Saviour. Will

you do it now?

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IV. THE JUDGMENT DAY

"God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because He hath

appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness

by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto

all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead. Acts xvii. 30, 31.

There are two events in the future which are absolutely certain. First

of all, it is absolutely certain that Jesus Christ is coming again to

receive His people unto himself, and to reward them according to their

works; and in the second place, it is absolutely certain that Jesus

Christ is coming again to judge the world. When I was on the ocean some

months ago a man asked me one night, as we were walking the deck of the

great steamer together, "What will be the outcome of this tendency

towards great trusts and monopolies in business?" And I replied, "I do

not know.," Men often come to me with the question, "What will be the

outcome of these great combinations of laboring men to resist the

encroachments of capital?" And again I reply, "I don't know."

But I will tell you what I do know, and it is infinitely more

important. I know that some day the Lord Jesus Christ will come back

again, and receive His waiting and faithful people unto himself, and I

know that there is going to be a judgment day for the world, and that

judgment day is the subject of our thought tonight.

There are five things about the judgment day that are set forth in our

text: first, the certainty of it; secondly, the universality of it;

thirdly, the basis of it; fourthly, the administrator of it; and,

lastly, the issues of it.

1. First, the Certainty of it.-It is absolutely certain that there is

to be a judgment day. "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge

the world in righteousness." Men who are living in sin may laugh at it;

they cannot laugh it away. In the days of Noah men laughed at Noah's

predictions that there was to be a flood, but the flood came and swept

them all away. In the days of Lot the men of Sodom laughed at the idea

that God would rain fire and brimstone out of heaven, and destroy Sodom

and Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain; but the fire and

brimstone fell, and these cities were blotted out. In the days of

Jeremiah the people of Jerusalem laughed at Jeremiah's predictions that

Nebuchabezzar would come and lay Jerusalem in the dust and destroy

their temple. But it all came to pass just as God said, and just as

Jeremiah believed and predicted. In the days of Jesus Christ men

laughed at Christ's prediction that the armies of Rome under Titus and

Vespasian would lay Jerusalem's walls even with the ground, and that

calamity would overtake that city such as the world had never seen; but

historians outside the Bible tell us that it all came to pass just as

Christ predicted, and that Jerusalem was overtaken with the most

appalling siege in the world's history. All of God's predictions about

judgment on individuals and nations in the past have come true to the

very letter in spite of all the false hopes that were held out by false

prophets.

If we are to judge the future by the past -and there is no other way to

judge it- Gods predictions about the future with regard to judgment

upon individuals and nations will come true to the very letter, in

spite of false hopes held out by the false prophets; that is by the

"liberal preachers" of the day. It is absolutely certain that there is

to be a judgment day for the world.

God has given us a special guarantee of the judgment day, and that

special guarantee is the resurrection of Christ from the dead. As we

rest in the text, God will judge the world in righteousness by that man

He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that

He hath raised Him from the dead." The resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead is an absolutely certain fact of history- It is not a

theological fiction; it is not a poet's dream: it is an established

fact of history. If I had time tonight to go into the evidence, I could

prove to every fair-minded, thinking, man that, beyond question, Jesus

Christ rose from the dead. When we were in the city of Sydney I was

talking to the business men of Sydney and Members of both Houses of

Parliament there for four hours, to prove to them that Christ did rise

from the dead, and many an Agnostic, Deist, Unitarian, and Higher

Critic had his views utterly shattered, and turned to the risen Christ.

There is no time,

however, to-night to go into the evidence of the resurrection of Jesus

Christ. I simply want to say to you that the evidence for the

resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it is impossible

for any honest man to sit down and thoroughly sift the evidence, and

come to any other conclusion than that Christ did rise from the dead.

Year's ago there were two eminent lawyers, one named Lyttleton and the

other West. These two men were Deists; that is, they had faith in a

supreme being, but did-not believe in revelation, or in inspiration, or

in the miraculous. One day they got to a talking about their views, and

finally one said to the other, "Well we cannot maintain our position

until we disprove two things; first, the reputed conversion of Saul of

Tarsus, and secondly, the reputed resurrection of Jesus Christ from the

dead." Said Lyttleton to West, "I will write a book to prove that Saul

of Tarsus was never converted in the way which the Acts of the Apostles

record." And said West to Lyttleton, "I will write a book to prove that

Jesus. Christ did not rise from the dead as the evangelists say." Well,

they wrote their books, and when they met afterwards, West said to

Lyttleton, "How have you got on?" "I have written my book," said

Lyttleton, "but as I have studied the evidence from a legal standpoint,

I have become convinced that Saul of Tarsus was converted in just the

way the Acts of the Apostles say he was, and I have become a Christian.

How have you got on?" "Well," said West, "I have sifted the evidence

for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the legal standpoint, and I

am satisfied that Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead just as

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record, and I have written my book in

defense of Christianity." And these two books can be seen in our

libraries today. It is absolutely impossible for any man with a legal

mind, and accustomed to sift evidence, to sit down and thoroughly

investigate the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and come

to any other conclusion than that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead.

Well, that resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is a guarantee that a

judgment day is coming. When Jesus Christ came upon the earth, He

claimed in John v. 22, 23, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath

committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son,

even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not son honoreth not

the Father which hath sent Him." He claimed that there was a judgment

day coming and that He was to be the Judge. Men hated him for making

the claim, and the other claims involved in it, the claim of Deity.

They put Him to death for making this claim, but before they put Him to

death He said, "My Father will set His seal to the claim for which you

put Me to death." And when the third day came, the breath of God swept

through the sleeping clay, and God, by the resurrection of Christ, set

his seal to Christ's claims and said in accents that cannot be mistaken

and that are a message to all ages, "There is a judgment day coming."

The indisputable action of Jesus C

hrist in the past points with unerring finger to a certain judgment in

the future. If there is any man here tonight that flatters self that

there is to be no judgment day; if there is any man here that fancies

that he can go on in sin, and never be called to account for it; if

there is any man here that believes he can go on trampling under foot

the Son of God, and not have to suffer for it, oh, man, throw that hope

away to-night, for it is baseless. It is absolutely certain that there

will be a day in which Jesus Christ will judge the world in

righteousness.

II. The Universality of the Judgment- In the second place please note

the universality of the judgment day. "God hath appointed a day in

which He will judge the world.- It will be no class judgment; every man

and woman on the face of this earth will have to face the Judge in that

day. Of course all who are Christians, all who have accepted Christ as

their Saviour, and surrendered to Him as their Lord, will have been

caught up to meet Him in the air. But all the rest will have to face

the Judge in that day. There will be no escaping that day. men often

escape human courts. There is many a thief that has never been

arrested, there is many a murderer that remains unhung; but when God

sends forth His officers to gather the people for that judgment day,

they win have to come, and they wig have to stay right there until

their case is settled. Men have often escaped me when I am preaching.

When the preaching becomes too pointed, they get up and go out, and

thus they escape me. You can't escape God that way. You will have to

come there, and you will have to stay there until your case is decided.

He is going to judge the world in righteousness. How you would rejoice

if every, infidel in London were at this meeting to-night. But most

infidels would not dare to come to this meeting. But there will be a

meeting that every infidel will be at. There will be one meeting that

every hypocritical church member will be at. There will be a meeting

where ever

y unpenitent sinner will be present-the meeting with Jesus Christ at

the judgment bar of God. That man who is sitting in this meeting

to-night trying to make light of everything I am saying-you will be at

that meeting, and you will not make light of it; you will be there face

to face with Jesus Christ. That woman who has come to this meeting

to-night for any purpose but a good one, you will meet Christ there at

the judgment bar of God.

III. The Basis of the Judgment-In the third place note the basis of

judgment.

1. The deeds done in the body." In 2 Corinthians, chapter v, verse 10,

are the words, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of

Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body

according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The deeds

in the body are the basis of that judgment. There are preachers who

tell us that a man can die in sin, and after he is dead can have

another probation, a her chance to repent, that he may repent after his

death and turn to God and be saved. The Old Book does not hold out any

such hope. That kind of teaching contradicts the plain teaching of the

Word of God, which says distinctly that "the deeds done in the body,"

in the life that now is, are to determine the issues of Eternity.

If a man to-night who is living in drunkenness, who is squandering his

time, squandering his money, squandering his manhood in a life of

dissipation; you will have to answer for in that day. That woman

to-night who is living a life of frivolity and pleasure instead of

living for the God who made her, and the Christ who died for her; you

will have to answer for it in that day. That man here who professes to

be a Christian but lives like the world; you will have to answer for it

in that day. That man who has made gold his god, overreaching his

neighbour in business, oppressing his employee, turning a deaf ear to

the crys of the widow and orphan: you will have to answer for it in

that day. That man who knows the truth, but will not heed it because it

will hurt him in business or politics; you will have to answer for it

in that day. That man who is a libertine, living in lust, living like a

beast, scattering ruin wherever he goes; you will have to answer for it

in that day. The deeds done in the body-they will all come up, things

that have been forgotten for years. There is a man here who years ago

did a base, nefarious deed, and to-night he is very comfortable in the

thought that no one on earth knows of it. Man, the whole world will

know about it in that day unless you repent, and Jesus Christ will know

about it and will pass judgment upon it. There is a woman here to-night

who has a very black page in her past history, but of late years she

has been very comfortable over that black page. No one now knows

anything about it; it is all forgotten; there is no one to bring it up.

The whole world will know about it in that day. unless you repent and

turn to Christ.

2. "The secret things" will be judged. In Romans ii. 16, we read: "In

the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." The

secret things, the things done in the dark, the things done under the

cover of night, the things that nobody saw but God; all will be brought

to light on that day.

I remember hearing years ago of an incident that happened here, in your

own country. A woman had killed her husband by driving a nail into his

skull, and so successfully had she covered up the wound that he was

buried without any suspicion being cast upon her. After several years

the woman flattered herself that she would never be found out. One day,

however, the grave-digger was at work in the cemetery, and threw up

this man's skull, and there he saw the nail I do not know that he

suspected the woman, but he took it to her and said, "Look there." She

threw up her hands and cried, "My God! Found out at last." It will all

be found out at last, the secret things, the thoughts and imaginations

of the heart. Oh, you men who are boasting of your morality, how would

YOU like to have the thoughts and fancies and desires and the last

twenty-four hours photographed and thrown upon a screen before this

audience tonight? The whole world will see those secret things in that

day, not those of twenty-four hours only, but those of a lifetime,

unless you repent; You, madam, who bare boasted of your purity and your

nobility of character above others, and fancied that you ought to be

saved because of your goodness; how would you like to have the hidden

things of the chambers of imagery and imagination and desire

photographed and thrown on a screen before all this audience? But the

whole world will see it in that day, unless you repent. The secret

things will all come to light.

3. The Lord tells us again that the basis of judgment will be our

words. In Matthew xii. 36 I read, "But I say unto you that every idle

word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day

of judgment." Our careless, thoughtless, unstudied words reveal what we

are at heart. Our studied speeches do not reveal what we are but what

we would like to be; but our idle words, that we drop accidentally,

they are the best revelation of what there is in our hearts. Your

impure words, your unkind words, your harsh words, your words of gossip

and slander; you will give account thereof.

On one occasion, at a service in Minneapolis, one of my workers came to

me and said, "Here is an infidel; will you come and speak to him?" I

went to him, and in reply to my question, he said, "Yes, I am an

infidel!" I said, "Why are you an infidel?" He replied, `Because the

Bible is full of contradictions." "Full of contradictions?" I said.

"Yes," he said. "Will you please show me one?" I asked. "Oh" said he,

"it is full of them" "Well," I said, "if there are so many you ought to

be able to show me one." "Oh, it is just full of them," he said. "Well"

I insisted, "please show me one.", Then he replied, "Well, I don't

pretend to know as much, about the Bible as you do." I said, "Then what

are you talking about it for in this way?" Then I looked him right

square in the eye and I told him what Jesus said of the idle words that

men speak "Now," I said, "this is God's Word. God is the author of this

book, and you lightly and thoughtlessly have been slandering the Word

of God, and thus you have been slandering God, the author of it. I want

to say to you, sir, that you will have to give account of your words in

the day of judgment." The man turned pale, and well he might. I want to

say to you men to-night that are pulling the Word of God to pieces

because you have been told that some German scholar says so and so; you

men that dare to criticise the book you don't know anything about; you

men that are taking up the idle talk of newspapers and reviews and

retailing it, slandering God's Word and God, the author of it; you will

have to give an account thereof in the day of judgment. Well may you

tremble. I want to say to you men who have taken the name of the

glorious Son of God, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead,

lightly on your lips, and have been saying flippantly, "I don't believe

that Jesus is divine, I don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God;"

you men who have been robbing the glorious Son of God of what is His

due, you will have to give an account of this in the day of judgment.

4. But the great basis of the judgment day will be what we do with

Jesus Christ. We are told in John iii 18, 19, "He that believeth in him

is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already,

because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of

God." God has sent one down into this world to be our Saviour. He has

sent His only Son. The rejection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom

God has appointed to be our Saviour, our King and our Lord, is the most

daring and damning of all sins. Light has been sent into the world and

men have loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

There is nothing that reveals what is in the human heart so clearly as

what a man does with Christ. Christ is God incarnate, the light of God

come into the world, and the rejection of Jesus Christ proves a wicked

heart.

The great question in the judgment day will be, "What did you do with

Jesus Christ?" Oh, I can imagine some people in that day. That man who

sits in yonder gallery trying to make light of what I am saying

tonight, he will be there; I see him standing before the judgment bar,

and the throng falls back, there is profound silence. Then comes

rolling forth, like the sound of many waters, the majestic voice of the

Judge, "What did you do with Jesus Christ?"

IV. The Judge.-We now come to the fourth point. Who is to be the judge

in that day? Jesus Christ himself- "God hath appointed a day in the

which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath

ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath

raised Him from the dead."

Christ is to be the Judge. That same Christ whom you are rejecting is

to be the Judge. That same Christ whom you are robbing of the honor

which is His due is to be the Judge. That same Christ whose divinity

you are denying, not that you have any reason for denying it, but

simply you don't want to have to believe it and want comfort in your

sin-that same Christ whom you are trampling under foot will sit as

Judge in that day. That will be a very dark day for some people. It

will be a dark day for Annas and Caiaphas, who robbed Jesus of every

form of justice. Now they stand before the bar, and Christ sits upon

the throne. I can imagine Pontius Pilate in that day, who knew that

Jesus Christ was innocent, and yet condemned Him to appease the Jewish

mob. Pilate will stand at the bar, and the Christ he so basely wronged

will be on the throne. I cam imagine - the soldiers who spat upon Him,

and mocked Him, and crowned Him with thorns. The Christ they spat

upon,, buffeted and crowned with thorns, sits upon the throne and they

stand at the judgment bar. I can imagine Judas Iscariat, who for thirty

pieces of silver sold his Master after three years of close a

ssociation with Him; now he stands before the bar, and the Christ he

betrayed sits upon the throne. I can imagine that man and woman in this

audience to-night who have been telling their friends that they do not

believe that Jesus is divine, who have been trampling the Son of God

under foot, who have been resisting the invitations of mercy it may be

for years; you stand before the throne, and the Christ whom you have

defamed, slandered, rejected and trampled under foot, sits as Judge.

V. The Issues of the Judgment Day.-Once more, please notice the issues

of the judgment day. They will be eternal. They will be either eternal

joy and life and glory, or eternal death, eternal darkness, eternal

despair and eternal shame. Oh! men and women, I would that I had it in

my power to-night so to picture to you that great judgment day that

every man and woman in this audience, would go out from here with the

judgment day of Christ before them as a great reality; but it surpasses

my power. There is the judgment, throne; its blazing glory, its

overwhelming splendor. I cannot describe. There is the Christ upon the

throne. His face shining with a glory above the glory of the Noonday

sun, His eyes like flames of fire piercing men through and through. And

there you stand before that awful judgment bar, the eyes of Christ upon

you like a flame of fire, piercing you through and through, your whole

life laid bare and your secret thoughts revealed.

Oh, men and women, repent, REPENT, REPENT! "God now commandeth all men

everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day in the which He

will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath

ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath

raised him from the dead."

Repent, REPENT, REPENT!

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V. EVERY MAN'S NEED OF A REFUGE

"And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind and a covert from

the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a

great rock in a way land. Isaiah xxxii. 2.

I have a very precious old testament text to-night. I love the Old

Testament, it is full of Christ-Isaiah xxxii. 2: "And a man shall be as

an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers

of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary

land."

A good many years ago I was traveling on the continent visiting some of

the art galleries of Germany, and I saw a picture in the new art

gallery in Munich that made a very deep impression on my mind. It

represented the approach of a storm; the thunder clouds were rolling up

thick and ominous; the trees were bending before the first approach of

the oncoming tempest. Horses and cattle were scurrying across the

fields in fright, and a little company of men, women and children, with

bowed forms, blanched faces, and terror depicted in every look and

action, were running before the storm in search of a hiding-place. I do

not suppose it was the artist's intention, but it has always seemed to

me that this piece was an accurate representation of every human life.

Every man and woman needs a hiding-place. You may say a hiding-place

from what? A hiding-place from four things.

1. A Hiding-Place, needed from an accusing Conscience.-First of all,

every one of us needs a hiding place from the accusations of our own

conscience. Every man and woman here to-night has a conscience, and

every man and woman here to-night has sinned against their own

conscience. There is no torment like the torment of an accusing

conscience. We do not have to go to the Word of God to find that out.

We find it in heathen literature as well. It was not a Christian poet,

but a heathen of about the time of Christ, the Latin poet Juvenal, who

said:

"Trust me, no torture that the poets feign

Can match the fierce, unutterable pain

He feels, who, night and day, devoid of rest,

Carries his own account in his breast."

It was another heathen poet, though he lived in a Christian land, the

poet Lord Byron, who wrote:

"Thus the dark in soul expire

Or live like scorpion, girt with fire,

Thus writhes the soul remorse hath riven,

Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven;

Darkness above, despair beneath,

Around him gloom, within him death."

But we do not need to go to the poets to find out the torments of an

accusing conscience. We find them round about us every day in actual

life and experience. One night at the close of a service, at the church

of which I am now pastor in Chicago, there came to me a woman with a

haunted face and said, "I would like to see you in private." I replied,

"If you will come to my office tomorrow at 2 p.m., I will have the

pastor there; and if you have anything to say we shall be glad to

listen."

The next day at 2 o'clock the woman came to my office, and Mr. Hyde,

the pastor, was present, and I said to the woman, "Now what is the

trouble?" She made an effort to speak, and failed. Again I said, "What

is the trouble?" Now she made an effort, and again failed. For the

third time I said, "What is the trouble? We cannot help you unless you

tell us your trouble." Then she gasped out, "I have killed a man. It

was fourteen years ago, across the Atlantic Ocean, in the Old Country,

in the darkness of a forest, I drove a dagger into a man's throat, and

dropped the dagger and ran away. He was found in the forest with the

dagger by his side. Nobody suspected me, but everybody thought he had

committed suicide. I stayed there two years, and nobody ever suspected

me; but I knew I had done it, and was wretched and at last I came to

America to see if I could find peace here. First I went to New York and

then came to Chicago, and I have been here twelve years, but have not

found peace. I often go to the lake, and stand on the pier and look

into the dark waters beneath, and I would jump in if I were not afraid

of what may lie beyond death." Haunted and hunted by her own conscience

for fourteen years! Hell on earth! Well, some one says, I can very

readily see how a person who has committed so awful a deed as

that, staining her hands with human blood, should be haunted by her

conscience. But I have never done a thing like that. That may be, but

you have sinned; and when conscience points at us the finger of

accusation, we do not so much balance up the greatness or the smallness

of our sin. But you say, "My conscience doesn't not trouble me." That

may be, for it is a well-known psychological fact that conscience

sometimes sleeps; but conscience never dies. The day is coming when

that sleeping conscience of yours will awaken, and your conscience will

point at you the finger of accusation, and woe be to the man whose

conscience wakes up, who has no hiding place from his own conscience.

In the city of Toronto years ago there was a young girl who had drifted

there from the country. She had heard of the gaieties of the place, and

had left her home and come there for a life of pleasure, going to

theatres and dances and amusements of that sort and like many another

that goes to the great

city with the same object, she was caught in the maelstrom of the

cities sins and had gone down, down, down into a life of shame. Her

conscience did not trouble her; but one night the Fiske Jubilee Singers

were singing in Toronto, and some friends asked the girl to go and hear

them, and she did. At last they came to that hymn with the weird

refrain:

"My mother once, my mother twice,

My mother she'll rejoice;

in heaven once in heaven twice,

my mother she'll rejoice."

The poor girl was sitting up in the gallery, and as she heard the

strains of that chorus floating up to her, all the memory of her

childhood came back; she was a child, and at home again, in the old

home. It was evening; the lamp stood upon the table, another

sweet-faced mother glad there with open Bible on her lap, and she a

little girl of four, with golden hair, was kneeling at her mother's

knee, learning to pray.

It all came back again to her. Again the Jubilee Singers came to that

refrain:

"My mother once, my mother twice,

My mother she'll rejoice;

in heaven once in heaven twice,

my mother she'll rejoice."

And as those words came floating up again, the hot blood came to the

girl's cheeks, she sprang to her feet, and rushed down the stairs out

into the streets of the great city. On, on, on, as fast as her feet,

now growing weary, could take her, out beyond the gaslights into the

country; and next morning, when a certain farmer came to his farm-house

door, there was the poor girl, clutching the threshold, dead! Hunted to

death by her own conscience.

Oh, there are men and women here to-night whose consciences are asleep,

but whose consciences will some day awaken, and woe be to the man or

woman whose conscience wakes up and who has no hiding place from it.

II. A Hiding-Place needed from the Power of Sin within Ourselves.-In

the second place, we need a hiding-place from the power of sin within

ourselves. Now every man and woman here to-night who know themselves at

all well know that there are powers of evil resident within themselves

which are more than they can master in their own strength. If there is

any man or woman who thinks they have a complete mastery over

themselves, if there is any man who thinks he has power to break away

in his own strength from the sin that is within, he is a sadly deceived

man. There are some people here to-night with the overmastering

appetite for strong drink. There are others who do not care for it at

all, but are enslaved by other sins. Others have a passion for

gambling. Others care for neither of these, but have a love for other

things. With another it is an ungovernable temper; with others it is a

sharp, unkind, censorious tongue. With some it is one thing and with

some another. But with every man and woman of us within these four

walls there is the power of sin within ourselves, which is more than we

can master in our own strength. We need a hiding-place from the power

of sin within.

I remember one night a young man came to me at the close of a meeting

like this, in Minneapolis, in America, and he said, "I heard you

speaking in the street to-night, and I said to myself, `that man can

help me,' and I have come here and stayed through the service. Will you

now help me?" I said I would be very glad to do so if I could. He said:

"listen; I was employed down in Pennsylvania, and I got to leading a

fast life. Now," he said, "you know that a fast life costs money. It

cost more than I earned, and I put my hand into my employer's

money-till and took his money. Of course I was caught, but my employer

was a good man. He might have sent me to prison; instead of that, he

said, `You must go to the Northwest. It is a new country; begin life

anew up there.' They sent me here, and I have now got a good position,

as you see by my uniform," and he pointed to it. "But," he said, "I am

going just the same way in Minneapolis that I went in Pennsylvania. I

am afraid to leave this hall to-night. Before I get a block from this

hall, I shall meet some one who knows me, and just as sure as do I am

lost."

You may have no weakness in the direction that this young man had, and

again you may have; but every man and woman here has the power of sin

within that is more than they can master in their own strength. We need

a hiding place from the power of sin within.

III. A Hiding-Place needed from the Power of the Devil.-In the third

place, we need a hiding-place from the power of the devil. Over in our

country there are a great many people who are too wise to believe in

the existence of a personal devil. I believe in the existence of a

personal devil. I will tell you why. In the first place, because the

Old Book says so, and I have found that the man who believes in the

Bible always comes out ahead in the long run, and that the man who is

too wise and too advanced to believe the Word of God comes out behind

in the long run, every time. Now, there was a time when I was so wise

that I believed so much of the Bible as was wise enough to agree with

me. Thank God, that time has passed. Thank God, he has opened my eyes

and ears until I have come to the place where I know-I wish I had time

to tell you how I know- that that Book, from the first chapter to the

last, is the very Word of God. Now this Book teaches us that there is a

personal devil. Turn to 1 St. Peter v. 8: "Because your adversary, the

devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Ephesians vi. 11,12: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be

able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not

against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,

against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual

wickedness in high places." But, friends, there is another reason why I

believe in a personal devil, and that is, because of the teaching of my

own experience and my common sense. Years ago a great French man of

science was crossing the Arabian desert under the leadership of an Arab

guide. When the sun was setting in the west, the guide spread his

praying-rag down upon the ground and began to pray. When he had

finished the man of science stood looking at him with scorn, and asked

him what he was doing. He said, "I am praying." "Praying! praying to

whom?" "To Allah, to God." The man of science said, "Did you ever see

God?" "No." "Did you ever hear God?" "No." "Did you ever put out your

hands and touch God and feel Him?" "No." "Then you are a great fool to

believe in a God you never saw, a God you never heard, a God you never

put out your hand and touched." The Arab guide said nothing. They

retired for the night, rose early the next morning, and a little before

sunrise they went out from the tent. The man of science said to the

Arab guide, "There was a camel round this tent last night." With a

peculiar look in his eye, the Arab said, "Did you see the camel?" "No."

"Did you hear the camel?" "No." "Did you put out your hand and touch

the camel?" "No." "Well, you are a strange man of science to believe in

a camel you never saw, a camel you never heard, a camel you never put

out your hands and touched."

"Oh, but," said the other, "here are his footprints all around

the-tent." Just then the sun was rising in all its oriental splendour,

and with a graceful wave of his barbaric hand, the guide said, "Behold

the footprints of the Creator, and know that there is a God." I think

the untutored savage had the best of the argument. Friends, we see

everywhere in the magnificent universe the footprints of the Creator.

But, alas! we see everywhere in human society the footprints of the

enemy. Why, you have only to walk the streets of Jordan and you see the

footprints of Satan; you see them in your dens of infamy, in the faces

of the men and women on the streets, and, alas! alas! you see the

footprints of Satan in the homes of culture and refinement. What means

it that men and women of education, men and women of refinement, fall

under the power of all these strange delusions, of Christian Science,

Theosophy and all that sort of nonsense? It means that there is a

devil-cunning, subtle, masterly, marvelous-more than a match for you

and me in cunning and power. We need a hiding-place from the subtlety,

the cunning, the power, of the devil

IV. A Hiding-Place needed from the Wrath to Come. -In the fourth place,

we need a hiding-place from the wrath to come. There are a great many

people who do not believe that there is "a wrath to come." I do. Why?

Again, because the Old Book says so. The Old Book says, as I showed you

last night, that "God has appointed a day in the which He will judge

the World in righteousness," and God has given assurance of this by

raising Jesus Christ from the dead. The Old Book says: "There is to be

a day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of a holy and

outraged God!" I believe this because the Bible says so.

Another reason why I believe that there is "a wrath to come" is that my

common-sense says so. Look here, here is a man who grows rich by

overreaching his neighbours, grows rich by robbing the widow and the

orphan. He does it by legal means. Oh, yes, he is too cunning to come

within reach of the law. But he grows rich by making other people poor.

He increases in wealth and is honoured and respected. When he goes down

the streets in his magnificent equipage, the gentleman on the street

turns and says to his son: "There goes Mr. So-and-so, a man of rare

business ability, a man who is now one of our leading men of capital. I

hope, my boy, when you grow up, you will be as successful as he." He

lives in honour, dies in honour, dies respected by everybody-almost.

And the victims of his rapacity, the victims of his oppression, the

victims of his dishonesty lie yonder, bleaching in the potter's field,

where they have gone prematurely because of his robbery. Do you mean to

tell me that there will not be a day when these men who have lived on

wealth wrung from the poor widow and orphan will not have to go before

a righteous God and answer for it, and receive what they never received

in this world, the meet reward of their dishonesty? Of course there is

a judgment day; of course there is a hell. If there is not, then there

ought to be. Look here, here is a man who goes through life, never

giving God one thought from one year to another. He leaves God out of

his business, leaves God out of his social life, leaves God out of his

study leaves God out of his pleasures, and makes God's day a day of

pleasure, God's book never opened, God's son trampled under foot. And

thus the man lived, and thus he dies, going through the world ignoring

the God that made him and gave His Son to die upon the cross to save

him. Do you mean to tell me that there will not be a day when that man

will have to go up before a righteous God and answer these questions:

"What did you do with My day?" "What did you do with My laws?" "What

did you do with My Word?" "What did you do, above all, with My Son?" Of

course there is a judgment day. And you and I need a hiding place from

it, every one of us, for every one of Us has sinned and come short of

the glory of God. There are then these four things from whi

ch we need a hiding place our own conscience, the power of sin within,

the power and subtlety of the devil and the wrath to come.

Is there a hiding place? I read my text again: "A man shall be as a

hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of

water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." A

man shall be-who is that man? There is just one man that is a

hiding-place -the God-man, Jesus Christ. He is a hiding-place from

conscience. I have told you part of a story, and I win now tell you the

rest. When that woman came and told me how she had been haunted by her

conscience for fourteen years, I took the Bible and said to her, "Do

you believe what is written in this book?" She said, "Yes, sir, I

believe it all. I was brought up in the Lutheran Church!" "All right,"

I said, "listen!" (Isaiah liii. 6) "`All we like sheep have gone

astray?'" I told, "Is that true of you?" "Oh, sir," she said, "it is."

"`We have turned every one to his own way. '" "Is that true of you?"

"Oh, yes, that is the trouble. It is true." I said, "What are you?" She

said, "I am lost." "Very well, listen to the rest of it: `And the Lord

hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' Now," I said, "who is the

Him?" She said, "It is Jesus Christ." "Well, listen: `And the Lord hath

laid on Jesus Christ the iniquity of us all.' Now," I said, "let my

Bible represent your sin, let my right hand represent you, and my left

hand Jesus Christ." I closed the Bible and repeated the text: "All we

like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one his own way." And

I laid my Bible over on my other hand and said, "Where is your sin

now?" She said, "It is on me." "Well, listen: `The Lord hath laid on

Him, the iniquity of us all.'" And I laid the Bible over on the other

hand. "Where is your sin now?" She hesitated and then said, "It is on

Jesus Christ." "Right!", I said. "Is it on you any longer, then?" It

was a few moments before she spoke, and then she burst out with a cry

of joy: "No, it is on Jesus Christ!

" That woman, who had been haunted by her conscience for fourteen years

went from my office that day with the peace of God in her heart. If

there a man or woman here haunted with the memory of the past? Christ

is a hiding-place and there is peace to-night for you in Him.

Christ is a hiding-place from sin within. I knew a young man belonging

to a good family, highly educated, with noble aspirations, but

completely overmastered by sin in one of its most loathesome forms. He

tried to break away, tried to be a man, but failed, and he went down,

deeper and deeper and deeper, unto at last he was in despair and on the

verge of a suicide's grave, and one awful night when despair had

settled on his soul, he cried to God for Christ's sake, and Christ set

him free. And never once did he fall into that sin again.

Thirdly, is a hiding-place from the power of sin. I know a man in our

home country- I think I never knew a man in my life more completely in

the power of Satan than he was-a man of brilliant intellectual gifts,

the most remarkable orator I ever heard and yet he had gone down, and

had fallen into the power of Satan, gone down until his friends had all

left him, unto his wife and children were wanderers, and he was a tramp

on the streets. The man had gone down so low that on one occasion I was

told he threw his poor wife down on the floor (one of the noblest women

who ever stood by a fallen husband), and stamped on her with his heel.

I said to him., "John, you ought to be repentant." He said, "Well, I do

not believe as you do. I do not believe in God or in your Bible."

"But," I said, "John, that does not make any difference; if you will

take Jesus Christ as your Saviour, He will save you, and if you do not

take Him, you are lost." A few months afterwards, in another city, he

went to his wretched garret, and threw himself upon Christ, and Jesus

Christ met him and saved him and transformed him, and to-day he is one

of the most honoured men in our land. There is no mere speculation

about the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a present-day demonstrable

reality. It is not merely that Christ saved people nineteen hundred

years ago; he is saving them to-day in London.

Once more, Christ is a hiding-place from the wrath to come. Now, of

course, I cannot prove that from experience, for it lies in the future;

but I can prove it by an argument that is unanswerable. That argument

is this: the Christ that has power to save men from the power of sin

now -certainly has power to save them from the consequences of sin

hereafter. Is not that a good argument? Let me add, that any religion

that is not saving you from the power of sin to-day will not save you

from the consequences of sin in eternity. There is a lot of religion in

this world that is absolutely, worthless. People tell you that they are

Christians and that they are religious. They are saying their prayers,

and doing all sorts of things. I will ask you a question: "Have you got

that kind of faith in Jesus Christ that is saving you from the power of

sin today?" If you have, you have that kind of faith in Jesus Christ

that will save you from the consequences of sin hereafter. But if you

have that kind of faith in Jesus Christ which after all is not faith,

which it not saving you now, you have that kind of faith in Jesus

Christ that wont save you from the penalty of sin hereafter.

Friends, Jesus Christ is a refuge, a hiding-place from experience and

its accusations, from the power of sin within, from the power of Satan,

from the wrath to come, from all that man needs a hiding-place from.

Who will come to this hiding-place tonight?

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VI. THE DRAMA OF LIFE IN THREE ACTS

"A certain man had two sons." Luke xv. 11.

My subject to-night is the Drama of Life in Three Acts. The Lord Jesus

Christ is the author of the Drama, and it surpasses anything that was

ever put on the stage in conciseness, in point, in height and depth,

and full-ness; and beauty of meaning, in pathos and in power. The

Dramatic Personas of the drama are four-God, two men and the Devil.

There are three acts in the drama: the First Act, Wandering; the second

Act, Desolation; and the Third Act, The Wanderer's Return. There is a

Fourth Act, but with that we have nothing to do to-night.

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ACT I.-WANDERING; OR THE NATURE OF SIN

In the first act there are two scenes:

Scene 1.-A beautiful home, a spacious mansion, with everything to meet

every desire of the hearts of its occupants. An aged father, whose

countenance is full of nobility, and wisdom, and kindness, a

remarkable, blending of strength and tenderness. He is in earnest

conversation with the younger of his two sons. This younger son is

tired of the restraints of home. He has heard of the gaiety in a

distant country, and he longs to break the trammels of his father's

guardian care, and to see the sights and enjoy the pleasures of this

new land. And he cries impatiently, "Father, give me the portion of thy

goods that, falleth to me." A look of inexpressible pain passes over

the gentle face of the aged father, but he grants the sons request.

Scene 2.-A leave-taking, a home-leaving. The younger son has gathered

all his property together, got it into as portable a form as possible,

and is taking his journey to the far country. It is a beautiful spring

morning, the birds are singing sweetly, the air is fragrant with the

perfume of spring flowers, the young man's voice is full of gladness

and good cheer and with light and tripping step he trends his way down

the

avenue from the old home, little thinking of the father who watches him

with moist eyes and lonely heart as he leaves the front gate and goes

out into a false and evil world.

In these two scenes we have a picture of the nature, beginnings and

growth of sin. The father in the drama is God; the son, man wandering

from God. The son wished to have his own way; he was tired of the

restraints of his father's control. He desired to get away from his

father that he might do as he pleased. That is where sin begins-in a

desire to be independent of God, in a desire to have our own way, in a

desire to do as we please. The essence of sin is in a desire to do what

we please, rather than be constantly looking to God and asking Him what

pleases Him. Is there any man or woman here to-night who wishes to do

as they please? They have the beginnings of sin in their heart. Now,

what you please to do may be upright, may be moral, may be very

refined, but the desire to do your own will is the heart and essence

and substance of sin. There are different classes of sinners and

different forms of sin. There is sin that is coarse, and there is

sin that is refined. There is sin that is low and vulgar, and there is

sin that is genteel and elegant. But all sin is alike in essence. It is

man seeking to be independent of God, man seeking to have his own way,

that is where sin begins, that is the very essence of sin.

The second scene represents to us the growth of sin. The son did not

leave home at once. His heart was in the far country already, but he

still stayed at home. But not very long. Not many days after his feet

followed where his heart had already gone. That is the story of sin in

every instance. When a man starts out in the path of sin, starts out to

have his own way, he does not give up all communion with God at once.

He still goes to church occasionally, reads his Bible occasionally,

prays now and then, but less and less as the days go by, until at last

he begins to wonder whether there is any God, begins to listen to

voices that say there is no God, and last of all, blatantly cries, "No

God, no divine Christ, no inspired Bible, no God!"

How far have you got on that path of sin? Are you just starting out?

Are you seeking your own pleasure, but still keeping up some form of

communion with God, still attending the House of God now and then,

opening the Bible now and then, praying now and then, but less and

less; or have you got farther down that road, down where you are never

found in the House of God, never read your Bible, never go to God in

prayer? Or have you got away off into the far country, where you say,

"There is no God, the Bible is not the Word of God, Jesus Christ is not

the Son of God?" How far have you got down the path of sin?

Will you notice before we leave this Act that the father granted the

younger son's request? He knew how the boy would use the money, but he

also knew that the only way for him to learn wisdom was in the bitter

school of experience. That is precisely the way that God deals with us.

If a man desires to live independently of God, God lets him do it. God

does not force a man into a life of communion with Himself, and

conscious dependence on Himself; He gives us our choice and gives us

our powers to make a living, and if we wish to live without communion

with Him, He allows us to do it. If we can only learn the folly of

living away from God by bitter experience, God lets us have the

experience.

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ACT II.-DESOLATION; OR, THE FRUITS OF SIN.

Scene 1. \_ It is a gay one. The young man has reached the far country,

and life is one constant round of pleasure balls, wine suppers, races,

card parties, theatres, operas, all kinds of amusements, innocent and

sinful, are the order of the day. Every day is a day of parties and

every night a night of dissipation, and the young fellow is having a

right royal time. Oftentimes he looks back on the quiet home life. Ah!

how humdrum it was; how he pities his elder brother staying home there

in all that dull life!

Scene 2.-The scene shifts. He is still in the city, but the boom has

burst; hard times have come, men are out of work, famine stalks the

street. On every corner there are little groups of men in ragged

clothes, with pinched faces, with starvation looking out of their eyes,

standing around trying to earn a chance penny by, odd jobs, and our

friend is among the company. "There arose a mighty famine in that land,

and he began to be in want.".

Scene 3.-A rural scene, but not a pleasant one. A great pasture, but

not a blade of grass. In the prolonged drought every spear of grass has

withered. In the midst of the field stands a lonely carob tree, from

which hang the long pods covered with dust; a herd of gaunt, hungry

swine are nosing about in the sand, looking for stray carob beans. Our

friend stands underneath the tree looking eagerly up at the carob

beans, for "he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the

swine did eat." At last, driven by hunger, but at the same time

weakened by it, he wearily climbs the tree, and shakes it until the

pods fall from its branches, but the hogs have devoured them before he

can reach the ground. Again and again he climbs the tree, but with the

same result, and at last he falls upon the ground in despair, starving,

"and no man gave unto him." In these scenes of the parable, we gave a

picture of the fruits of sin. The first fruit of sin is pleasure; the

young man has a good time at first. There are those who tell us that

there is no pleasure in sin, but I will not tell you that; first,

because you would not believe me if I did. You have tried sin and found

pleasure in it. I will not tell you that there is no pleasure in sin,

because I know it is not true. I tried sin and found pleasure in it. I

will not tell you there is no pleasure in sin, because the Bible does

not say so. It is true that the Bible says "there is no peace for the

wicked," and you know that is true, or, if you don't know it now, you

will before very long. But the Bible does not say that there is no

pleasure in sin. On the contrary, the Bible speaks in Hebrews xi. of

"the pleasures of sin." Of course it adds that they are only "for a

season," very short lived. There is pleasure in sin. Some one has said,

I think it was Mark Guy Pearse, that the devil is not such a fool as to

go fishing without bait. The pleasures of sin are the devil's bait. But

mind you, the devil's bait always has a hook in it. He is dangling his

bait before some of you here tonight. "Oh," he says, "don't become a

Christian; you will have to give up this; the ball-room, look at this;

the theatre, look at this; the card-party and its pleasures, look at

this." And to-night, if you will snatch the devil's bait, the first you

know you will have the devil's hook in your gills, and you will be on

the bottom of the devil's boat, beneath a pitiless sun, floating out

over the sea of a hopeless eternity.

The second fruit of sin is want. "He began to be in want." That is

always the second result of sin-want, famine, starvation. Oftentimes

they come in a very literal form. How many men there are in London

to-night without a decent coat to their backs, without a meal in their

stomachs, without a place to lay their heads, who once had plenty. A

friend of mine pointed out to me a man one night in Chicago. He said,

"Do you see that poor fellow there all curled up near the store, with

his uncombed hair and ragged clothes? That man used to be a Congressman

of this district." Fast times followed by hard times. But it does not

always come that way. There is many a man living in sin who has plenty

of money, plenty to eat, plenty to drink, plenty to put on, plenty of

all material things; nevertheless, want comes. There is other famine

besides temporal famine. There is other starvation besides physical

starvation. A man has a soul as well as a belly, though a good many men

in London live as if they did not believe it; bat it is a fact. The

human soul is so large, so vast, so glorious that God only can fill it,

and away from God there is starvation. Augustine was right when he

said, "Thou, O Lord, hast made us for thyself, and our soul is never

satisfied until it resteth in thyself." Away from God there is

barrenness, away from God is an aching void, away from God is the

bottomless abyss of insatiable desire; away from God is woe, woe, woe!

Look at that young fellow as he sits there in his tatters and with

uncombed hair, the hunger of his stomach looking out of his half-crazy

eyes, and see in that wretched prodigal a picture of your soul, a

picture of every soul in this hall to-night that is away from God.

How well I remember a day and a night in my own life. I had started out

one afternoon to have an afternoon and night of pleasure. With a little

company of chosen companions I was in a hall that had been fitted up at

great cost for pleasure. For a few moments I had left my gay

companions, and I stood in the distance leaning against a pillar and

looking at them yonder. And oh, there was such a cry, such an aching

void, such a mysterious despair in my heart, that I leaned up against

the pillar of that magnificent hall and I groaned in the agony of my

spirit. I was starving. What do you think I did? I shook it all off and

went right back to spend the afternoon and night as I had started out

to spend it. What a fool I was I

The third fruit of sin is degradation and slavery. "He went and joined

himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields

to feed swine; and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks

that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." Jesus was to Jews,

and if `there is any position low and degrading in the sight of a Jew

it is that of a swine-herd. Christ meant this, that you and I have our

choice between being God's sons and hog-tenders to the devil. That is

the choice open to every man here to-night. That young man might have

been a son in his father's home, in glad, ennobling and well-requited

service, but instead of that he is hog-tender to a stranger. It is open

to you to be a child of God in full and joyous surrender to His will,

in glad and ennobling and well-requited service, or to be hog-tender to

the devil. Men say, "I will not be a Christian. I want my own way." You

cannot have it; no man has his own way- It is either God's way or the

devil's. You cannot have your own way-unless you make God's way your

own. Young man, which will you choose to-night? To be a child of God.,

or to be a swine-herd for Satan?

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Act III.-THE WANDERER'S RETURN; OR, THE REMEDY FOR SIN.

We come now to the third and last act of the drama. There are two

scenes. The first scene is the same lonely field. The young man sits

beneath the carob tree with his face in his hands and in despair. He

begins to think. Visions of the old home come before him. He sees his

noble father; he sees the well-laden table; he sees the well-fed

servants, and bitterly he cries, "How many hired servants of my

father's have bread enough and to spare, and I (his son) perish with

hunger!" and his face sinks deeper into his hands. Then he lifts his

head with the light of a new hope in his eyes, and he cries, "I will

arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned

against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy

son; make me as one of thy hired servants." And he arose and came to

his Father. This is God's picture of the remedy for sin. Notice what it

is. In the first place he began to think-that is where salvation begins

in thinking. People say that Christianity is blind faith; not a bit of

it. Christianity is a rational faith that comes from honest, candid,

close thought. He began to think. Men often say to me, "I am not a

Christian, because I think for myself." My dear friend, you are not a

Christian because you don't think for yourself. You don't think, and

you know you don't. For every man who is not a Christian because he

thinks for himself, I will show you a hundred who are not Christians

because they don't and won't think for themselves. What is the trouble

with you who are out of Christ? The simple, trouble is that you won't

think. You are bound not to think. You deliberately refuse to read

every book that would make you think. You go down to hear some infidel

lectures because you think that will prevent you thinking, because they

stuff you with irrational nonsense. At a meeting like this you will go

out when the preaching becomes too pointed and you are compelled to

think; some of you would do it now if you dared. If I could get you men

and women who are out of Christ to think for thirty consecutive

minutes, I would get you saved. The trouble is you are bound not to

think. A stubborn refusal to think is sending tens of thousands of the

men of Great Britain down to perdition.

He thought about the comparative lots of his father's servants and of

himself in this far country. The comparative position of a child, or

even a servant, of God and a servant of the devil; that is the thing to

think about. I wish I could get a good and faithful servant of Christ

and a faithful servant of the devil to stand together on this platform

to-night and just let you look at the two. Pick out the best servant of

the devil you know in London, and then pick out the most faithful and

devoted servant of Jesus Christ that you know; then make a call on them

the same day, and study their faces. If this does not make a Christian

of you, it is because you are not willing to give up sin. Compare the

lot of the child of God and that of the servant of the devil.

But, friends, he did not to stop with thinking; his thought brightened

into resolution. He said, "I will arise and go." It is not enough to

think, you must resolve; there are people here to-night who have

thought of this question often and who know just as well as I do that

they ought to be Christians, but they never come to the point of

resolution. In my first pastorate there was one of our leading men in

business and politics whom I know very well. I said to him, "John, you

ought to be a Christian." "`I know it"' he replied. "I would give

everything in the world if I were a Christian. I know you have got the

right of it, and the best of it, and I would like to be a Christian!"

"Then," I said, "John, give me your hand on it, and take Jesus Christ

right now." But he never would come to the point of resolution. Don't

only think; resolve! What are you to resolve? "I will arise and go to

the Father." That is the thing; come to God, to your Father. Come right

to Him.

But notice how to come; come with a confession, and say, "I have

sinned." That is the only way a sinner

can come to God-with a confession. God is willing to receive the vilest

sinner on earth that will come with a confession on his lips.

The last step is "He arose and came to his Father." He turned his back

on husks and hogs and hunger and turned his face towards home. Now we

come to the last scene. The boy is nearing home. I don't know what his

thoughts may have been by the way. He may have had doubts and fears.,

he may have wondered how he would be received, he may even have

thought, "I wish I could fix myself up better before going home." But

he had sense enough to come just as he was, and he kept trudging right

along on his journey, and now he is within a few miles of home. Away

off - yonder on the hilltop, as the sun was setting, stands a man, an

old man, in the last rays of the setting sun, peering off into the

west. He has often been there before; it is the father looking out into

the west, for the home-coming of the boy that never came. The loving

father is there again, for love never wearies, looking out into the

west Away down yonder towards the horizon he sees a speck. Can it be

the boy? It grows larger and larger; it assumes the proportions and

form of a man, but not at all the boy who left his home; no longer is

it that rotund form, no longer is there the bright glow of youth in his

face, no longer is there the light, tripping step. It is the figure of

a man prematurely old, with sunken cheeks and emaciated form, clothed

in rags and sore-footed limping slowly along the road. But those old

eyes, though dim with age, are sharp with love. Hear that cry, "My son,

my son!" The aged feet forget their feebleness- The old man runs and

falls on the neck of him and kisses him. The son begins to stammer out

his confession: "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee,

and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the father won't hear

another word. He cries: "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, a

ring on his hand and robes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted

calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry for this my son was dead

and is alive again: he was lost and is found." Of what is this a

picture? God-God's attitude towards the sinner. Although the son had

forgotten the father, the father had not forgotten the son. For many

years you have forgotten God, but God has never forgotten you. You have

not thought of God for many a long day, but there has not been a day in

which God has not thought of you, waiting to see some sign of your

home-coming. If you turn your back on your sin to-night, if you turn

back on husks, hogs and hunger, turn you face towards God; while you

are still a great way off, God will run to meet you; and there will be

the best robe of God's own righteousness in Christ to put on you, a

ring for your finger, a pledge of your sonship; a kiss of

reconciliation for your cheek, shoes of the preparation of the Gospel

of Peace for your feet, and the fatted calf, typical of the great feast

of joy and gladness in Jesus Christ. Men and women, come home to-night.

I heard years ago a story which I have never forgotten. A girl had gone

astray and had left her home the great city. For some time she had

continued to write to her mother, but after a while her letters became

less frequent and at last they ceased altogether. The mother suspected

the worst, and came up to the city to search for the lost girl. She

went to a gentleman who worked in the lower parts of the city and asked

him, "Can you get my daughter for me?" "Well.," he replied, "I think I

can, but you will have to do just what I tell you." "I will do anything

to get my daughter," she replied. "Then," said the missionary, "go to a

photographer and have your picture taken; have it taken large size, and

have a hundred of them, and bring them to me." After a while the mother

came, bringing the hundred photographs. "Now," be said, `sit down and

write underneath each photograph just these two words, `Come home,' "

and the mother sat down and wrote. "Now," said the missionary, "may I

take these photographs down into the low parts of the city and put them

up in the saloons and places of infamy?" It was a hard thing to ask of

a pure woman, that her picture should be put up to the gaze of the

outcast and the vile. But the mother's lore said "Yes"- anything to win

the girl. The man took them and put them up in a hundred dens of

infamy. Then he said to the mother, "Now go right home and wait." A few

nights after, a group of revelers came into one of the places where the

mother's picture hung among the group was the lost daughter; who,

looking across the saloon, saw that picture on the wall. It looked

familiar. Stepping over to it, she saw in her mother's handwriting the

two words, "Come home." She knew what it meant; it broke her heart; she

fled from the saloon and took the first train for home, and in a few

hours she was wrapped in her mother's arms.

That is what God has done in this fifteenth chapter of Luke. He has

sent down a picture of Himself, picture of His heart of love, of His

love for you and me, and underneath it God has written, as it were in

His own handwriting, these two words, "Come home."

Will you come to-night?

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VII. QUESTION THAT SHOULD STARTLE EVERY MAN WHO IS NOT A CHRISTIAN

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Hebrews ii. 3.

I have a text to-night which I believe God has given me for this hour,

a text that ought to startle every man and woman in this building who

has not accepted the Gospel of Christ. You will find it in Hebrews ii.

3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" I wish that

that text would burn itself into he heart of every man and woman in

this house who is out of Christ, "How shall I escape if I neglect so

great salvation?" I wish that every man and woman that may go away from

this place to-night without definitely having received Christ as their

Saviour and Lord and Master would hear it ringing in their ears as they

go down the street, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great

salvation?" I wish that every one that may lie down to sleep to-night

without a definite assurance of being forgiven through the atoning

blood of Jesus Christ and of acceptance before God in Him, would hear

it all through the night, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great

salvation?" Our text sets forth the folly and guilt of neglecting the

salvation that God has sent to us in and through His Son Jesus Christ,

and that is my object to-night. My sermon is all in the text-the folly

and guilt of neglecting the salvation that God the Father has sent

through His Son and in His son Jesus Christ.

You notice I say not merely the folly but the guilt. There is many a

man who thinks that perhaps it may be a foolish thing not to accept

Christ, and admit the folly of it, but he has never realized the guilt

of it. But I shall endeavour to show you to-night in the unfolding of

this text that it is not merely an egregiously foolish thing, but that

it is an appalling wicked thing to neglect this salvation.

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1. THE GREATNESS OF THE SALVATION.

We see the folly and guilt of neglecting this Salvation, in the first

place, by a consideration of the greatness of the salvation. "How shall

we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

1. We see the greatness of the salvation first of all in the way in

which the salvation was given. God sent His Son, His only Son, down

into the world to proclaim this salvation. As we read in the preceding

chapter, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time

past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken

unto us by His Son whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom

also He made the worlds; who, being the brightness of His glory and the

express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of

His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the

right hand of the Majesty on high." Have you ever thought of it in the

light of the context, that when God in infinite condescension, the

great and infinitely holy God, sent down His own Son to proclaim pardon

to the vilest sinner, if you and I neglect this salvation we are

pouring contempt upon the Son of God, and upon the Father that sent

Him? If God had spoken this salvation by the lips only of inspired

prophets, it would have a right to demand our attention. If God had

gone above prophets, and had spoken this salvation by the lips of

angels sent down from Heaven, it would have a still greater right to

demand our attention. But when God, in His infinite condescension, sent

not merely prophets or angels, but sent His own son, the only begotten

one, the express image of His person, God manifest in the flesh, to

proclaim this salvation, and you and I do not heed it, we are guilty of

the most appalling presumption and defiance of God. "He that despised

Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," but how

much sorer punishment you and I shall receive if we neglect this

greater salvation.

2. In the second place, the greatness of this salvation is seen in the

way in which it was purchased- This is a costly salvation. It was

purchased by the shed blood, by the outpoured life of the incarnate Son

of God. Ah, friends, when God in wondrous love went to that extent that

He sacrificed His very best, when God went to that extent that He gave

His own and only Son to die on the cross at Calvary, that He might

purchase your salvation and mine, if you and I neglect so great

salvation we are pouring contempt on the precious blood of the Son of

God. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three

witnesses," but how much greater punishment shall he merit who under

foot the Son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant wherewith He

was sanctified an unholy thing, and insults the Spirit of Grace

(Hebrews x. 29,29).

3. Again, the greatness of this salvation is seen in the third place by

a consideration of what it brings. It brings pardon for all our sins,

it brings deliverance from sin, it brings union with the Son of God in

His resurrection life, it brings adoption into the family of God, it

brings an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and, that fadeth not

away, laid up in store in Heaven for us, who are kept by the power of

God, through faith, unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last

time. When you think that God has put at our disposal in Jesus Christ

all His wealth, and is ready to make us heirs of God and joint heirs

with Jesus Christ, who can measure the guilt of neglecting and of

turning a deaf ear to this wonderful salvation? Suppose that on his

coronation day King Edward had ridden down to the East End of London,

and seeing some wretched little boy on the street, clad in rags, with

filthy face and hands, his great heart of love had gone out to that

wretched boy, and he had stopped the royal carriage and said, "Bring

that boy here," and they had brought the boy, and he had said, "I want

to take you out of your poverty, out of your squalor and rags and

wretched home; I am going to take you to the royal palace and adopt

you, as my son." Then suppose the boy had turned said, "Go along, I

don't want to he adopted as your son; I would rather have my wretched

crust of bread, I would rather have my rags and filthy home than live

in your old palace; I don't want to go to be your son."

But when the great King of Glory, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords,

the great Eternal Son of God comes to you and me, in our filth and rags

and sin, and wants to take us out of our filth and sin and rags of

unrighteousness, and says, "I want to adopt you into my family and make

you an heir of God and a joint-heir with Me," there are some of you men

and women in this building to-night who, by your actions, are saying,

"Go away with your salvation, go away with your adoption into the

family of God; I would rather have the crust of the world's pleasure

and the rags of my sin than all the royal apparel of righteousness and

glory which you offer me." Oh, the daring, damning guilt, of any man or

woman who neglects so great salvation!

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II. ONLY SALVATION.

A second thought which the text suggests is that our folly is great in

neglecting this great salvation because it is the only salvation that

is open to us. As Peter puts it in Acts iv. 12: "There is none other

name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It is

salvation in Christ, or it is no salvation at all. A man is in a

burning building. If there were one way of escape by a fire-escape, and

another by a great broad stairway, he would have a perfect right to

neglect the fire-escape for the easier escape by the stairway. But

there was no way of escape but the fire-escape, how great would be his

folly in neglecting it. Men and women, you are in a burning building,

in a doomed world. There is just one way of escape; that is by Christ.

In Christ any one can be saved. out of Christ; no one shall be saved.

By Christ, or not at all. There is a class of men to-day who say, "Give

up your Bible, give up your Christ of the Bible." and we turn to them

and say, "What have you got to give us in place of our Bible; what have

you got to give us in place of the Christ of our Bible?" Now we know by

personal experience that the Bible and Christ bring forgiveness of sins

and peace of heart, for they have brought them to us. We know that they

bring deliverance from sin's power, for they have brought it to us. We

know that they bring joy unspeakable and full of glory, for they have

brought it to us. We know that they bring pardon and a firm assurance

of eternal life, for they have brought them to us. We know that Christ

makes us sons of God, and if sons, then heirs of God, and joint heirs

with Himself. What have you got that will bring us the same, that will

bring us pardon and peace and set us free from the power of sin? What

have you got that will bring us joy unspeakable and full of glory? What

have you got that will bring us the assurance of eternal life? Have you

anything? No, you have not. Well,

then, please, we are not quite so great fools as to give up a book and

a Saviour that bring us all these for nothing. Salvation in Christ, or

salvation not at all. Point me to one saved man in London that was not

saved by Christ. I have been away round this round earth. I have been

in every latitude and almost every longitude, north and south; I have

talked with all kinds of people, of all races and all classes, but I

have never yet found a saved man, who had a glad assurance of salvation

and practical deliverance from sin's power, that was not saved by Jesus

Christ; neither has anybody else.

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III. TO MISS SALVATION ALL THAT IS NECESSARY IS MERELY TO NEGLECT IT.

In the third place, this text teaches us that to miss this salvation,

and to bring upon ourselves the just and awful displeasure of a holy

God for our light and contemptuous treatment of a salvation so

wonderful, given and purchased at so great a cost, all that is

necessary is simply to neglect it. "How shall we escape if we neglect,

so great salvation?" In order to bring upon your head the awful

displeasure of God, and to be lost forever, it is not necessary that

you go into any outrageous immoralities; it is not necessary that you

should be an arrant and blatant blasphemer; it is not necessary that

you should abuse churches and preachers of the Gospel; it is not

necessary that you should even positively refuse to accept Jesus

Christ; all that is necessary is that you simply neglect. More people

are lost in Christian lands by neglecting than in any other way. There

are millions in England to-day who are going through life neglecting,

drifting into their graves neglecting, drifting into eternity

neglecting, drifting into hell neglecting. That is all that is

necessary to be lost. Here is a dying man, there stands a table by the

dying man's bedside, within easy reach, and standing on that table

there is a tumbler in which is a medicine that has power to save the

dying Christian's life. The man has strength enough to put out his hand

and take

the tumbler and drink the medicine. Now what is all that is necessary

for that man to be saved? All that is necessary is simply for him to

put out his hand and take the tumbler and drink the medicine. Now what

is all that is necessary for that man to be lost and die? It is not

necessary that he should cut his throat or blow out his brains; it is

not necessary that he should throw the medicine out of the window; it

is not necessary that he should assault or insult the doctor or the

nurse; it is not necessary that he should positively refuse to take the

medicine; all that is necessary for that man to die is to neglect to

take the medicine.

Men and women out of Christ, you are dying. Eternal death is at work in

your souls to-night, but on that table, in that Book, in the Christ of

that Book, there is a medicine that will save you, and save you

to-night if you will take it. The medicine is within the reach of

anybody in this building. Christ is nearer to you than the man or woman

that sits next to you in that pew. All you have to do to-night to be

saved is to put out your hand and take Christ. "To as many as received

Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God." What is all that

is necessary to you to perish eternally? Not to commit moral suicide;

not to commit to-night some awful act of immorality; not to get up and

curse Christ and the Bible; not loudly to proclaim that you are an

infidel; not to refuse blatantly to take Christ; all that is necessary

for you to be lost is simply to neglect. Here is a boat on the Niagara

River, away above the Falls, towards Lake Erie, where there is scarcely

any current. A man sits in the boat, being carried on very, slowly by

the gentle current. There is a good pair of oars in the boat, and the

man could take them and pull up the river towards the lake, or to

either bank, if he liked; but the man sits there and is carried on,

almost imperceptibly at first, and then faster and faster, until,

before he knows it, he is in the swift current just upon the rapids, an

d he is being carried on towards the Falls. The oars are no good to him

now, the current is too swift; he could not save himself if he

would-but on the shore there are men who have seen his peril; they have

run along the bank and have thrown a line good and strong. It falls

right into the boat, at the man's very feet. What is all that the man

has to do to be saved? All he has to do is to lay hold of the rope and

they will pull him ashore, as has been done more than once on that

river. What is all that he has to do to be lost? It is not necessary

that he should take up the oars and pull with the current; it is not

necessary that he should throw the oars overboard; it is not necessary

that he himself should jump into the river; all that is necessary is

simply for him to neglect to lay hold of that rope that lies before

him, and the swift current of the river will carry him on to absolutely

certain death over the cataract.

Men and women, that is a picture of every man and woman in this

building out of Christ. You are in a boat in a perilous stream, being

carried towards the cataract of eternal perdition. There is no man who

has the power to take the oars in his own strength and pull against

that awful current; there is no man on earth who can save himself; but

God has seen your peril, and, in the Gospel of His Son, has thrown out

a rope. It has fallen at your feet to-night; all you have to do is to

lay hold, and He will pull you safely on to the glorious shore. But

what is all that you have to do to be lost? It is not necessary that

you should jump into the current or pull with the stream, or refuse to

accept Christ. All that is necessary is that you simply neglect, and

that awful current that you are already in will sweep you over the

cataract to eternal death and ruin.

Some one put a little card into my hand one day, a short, narrow card,

and on the one side were these words, "What must I do to be saved?"

Underneath was written God's answer in Acts xvi. 31: "Believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Then it said "Over," and I

turned it over. On the other side of the card was this question, "What

must I do to be lost?" and there was the answer in just one word

"Nothing!" "Nothing!" You don't have to do anything to be lost. You are

lost already; if you do not do something, and do it quickly, you will

be lost forever. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great

salvation?" To sum it all up, friends, all that is necessary to be lost

to-night, all that is necessary to bring upon our heads the awful wrath

of God for our light and contemptuous treatment of a Gospel proclaimed

by the lips of His own Son and purchased by the atoning death of His

own Son, all that is necessary is simply to neglect.

Years ago in Minneapolis, the leading paper was the Minneapolis

Tribune, published in a magnificent six or seven-story building, the

finest newspaper building at that time in the Northwest. I had occasion

very frequently to go into the upper stories of that building to see

editorial friends. There was one great defect in that great building

which I had never noticed. The defect was this, that the stairway went

right round the elevator shaft, so that if a fire broke out in the

elevator shaft escape by the stairway was cut off as well. There was,

however, a fire-escape outside. That very thing happened. There broke

out a fire in the elevator shaft, and it commenced to sweep up the

shaft, story by story, cutting off escape by the elevator and cutting

off escape by the stairway as well. But they had a brave elevator boy

who went up a number of times until he got a large number of men down

from the upper stories, and almost all the rest escaped by the

fire-escape outside the building. But away up in the sixth story there

was a man, a dispatcher for the Associated Press, which is the largest

news gathering agency in the United States. He was urged to escape, but

he refused to move. There he sat by his instrument, telegraphing to all

parts of the country that the building was on fire. He could have gone

out of the building by the fire-escape, and across the road to an

instrument there, and could have done just as well; but, like a typical

newspaper man, he wanted do something sensational, and so there he sat

telegraphing the news. There had been a similar case above Johnstown in

the time of the Johnstown flood, when the dam of the river was

breaking. A woman out in a telegraph office at the bottom of the dam

telegraphing down to the people at Johnstown that the dam was breaking

and that they had better flee for their lives. But she sat there,

because duty required her, until the dam burst, and she was swept down

in the flood. This man, however, sat there quite unnecessarily, merely

because of his desire for notoriety. "I am in the Tribune building," he

telegraphed, "in the sixth story, and the building is on fire. The fire

has now reached the second story; I am in the sixth." In a little while

he sent another message: "The fire has now reached the third story."

Soon he telegraphed: "The fire has reached the fourth story; I am in

the sixth." Soon the message went over the wires: "The fire has reached

the fifth story; I am in the sixth." Then he thought it was about time

to leave; but, in order to do this, he had to cross the hallway to a

window to reach the fire-escape. He went to his door and opened it,

and, to his dismay, found that the fire had not only reached the fifth

story,, but the sixth story, and that the hallway was full of smoke and

flame, which, the moment he opened the door swept into the room. He

shut the door quickly. What was he to do? The stairway, the elevator

and the fire-escape were all cut off; but he was a brave man., and he

went to the window and threw it up. Down below stood a great crowd, six

stories down. There was no means of catching him if he jumped, and he

stood there on the window sill, not knowing what to do. But presently

he looked up. Above his head was a long wire guy-rope that passed from

the Tribune building to the roof of a building across an opening. Below

him was a chasm six stories deep, but he caught hold of the guy-rope

and began to go hand-over-hand across that chasm. The people down in

the street looked on in breathless suspense. On and on he went, and

then he stopped. The people below could hardly breathe. would he let

go? No. On and on he went, and again he stopped, and again the crowd

below gasped, but only for a moment. His strength was gone; he was now

obliged to let go, and down he came tumbling through those six stories

of space, crushed into a shapeless mass below. All through mere

unnecessary neglect!

Men and women, you are in a burning building tonight, you are in a

doomed world; but, thank God, there is a way of escape, and one way

only, in Christ Jesus. No one knows how long that way will be left

open. But I beg of you, do not neglect it, and then when it is too late

lay hold on some poor guy-rope of lame philosophy, and go a little way,

and then let go and plunge, not six stories down, but on and on and on

the awful unfathomable depths of the gulf of despair. Men and women,

turn to Christ to-night! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great

salvation?"

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VIII. A SOLEMN QUESTION FOR THOSE WHO ARE REJECTING CHRIST THAT THEY MAY OBTAIN

THE WORLD.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the world, and lose his

own soul?" Mark viii. 36.

That question ought to set thinking every man and woman here tonight,

who, because of love of the world is refusing Jesus Christ.

1. Will you please notice in the first place the two things that are

contrasted in the verse? The two things contrasted are not the present

and the future. The question is not what shall it profit a man if he

gain the present and lose the future. That would be an important

question. If a man were to gain the fleeting present and thereby lose

the eternal future, it would be a very foolish bargain; but that is not

the question of the text. The man who loses his soul does not gain the

present. It is true he loses the future, the eternal future; but he

does not gain the present. The man living in sin, the man living away

from Christ, does not get the most out of the life that now is. He gets

the least out of it. On the other hand, the man that saves his soul

does not lose the present. It is true that be gains the future, the

eternal future; but he does not lose the present. The man whose soul is

saved gets the most out of the life that now is. The two things put in

contrast are these, the world and the soul, or life- the world, that

is, the tangible world and all it contains, wealth, honour, power,

pleasure, everything that appeals to the senses, the lust of the flesh

and lust of the eye and the vainglory of life (cf. 1 John ii, 16). That

is the world. That which is put into contrast with it is the soul or

life, the inner, real man. To gain the world is to get all the wealth

there is, and all the honor there is, and all the social position there

is, and all the power there is, and all the worldly pleasure there is.

To lose the soul is to lose your real manhood, to fall short of that

for which God created you, to miss the divine image, to have the divine

image blotted out and the image of the devil stamped in its place.

To lose the soul is to come short of the knowledge of God, to lose

communion with God and likeness to God, to "fall short of the glory of

God." Now the question is this, What shall it profit you to gain all

that this world has, all its wealth, all its honor, all its pleasures,

all its power and lose your true selves, lose that for which God

created you, lose communion with God and likeness to God, and the glory

of God?

II. For any man to gain the whole world at the cost of forfeiting his

soul would be a bad bargain. If one could get the whole world by

forfeiting his soul, it would be an idiotic exchange. Why?

1. First of all, because the world does not satisfy. The world never

satisfied a human soul. Take wealth. Was ever any man satisfied with

wealth? Did any amount of money ever bring satisfaction and lasting joy

to any man or woman on earth? You had a man here in England a few years

ago who was very successful in making money. He made millions of pounds

sterling, but so little did it satisfy him that he jumped overboard

from the deck of an ocean steamer and drowned himself. I remember one

day that the heir to one of the largest fortunes in the world invited

me to dinner, and I went to dinner with him. After the dinner was over

he opened his heart to me, and confessed his dissatisfaction with life.

All the million - and there were a great many millions that that young

man was heir to- did not give him satisfaction and joy.

Did honour ever satisfy any man? I have known men and women in the

highest positions of honour is politics and social life, in culture and

in all spheres of life, but I never knew a man or woman yet that was

satisfied with honour. Does power satisfy any man? Was any king or

emperor or czar, no matter how large his power, satisfied with the

possession of power? Do the pleasures of life satisfy any man? Does the

ball room satisfy? Does the card party satisfy? Does the theatre

satisfy? Does the race-course satisfy? Does gambling satisfy? Is there

any form of the world's pleasure that satisfies the human soul? How mad

then to forfeit your soul to gain money, houour, power, position,

glory, pleasure, or anything that this world contains, when we know

that they never satisfied anybody.

2. But in the second place it is a mad bargain to forfeit your soul to

gain the world, because the world does not last. As the Apostle John

says in I John ii. 17, "The world passeth away." How well we know it.

Take wealth. How long does wealth last? With many a man it does not

last even a few years. A man is a millionaire to-day, and by a turn of

the wheel of fortune he is practically penniless to-morrow. I was

talking about a man of your city only to-day to a friend of his, and he

told me how wealthy this man used to be. But there was a little change

in the line of production in which this man was interested, and your

country ceased to be the country that supplied that market, and that

man's fortune dwindled from millions to practically nothing. I remember

when I was a boy, one night we five children were in the sitting room

at home, and we asked our father to tell us what his properties were.

We were going to figure them up and see how much we were going to be

worth when

he was gone. He was rather amused at the idea, and he began to tell us

what he thought he was worth; and when he told us of all the

possessions he could think of, we all of us added them up, and divided

them by five to see how much each of us would be worth when my father

saw to hand things over to us. This looked splendid on paper, and I

felt quite rich that night; but a financial crash in America in 1873

which affected my father's properties, and little by little, by the

year `77, when my father was called away, practically the last vestige

of all that he possessed was taken from his hands and he left only a

few thousand dollars. And that was mismanaged, and in a few months not

a penny was left. All I had was a matchbox and a pair of

sleeve-buttons, one of which I have lost, and I don't know what became

of the other. "The world passeth away." I thank God that that money did

pass away. It was one of the best things that ever happened to me.

Take honors, how long do they last? I remember a man in our country who

stood preeminent among the statesmen of America I think beyond all

question he was the first statesman of America of his day. He might

have become President, but he was a little too much of a statesman to

become President. England had an unpleasant experience once with this

man's statesmanship, when he represented the United States government

at the Geneva Commission on the Alabama claim and carried the day. He

was the most highly honoured I think of any man of his day in America,

but after a while this man dropped out, and we almost forgot there had

been such a man. I remember I was thinking of this man one day, and I

said to myself, "I guess so-and-so's dead." I have not seen his name in

the pages at all lately," and a day or two afterwards I saw in the

papers that the Hon. So-and-so was living in such a street of New York,

that he never went out in but sat by his open window looking out upon

the passing crowds and thinking of his old-time successes. That man was

utterly forgotten, yet at one time he was almost the unquestioned

leader of political life in America. In a few months more I took up the

paper and read that he was dead, and when he died there was nothing

said. He had dropped out of sight. Honour does not last. Take your most

honoured statesmen, whose names are in every mouth, no one will be

speaking of them or thinking of them a few years hence. "The World

passeth away." Suppose honour and money do last until a man dies. How

long will they last? Twenty years, thirty years, forty years, possibly

fifty or sixty years, and then-gone! One of our wealthiest men in

America, the wealthiest man of his day, died. Two men on `Change in

this city, New York, met the next day, and one of them said to the

other, "How much did so-and-so leave?" and the other one replied, "He

left it all." So he did. Of his one hundred and ninety-six millions of

dollars which he was worth, he didn't take one penny with him.

Pleasure, how long does it last? Take the ball; how long does the

pleasure of the ballroom last? Somewhere from two to seven hours; then

you go home with weary feet and throbbing brain, blaming yourself for

having been such a fool. The card party; how long does it last? Oh, two

or three hours, four or five hours; and then you will go home with a

lighter purse and a heavier heart. The champagne party; how long does

it last? A few hours, and you go home with an aching head, a nauseated

stomach, thinking what a fool you have been and saying, "I win never be

such a fool again." Ah, friends, "the world passeth away."

The joys of friendship; how long do they last, if it is worldly

friendship? A few brief years, and then we look into the casket on the

beloved form and face and the coffin lid is locked down, and all is

over. "The world passeth away." But the soul lasts. "He that doeth the

will of the Lord abideth for ever." So I say that to forfeit your soul

to gain the world is a mad bargain, for the world does not satisfy

while you have it, and it does not last at all.

II Now, then, if any one here to-night could get the whole world as the

price of selling his soul it would be a foolish bargain.; but who ever

got the whole world? Who ever had the world's wealth? No one. The

richest man has but small portion of all the world's wealth. Who

possesses all the world's honor? The most honored man on earth to-day

has but a portion of all the world's honour? Who possesses all the

world's pleasure? The greatest devotee Of Pleasure has but a very small

portion of all the world's pleasure. Who possesses all the worlds

power? The mightiest man on earth has but a small portion of all the

world's power. But even if you could get it all, it would be a bad

bargain; and what a mad bargain to sell your soul to get so small a

portion of the world as any of you are getting!

I asked a man one night at a meeting like this- he looked a bright,,

intelligent fellow for a man of his class: "Why are you not a

Christian?" He replied, "I am deeply moved and I would like to become a

Christian. You have made me perfectly wretched. Yes, I would like to

become a Christian." "Then why not become one to-night?"' He said, "My

business forbids it I would have to give up my position to-night if I

became a Christian." I asked what was his business and he replied, "A

bartender!" He didn't look it; he looked more respectable. I said,

"Will you please tell me how much you get a week for tending the bar?"

If I remember correctly it was six dollars, that is 24s.; and that ma

was selling his soul for 24s. a week. Some of you are selling your

souls at almost a cheap a price. I asked another young fellow why he

did not become a Christian. He said, "I believe in it, and I hope I may

one day. But I am in a business of my own and I have my best business

on

the Sabbath; I cannot be a Christian and do Sabbath work." Then I said,

"You had better give up your Sabbath work." "No" he said, "I can not do

that. It is the biggest day's profit I have in the week." And that man

was selling his soul for the profit of one day's business a week.

Why, there are some of you here to-night selling your immortal souls,

for which Jesus Christ died, and which shall live for ever, in Heaven

and glory, or in hell and flame, for some single form of pleasure. It

may be the dance, it may be the @ card party, it may be the horse race,

it may be the theatre, it may be some other form of pleasure to which

you are a slave, and for one single form of worldly pleasure you are

forfeiting your souls. Why, man, you are mad! "What shall it profit a

man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Friends, while I am talking here to-night, and offering Christ to you,

and salvation in Him, all unseen but none the less present there is

another preacher here tonight and that is Satan. He stands right by

some of you as you sit in yonder pews, and while I offer you Christ and

salvation and life eternal in Him, Satan offers you money, a little

larger income in your business, or the social position that he tells

you you will have to forfeit if you come out and out for Christ, or

some form of worldly pleasure. He says, "Take this. Give me your souls

and I will give you money. Give me your souls and I win give you these

pleasures that you will have to give up if you become real Christians.

Give me your souls and I will give you social position. Give me your

souls and I will give you the world." Why, men and women, if he should

offer you the whole world, you would be mad to accept his offer; but

when he offers to you such a little trifle-the consummate folly of it-

that for the little piece of the world you forfeit your soul; you

forfeit life eternal for a world that never satisfies and does not

last!

I have known many men and women that gave up the world for Christ, that

gave up money for Christ, men that gave up much money for Christ, gave

up high honour for Christ, gave up social position, high social

position for Christ,, gave up pleasures that had been the passion of a

lifetime for Christ, but I have yet to find the first man or woman who

regretted it, and I have known people who gave up Christ for the world,

and when the hour came in which the eternal realities were opening upon

them, they bitterly regretted it.

One day in New York City one of the wealthiest men that America ever

produced, the first man that established a family name now famous, lay

dying, with all his millions in the bank, and with all his railway

stock of no use to him. `And as he lay there, he said, "Bring in the

gardener." The gardener was a godly man, and when he came in to see his

dying master, the rich man said to the gardener, "Get down, and pray

for me." The gardener did so, and when he had finished his prayer, the

rich man said, "Sing,

'Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, Weak and wounded sick and sore.'"

Ah, men and women, a time is coming when we shall no longer see through

eyes that are blinded by the glamour of this world; the time is coming

when every man and woman here to-night will have the scales taken from

their eyes, and face to face with death, face to face with God, face to

face with eternity, you will see as God sees. You will say, "What a

fool I was to forfeit my never-dying soul to get the world that has not

satisfied, and is now slipping out of my grip." " What shall it profit

a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

The story is told of Rowland Hill, the great preacher. Lady Ann Erskine

was passing by in her carriage, and she asked her coachman who that was

that was drawing such a large assembly. He replied that it was Rowland

Hill. "I have heard a good deal about him she said; draw up near the

crowd!" Mr. Hill soon saw her, and saw that she belonged to the

aristocracy. He suddenly stopped in the midst of his preaching, and

said: "My friends, I have something for sale." His hearers were amazed.

"Yes, I have something for sale; it is the soul Lady Ann Erskine. Is

there any one here that will bid for her soul? Ah, do I hear a bid? Who

bids? Satan bids. Satan, what will you give for her soul? I will give

riches, honour, and pleasure.' But stop! do I hear another bid? Yes,

Jesus Christ bids. Jesus, what will you give for her soul? `I will give

eternal life.' Lady Ann Erskine, you have heard the two bids -which

will you have?" And Lady Ann Erskine fell down on her knees and cried

out, "

I will have Jesus."

Man and woman, two are bidding for your soul to-night, Satan and Jesus.

Satan offers you the world, the world that does not satisfy, and that

does not last. Jesus offers you life, real life, eternal life. To which

will you have? "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world

and lose his own soul?"

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IX. REFUGES OF LIES

"The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies"- Isaiah xxviii. 17.

We have seen in a former address that every man needs a refuge from

four things-from the accusations of his own conscience, from the power

of sin within, from the power of Satan, and from the wrath to come.

Almost every man has a refuge, that is, he has something in which he

has put his trust to comfort him. The difficulty with most men is not

so much that they have not a refuge, as that they have a false refuge,

a refuge that will fail them in the hour of crisis and need; what our

text characterizes as a "refuge of lies." It was just so in Isaiah's

time; the men of Israel knew there was a coming day of judgment, and

that they needed a hiding place from that coming judgment of God, and

they made lies their refuge, and Isaiah -God's messenger- proclaimed,

"the hail shall sweep away your false refuge, the refuge of lies," and

I come to you with the same message, you men and women that have a

refuge, but a false one. "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of

lies."

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I. HOW TO DETECT A REFUGE OF LIES.

Is there any way in which we can tell a true refuge from a false one, a

refuge that will stand the test of the coming day of God from a refuge

that the hail shall sweep away? There are four tests that will commend

themselves to the reason and common-sense of every intelligent and

candid man here to-night, whereby he tell a true refuge from a false

one, a refuge that will save from a refuge that will ruin; a refuge of

truth from a refuge of lies. The first test is this:-

1. A true Refuge is one that meets the highest Demands of your own

Conscience.-If that in which you are trusting does not meet the highest

demands of your own conscience, it certainly is not a hiding place from

accusations of conscience. Furthermore, it is not a hiding-place from

the wrath of God, for if our own hearts condemn us, God is greater than

our hearts, and knoweth all things.

2. The second test is this: Every true refuge is one, trust in which is

making you a better man or woman today.- IF you are trusting in

something which is in something which is not making you a better man or

woman to-day, it is not a hiding-place from the power of sin within, it

is not a hiding-place from the power of Satan, it is not a hiding-place

from the wrath to come; for a refuge that does not save you from the

power of sin here on earth, very certainly will never save you from the

consequences of sin hereafter.

3. In the third place: A true Refuge is one that will stand the test of

the Dying Hour.- If you are trusting in something that simply brings

you comfort when you are well and strong, but will fail you in that

great hour that we have all got to face, when we lie face to face with

death and eternity, it is absolutely worthless.

4. In the fourth place: A true Refuge is one that will stand the Test

of the Judgment Day.-If you an trusting in something that will not

stand the test of that great Judgment Day, when we have to pass up

before the judgment bar of God to give an account of the deeds done in

the body, it is absolutely worth-less. There are men here in London

indicted for murders and about to be tried. Now suppose you went down

to see one of these men, and you found him in a very peaceful frame of

mind, without a fear, and you said to him, "Well, you seem very

cheerful for a man charged with murder." "Oh, yes," he said, "I am; I

have no anxiety whatever about that trial." And you say, "What, no

anxiety about it?" "No, nods whatever." he replies. "Why not?" you say.

"Because," says he, "I have an answer to make." "Well, is your answer

one that will satisfy the judge and jury?" you ask. "No," he replies,

"I do not think it will satisfy the judge and jury, but it satisfies

me." "Why," you would say, "what good is it if your answer satisfies

you, if it will not satisfy the judge and jury before whom the case is

to be tried." The question is not whether your hope satisfies you; will

it satisfy God? I might add a fifth test: will it stand the test of the

Word of God?

Here then are the four tests: first, Is it meeting the highest demands

of your own conscience? second, Is it making you a better man or woman?

third, Will it stand the test of the dying hour? fourth, Will it stand

the test of the judgment day?

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II. REFUGES OF LIES EXAMINED AND EXPOSED.

Now we are going to apply these four tests to the things in which men

are trusting.

1. The first is their own morality. How many men in London there are,

who, if you go up and speak with them and ask them to come to Christ,

say, "No, I will not come; I do not need Him." You ask, "My not?" And

they reply, "Because I am a good man; my life and character are such

that I do not feel the need of a Saviour and I am trusting in my life

and character to gain acceptance before God." Let us apply the tests.

You are trusting in your own goodness. Does your own goodness meet the

highest demands of your own conscience? is there a man here to-night

that will say, "My life and character are such that they meet the

highest demands of my own conscience"? Is there a man out of Christ

here to-night who will say that? I have never met but two men who have

said it. You will say, "They must have been remarkably good men." No,

they had remarkably poor consciences. The first one was a man I once

met while crossing the Atlantic Ocean. I approached him on the subject

of becoming a Christian. He said, "I do not need any Saviour." I said,

"Do you mean to me your life has been such, and your character from

childhood up to this moment, as to satisfy the highest demands of your

own conscience?" He said, "Yes, they have." But so far from being an

exceptionally good man, he was the most unpopular man on the boat

before we reached New York City.

Second. Is trust in your goodness making you a better man? As you go on

from month to month and from year to year, do you find that you are

growing more kind, more gentle, more self-sacrificing, more thoughtful

of others, more considerate, more tender, more humble, more prayerful?

Now I have known a great many men who trusted in their own goodness but

I have yet to meet the first one who, while trusting to his own

goodness, grew better. As far as my experience goes, these men grow

hard, grow censorious, grow harsh, grow selfish, grow more and more

inconsiderate of others, grow more proud, and more bitter.

Third: Will it stand the test of the dying hour? Oh, how many a man has

gone through life boasting of his morality, and trusting in his

morality to save him in the life to come; but when that dread hour

comes, when he lies upon his dying bed face to face with God and

eternity, all his trust in his morality leaves him, in the illumination

that comes to the soul as eternity draws nigh. I remember a man in one

of my pastorates who was very, very self-confident. He had no use for

the church, no use for the Bible, no use for Jesus Christ He was very

well satisfied that he was about the most exemplary man there was in

the community, and he needed no Saviour. But the time came when there

was a cancer eating into that man's brain. It was eating through the

skin, eating through the flesh, it was eating into the skull, and

eating so far into the skull that there was only a thin film left, and

you could see the throbbing of the brain underneath. And when that man

saw that he had but a few days, and possibly but a few hours, to live,

his trust in his morality fled, and he said, "I wish you would go and

call Mr. Torrey to come here and see me." I came to the bedside, and as

he lay there in agony he said to me, "Tell me what to do to be saved?"

I sat down by that bed, and tried to show him from the Word of God what

he must do to be saved. And as night came on I said to his family, "Do

not sit up through the long hours of the night; I will up stay up with

him, and perform all that is necessary." And all sat through the hours

of the night I sat beside that dying man's bed. Sometimes I had to go

out of the room to get something for him, and whenever I came back

there was always one groan from the bed over in the corner. It was

this: "Oh, I wish I was a Christian! I wish I was a Christian! I wish I

was a Christian!" And so he died. His morality did not stand the test

of the dying hour.

Will it stand the test of the Judgment Day, when you stand face to face

with an infinitely holy God who knows you through and through? Will you

look up into His face and say, "O God, I stand here on my merits, on my

character and life! Thou knowest my life; Thou knowest me through and

through; Thou knowest my every secret thought and act; Thou knowest my

life is pure, and I stand here before an infinitely holy God, and am

proud of my morality."

Will it stand the test of God! God's word? Turn to Romans iii. 20:

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in

His sight." Turn to Galatians iii. 10: "For as many as are of the works

of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one

that continueth not in all things are written in the Book of the Law to

do them.

2. There is a second refuge of lies, and that is, trust is other

people's badness. Some men trust in their own goodness; other men trust

in other folk's badness. You go to them and talk about Christ, and they

say, "Well, I am just as good as other folks. I am just as good as a

lot of your professing Christians." Oh, I know so many hypocrites in

the church. Instead of making their boast of, and putting their trust

in, their own goodness, they make a boast of, and put their trust in,

other people's badness. Let us apply the tests. Does that mean the

highest demands of your conscience? When your conscience comes to you

with its lofty demands, does it satisfy your conscience to say, "Well,

I am just as good as a great many professing Christians"? If it does,

you have a conscience of a very low order. Is trust in other people's

badness making you a better man? Now, I have known a good many people,

just as you have known them, who were all the time talking about the

badness of other people. I have yet to meet the first one that grew

better by the process. Show me the man or woman that is all the time

dwelling upon the badness of other people, and I will show you a man or

woman that is bad them-selves, every time. Show me the man that is

always talking about another man's adultery, and you show me a man that

is an adulterer himself. Show me the woman that is always having a

suspicion about other women, and I will show you a woman you cannot

trust. Show me a man that say; every other man is dishonest, and I will

show you a man who is a knave himself. I once had a Bible-class, and in

that class there was a woman who was in business, one of those women

who was always talking about the faults of others; and one day this

woman propounded this question to me; she said: "Mr. Torrey, is it not

true that every person in business is dishonest?" I looked at her and

said, "When any person in business comes to me and asks i

f every one in business is not dishonest, they convict at least one

person." She was angry, but I was only telling her the truth. Show me

the man or woman who is always dwelling upon the faults of Christians,

or the faults of anybody else, and I will show you a man or woman that

is rotten to the core"- I made that remark in my church when I was

pastor in an American city, and at the close of the meeting a lady came

and said to me, "I do not like what you said; you said, "If you show me

any man or woman that is always talking about the faults of others, you

would show me some one that was bad." "Yes," I said, "and I mean it."

"Well, there is Miss So-and-so. Now, you must admit that she is always

talking about the faults of others." I had to admit that this was a

well known fact. "You do not mean to say that she is bad herself?" I

did not answer, for I did not care to be personal; but if I had told

her all the truth, I would have told her that that very week I had

forbidden that

very woman to sing in the choir any more because of certain revelations

of her character which had been made to me, and to which she had

confessed.

Will it stand the test of the dying hour? When you come to lie on your

dying bed, will it give all the comfort you need to be thinking about

the faults of others?

This very woman who accused every person in of being dishonest, who was

always dwelling the faults of others-the time came for her to die; and

as she lay dying, the doctor came in and said: "Mrs. So-and-so, it is

my duty to tell you that you must die.:" The woman shrieked, "I cannot

die; I won't die; I am not ready to die"; but she did die.

Will it stand the test of the Judgment Day? When you go into the

presence of God to answer to Him, will you look up into His face with

the same confidence as you look up into mine, and say, "O God, I do not

pretend to have been very good, but I was just as good as a great many

in the churches"? Will you do it, man? Will you do it, woman? Ah, the

blessed Book tells you, in Romans xiv. 12: "So then every one of us

shall give an account of himself to God." Not an account of somebody

else. In the judgment day you will forget everybody but yourself. In

that judgment day all other sin will vanish but your sin.

3. The third refuge of lies is Universalism. There are a great many men

in every city, who, if you approach them on the subject of becoming

Christians and giving up sin, say, "Oh, no, I will not do that; I

believe in a God of Love; I believe God is too good to damn any-body. A

man does not need to forsake sin in order to take Christ. God is good,

and there is not any hell. Do you mean to tell me God would permit a

hell; that a good God would damn any one? No, I do not need to forsake

sin. I am trusting in the goodness of God, and I believe all men will

at some time or other be saved" Now, let us just try this. Does that

meet the highest demands of conscience? When your conscience comes to

you and points out your sin and demands your renunciation, does it

satisfy your conscience to say, "Yes, I am doing wrong, but God is so

good I can just as well go on sinning, I can just as well go on

trampling God's laws underfoot. He is so good He will not punish me. He

gave His Son to die for me; I can go on sinning as I please"? Does that

satisfy your conscience? Well, then, you have a mighty mean conscience.

What would you think of a boy and girl, brother and sister, whose

mother lies sick in the house. The boy was sick a little time before,

and the mother had watched over him so faithfully and tenderly that she

had caught his sickness; she had brought him back to health, but she

was lying very sick and almost at the point of death. She had told the

children that they could go out into the garden, and said, "There are

some flowers out there about which I am very careful. I do not want you

to pick them." So Johnny and Mary go out, and Johnny goes to work to do

just what he was asked not to do. His sister expostulates, and says,

"Johnny, did you not hear mother tell us not to pick those flow

ers, that they were very precious and that she did not want them

picked?" "Oh, yes," says Johnny. "Then why pick them?" asks the sister.

"Because," says Johnny, "she loves me so, Mary. Don't you know how she

loves me, how when I was sick mother gave up sleep and everything, and

watched over me through the nights? Don't you know that she is sick

there now because she loves me so? And so I am now going to do the very

thing she told me not to do." What would you think of a boy like that,

and what do you think of the man or woman that makes their boast of the

love of God, and because God loves them, with such a wonderful love,

make His love an excuse for sin, make God's love an excuse for

rebellion against him, make God's love a reason for a worldly life? I

should think you men and women would despise yourselves. Oh, the

baseness of it; oh, the contemptible ingratitude of it; oh, the

blackheartedness of it, making God's wondrous love, that gave Jesus to

die on the Cross of

Calvary, an excuse for sinning against Him!

Is your universalism making you a better man or woman? Oh, how many men

grow careless, grow worldly, grow sinful, grow indifferent, because

somebody has inoculated them with the pernicious error of eternal hope.

How many men there are alive now, once earnest in the service of God,

who are indifferent about the condition of the lost, the worldly, and

the careless, because they have read some books undermining, or trying

to undermine, the doctrines of Jesus and the Apostles. With what

honeyed words the Professing Church to-day it promulgating the doctrine

of eternal hope, which is an infernal lie. Will it stand the test of

the dying hour? Oftentimes it does not. Dr. Ichabod Spencer, one of the

most able and faithful pastors America ever had, tells how, when pastor

of a Presbyterian church in Brooklyn,, he was called to see a Young man

who was dying- His wife and mother were members of the church, but this

young man was not. The doctor went to see him, and tried to lead him to

Christ; but he turned and said, "It is no use; I have had many chances,

but I have put them all away and I am dying, and shall soon have to go;

it is no use talking to me now." And he was in great agony and distress

of soul. Then the father came in and heard him talking said groaning,

and he said, "My boy, there is no reason for you to take on so. There

is no reason for you to feel so bad. You have not been a bad man; you

have nothing to fear." The dying young man turned round and said to his

father, "You are to blame for me being here. It I had listened to

mother when she tried to lead me to a good life, instead of listening

to you, I should not be in this strait. Mother tried to get me to go to

Sunday school and to church, but you said God was so good it did not

matter; and when mother tried to take me to church you took me fishing

and hunting and pleasuring; you told me there was not a hell, and I

believed you; you have deceived me up to this moment, father, but you

can't deceive me any longer. I am dying and I am going to hell, and my

blood is on your soul." Then he turned his face to the wall and died.

Men, you turn people into sin by preaching a doctrine that contradicts

the teaching of the Son of God. It means that you are deceiving the men

you are rocking to sleep in sin, and they will live to curse you some

day. And you men who are in health and strength are building upon a

false hope. Death will tear away the veil that blinds your eyes

to-night.

Will it stand the test of the judgment day? When you go up into the

presence of God will you look up, and when He asks about your sin, will

you answer, "Yes, Father, I did sin; I did trample Thy laws under foot;

I did neglect prayer, neglect the Bible, neglect the house of God,

neglect obedience to Thee; I was worldly and careless, but I have a

good answer. Father, my answer is this: I knew Thou wert a God of love,

and gave thy Son to die for me on the Cross of Calvary, and as I knew

Thou wert so loving, I just went on trampling Thy laws under foot"?

Will you do that? It won't stand the test.

4. A fourth refuge is infidelity. How many men there are, who, when

asked to become Christians, turn and say, "I do not believe that the

Bible is the Word of God. That is an old superstition that is worn out.

I do not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. In fact, I

am not quite sure that there is a God. I am not a Christian, and you

can call me what you like. Call me an infidel, an agnostic, what you

please; but I do not need any Christ, and do not believe in Him." He

tries to comfort himself with infidelity. Hundreds of thousands are

doing this in London tonight. Apply the tests. Does that meet the

highest demands of your own conscience? When conscience asserts itself,

and comes to you with its majestic demands, does it satisfy your

conscience, to say, "I do not believe in the Bible or in Jesus Christ;

I do not believe in God"? Is your infidelity making you a better man? I

have yet to find the first man or woman made better by infidelity. I

have known men to be made adulterers by infidelity; I have known men

and women to be made suicides by infidelity; I have known men to be

robbed of business integrity by infidelity; I have known men who were

made deceivers by infidelity and ran away from their wives and went

with other women. I could stand here by the hour and tell you of the

characters I have known to be shipwrecked by infidelity. I have yet to

find the first man that was made upright or moral or clean by

infidelity. I stood up one night in my church in Chicago. The church

was full, and a great many infidels were there. I had invited them to

be there, as I was talking about "Infidelity: Its Causes, Consequences

and Cure." I stopped in my sermon and said, "I want every man in this

audience to-night that can honestly testify before God and this

audience that be bas been saved from drunkenness by the Gospel of Jesus

Christ to stand up"; and two or three hundred men stood up as having

been saved from drunkenness by the Gospel of Christ. I said, "Th

at will do. Now we am going to be fair and give the other side a

chance, and I want to ask any infidel in this audience to-night that

has been saved from drunkenness by infidelity in any form to stand up."

I looked round; at first I thought there wasn't any one standing up. At

last, away under the gallery, I saw one, a very ragged looking sort of

a Senegambian, and he was drunk at the time; that is an actual fact.

Thank God, he went down into the inquiry-room afterwards, and thought

it over. Men and women, infidelity undermines character, infidelity

robs men and women of purity, infidelity makes your clerks and cashiers

unsafe. You know it.

Will your infidelity stand the test of the dying hour? A great deal of

infidelity does not. A friend of mine who took part in the American

Civil War, and fought for the North, told me a story about a man in his

regiment who had been boasting in camp of his unbelief. 0n the second

day of the battle of Pittsburg Landing this man said to his comrades of

his company, while waiting for the word of command to go forward, "I

fear I am going to be shot this day; I have an awful feeling." "Oh,

that's nonsense," they said, "it's just a premonition, a superstition,

and there's nothing in it." Soon the command came, "Forward!" and that

company marched up the hill, and just as it went over the crest there

was a volley from the enemy's guns. The first one sent a bullet through

his chest near his heart, and he fell back, and as they carried him to

the rear, he cried, "O God, give me time to repent!" It took only one

bullet to take the infidelity out of him. It would take less than that

to take the infidelity out of most of you here to-night. Will it stand

the test of the judgment day? Will you go up into God's presence, and

when asked to answer for your sin, will you say: "Well oh God, Thou

knowest I did not quite believe You existed; I did not believe the

Bible was Thy Word, and that Jesus Christ was Thy Son. I was an

infidel; that is my answer"? Will you do this? I will tell y

ou how to try it. Go home to-night, and go down on your knees, and look

up into God's face, and tell Him you are an infidel, and that you do

not believe in Him, or in His Son, or in the Bible, and that you are

willing to stand the judgment test. I went down in a meeting like this

one night to the last row of seats at the back of the hall, and I said

to a man there, "Are you a Christian?" "I should think not," he said;

"I am an infidel." I said, "Do you mean to tell me you do not believe

Jesus Christ is divine?" He said, "No, I do not." I said, "Just kneel

down here and tell God that." He turned pale. And I say to you to-night

who profess to be infidels, "Go and tell that to God alone, not when

you are trying to brave it out in the presence of others, but alone;

meet God alone. Get down before Him, and tell Him what you tell me."

5. There is one more refuge of lies-religion. Religion is a refuge of

lies. Religion never saved anybody. You say, "What do you mean?" I mean

just what I say-religion never saved anybody. Trust in religion is one

thing; trust in the personal Christ is another thing. There is many a

man who trusts in his religion and yet he is not saved. You go to men,

and they say, "Yes, I am religious; I go to church every Sunday; I read

my prayer-book, and say prayers regularly every day; I read my Bible; I

have been baptized; I have been confirmed or united to the Church; I

have taken the Sacrament regularly, and that is what I am trusting in."

Is it?, Then you are lost. Let us apply the tests. Does your religion

satisfy the highest demands of your conscience? Does it satisfy your

conscience, when it points out your sin, to say, "I go to church; I

read the Bible; I have been baptized and confirmed"? Does it really

give your conscience peace? Is your religion making you a better man or

woman? There is a great deal that is called religion that does not make

men and women better. There is many a man who is very religious, and

goes to mass or to church every Sunday in the year; he goes to C

onfession very frequently, says his prayers regularly, reads his Bible,

and partakes of the Communion; he has been baptized, he has been

confirmed, and yet he is just as dishonest as any other man in the

community. There is many a man who is very religious, and yet oppresses

his employees in the matter of wages, or robs his servants in his home.

Many a most religious man is a perfect knave. Such religion will not

save him, but damn him with a deeper damnation.

Thirdly, will it stand the test of the dying hour? There is a great a

great deal of religion that does not. How many people have been very

religious, and yet when they come to die they tremble with fear.

Will it stand the test of the judgment day? Jesus Christ says it will

not. In Matthew vii. 22, we read: "Many shall say unto Me in that day,

Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast

out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" -that is, they

have been very religious; and Jesus says, "I will say unto them, I

never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Friends, if you

have nothing to trust in but religion you are lost; it is a refuge of

lies.

Well, then, is there any refuge? There is. The verse before my text

gives it, Isaiah xxviii. 16: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God,

Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a

precious corner stone, a sure foundation." That foundation stone is

Jesus Christ. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid,

which is Christ Jesus." As I said before, it is one thing to trust in

religion, and it is an entirely different thing to trust in Christ. Oh.

friends, if your trust is in Christ it will stand the test, it will

meet the highest demands of your conscience. When my conscience accuses

me of sin, I say-

Jesus paid my debt,

All the debt I owe;

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow.

"He who had no sin was made sin for me, that I might be made the

righteousness of God in Him. He Himself bore my sin in His own body on

the Cross"; and that satisfies the conscience. The blood of Jesus

Christ gives the guilty conscience peace. Trust in Jesus Christ makes

me a better man. It has completely transformed my life, my outward life

and my inward life. It will stand the test of the dying hour. Oh, how

often I have gone to the room of the dying man who was trusting in

Jesus, and he has looked up into my face with radiant confidence,

without a tremor of fear, trusting in Jesus.

I remember one day I was told that one of the former members of my

Bible class was dying, and I went to his house. I walked in and he sat

there propped up in bed. He was dying very fast. I said, "Mr. Pomeroy,

they tell me you probably cannot live through the night." "No' he said;

"I suppose this day is my last." I said, "Are you afraid?" He said,

with a smile of perfect peace, "Not at all." I said, "Mr. Pomeroy, Are

you ready to go?" He said, "I shall be glad to depart, and be with

Jesus Christ." When Mr. Moody was facing the other world there was no

fear. At six o'clock in the morning his son was by his bedside and

heard him whisper, "Earth is receding; Heaven is opening; God is

calling." Then later, "Is this death? This is not bad, this is bliss,

this is glorious." Still later, some one began to cry to God to raise

him from his bed of sickness, and he said, "No, do not ask that. This

is my coronation day; I have long been looking forward to it. Don't

call me back; God is calling me." Oh, friends, a living faith in Jesus

Christ, the crucified and risen Saviour, will stand the test of the

dying hour. It will stand the test of the judgment day. If it is the

will of God, I am ready to go and meet Him at the judgment bar

to-night, and, when He asks me to answer, I have but one answer, the

all-sufficient answer, "Jesus." That will satisfy God.

Throw away your refuges of lies to-night. The hail will soon come and

sweep them away; "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies." Throw

them away to-night. Take the only sure and true refuge, Jesus Christ.

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X. THE WAY OF SALVATION MADE AS PLAIN AS DAY

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and

fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs,

what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ and thou shalt be saved. and thy house."-ACTS xvi. 29-31.

The Philippian goaler, by a train of circumstances, which I have read

in the Scripture lesson to-night, had been brought to a realization of

the fact that he was a lost sinner, and had a deep yearning for

salvation, and he put to Paul and Silas this direct question, "What

must I do to be saved?" and Paul answered him in the words of the text,

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Nothing

could be plainer, nothing could be more direct, nothing could be more

positive than that. The way of salvation is to believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and the moment any man or woman or child really believes

on the Lord Jesus Christ they are saved. If the most utterly lost man

or woman in London should come into this hall to-night, and should

here, or in the after-meeting, or after they hare gone out, believe on

the Lord Jesus, the moment they did it they would be saved. Some one

may say, "But this was a word simply spoken to one man; what right have

you to say that any man will be saved the same way?" Because the same

thing is said over and over again in the Bible. For instance, you read

in Acts x. 43:, "To Him give all the prophets witness that through His

name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." There

isn't a man or a woman in this building to-night that needs to go out

of it without all their sins being forgiven and blotted out. It is just

one act, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved."

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I. WHAT IT MEANS TO BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS.

What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus? We need to be very

careful in our answers to that question, for there are many answers to

it that are inaccurate and untrue. There are men who say and think that

they believe on the Lord Jesus, and yet they do not. What does it mean

to believe on the Lord Jesus? I have given a very careful and thorough

study to this subject; I have gone all through my Bible looking up the

word "believe," and all words related to it, and I have found out what

I suspected to be the fact when I began, viz., that "believe" means in

the Bible just exactly what it means in modern speech. What is it to

believe on a man? To believe on a man means to put confidence in him as

what he claims to be. To believe on a physician means to put confidence

in him as a physician, resulting in your placing your case in his

hands. To believe in a teacher is to put your confidence in him as a

teacher and accept what he teaches; to believe in a banker means to put

your

confidence in him as a banker and to put your money in his bank. And to

believe on the Lord Jesus means to put your confidence in Him as what

he claims to be.

To put confidence in the Lord Jesus as what? As all that He claims to

be, and all that He offers Himself to be. What does the Lord Jesus

claim to be, and what does He offer Himself to be?

1. In the first place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to every one of us

as a Sin-bearer. In Matthew xx. 28., He says, "The Son of Man came not

to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom

for many." He offers Himself as a ransom for all. That thought runs all

through the Bible, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. If you

want to find it in the Old Testament, turn to Isaiah liii. 6: "All we

like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;

and the Lord hath laid on Him (that is, on the Lord Jesus) the iniquity

of us all." If you want to find it in the New Testament turn to I Peter

ii. 24: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,

that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose

stripes ye were healed." Christ offers Himself to every man as a

Sinbearer, and to believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Him

as your Sin-bearer.

2. In the second place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to us as a

Deliverer from the power of sin. He says in John viii. 34, "Whosoever

committeth sin is the servant of sin." And we all know that is true,

for we have all committed sin, and become the bondservants of sin, and

no man is able to break away from sin in his own strength. He says, in

John viii. 36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be

free indeed." The Lord Jesus offers Himself to each one of us as One

who has power to set us free from the power of sin. He says that Satan

is the strong man armed, but that Himself is stronger than Satan. To

believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Jesus as One who has

power to set you free from sin.

3. In the third place, Christ offers Himself to us as a divinely taught

and absolutely infallible Teacher. In John xiv. 10, He says, "Believe

Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me

for the very works' sake. The words that I speak unto you I speak not

of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me. He doeth the works." He

offers Himself to you as the Teacher who speaks to you the words of

God, who speaks no words of His own; as the Teacher who dwells in God,

and in whom God dwells, a divinely taught and absolutely infallible

Teacher; and to believe on Christ is to put confidence in Him as such.

4. In the fourth place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to us as our

Master, who has the right to the entire control of our lives. In John

xv. 14, He says, "Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command

you." To believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Jesus as a

Master who has the right to have the entire and absolute control of

your life.

5. Again, the Lord Jesus Christ offers Himself to us as a light and

guide. He says in John viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world; be that

followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of

life." To believe on Jesus is to put confidence in Him as the Light of

the world, as the One to follow wherever He leads.

6. And lastly, the Lord Jesus offers himself to us as our Divine Lord.

He says in John xiii. 13: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well;

for so I am." And we read in John xx. 28, 29, that when Thomas saw

Jesus Christ after His resurrection, and was convinced at last that He

really was raised from the dead, he threw up his hands and said to

Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" And Jesus commended Thomas for this

confession, saying to him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou has

believed: blessed are they who have not seen,, and yet have believed."

Jesus offers Himself to us as our divine Lord. To believe on Jesus is

to put confidence in Him as our divine Lord.

So, to sum it all up, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to put

confidence in Him as your Sin-bearer, as your Deliverer from the power

of sin, as your divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, as

your Master, who has the right to the entire control of your life, as

your Light and Guide whom you will follow wherever He leads, and as

your divine Lord. The moment you thus put your confidence, your

absolute confidence in Jesus Christ, that moment you are saved.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

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II. HOW FAITH MANIFESTS ITSELF.

But how will we show our faith? In other words, if we really have

believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and really have been saved, how will

we show it?

1. In the first place, we will show it by an assurance that our sins

are all forgiven. If I really put my trust in Jesus as my Sin-bearer,

put my trust in Him as One who has borne all my sin, past, present, and

future, the moment I put confidence in Him as that, I know I don't bear

them any longer, and I have assurance that every sin I have ever

committed is forgiven. In Luke vii. we read of a woman who was a

sinner. She was an outcast. But she came into a house where Jesus was

reclining at the table, and men thought Jesus could be no prophet

because He allowed her to touch Him. But Jesus, when He saw her faith,

said, "Thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

When that woman went out of that place she knew that her sins were

forgiven. If you had met her on the street and had said, "Do you know

your sins are forgiven?" she would have said "Yes, I know it; I am sure

of it." "Why are you sure?" "Because He told me so, and I therefore

know it." "But do you feel it; do you feel as if your sins were

forgiven?" Very likely she would reply, "I don't feel it yet; the news

is so good I cannot realize it, but I am sure it is so; I know it, for

He said so." "Well," you might have said, "you must not be so sure

unless you feel it." And she would have replied, "Oh, I am sure." But

you will say, "How can you be sure if you don't feel it?" And she would

say, "Because He said so."

2. Secondly, if you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, it will

show itself in your looking to Him and trusting Him for victory over

sin. If you put confidence in Him as the Deliverer from the power of

sin, you will certainly look to Him, and trust Him to set you free from

the power of sin. You will not say, "My sins are so great that He

cannot deliver me." You will not look at the greatness of your sin at

all. You will look at the greatness of your Saviour.

A man came to me one day in Chicago, and said, "Mr. Torrey, I want to

speak to you alone"; so I took him up to Mr. Moody's office-Mr. Moody

was away at the time. He said, "I want to tell you my story. So I said,

"Very well; sit down,; and he began to tell me his life-story. He said:

"Away over in Scotland. when I was but seven years of age, I started to

read the Bible through," (a good thing for a boy to do) "and I got as

far as Deuteronomy. Reading there I found that if a man kept the whole

law for a hundred years, and then broke the law at any point, he was

under a curse. Is that right?" I said, "Well, that is not an exact

quotation, but it is about the substance of it." He continued, "I was

only a boy of seven, but I was overwhelmed with the sense that I was

under the curse of God, and that lasted for nearly a year. Then I got

to the New Testament, and I read John iii. 16: `God so loveth the world

that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish. but have everlasting life.' Then I saw that the Lord

Jesus had borne all my sin, and my burden rolled away." He said, "Was I

converted?" I replied, "That sounds like an evangelical conversion."

Then he said, "Wait a moment; let me tell the rest of my story. After

some years I came to Chicago, and I am now working down in the

stockyards. You know the stockyards neighbourhood; it is a very hard

neighbourhood. I have got into drinking habits, and every little while

I fall under the power of strong drink. I try to break away, but I

cannot. What I have come to ask you is this, is there any way to get

victory over sin?" I said "You have come just to the right man; I can

tell you that." "I wish you would," he said. I opened my Bible to I

Corinthians xv., and I read the first four verses: "Moreover, brethren,

I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye

have received, and, wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, it ye

keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in

vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,

how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that

He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the

Scriptures."

"Now," I said, "you believed that Jesus Christ died for your sins." He

said., "I did." "You found peace in believing." "I did." I said, "But

you only believed half of the Gospel, that Christ died for our sins

according to the Scriptures, and was buried. Will you now believe the

other half of the Gospel? Will you believe that He rose again?" and He

said, "I do believe; I believe every thing that is in the Bible." I

said again, "Do you really believe that Jesus rose again?" and he said,

"I do." I said, "Do you believe what Jesus Christ says in Matthew

xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth?" "Yes."

"Then He has got power to set you free from the power of sin. Do you

believe it?" He said, "I do." I said, "Will you put your trust in Him

right now, to do it?" He said, "I will." "All right," I said, "let us

kneel down," and then I prayed, and he followed with a prayer something

like this: "Oh God, I believed that Jesus died for my sins on the

Cross, and I found peace through believing, and now I believe that

Jesus rose again, and that He has all power in Heaven and on earth, and

He has got power to set me free to-day. Lord Jesus, set me, free from

the power of drink and the power of sin." When he had prayed, I said to

him, "Will you trust Him to do it?" He said, "I will," and he did. In a

few weeks I received a letter from that man in which he said, "I am so

glad I came over to see you. It works!"

Christ not only died, but He rose again, and is a living Saviour

to-night. He has all power in Heaven and on earth, and the devil is no

match for Him; the risen Christ has power to snap the fetters of strong

drink, to snap the fetters of opium, to snap the fetters of lust, and

of every sin; and if yon will trust Him to do it for you, He will do

it. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ means to look to Him and trust

Him to give you victory over sin.

3. In the third place, it will show itself in your unquestioning

acceptance of the infallible and absolute truth and authority of

everything Jesus says.- If I put confidence in Jesus as a divinely

taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, whatever I find in the Bible

that Jesus says, I will believe it. I may not understand it, it may

seem impossible, and the scholars may be against me, but I believe in

the Lord Jesus, and what He says I accept absolutely in all its height,

depth, length, and breadth. Many people to-day claim to believe in the

Lord Jesus, but if they find Jesus teaching one thing, and men tell

them that the consensus of the latest scholarship teaches something

else, they accept the consensus of the latest scholarship, and throw

overboard the teaching of Christ. Gentlemen, I affirm that those men do

not believe in the Lord Jesus. They believe in "the consensus of the

latest scholarship," and believing in the consensus of the latest

scholarship never saved any one. It has ruined many. How can you say

you believe in Jesus if you don't believe Him? Belief in the Lord Jesus

means to put confidence in Him, to put absolute confidence in Him, as

what He claims to be; and He claims to be a divinely taught Teacher,

that speaks only the words of God.

It is a critical time in which we live, and the question is, shall we

believe German scholarship so called, or the Lord Jesus Christ? Well,

in answer to that question, I say the Lord Jesus Christ has stood for

nineteen centuries, and German scholarship never stands for

fifteen-years consecutively; and I prefer to believe the Lord Jesus.

4. Our belief in Him will be shown by studying His Word.- If I believe

in the Lord Jesus, I shall study His word over and over again. Suppose

some man should come to London claiming to be a divinely taught and

absolutely infallible teacher, and that you believed in him. Would you

not read every word that he uttered? We have a man in America who

claims not only to be a divinely taught and absolutely infallible

teacher, but a messenger sent direct from God. Suppose I believed he

really was a teacher sent from God, I would study every word he said,

as hundreds do in Chicago. They spend more time reading his words than

they do reading their Bibles. Just so, if I believe in Jesus as what He

claims to be, a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, what

I shall study above all else will b the words of Jesus Himself.

5. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself by a surrender of

the entire life to His control.- If I put confidence in Jesus as what

He claims to be -my Lord, having right to the absolute control of my

life- I will put my whole life in His control. Have you done it? You

say you are a Christian, you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you

proving it by putting your entire life in His control.

6. In the next place, you will show your belief in the Lord Jesus

Christ by obedience to Him in daily life, in whatever He tells you to

do.- In Luke vi. 46, He says, "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not

the things which I say?" I believe He is saying the same thing to the

Christians of London, the professing Christians. You call Him "Lord,

Lord, " every Sabbath day in your lives and then you go through every

day of the week living just as He tells you not to live, and you refuse

to do what He plainly tells you to do. Now when the Lord Jesus was here

on earth and healed men, He demanded faith as a condition precedent to

healing, and He demanded that they should show their faith by their

acts. He demands faith to-day as a condition precedent to salvation,

and, having been saved, He demands that you show your faith by your

acts, that you do what He tells you. That makes some of you look very

uncomfortable. I am glad of it; it is a good sign. Some of you

professed Christians need to be brought under conviction of sin. You

have been praying that outsiders may be convicted of sin, but a whole

lot of you need to be convicted of sin yourselves; and when you get

convicted of sin more of the outsiders will be convicted of sin.

7. Faith on the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself again in following

Him wherever He leads.- If I put confidence in Jesus Christ as the

Light of the World, I will follow Him that I may "not walk in darkness,

but have the Light of Life." "He that saith he abideth in Him ought

himself so to walk even as he walked." Are you following in His steps,

in your business, in your social life, in your personal life, in your

individual life everywhere?

8. Belief on the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself in confessing Him

before the world, and in witnessing for Him to men.-We read in Romans

x. 9,10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt

believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be

saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with

the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

I received a letter to-day from a man who said it was a very hard thing

to expect people to stand up to confess Christ in the way I ask them

to, and he went on to tell me an easier way to get at it. But I am not

looking for an easier way. I abominate these easy ways. I believe in

getting people converted. I could pass around cards and get them to

sign their names, saying that they hoped to go to heaven; but a month

after I had gone the effect would be nothing, or worse than nothing. I

do not take any stock in any faith that does not lead to an open

confession of Christ before the world, and I do not take any stock in

the Christianity of your professed Christians unless it leads you to go

out into the world and witness for the One who saved you. "Out of the

abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Now I put to you a question. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?

You thought you did when you came in, but do you? I asked God in my

prayer that He would sweep away false hopes to-night. Do you believe on

the Lord Jesus Christ? It is one thing to say you believe, and another

thing to believe. If you do not, will you believe on Him now, this

moment? Will you put confidence in Jesus Christ this moment as your

Sin-bearer, as a Deliverer from the power of sin, as a divinely taught

and absolutely infallible Teacher, as the Lord who has the right to the

absolute control of your life, as the Light of the World, as your

Divine Lord? Will you do it? It takes but one instant to believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ. It can be done in a moment. But it will take a whole

lifetime to show that you have believed on Him after you have done it.

The act of faith in instantaneous, the fruits of faith are lifelong.

Will you put your trust in Him to-night? If you do, the results will

follow, and if you never did it before, you can do it now. You can do

it before Mr. Alexander sings.

And you men and women who never professed to believe in the Lord Jesus

Christ, will you put your confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ now? The

moment you do it, you will be raved. I will tell any man or woman who

is utterly unsaved, that in the next moment you may be saved. I will

tell any man or woman who is utterly unsaved, who wishes to flee from

underneath the wrath of God and come underneath the full sunlight of

God's favour, that you can do it in an instant. How? Believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ; put confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ as what He

claims to be. If the vilest outcast in London should be in this room

now and should here and now put confidence in Jesus as all He claims to

be, the moment he did it God would blot out all his sin, and set to his

account all the righteousness of Christ; and set him free from the

power of sin, and transform him into a child of God. Old things in a

moment would pass away and all things would become new. Oh, the miracle

of regeneration! I have seen a man one moment a drunkard, half drunk at

the time, get his eyes open enough to see the truth about the Lord

Jesus and put his trust in Him, and the next moment I was looking into

the eyes of a child of God.

One night in Chicago, in the Pacific Garden Mission, there came in a

poor fellow, a complete physical and moral wreck. He had been in a

railroad accident and was a total cripple, helpless on both feet,

dragging himself along on crutches. For fourteen years he had been a

victim of whisky and alcohol in all its forms, and of opium as well. He

was an opium fiend and an alcohol fiend. My friend Colonel Clark spoke

to him and told him the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but he refused to

believe. But on La Salle street, one of our busiest commercial streets,

next day, Colonel Clark saw this same man dragging himself along on his

crutches, and as he got to the entrance of an alley-way, Colonel Clark

drew him into the alley-way and said to him, "My friend, Jesus has

power to save you," and after talking to him a while, there and then

the man got down as best he could on his crutches, beside the strong

man of God, and put his trust in Jesus Christ. And when that man came

out of that alley-way he came out a child of God, and he is to-day a

preacher of the Gospel. Thank God for a Gospel that can save anybody.

You cannot find me a man in all London that Jesus Christ has not power

to save if he will only believe on Him. Put confidence in Him. Will you

believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to-night?

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XI. WHAT IT COSTS NOT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies.-Psalms

cxix. 59.

A good many years ago I was talking to a young society lady in the city

of New Haven in America, and suddenly she stopped me and said, "Don't

talk that way; it makes me think, and I hate to think." The world is

full of people who hate to think, and because they hate to think they

go into things blindfolded, and come out with blighted hope and broken

hearts and blasted lives. It is so in business. How many a business man

there is in this city to-night who a few years ago had a business

proposition made to him, and instead of sitting down, as any

long-headed business man would do, and thinking it all over, and

figuring it an out as to how much money he would have to put into that

investment before he realized, how many years it would be before there

was any adequate return, and what interest on his money there would be,

just because it promised well on the surface he accepted the

proposition without sufficient thought regarding it, he just put his

money into that project and left it there, and that man's life ever

since has been a wretched drag for a bare existence. Simply because he

hated to think! It is the same way in social life. How many a young

woman has met at some social

gathering a handsome, attractive young man, a young fellow of pleasant

manners, who knows how to do a thousand and one little acts that mean

so little and yet so easily gain the hearts of women, a young fellow

who is a fine waltzer, and popular and attractive in all his ways; and

one night that young man makes a proposal of marriage to her, and

instead of sitting down, as any sensible girl would do, and asking

herself whether that man has the mental and moral qualities that fit

him to be a companion for life, just because he is handsome, because he

is attractive and popular, because he is a beautiful waltzer, that

young woman accepts his proposal of marriage and marries him; and after

a few months she wakes up one day to find that she has married a fool,

or, what is worse, a rascal. And all that woman's future life is

wretched beyond description, just because she hated to think. But there

is no place where that mistake is made so often and where it is so

fatal as in the matter of being, or not being a Christian. Men and

women go into a Christless life, or, being in a Christless life, drift

on in it, without even once sitting down to give the question thirty

minutes' honest consideration, What it Costs to Live and Die without

Jesus Christ. Now I am going to ask you to do some thinking to-night,

some hard, serious, honest thinking. What I am going to ask you to

think about is this: what it costs not to be a Christian, what it costs

to live and die without Jesus Christ. And if when I get through you

think you are willing to pay the price of a Christless life, I have

nothing more to say. But if, when you have thought it all out, you come

to the conclusion that it costs too much to live and die without

Christ, I am going to ask you to do the only intelligent thing there is

to do in the circumstances, that is, to stand up here to-night and

declare your purpose to accept Jesus Christ right now.

What does it cost not to be a Christian? First of all, what is it to be

a Christian? By a Christian, I understand, any man, woman, or child,

that comes to God as a lost sinner, takes Jesus Christ as their

personal Saviour, surrenders to Him as their Lord and Master, confesses

Him as such publicly before the world, and strives to live to please

Him in everything day by day. Let me repeat that definition. A

Christian is any man, woman or child that comes to God as a lost

sinner, takes Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, surrenders to Him

as their Lord and Master, confesses Him as such publicly before the

world, and strives to live to please him in everything day by day.

What does it cost not to do it?

1. In the first place not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of

peace.-A Christian has peace: "Being justified by faith, we have peace

with God through the Lord Jesus Christ."-Romans, v. 1. And having peace

with God we have peace in our hearts, but no man out of Christ has

peace. "There is no peace for the wicked, saith my God." One night in

Chicago, after a meeting like this, when the congregation had gone out,

I went and sat down in a scat by the side of a gentleman about

thirty-five years of age, and I said, "My friend, why are you not a

Christian?" "Oh," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders, "I am very

well satisfied as I am." I said, "You haven't peace." He said, "How do

you know that?" I said, "Because God says so; `There is no peace for

the wicked, saith my God. '" The man dropped his head, and said, "You

are right, sir, I haven't peace." And there is not a man or woman in

this audience to-night out of Christ that has peace. Money won't give

you peace; the pleasures of this life won't give you peace; no number

of good earthly friends will give you peace; not to be a Christian

costs the sacrifice of peace.

2. In the second place, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of

the highest, deepest, purest, holiest, most overflowing joy that can be

known right here on earth. -As we read, in the Scripture lesson

to-night, in 1 Peter i. 8: "Though now ye see Him not, yet believing in

Him ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." That was

Peter's testimony. That is the experience of every true Christian. A

real living faith in Jesus Christ gives a man joy unspeakable and full

of glory. Nobody out of Christ has joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Oh," but you say, "I know many a Christian that has not joy

unspeakable and full of glory." A real Christian? You know there are

two kinds-professing Christians and real Christians. Now I will admit

that there are a great many people in the world that call themselves

Christians, who have just enough religion to make themselves miserable.

They are bolding to the world with one hand, generally the right hand,

and to Jesus Christ with the other. Of course they have not joy

unspeakable and full of glory. But show me a Christian who has dropped

the world with both hands, and laid hold of Jesus Christ with both

hands, and I will show you a man or woman that has joy unspeakable and

full of glory, every time. But nobody out of Christ has joy unspeakable

and full of glory. How Satan deceived me along that line for many years

when I was a mere lad! I went one day up to the third story of our

home, where we had a great store-room where we put away the old books

out of the library, and as a boy I loved to go and sit on the floor of

that room, and get the books around me and look through them, and one

day I came across the covenant of the church of my mother, and

commenced to read it, and I said to myself, "I wonder if I cannot be a

Christian?" I can say "Yes" to that, and can say "Yes" to that, and

that, and after a time I came to a place where it said something to

this effect, "If I became a Christian I was to be willing to do

anything God said, and go anywhere He said." I shut up the book and

said, "No, just as likely as not I'll have to be a preacher if I say

`Yes, to that, and then life won't be worth living." And I threw that

book away and deliberately refused to take Jesus Christ, and

deliberately refused to think about it any more. Then I said to myself,

"I am g oing in for all the pleasure I can get"; and I had a good

opportunity to get it. My father was well off in this world's goods;

and as a boy of fifteen I was sent off to the university and

matriculated for a degree, and my father sent me up all the money I

wanted. Now, if you put a boy into a university, who learns easily and

has no trouble to keep up with his class, a boy with a rich father, who

does not ask him how he spends his money -I have often thought it would

have been a good thing for me if he had- if anybody can have a good

time, he can, and I went in for a good time. Did I find it? Yon know

whether I did or not. I did not. And I went deeper, deeper, deeper,

deeper into dissipation and sin to find joy to satisfy my unsatisfied

heart. I did not find it, and one awful night, a mere boy still, with

all hope gone, with life desolate and bare, life so barren that there

was just one step between me and hell, in fact, that very night I

started to take that awful step, to take my life by my own hand. I

sprang out of bed and drew open a drawer to take out the instrument

that would end my. life. For some reason or other I could not find it.

God did not let me find it, and I dropped upon my knees, and said, "O

God, if you will take this awful burden from my heart, I will preach

the Gospel;" and God not only removed the burden, I found a joy I had

never dreamed of in this world, and all the years since it has gone on

increasing, with the exception of a short time when I fell under the

blighting power of skepticism and agnosticism; all the rest of the time

all these years the joy has grown brighter, brighter, brighter every

year. Young men and women, if you want the deepest, sweetest, purest,

most overflowing joy there is to be known on earth, come to Jesus

Christ.

3. In the third place, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of

hope. A Christian has hope.- As we read in Titus i. 2, "In hope of

eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised." Oh, how

magnificent that hope is, hope of eternal life! How sure it is, resting

on the Word of God, who cannot lie. The world has no hope like that.

The world holds out no hope that has any foundation. Hope for the

future is more important than present possession. "Oh," some one says,

"I do not believe that; give me the present and I will let the future

take care-of itself." Yes, you do believe it. There is not a man or

woman here to-night that does not believe that hope for the future is

more important than present possession. A man rays, "I do not believe

it." Yes, you do; I will prove it to you in five minutes. Suppose you

had your choice to-night between being a millionaire and having all

that money can buy for to-night, with no hope for to-morrow, but with

the rising of to-morrow's sun and the opening of to-morrow's banks to

be proved to be an embezzler, and all your money swept away, and you

cast into prison to spend the rest of your life there; or to be

absolutely penniless to-night, but with the absolute certainty that

with the rising of to-morrow's sun and the opening of to-morrow's banks

you were to be a millionaire all the rest of your life, which would you

choose? "Oh!" you say, "that's very easy; I would choose to be

penniless to-night, with the certainty that to-morrow and all the rest

of my life I was to be a millionaire." So would I, but that only shows

that you believe that hope for the future is more important than

present possession; and I would rather be the poorest child of God in

the world to-night, with the absolute certainty that with the dawning

of eternity I was to be for all eternity an heir of God and joint-heir

with Jesus Christ, than to be the richest man on earth to-night out of

Christ, with no outlook for all eternity but to be cast into God's

eternal prison-house of hell. A man out of Christ has no hope, even

from the life that now is, that is at all sure. You say, "That is too

strong; a man out of Christ may have no hope for the future, but if he

is rich he has for the present life." You are mistaken. Come with me to

New York City. We walk up Fifth Avenue; we stop before one of the most

elegant mansions there; we go up the steps and are ushered through the

hall down to the library at the end of the hall. You and I stand there

on the threshold and look into the library. In it there are two men

deep in earnest conversation. This is not an imaginary case, but an

actual one. One of these men is worth one hundred and ninety-six

millions of dollars, by an actual inventory of his property taken a few

days after the time of which I am speaking. The other man is one of

America's greatest financiers. You and I stand there and look in, and

you say, "Well, I would like to be in that man's shoes. One hundred and

ninety-six million dollars! I do not know anything about his religious

convictions, I do not know anything about his eternal prospects, but he

is well fixed for many years to come so far as this life is concerned."

You are mistaken. While you and I are looking in, that man falls out of

his chair on his face on the floor, and when Quincey Garrett picks Wm.

H. Vanderbilt from the floor he is a corpse. For all his one hundred

and ninety-six millions he had no hope for five minutes. Friends, we

all of us here to-night are like men standing on the seashore looking

out over the boundless ocean of eternity, and as we look out, there

comes towards some of us -those of us who have a living faith in Jesus

Christ- gallant vessels laden with gold and silver and precious stones,

with every sail set, waited swiftly towards us by the breezes of the

divine favour. But toward the rest of us -those out of Christ- as we

look out over the boundless ocean of eternity, there come no vessels,

but dismantled wrecks, with, no cargoes but the livid corpses of lost

opportunities, over which are hovering the vultures of eternal despair,

driven madly towards us by the fast-rising blasts of the indignation of

a holy and an outraged God. That is what it costs not to be a

Christian.

4. In the next place, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of the

highest manhood and the highest womanhood.-Have you ever thought of it,

that we have all fallen away from God's ideal of manhood and womanhood

through sin? Paul puts it in his tremendous way, "We have all sinned

and come short of the glory of God;" all fallen short of God's ideal of

manhood; and the only way back to it is by the acceptance of those

regenerating and transforming powers that there are in Jesus Christ;

or, to put it into ordinary language, by regeneration through Christ.

And the best that any man or woman can attain to out of Christ is to be

a mere caricature of manhood or womanhood as God created men and women

to be. Is there a man in this audience to-night so lost to all that is

noble, to all that is good, to all that is truly manly, that he is

willing to be a mere caricature of manhood as God created man to be? Is

there a woman here to-night so lost to all that is true, to all that is

womanly, that she is willing to be a mere caricature of womanhood as

God created woman to be? That is what it costs not to be a Christian;

and, men and women, if there were no other argument but that, I would

come to Christ to-night.

5. In the next place, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of

God's favour.-We have all sacrificed God's favour through sin. The only

way back to God's favour is by the acceptance of the Sin-bearer whom

God has provided. How plain the Bible makes that. Turn to John iii. 36:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that

believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth

on him." "Oh," but some man says, "I do not know that I care about

that. The favour of God? God is not real to me. He is so far away. If I

have the favour of my neighbour, the favour of my employers, the favour

of my friends in the club, the favour of my constituents in politics, I

do not know that I care whether I have the favour of this far-away

being that you call God or not." Wait a moment; when you go out of this

place to-night, look up at the stars over your head, and say to

yourself, "The great God that made those stars, the great God that made

those wonderful worlds of light, about which the astronomers are

telling such wonderful things in these days, the God that holds them in

the hollow of His hand as they go whirling through space with such

incredible momentum, that God loves me, but He is displeased with me."

When you get home to-night and lie down to sleep, and cannot -for I

trust, in the kind mercy of God, some of you will not sleep when you

get home to-night through thinking of what you have heard here- when

you get home and cannot sleep, and all the rest of the house is asleep,

and you lie there alone, alone with God, looking up into the face of

God, and God looking down not into your face only but also into your

heart, say to yourself, "The great God into whose face I am now looking

up, and who is looking down not into my face only but also into my

heart, that God loves me, but He is displeased with me." Men and women,

if I had to face that thought tonight, if there were any way to find

peace with God -and thank God there is!- I would not rest till I had

found it.

6. In the next place, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of

Christ's acknowledgment in the world to come. How plain the Word of God

is about that. Turn to Jesus' own words in Matthew x. 32,33: "Whosoever

therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before

My Father which is in Heaven; but whosoever shall deny Me before men,

him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven." You will

often hear men say this: "If a man believes in Christ in the secrecy of

his heart, even if he never confesses Him or says anything about it,

God yet knows what is in his heart, and will accept him on the ground

of the faith which he never confesses." I challenge any man to show me

one line in this book that countenances such a statement. That Word

says as plainly as day, in Romans x. 10., "For with the heart man

believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made

unto salvation.- That Word says as plainly as day, and the Master

Himself said it, in Mark viii. 38, "Whosoever therefore shall be

ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation,

of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory

of His Father with the holy angels." That word says as plainly as day,

"Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before

My Father which is in Heaven, but whosoever denieth me before men, him

will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven." You say, "Does

not faith save?" Yes, and faith confesses; and the faith that does not

lead to confession is no faith and the faith that does not lead to

confession will not lead to salvation. I can imagine that great day,

when the Lord Jesus summons all His own before the bar of God. There we

stand in bright and glorious array, the Lord Jesus Christ at our head,

and He turns to His Father and says, "Father, all these are Mine; they

confessed me upon earth before men, and I now confess them before Thee

My Father in Heaven." But look, away over on the outskirts of that

crowd is a man who hung upon the outskirts of the Church of Christ on

earth. His sympathies were with the Church, his associations were with

the Church, but he was a coward, and had not the courage of his

convictions. He was afraid of his business partner, of his associates

in politics or in society, and he never came out and confessed Christ

openly before men. But he thinks that because he hung upon the

outskirts of the Church of Christ on earth, that he can hang upon the

outskirts up there. The Lord Jesus Christ now turns to him -I do not

believe it will be so much in anger as in unutterable pity-and with a

sad wave of His hand He says, "Depart, depart; you did not confess Me

upon earth before men; I cannot confess thee before My Father which is

in Heaven." Men and women, that is what it costs not to be a Christian.

Not to be an open, confessed, out-and-out follower of Jesus Christ.

7. Once more, not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of eternal

life, and means to perish for ever. How plain the Word of God is about

that. Take the words of Jesus Christ Himself in John iii. 14,15, "And

as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son

of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,

but have eternal life." How plain it is. Believe-have everlasting life;

not believe-perish. John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world that He

gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life." How plain it is; believe-have

everlasting life; not believe-perish. Once more, John iii. 36: "He that

believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not

the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." How

plain it is; believe-have everlasting life - not believe shall not see

life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Do you ask me what eternal life means? I cannot tell you. I can tell

you what its beginnings are, for, thank God, I have them in my own

heart to-night. But what eternal life means in all its fulness, in its

eternal outworking, no human language can describe, and no human fancy

can conceive. I will tell you what to do. Take that moment of your life

whose joy was purest, deepest, highest, holiest, divinest, multiply it

by intensity, and carry it out to all eternity, and you will have some

faint conception of what eternal life means. Do you ask me what it

means to perish? I cannot tell you. You and I sometimes see the

beginnings of it in the man or woman who has gone down through sin, in

the depravity of their lives, in the corruption of their characters, in

their wretchedness and despair. But what it means to perish in all the

eternal outworkings of a depraved character, what it means to perish in

that endless vista that lies ahead of us, no human language can

describe, no human fancy can conceive. But I will tell you what to do.

Take that moment in your own life whose degradation was deepest, whose

corruption was completest, whose despair was the most blank and the

most utter, and whose agony was the most appalling, multiply it by

infinity, and carry it out to all eternity, and you have some faint

conception of what it means to perish. And that is what it costs not to

be a Christian.

Men and women, I put to you then this question: Are you willing to pay

the price of a Christless life? If you are, I have nothing more to say.

If not, I ask you to stand right up and profess your acceptance of

Christ like men and women. Now I will admit that you may gain something

by not becoming Christians. I will admit that it will cost you

something to become real Christians. It will in all probability cost

you the loss of friends that you hold very dear. I never knew a man to

step out of the world without losing friends. It will cost you the loss

of money, for real Christianity touches a man's pocketbook. I am

willing to admit that. You cannot do some things in business if you

become a Christian that add to your income and which you do to-day. I

will admit that. I want you to know this. I do not want you to come out

under false pretenses. It will cost you very likely the loss of

pleasures of which you are very fond, and not for one day only, but for

weeks and months and years to come. When I gave my heart to Christ I

had to give up everything I was most addicted to in the days gone by,

the things without which, it seemed to me, life would not be worth

living. I want you to know this to-night. We want real conversion here.

But I also want to ask you a question: Are you willing, for the sake of

a few godless companions that you are better off without, are you

willing, for the sake of a few hundred or a few thousand or a hundred

thousand, if need be, of pounds sterling, are you willing, for the sake

of foolish, godless pleasures that are unworthy of a thinking being

anyhow, and unworthy of your brain and your feet and hands, that men

and women ought to be ashamed of even if they are not

Christians, like the dance, the card table, the theatre, that

intelligent people ought to be ashamed of even if they are not

Christians" are you willing, for the sake of such things as these, to

sacrifice peace and joy and hope and manhood and womanhood and God's

favour and Christ's acknowledgment and eternal life, and perish for

ever? Are you willing to make so great a sacrifice for so paltry gain?

One night in New York City, at the close of a sermon by Dr. MacArthur,

a gentleman came to him and said, "Dr. MacArthur, I want to ask you a

question; if I become a Christian must I give up my money?" Dr.

MacArthur was a wise man, and answered, "If you become a Christian, and

Jesus Christ asks you for your money, you must be willing to give it

up, every penny of it." The man said, "Dr. MacArthur, I will take a

week to think about that." Dr. MacArthur knew it was no good pressing

the man just then, and he said, "Very well." The man came back after a

week, and said, "Dr. MacArthur, I

have settled it; I will hold on to my money till death, and if Christ

and Heaven must go, they must go." That was an awful decision, but it

was an intelligent one. Are you ready to say that to-night? "I will

hold on to my money till death; I will hold on to godless companions

till death; I will hold on to my godless pleasures till death; and if

Christ and Heaven must go, and peace and joy and hope and manhood and

go, and peace and joy and hope and manhood and womanhood and God's

favour and Christ's acknowledgment and eternal life must go, and

eternal ruin come, let them go and let it come." Are you ready to say

that, men and women? That is what you do say, practically, if you go

out of this place to-night without Jesus Christ.

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XII. THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION THAT ANY MAN EVER ASKED OR ANSWERED

"What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"- Matthew

xxvii. 22.

You will remember that it was the Roman governor Pilate who asked this

question, and he answered it wrongly, and brought eternal ruin and

infamy down upon his own head. I trust that many in this great audience

will answer it right to-night, and bring to themselves eternal life,

eternal joy, and eternal glory. That question is the most important

question that any man ever asked or answered, for if you do the right

thing with Jesus Christ you will get everything that is worth having

for time and for eternity; and if you do the wrong thing with Jesus

Christ you will lose everything that is worth having for time and for

eternity.

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1. SOME THINGS THAT DEPEND ON WHAT WE DO WITH JESUS CHRIST

I want to call your attention first of all to some of the the things

that depend on what we do with Jesus Christ.

1. In the first place, our acceptance before God depends upon what we

do with Jesus Christ. -If you accept Jesus Christ God will accept you;

if you reject Jesus Christ God will reject you. We read in John iii. 18

and 19: "He that believeth is not condemned, but he that believeth not

is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the

only begotten Son of God; and this is the condemnation, that light is

come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because

their deeds were evil." Our acceptance before God does not depend on

the good works we perform. In order to be accepted before God on the

ground of our good works, our good works must be perfect; and no man's

works are perfect. For it is written in the Law of God., "Cursed is

every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the

book of the Law, to do them"; and no one has kept the whole law, and

therefore no man can be accepted on the ground of his works. Again, our

acceptance before God does not depend on the character we have built

up. In order to be accepted before God on the ground of character, our

character must be absolutely holy, for God is an infinitely holy God;

and there is no one who has not sinned.

Our acceptance before God depends upon our acceptance of Him who lived

a perfectly holy life Himself, and then died as the substitute for

those who have led unholy lives. If the vilest man or woman in London

should come into this gathering to-night and should here and now accept

Jesus as their Sin-bearer and Saviour, the moment they did it God would

blot out every sin they ever committed, and their record would be as

white in God's sight as that of the purest saint in Heaven.

I remember preaching one morning in my own church in Chicago on Romans

viii. 1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in

Christ Jesus"; and I was led to make this remark: "If the wickedest

woman in Chicago should come into Chicago Avenue Church this morning,

and should here and now put her trust in Jesus Christ as her personal

Saviour, the moment she did it God would blot out all her sins, and her

record would be as white in God's sight as that of the purest woman in

this building." Now quite unknown to me a true Christian woman, a

member of my congregation, had gone out that morning, and had gone into

one of the lowest dens of infamy in the city, and there she had asked a

woman living in sin to come and hear me preach. But the woman answered:

"No I never go to church; church is no place for a person like me." But

the good woman replied: "Our church is; the vilest sinner is welcomed

at our church." "No, no," this outcast woman said, "I could never go."

"But I will go with you:" "No, that will never do," said the woman;

"the people on the street know me; the policemen know me; the very boys

on the street know me, and sometimes they throw stones at me when I go

down the street; and if they saw you walking with me they would take

you to be like me." But the lady replied, "I don't care what they think

about me; you come along with me, and I will go with you to the, House

of God." But the woman still refused, and said, "I cannot do that;

but," she added, "you go a little way ahead, and I will follow you up

the street." So the lady consented, and this woman who was a sinner

followed her. They c

ame to the corner where my church stands, and mounted up the steps at

the entrance into the vestibule, and when they got inside the church

this poor woman who was a sinner dropped down into the very last seat,

at the back of the church. I was preaching when she entered, and just

as she got to that seat I uttered the words, "If the wickedest woman in

Chicago should come into the Chicago Avenue Church this morning, and

should here and now put her trust in Jesus Christ as her personal

Saviour, the moment she did it God would blot out all her sins, and her

record would be as white in God's sight as that of the purest woman in

this building." My words went floating down over the heads of that

audience and dropped down into the heart of that woman. She believed

it, and accepted Christ, and God met her and blotted out all her sins,

and washed her record white right then and there. And after that

service the woman came down the aisle of the church to me, the tears

streaming down her face, and told me how God had blessed her that

morning.

2. In the second place, our finding peace of conscience depends

entirely on what we do with Jesus Christ.-In Romans, v. 1, we read,

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through

our Lord Jesus Christ."

We can never get peace of conscience by good works; we can never get

peace of conscience by prayers and penances. How many have tried to get

peace that way and have failed! Martin Luther, after his wild

university life, roused to the sense of the fact that he was a sinner,

tried to find peace by good works, by long nights of prayer, by

penances, but failed! At last he went to Rome, and started to climb up

the steps at St. Peter's on his knees, hoping to find peace that way,

but failed. At last, the words of God came ringing in his ears, "The

Just shall live by faith," and Martin Luther, put his faith in the

finished work of Christ, and found peace instantly. I have a friend

over in America, and in the days before I made his acquaintance he was

a very vicious man. He was a professional gambler, one of the most

desperate gamblers on the Mississippi River in the old days of the

Mississippi gamblers. One night he was at the gaming table, and a man

across the table accused him of dishonesty at cards, and Stephen

Holcombs, who is now my friend, drew his revolver and shot at his

accuser. The bullet went into the man's neck, and when he saw what he

had done Stephen Holcombe sprang to the man's side, lifted his head on

to his knee, and tried to staunch the flow of blood in the gaping

wound; but the man bled to death then and there. Stephen Holcombe was

arrested for murder; he was tried, and was acquitted on the ground that

he had shot the man in self-defense. But, though acquitted by a human

court, he was not acquitted before the bar of God, nor before the bar

of his own conscience. He tried every way to find peace. He gave up

gambling, and he gave up all his evil ways to find peace, but he did

not find it. He even united himself to a church, and went to the

Communion table, but he did not find peace. Two years after that awful

night he was in his room alone in misery, his face buried in his hands,

and the memory of that day was haunting him, and as he knelt there he

cried: "O God, can anything blot out the awful memory of what I have

done and give me peace?" And the strains of the old familiar hymn came

singing through his heart-

What shall wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

What shall make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

And then and there Stephen Holcombe saw Christ on the Cross for his

sin. He saw all his sins, the murder and all, laid on Christ. Then and

there Stephen Holcombe found peace, and from that day he has gone up

and down our country preaching Christ and the atoning blood that gave

him peace.

Is there some man or woman here to-night haunted with the memory of the

evil you have done? Men and women, there is a way to find peace, only

one way-by simple faith in a Christ that was crucified on the cross of

Calvary for your sin.

3. In the third place, finding deep and abiding joy depends on what we

do with Jesus Christ.-As the Apostle Peter says in 1 Peter i.8.,

"Though now ye see Him not, yet, believing, ye rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory." A man can never get joy through the

accumulation of wealth. Many have tried it, but no one has ever

succeeded. A man cannot get joy through seeking the world's honours;

many have tried it, but no one has ever succeeded. A man cannot get joy

through indulging in the worlds -pleasures. millions have tried it, but

no one has ever succeeded. But, friends, the wretchedest heart in this

world can find joy to-night through believing in Christ crucified and

risen.

Some years ago I remember a noblewoman of your country was studying at

our Bible Institute in Chicago, and on the day she left the Institute

she told us these two incidents that I appened over here in England.

She said, "I had a letter from a dear friend of mine, a lady, and she

asked me to come at once to see her. I hurried to her home, and, as I

went up the elegant marble stairway and saw the costly paintings on the

walls and the magnificent statues that lined the hall, I said to

myself, `I wonder if all this wealth and splendour makes my friend

happy.' I did not have to wait long to find out, for presently the lady

came hurrying into the room, and, after greeting me, dropped into a

seat and burst into tears. All the wealth, honour and dignity of her

position had not given her joy. After this I went to visit, a poor

blind woman in an humble cottage. It was a dark rainy day, and the rain

was dripping through the badly thatched roof, gathering in a pool

before the chair where the woman sat. When I saw the poverty of that

blind woman I was driven to turn to her and say, `Maggie, are you not

miserable?' `What, lady?' and she turned her sightless eyes to me in

surprise. `What, lady? I miserable; I, the child of a King, and

hurrying on to the mansion He has gone to prepare for me? I miserable?

No, no,

lady, I am happy!'" Wealth had not brought joy to the one, but a living

faith in Jesus Christ had brought joy to the other in the midst of her

overly and misfortune.

4. In the fourth place, our obtaining eternal life depends entirely on

what we do with Jesus Christ.- We read in 1 John v. 11, 12, "God hath

given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the

Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." What

stranger ideas even Christian people have about how to obtain eternal

life. If I could come to some of you to-night and say, "How do you

think people get eternal life?" some of you would answer something like

this, "If a man leads a very good life, and fights against sin, and

overcomes it, and is faithful in his service to God, at the end of a

life of struggling and victory and service perhaps God will give him

eternal life." Thank God, that is not the doctrine of that Book. The

doctrine of that Book is, that when God sent His Son Jesus Christ down

to this world, He sent eternal life in Him, and the moment you take

Christ you have the eternal life that is in Him; and if the worst

outcast in London should here and now take Christ, the moment he did it

he would have eternal life.

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II. WHAT WE MUST DO WITH JESUS CHRIST.

Now, I want to call your attention to a second line of thought, and

that is, What we must do with Jesus Christ; and let me say at the

outset that every one of us will have to do something with Jesus Christ

tonight. You don't want to. Many a man here tonight does not want to do

anything with Jesus Christ. You do not want to accept Him or reject

Him. You do not want to confess Him or deny Him. You just want to get

Him off your hands. You can't do it! Pontius Pilate, who asked the

question of our text, tried to get Christ off his hands; first he

turned to the Jews and said, "Judge Him according to your law"; but

they said, "We can-not do it; by our law He ought to die, but we have

not the power to put Him to death." Pilate then sent Him to Herod, and

said, "You take Him and judge Him," and then Pilate said to himself, "I

have got rid of Him now; I have put the responsibility on Herod." But

look, what is that coming down the street? They are the returning

soldiers of Herod, and Herod has sent Christ back to Pilate; so Pilate

has Him on his hands again. Then Pilate says, "What shall I do? I do

not want to crucify this Man, because I know he is innocent, and I do

not want to release Him, because it will make the Jews angry. I know

what I will do," and he went to face that great Jewish mob, and said to

them, "This is the time of Passover, and you know we have a custom at

this time of the year that there should be released to you one of the

criminals in custody, whosoever you may choose. Now I am disposed to be

gracious to-day, and I will let you have whom you like; which will you

have, Jesus or" - (and he put up against Jesus the meanest criminal he

had, a murderer and a robber, and he said to himself, they will never

choose him, in the world) "will you have Jesus or Barabbas?" But the

men of Jerusalem were like you men of London, and they cried, "We will

have Barabbas"; and Pilate had Jesus on his hands again. He could not

get Him off his hands-neither can you. Every man and every woman in

this building will do something with Jesus Christ to-night. Now let me

tell you what you must do.

1. You must either accept Him or reject Him. Jesus Christ is here, and

now offers Himself to every man and every woman in this building as

Your Saviour and Lord and Master, and unless you definitely accept Him

as such you definitely reject Him. Every man and woman will go out of

this building to-night either having definitely accepted Christ or

definitely rejected Him.

I said to a gentleman going out of a meeting like this one night,

"Mr.---, are you going to accept Christ to-night?" He replied, "I am

not going to accept Him to-night, but I want you to understand that I

do not reject Him." I said, "I understand nothing of the kind; Jesus

Christ offers Himself to you, and if you do not accept Him, your

refusal to accept Him is to reject Him." and every man and woman in

Mildmay Hall will go out of the building to-night either having

accepted Jesus Christ or having rejected Jesus Christ.

2. Secondly, we must either confess Him or deny Him. He Himself said so

in Matthew x. 32, 33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men,

him will I confess also before My Father which is in Heaven; but

whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My

Father which is in Heaven." You will do one or the other. There are

just two parties in the world to-day, the confessed followers of Christ

and the deniers of Christ, and you belong to one or the other. Which do

you belong to? Are you a confessor of the Son of God, or are you a

denier of the Son of God?

3. In the third place, you must either let Him into your heart or shut

Him out. The Lord Jesus Christ says in Revelation iii. 20: "Behold I

stand at, the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open, the

door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me." The

Lord Jesus is in Mildmay Hall to-night, knocking, knocking! Who is it

knocking? The Son of God-knocking at your heart and mine. Will you

throw your heart wide open and say, "Come in, Lord Jesus?" or will you

shut your heart and bar it and say, "Stay out, Lord Jesus"? Every one

of us will say one or the other to-night.

4. In the next place, we must either be for Christ or against Him. He

Himself says so. In Matthew xii. 30, He says, "He that is not with Me

is against Me." Every man that is not with Him is against Him. Every

man that is not openly, decidedly, confessedly, out and out for Christ

is against Christ. You either have to take your stand with John, the

Beloved Apostle, and Peter the warm-hearted, and Paul the heroic, and

all the noble band of confessors and martyrs and servants of the Son of

God, or you have to take your stand with Pontius Pilate, with Herod,

with Annas and Caiaphas, with Judas Iscariot. Where do you take your

stand to-night? I could run a line through this building, and, if I

knew you all to-night as God knows you, I could put every man and woman

in the building on one or the other side of the line. On one side those

who are for Christ, whole-heartedly for Christ; on the other side,

those who are against Christ. Suppose I did it; which side would you be

on?

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III. WHO THIS JESUS IS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO.

Now one other line of thought, and that is who this Jesus is with whom

we have to do. Who is He?

1. In the first place, He is One whom God hath appointed and anointed

to be your King. We read in Acts ii. 36, "This same Jesus, whom ye have

crucified, God bath made both Lord and Christ" (that means "anointed

King"). You have a way of saying here in England that King Edward is

your divinely appointed king, and I believe it. I believe he is, but in

an infinitely higher sense Jesus of Nazareth is your divinely appointed

and divinely anointed King. If you reject Jesus Christ you reject your

divinely appointed King; if you deny Jesus Christ, you deny your

divinely appointed King; if you shut Jesus Christ out of your heart,

you shut your divinely appointed King out of your heart; and if you

take your stand against Jesus Christ, you take your stand against your

divinely appointed King. And you are guilty of -listen- high treason!

There closed a trial in London the day before yesterday in which a man

was tried and convicted of high treason, and sentenced to death.

Whether or not they will carry out the sentence into execution I do not

know; but I do know that if the man was guilty, as the jury found, then

according to the English law, and the law of any well-organized

government, he is worthy of death. But, men and women, I charge every

man and woman in this building to-night -I care not what position in

society you hold- I charge you, I indict you, every man and woman,

every man and woman in the building out of Christ, of high treason

against Heaven's King, and if you got your just deserts you would die.

One day in Maryborough, over in Australia, a fine looking man came to

see me, an unusually fine-looking man, with splendid physique and

dome-like forehead. He said, "I want a talk with you," and I said,

"Very well, take a seat, sir." He said, "I don't know about your

preaching. Now I am a moral, upright man, and no one can deny it. Now."

he said, "I would like you to tell me what you have against me." I

said, "Are you a Christian?" "No, sir," he replied. "Have you taken

Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and surrendered your life to Him

as your Lord and Master, and confessed Him as such before the world,

and given your life to Him?" "No, sir," he replied. "Then," I said, "I

charge you, sir, with high treason against your King. Jesus Christ is

your King; God made Him so; and I charge you sir" -and I looked him

right in the eye- "I charge you, sir, with the crime of high treason

against your King." And a dark cloud came over the man's face as he got

up, and, going out of my room, he said, "Good afternoon," and walked

away.

Months passed away; we had been over to Tasmania and conducted a

mission there, and had returned, and I was preaching in Ballarat, about

forty miles away from Maryborough. After the service, a fine-looking

man came to me, and said, "Do you remember me?" I knew his face, hut I

could not remember where I had seen him. I said, "I have seen you

somewhere, but I cannot place you." He said, "Do you remember ever

charging a man with high treason?" I said, "I have charged many a man

with high treason." "Yes." he said; "but do you remember charging any

specific man with high treason?" Then he began to tell me his story,

and I commenced to gather who he was. He said, "I am the man, and I

have come to Ballarat, sir, to tell you that you will never charge me

with high treason again;" and he held out his hand, and I held out

mine, and he took mine in his mighty grip -and it was a mighty grip-

and he said "Down!" and he dropped on his knees, and I dropped on to

mine, and he said, "Lord Jesus, I hand in my allegiance; I give up my

treason' I take Thee as my King."

You men ought to do it to-night. He is your King, and every man and

woman among you that does not accept Him and acknowledge Him as such

to-night I charge you with high treason against Heaven's King.

2. But He is more than your King-He is the Son of God. He is a divine

Person, and if you reject Him you are guilty of rejecting the Son of

God; if you deny Him you are guilty of denying the Son of God; if you

shut Him out of your hearts you are guilty of shutting the Son of God

out of your hearts; if you take your stand against Him you are guilty

of taking your stand a against the Son of God.

"Oh, but," some may say, "we don't believe He is the Son of God. Don't

you know there are some people in these advanced days that don't

believe that Jesus is the Son of God?" I, know it just as well as you

do; and I know something else that you will know in a minute -that is,

that denying a fact does not alter the fact. In this superficial

twentieth century we have a very easy way of disposing of the facts we

don't like to believe. We say, "I don't believe this," and we think

that does away with the fact. Men who do not want to believe in hell

say, "I don't believe in hell" and they think that the have shut the

gates of hell by saying that. Men who don't want to believe in the

Bible say, "I don't believe in the Bible," and they think that they

annihilate the Book that has stood for nineteen centuries by saying

that. Men who do not want to believe in Christ say, "I do not believe

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and they think by their not

believing it He ceases to be the Son of God. Has it never occurred to

you that a fact is a fact whether you believe it or not? We have got

some people in America that have become so possessed with the idea that

denying a thing is quite sufficient to annihilate it, that they declare

that there is no such thing as pain. They tell you not to believe there

is such a thing as pain, and then you won't feel it. But when they go

to the dentist's and get into the chair they jump just as much as any

one else! And in this foolish belief they are dying by the score; by

the miserable madness of Christian Science, that dares to deny sickness

,which exists all the same, and sweeps them into premature graves.

Denying a fact does not alter a fact, and denying that Jesus is the Son

of God does not alter the fact that He is the Son of God. It only makes

you guilty of robbing a divine Person of the honour that is His due.

Listen: There are five indisputably divine testimonies to the deity of

Jesus Christ. In the first place, there is the testimony of the divine

life He lived, for He lived as never man lived. Napoleon Bonaparte

said, "I know men, but Jesus Christ was no (mere) man." In the second

place, there is the testimony of the divine word He spoke, for he spoke

as never man spoke. In the third place, there is the testimony of the

divine works He wrought, for He wrought as never man wrought; not

merely healing the sick, but cleansing the lepers, stilling the

tempest, raising the dead, and feeding the five thousand by a creative

act with five small loaves and two small fishes. In the fourth place,

then, is the divine attestation of the resurrection from the dead. The

resurrection of Christ from the dead is the best proven fact of

history; it is proved by such indisputable evidence that I wish I had

time to do in London what I did in Sydney, meet the skeptics and

agnostics of the city, and prove to them that Jesus rose from the dead;

and I believe I should see in some of your agnostics and skeptics the

honesty which some of the Sydney skeptics showed, in owning their

arguments beaten and coming right out and acknowledging the truth of

the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus did rise from the dead. Before

they crucified Him He said, "You will crucify Me, but God will set His

seal on My claims by raising Me from the dead." They did not believe

Him; the Unitarians of the day crucified Him for cla iming to be the

Son of God. They laid Him in a sepulchre, and put the seal of the Roman

Government on the stone, which no one dared to break. But on the third

day the Spirit of the living God breathed through the sleeping clay,

and the crucified Christ rose from the dead, and God proclaimed in

unmistakable tones to all ages, "This is My beloved Son." In the fifth

place, there is the testimony of His divine influence upon all

subsequent history. There is no question that Jesus Christ claimed to

be divine; no competent student will deny that He claimed to be divine.

Well, then, He was one of three things; He was either divine, a He

claimed to be, or else He was the most audacious impostor the world had

ever seen, or else He was the most hopeless lunatic the world has ever

seen. He must have been one of the three. Of all the irrational systems

of philosophy that of Unitarianism is the most irrational. It says that

Jesus Christ was not divine, but was a good man, perhaps the best man

that ever walked the earth. I say if He was not divine He was not good,

for He was an impostor. You had a man in this city a few months ago who

claimed to be divine, and you all decided that he was either an

impostor, or most of you, perhaps, took the more charitable view that

he was a lunatic. Jesus Christ was either divine, as He claimed to be,

or else He was the most audacious impostor the world has ever seen, or

else He was the greatest lunatic. Take your choice. Is there any man

here to-night that will say that Jesus Christ was a lunatic, and that

His influence on history has been the influence of a lunatic? Nobody

but a lunatic will say so. Will any man here dare to say that the

influence of Jesus Christ on the history of the world has been the

influence of an impostor? No one but an impostor would say so. Then if

not a lunatic or an impostor, what? The Son of God! Jesus Christ is the

Son of God, and every man or woman that goes away from here to-night

rejecting Christ will go away rejecting the Son of God. Every man or

woman that goes away from here to-night denying Christ will go away

denying the Son of God. Every man or woman that goes away from here

to-night shutting Christ out of his heart will go away shutting the Son

of God out of his heart. Every man or woman that goes away from here

to-night taking his stand against Christ will go away taking his stand

against the Son of God. Men, if you were not blinded by sin to the

thought of your awful guilt, you would fall on your faces now and cry,

"God be merciful to me, so awful a sinner!" I trust some of you will do

it before you go away.

3. Jesus Christ is not only your King; He is not only divine; He is

something more yet. You say, What? Your Saviour, the One who was

wounded for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities, upon whom

the chastisement of your peace was laid; and oh, men and women, if you

reject Him, if you deny Him,, if you take your stand against Him, if

you shut Him out of your hearts, you will be guilty of the most awful

ingratitude. Never mother loved her son, never mother suffered for her

child, as Christ has loved us and suffered for us. "Though He was rich,

yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might

become rich. Being in the form of God, He thought it not a thing to be

grasped to be equal with God, but He emptied Himself and took upon

Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and

became obedient unto death, yes, the death of the Cross." For you and

me! Will you, will you reject Him, will you deny Him, will you shut Him

out of your hearts, and will you take your stand against Him? Oh, men

and women, what are you made of ?

A man came to me one night and said: "I don't believe in your

Christianity." I said, "Why not?" He said,- "It is irrational." I asked

why. "Why," be said, "you teach, don't you, that if a man leads a moral

life and does his duty by his neighbour and in business, treating his

employees fairly, he will be lost for ever for nothing worse than the

one thing of rejecting Jesus Christ. That is not just," he said. I

said, "Hold on a minute; suppose you have a mother who is one of the

purest women who ever lived. Suppose your mother loved you even as few

mothers loved their sons. Suppose your mother if necessary was ready to

lay down her life for you to save yours." He said, "She would."

"Suppose you should do your duty," I said, "by your wife and children

and by your neighbour, and in your place of business, and treat

everybody honestly; suppose you were upright in all the relations of

life, and treated every person right but one, and that one your mother,

who, you say, is so good, who, you say, would be ready to die for you,

who, you say, loves you so. Suppose you should turn her out of doors on

to the street, leaving her there naked and to starve. What would you

think of yourself?" He said, "I would be a scoundrel." "Well," I said,

"Jesus Christ loves you more than a mother ever did, and Jesus Christ

would not only die for you, but He did die for you. Jesus Christ has

done more for you than any mother ever did for her child. And now,

while you say you are doing your duty by everybody else, you are

trampling under foot Jesus Christ." I said, "What do you think of

yourself?" He saw it, that he was a scoundrel. And he was. And so are

you, and so are you, every one of you, that is rejecting Jesus Christ.

Supposing you had a man here in London who did his duty to his wife and

children, who did his duty by his neighbour, who did his duty in

politics, in business, and by every person but one, and that one his

mother, who loved him and brought him up, who had wasted her life upon

him, and was now feeble and decrepit simply because she poured her life

out for him. And while he did his duty by everybody else, he turned

that mother, to whom he owed everything, out into the street to starve.

Would his doing his duty towards his wife cover the infamy of his

treatment to his mother? Would his doing his duty towards his neighbour

cover the infamy of that treatment; would the doing of his duty in

politics, in business, cover the infamy of his treatment of his mother?

Never! And will your doing your duty by your wife, mother, father,

children, brothers, sisters, and neighbours, cover the infamy, the

hideous black ingratitude of your treatment of the Christ who gave up

Heaven and died on the Cross for you? Never! You are rejecting the one

that was wounded for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities,

upon whom the chastisement of your peace was laid; you are denying

every day of your lives the One who was wounded for your

transgressions, bruised for your iniquities, upon whom the Chastisement

of your peace was laid; you are shutting out of your heart the One who

was wounded for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities, upon

whom the chastisement of your peace was laid; you are taking your stand

against the One who was wounded for your transgressions, bruised for

your iniquities, upon whom the chastisement of your peace was laid.

Oh, men and women of London, in the light of what

depends on your choice, in the light of what Jesus Christ is what are

you going to do with Christ to-night ?

It was an awful Crisis in the life of Pontius Pilate when he asked the

question of the text. There sat Pontius Pilate in all the dignity and

power of a Roman governor; and there stood Jesus Christ in all the

beauty of His perfect manhood, in all the dignity and glory of His

perfect Deity, in all the wondrousness of His matchless love; and there

sat Pontius Pilate deep in thought, deciding what to do. There were two

kinds of voices speaking in Pilate's heart -higher voices and lower

voices; heavenly voices and infernal voices. Listen to the higher

voices. The voice of reason said, "Pilate, release Him; He is

innocent." One voice of conscience said, "Pilate release Him; He is

innocent." The voice of the Spirit of God, whispering in Pilate's

heart, said, "Pilate, release Him." The voice of common decency said,

"Pilate, release Him; He is innocent." Everything that was noble and

true and just in Pilate's heart said, "Release Him." But, alas, there

were other voices, infernal voices, speaking, and Pilate is listening

to them. There was the voice of cowardice, of fear of what the Jews

will say, that whispered, "Pilate, crucify Him." There was the voice of

avarice, the greed for gold, saying, "Pilate, crucify Him." There was

the voice of low political policy whispering, "Pilate, crucify Him."

And Pilate sits there deep in thought. At last, he decides, and he

decides wrong; and his name has come down to everlasting infamy.

It is a more solemn moment and a more awful crisis for you to-night,

for you know better who Jesus is. There you sit, and there stands Jesus

again, unseen, but there He surely stands, in all the dignity and

beauty of His perfect manhood; there He Stands in all the glory of His

perfect Deity; there He stands in all the wondrousness of His matchless

love, crowned with thorns, and with pierced hands. And there you sit,

trying to decide what to do with Him. In your heart there are higher

voices and lower voices. There is the voice of the Spirit of God which

says, "Accept Him; confess Him; take your stand on His side tonight."

Here is the voice of conscience which says, "Accept Him." There is the

voice of gratitude which says, "Accept Him." Everything that is noble

and good and true in you says, "Accept Him; confess Him; let Him into

your heart; take your stand on His side." But, alas, there are lower

voices in your heart to-night. There is in your heart the voice of

cowardice, the fear of what people will say, which says, "Reject Him

to-night; take your stand against Him." There is the voice of avarice,

the greed for gold that might slip through your fingers if you became a

real Christian and that says, "Reject Him." There is the voice of lust,

low and beastly that says, "Reject Him." There is the voice of low

political trickery, which says it will rob you of influence in your

political party if you become a Christian, and that says, "Reject H

im." Everything that is low and base and mean and devilish in your

heart says, "Reject Him; deny Him; shut Him out of your heart; take

your stand against Him."

Men and women, which are you going to listen to? What are you going to

decide? God help you to decide right to-night.

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XIII. ONE OF THE SADDEST UTTERANCES THAT EVER FELL FROM THE LIPS OF THE SON OF

GOD

"Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." 1 John v. 40.

That is one of the saddest utterances that our Saviour ever spoke. I

wish I could reproduce His tender tones and His loving look when He

uttered the words. I believe it would break your heart. He came down

from Heaven with its glory to earth with its shame, to bring life to

men. He went up and down among men proclaiming that life could be

obtained by simply coming to Him, but men would not come. And at last

He turned round upon the men who had not come to Him, and with a heart

aching with disappointment, and with tones full of yearning pity He

said: "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."

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I. WHY ANY MAN IS LOST.

Those words contain the explanation why any man is lost. If any man is

lost it will be because he will not come to Christ. If any man or woman

goes out of this hall to-night unsaved, that will be the reason. Jesus

Christ offers life to every man and woman here on the simple condition

that you come to Him, and if you go out of this hall to-night without

it, it is simply because you would not come to Him.

1. No man is lost because he needs to be lost. No man needs to be lost.

God has provided salvation for everybody. The atonement of Jesus Christ

covers the sins of every man. He tasted death -as we are told in the

Word of God- for every man, and the offer of salvation is made to every

man. If any man does not take it, it is because he will not come and

get it. No man is lost because of any purpose or decree of God. It is

the will of God, we are told expressly in His word, that all men should

be saved, and He "is not willing" -as we read in 2 Peter iii. 9 "that

any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And if any

man is lost, it is solely because He will not come.

2. No man is lost because he has gone down so deeply into sin. Indeed

it is true that all of us have gone down into sin so deeply that we

deserve to be lost. But "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all

acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"

-even the chief. He can do it. He is doing it every day. Christ did

save the chief of sinners -Saul of Tarsus- and He has power to-night to

save any man or woman in London. No man or woman is lost because they

have gone down so deeply into sin, but simply because they will not

come to that only Saviour who has power to save them from their sins.

3. No man is lost because he is too weak to lead the Christian life. It

is true that every one of us is too weak to lead a true Christian life

in our own strength; but, thank God, we have a Saviour who "is able to

keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence

of His glory with exceeding joy." If any man is lost, it is solely

because he will not come to Christ. If any man or woman or person goes

out of this hall to-night unsaved it is no one's fault but your own,

and the whole reason will be that you will not come to Christ and

obtain life.

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II. WHY MEN WILL NOT COME TO CHRIST.

But why will not men come to Christ? There are many things that keep

them from coming.

1. The first one is sin. I believe that sin is keeping more men and

women from coming to Christ than almost anything else. There are a

great many men in this world who know their need of a Saviour, who long

for a Saviour, who have a deep desire to take the Lord Jesus Christ,

but they know if they come to Him they must leave their sins behind. A

man cannot come to Christ and retain his sin. You have to choose

between Jesus Christ and sin. Men know that, but they are not willing

to give up their sins. At one of Mr. Moody's services in Chicago, after

he had preached on the "Prodigal Son" a fine-looking young fellow came

to me and said, "That was a good sermon to-night. He pictured my case

exactly. I am that prodigal son." I said, "Don't you want to come home

to the Father to-night, then?" He said, "I do." I said, "And the Father

wants you to come." He said, "I know it." I said, "Will you come?" He

said, "I will not." I asked, "Why not?." He replied., "I am entangled

in the

meshes of a disgusting sin." "Then," I said, "will you not give it up

to-night?" "No, sir," he said, "I will not." That young man went out of

that place where he had been brought face to face with God's love,

deliberately choosing a vile sin and death instead of Jesus Christ and

eternal life. I dare say there are men and women who will go out of

this hall to-night with a clear view of the fact that they can come to

Christ and be pardoned, but you will not come because there is some

deliberate sin in your life or heart that you are not willing to give

up.

2. The love of money keeps many men from coming to Christ. Many a man

knows that if he came to Christ he would lose money by it. There are

things in his business that would need to be given up. But he is not

willing to sacrifice the profits he gets in crooked ways. He is

deliberately choosing a larger income and eternal death instead of

Jesus Christ and eternal life. How many a young fellow has come to me

and when I have urged him to come to Christ he has said, "I believe it

is a good thing, but I should have to give up my situation if I did."

Two young ladies said to Mrs. Torrey at one of our services in

Australia, when they seemed to be very near decision, "We cannot come

to Christ. We are employed in a large shop, and our employer requires

us to misrepresent the goods. We cannot do that and be Christians, can

we?" "No, you cannot " Mrs. Torrey replied; and the young ladies said,

"If we don't, then we lose our positions." God pity the man or the

merchant who requires his employees to lie! And yet there are such who

profess to be Christians. God have mercy on such hypocrites, who are

hurrying on fast to an eternal hell- every one of them. How sad it is

that those young women were ready to choose their position and small

salary in the place of Jesus Christ and life eternal!

3. Love of pleasure, is keeping many a man and woman from coming to

Christ. How many young men and young women there are in London who know

need Christ and would like to be Christians, but they say if they come

to Christ they will, have to give up this or that pleasure-the dance or

the card party or the theatre. "I can never do it," they say, and they

are choosing the dance or card party or theatre or some other form of

worldly amusement and death instead of Jesus Christ and life. Dr. John

Hall, of New York City, was at one time pastor of perhaps the

wealthiest church in New York City. There came to him one day a young

lady who was a most beautiful waltzer and she said, "If I become a

Christian will I have to give up my dancing?" He replied, "If You

become a Christian and Jesus Christ asks you to give up your dancing,

you must be ready to do it." She replied, "If I must choose between

Jesus Christ and dancing, I will hold on to my dancing and let Jesus

Christ go." What an awful choice! You have not said it; perhaps you

never thought it so definitely; but some of you to-night are making

that very choice. You feel you could not be a real Christian and hold

on to your worldly pleasure, and you reject Jesus Christ rather than

give up your worldly pleasure. You are saying by your action, "if I

must choose between Jesus Christ and my dancing or card-playing or

theatre, or this or that and the other thing, I will hold on to my

dancing, or whatever it be, and let Jesus Christ go."

4. The fear of man is keeping many a man and woman in London from

coming to Christ and obtaining eternal life. How many there are who

when the invitation is given would like to stand up, but they say if I

should do it my friends in business or society would hear about it, and

what would they say? You keep your seat and you reject Jesus Christ for

fear of what they would say. In Proverbs xxix. 25, we read: "The fear

of man bringeth a snare. "It is bringing a snare that is landing many

in a path that leads to eternal ruin instead of to Jesus Christ and

life eternal. I would a great deal rather that men would laugh at me

down here for doing a wise thing, than that the devils in hell should

laugh at me for all eternity for doing a foolish thing. We have in our

country a very foolish custom. I think you have it to a certain extent

in your country also, but perhaps not to the same extent as we have it

in ours. It is called "April Fools' Day." On the first day of April all

the fools in America try to make fools of all the other fools. One

custom is to bore a hole in a silver coin, and after attaching a string

to it, put it on the sidewalk. When any one comes along and stoops to

pick it up, the coin is pulled away, and they cry "April fool." Another

joke is to take a wallet and fill it with dust and dirt and chips and

throw it on the sidewalk, and when an one picks it up and opens it to

cry "April fool!" One day a farmer went to his bank in Baltimore and

drew some money, which he put for safe-keeping into his wallet. After

walking some distance, he felt in his pocket and found the wallet had

gone. Retracing his steps, he had not gone many blocks when he saw a

circle of people round a wallet, no one daring to touch it, thinking it

was full of sawdust and shavings. When the farmer entered the circle

and picked up the wallet, all cried "April fool !" but when he opened

it and counted the money to see if it were all there, they felt that

they were the fools. I tell you that a day is coming for those men and

women who laugh at you, because you choose Christ and eternal life,

when they will say that you have made a wise choice and they were the

fools. Don't let them laugh you out of life eternal. At one of my

missions I asked a woman how she was getting on. She replied, "I am not

getting on at all; I am perfectly miserable." - "Why is that?" I said.

"I don't know" she replied. Another said, "I can tell you why it is,

she has never told her husband she has accepted Jesus Christ." "Is that

so?" I asked her. "It is," she replied. "But you stood up in the

meeting?" I said. "Yes, but not when he was present." "Well, you must

tell him!" "I can't tell my husband; he would laugh at me," she

answered. "Never mind how much he laughs" I said. "I can't do it," was

all she would reply. The next Sunday night the lady and gentleman were

sitting together in one of the front seats. I stopped in the midst of

my address and said, "Every woman in the house who will say that from

this time on my husband shall have an out-and-out Christian for his

wife, please rise." This woman immediately rose to her feet. "Now," I

said, "every man who will say from this time my wife shall have a true

Christian man for her husband, please rise." That man was the first man

in the house on his feet. Show people the beauty and power of a living

faith in Jesus Christ, and you will bring them with you.

5. An unforgiving spirit is another thing that is keeping men and women

from coming to Jesus Christ. They know they cannot come, and bring a

heart full of hate, and so they choose bitterness and hatred and death

instead of Christ and life. One afternoon at Cleveland, after Mr. Moody

had been speaking, he brought me to a lady to show her the way of life.

I had been speaking to her trying this and that passage to see what was

in the way of her accepting Christ, when suddenly I turned to her and

said, "Is there somebody you cannot forgive?" She looked quickly at me,

and said, "Who told you?" I said, "Nobody told me, and I have never

seen you before to-night." That was her trouble, and that is the

trouble with some of you. Some one has done you an injustice or you

think they have, and you will not come to Jesus Christ because you want

to cherish this bitter grudge in your heart. I once talked about two

hours; to a young lady, trying to lead her to Christ, but at last she

said, "There is somebody I cannot forgive." I told her, "You must or be

lost for ever." But she replied, "I cannot; they have done me a wrong."

I said, "If they had not done you a wrong, there would not be anything

to forgive. Have they wronged you as much as you have wronged Jesus

Christ?" In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, commencing at the

twenty-third verse, we have the parable of the servant who was forgiven

a large debt, and then would not forgive his fellow-servant a trifling

sum. That is a picture of the unforgiving one to-day. I said to her,

"Read that incident; you must forgive." But she said, "I can't." "Are

you willing," I then asked her, "that God should take the bitterness

out of your heart?" She replied, "I am." Then I said, "Kneel down and

ask Him;" As she knelt down, and scarcely had her knees touched the

floor, when she burst into tears, as she felt the feeling of hate taken

away. Are you going to reject Jesus Christ and eternal life for the

sake of hating somebody? God have mercy upon you.

6. Self-will stands between many a person and Christ and eternal life.

There are a great many people in this world who are not willing to

surrender their wills to anybody, not even to God. They are bound to

have their own way. A woman told me that on Friday night. She said, "I

cannot give my will up to anybody." What foolishness! Who is this God

to whom we ask you to surrender your will? God is love. Is it not

wisdom to surrender our wills to infinite love and wisdom? Oh, the

folly of those who will not surrender their wills to God and His love.

7. There is one more thing that is keeping people from coming to Jesus

Christ, and that is pride. I believe that there are thousands and tens

of thousands of people in London to-night that are kept from Him

because of the pride in their hearts. Pride manifests itself in many

ways. It makes men and women, who have led moral and respectable lives,

unwilling to admit that they are lost sinners, and must come into the

Kingdom of God through the same door as the thief or the harlot or the

drunkard. You will all have to get into the kingdom in that way. Look

at Christ's parable of the publican and sinner. First there came the

Pharisee to the temple to pray, a moral, upright, prominent citizen.

But what is his prayer? It is just a parade of his own virtues. "God, I

thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust,

adulterers or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give

tithes of all that I possess." Do you know what Jesus Christ says about

him? He says that this man went down to his house unforgiven. Then came

the publican -an outcast, despised by everybody, but a man who had been

brought to the consciousness of his sin. He would not lift up so much

as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be

merciful to me a sinner"- the sinner. Do you know what Jesus Christ

says? "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather

than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased;

and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." I believe that very

many people are being kept from Christ and eternal life by the pride of

their hearts. In Chicago I was once telling the story of a woman who

had been away down in sin and been saved; and afterwards a refined lady

came to me and said, "You do not mean to say that that woman was

saved?" The strange thing was that the lady was a Universalist, and

believed that everybody could be saved. I told her "the woman was

saved, and what is more, she was saved in precisely the same way that

you will be saved if ever you are saved." That is God's truth. Ah! but

some of you people are not willing to lay your pride in the dust. You

are not willing to throw your pride to the winds, and go to God and

seek pardon through the atoning blood of the Son of God. You will never

be saved any other way. A lady once came to me and said,

"My Christian experience is not satisfactory." I said, "I don't think

you have any Christian experience." "Why," she said, "I have. I am the

widow of a minister and a member of a church." "Well," I responded, "I

don't think that you ever were saved in your life. No, you never were,

for you never saw yourself as a lost sinner in your life." She said, "I

never did, because I am not." I replied, "Let me deal frankly with you.

You are just full of conceit." Unless God opens your eyes to see that

you are not essentially better than the vilest sinner, and unless you

come to God and cry for mercy, through the atoning blood of Christ, you

will never be saved." She said "You are cruel." "No " I said, "I am

kind. You are a physician, I believe?" She replied, "Yes." Then I said,

"Suppose a patient had a tumor, and you cut it out to save her life.

Would you call that cruel?" "No," she said, "I should say that was the

kindest thing I could do." "Well," I said, "you have a tumor. Your

pride and conceit are blinding your eyes so that you cannot see that

you are a poor, vile, worthless sinner, and Jesus Christ died for you

on the Cross." The woman had the good sense at last to see it, but that

more than some of you have. I tell you among the people who are in this

hall there are a lot of people who are being kept away from Christ by

spiritual pride.

But pride operates in another way. Oh, that by the help of God I could

tear these awful scales from your eyes. Pride makes people set

themselves not to do certain things which they are asked to do. I am

not coming," they say, "to the meeting," or "I am not going to the

front seats," or "I am not going to the inquiry room. A person can be

saved without that." They can, beyond a doubt; but if you make it a

point that you won't do something of that kind, you won't be saved

until you do. In Mr. Finney's day many people found salvation under a

certain tree. One prominent man said he would not go out there. It was

not necessary, of course. He did all sorts of things, but he would not

do that. He got no peace however, and one day he stole out of the town

the back way, and made his way to the place where the tree was, and

climbed the fence around it. When he went to kneel down the wind shook

a leaf and frightened him. But as soon as he knelt down and asked God,

He saved him right there. There are some of you men and women like

that. Do not misunderstand me. I want to make it as clear as day. It is

not necessary for you to do anything except to believe in the Lord

Jesus Christ, but if you say I won't do a thing, you will never be

saved until you do. You have got to lay your pride in the dust before

you can find Jesus Christ. I remember the first time I went to hold a

mission. The last meeting had come, and the last person had stood up,

and I got up to dismiss the meeting, when a lady rose. She was the

leading society woman in the town. She rose slowly to her feet and

said, "Before you dismiss this meeting, may I say something?" And then,

turning round to face the audience, she said, "When Mr. Torrey came, I

said he would never get me to stand up, but I now wish to most humbly

take it an back, and ask you to pray for me." The power of God fell on

that meeting. Some of you men and women think your position in society

is too exalted for you to come up to the front with common folks and

accept the Saviour just as ordinary men and women do, but if you think

that, you will never be saved until you humble your pride in the dust,

and are willing to go anywhere to find peace and pardon. Let us throw

away everything that stands between us and Jesus Christ. He stands in

this building to-night with outstretched hands. Oh, see Him! Hear the

tender tones that fall from His lips, the heart-breaking tones: "Ye

will not come to Me, that ye might have life." The Lord Jesus Christ,

who died on the Cross of Calvary, is standing here, with His

thorn-crowned brow and pierced hands, saying, "Ye will not come to Me

that ye might have life." Men and women rise and say, "I will come,

Lord

Jesus; I come now."

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XIV. WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, washing away thy

sin, calling on the name of the Lord" (especially the first part of the

verse, "Why tarriest thou?").-Acts xxii. 16.

It was God who asked the question, through His servant Ananias, of Saul

of Tarsus; and I believe that God is asking that same question to-night

through me of every man and woman and child in this building that is

not an openly confessed, out-and-out follower of Jesus Christ. God is

saying to you to-night, "Why tarriest thou? What are you waiting for?

Why do you not come out to-night on the side of Jesus Christ?" You

remember that Saul of Tarsus hated Jesus Christ Saul of Tarsus thought

that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor; he did not believe that He was

the Christ and the Son of God as He claimed to be. But away down in the

depths of his heart Saul of Tarsus had an uneasy feeling that perhaps

He was the Christ, perhaps He was the Son of God, but he never admitted

it even to himself. As far as big admitted convictions were concerned,

Saul of Tarsus thought Jesus was an impostor, and he hated Jesus with a

very intense hatred; and he said, "I am going to stamp out this

religion of the followers of Jesus." And he not only hated Jesus

Christ, but he hated everybody that bore the name of Christ, and

whenever he saw a man or woman or child that believes in Jesus and

followed Him, he hated them. He did everything in his power to stamp

out the religion of Jesus. He went from house to house in Jerusalem,

and arrested men and women and children, sparing neither age nor sex,

and dragged them before the courts to be tried; and when they were

sentenced to death, he gave his vote for their execution. But at last

Saul of Tarsus had exhausted all the opportunities for murder in

Jerusalem, but he had not exhausted the hatred of his heart. He

breathed an atmosphere of murder and slaughter, and hearing that a

hundred and more miles away, in the city of Damascus, there were

followers of Jesus, he went, with a heart full of hatred, to the High

Priest, and said, "Give me letters to Damascus, and I will go and do in

Damascus what I have done in Jerusalem. I will arrest all the

Christians, whether men or women or children, and I will bring them

down here to Jerusalem to be punished." His request was quickly

granted.

It was a long journey across the barren, desolate, dreary desert,

whether on foot or on horseback, but day after day Saul of Tarsus

pressed on, not even staying for the burning heart of the noonday sun.

At last he has almost reached Damascus, and he stands on the last

hilltop, and there Damascus lies before him, in all its beauty, a city

of olive groves, a city of vineyards, a city of gardens, and of

flashing fountains, a city of glittering palaces and dashing rivers, a

city of which poets loved to sing, and of which one Persian poet says,

"Damascus is a diamond in a setting of emeralds." But as Saul looks

down on Damascus in all its far-famed beauty, he has no eye for its

beauty; his only thought is that in that city are some of there

accursed Christians, and he adds to himself as he stands there, "I will

soon have them in my power, and be dragging them back to be punished at

Jerusalem." He starts to press on towards the city, to do the hellish

work for which he has come, when suddenly there shines round about him

a marvelous light with a brightness about that of the noonday sun, and

there in the midst of it he beholds the most wondrous face and form his

eyes had ever gazed upon, the face and form of the glorified Christ. He

is blinded by the glory of it and falls on his face to the ground. He

hears a voice speaking to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

and the humbled man cries back from the ground, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

and back comes the crushing and overwhelming answer, I am Jesus whom

thou persecutest." Men, thoroughly subdued and awed, he cries back,

"What wilt Thou have me to do, Lord?

" And the answer comes, "Arise, stand upon thy feet, and go into

Damascus, and there it shall be told you what thou must do." He rises

to his feet, but everything is black. He turns his eyes hither and

thither, but he sees nothing. He has to hold out his hand and be led

like a helpless child into the city he expected to enter as a

conqueror. He goes to the house of Judas, and there for three days and

three nights he shuts himself up and sees no one, neither eating,

sleeping, nor drinking; but still he does not yield himself up to

Christ. At last, God, weary of waiting, sends His servant Ananias with

the message, "Why do you not come out openly and confess Him whom you

know to be the Christ?"

Men and women, God is putting the some question to you: "Why tarriest

thou? Why do you not come out openly and accept Christ, and confess Him

before the world as your Saviour and Lord and Master?" I wish it were

possible for me to go down from this platform, and to go from seat to

seat, and from man to man, and put to every man and woman out of Christ

this question: What are you waiting for before you come out on the side

of Christ? I would have you tell me your real reason. I would have you

give me an honest answer, and then I would sit down beside you with the

Word of God, and show you h little there is in your reason. If I could

do that I believe I could get almost every man and woman in this

building that is out of Christ to accept Him to-night. But there is no

time of course for that, it would take days and weeks and months, so I

am going to ask you to do the next best thing. I am going to ask every

man and woman who is not a Christian to forget about every one else,

and not to look at me as preaching a sermon to a multitude, but to

think of you and me as being here alone in personal conversation

together, face to face. Will you put to yourself this question before

we begin our conversation, "What am I waiting for? Why do I not come

out on the side of Christ to-night?" Now we are going to have a few

momen

ts of silence and prayer, and I am going to ask every Christian man and

woman in the room to pray that every one may be honest, and I am going

to ask all of you who are not Christians to put this question to

yourselves, "What am I waiting for?" Let us have silence.

Will every man and woman put to themselves the question, "What is the

real reason that I do not accept and confess Christ to-night; what am I

waiting for?" Now I will take up your answers one by one.

1. Some of you have said to-night, ""I am waiting until I shall be

convinced; just as soon as I am convinced that the Bible is the Word of

God and Jesus is the Son of God, I will accept Christ as my Saviour,

and confess Him before the world." Now, I want to make an offer to

every man and woman who has made that answer. If you will come to me at

the close of this meeting, I will show you the way to find out that,

beyond all peradventure, the Bible is God's Word, and Jesus Christ is

God's Son. Now, if you are an honest skeptic, you will accept that

offer, and if you do not accept it, never say again that you are a

skeptic. You are a humbug. Of course, if you are only a trifler I have

no time to waste upon you, but if you are a sincere doubter, I would

rather speak with you than anybody else in the building, for I have yet

to find the first sincere doubter, the first sincere agnostic, the

first sincere atheist, the first spiritualist, the first Christian

Scientist, the first Theosophist, who really wanted to know the truth,

that I could not show the way to find it. All over the world to-night

there are men who used to be agnostics and doubters whom it has been my

privilege to lead to Jesus. If you are an honest skeptic, you will

accept that offer, and if you do not, at least one good result will

come of it-you will know when you go out of this hall that you are not

an honest skeptic. I went to a man one night during my first pastorate;

he was standing away at the end of the hall between the two doors, and

I stepped up to him and said, "Mr. B. (I k

new him very well, he was one of the most prominent business men in the

place and one of the most highly esteemed) "Why are you not a

Christian?" "Well," he replied, "I don't boast about it, but I don't

believe anything." I said, "Don't you believe there is a God?" And he

said, "I have never given up faith that there is a supreme Being."

"Well," I said, "if there is a God, you ought to surrender your will to

Him. Will you do it? Will you take your stand upon the will of God, and

follow it wherever it carries you?" He replied, "I try to live now as

near right as I know how" (I believe he did, for he was one of the most

upright men in the community). But I said, "That is not what I asked;

will you take your stand upon the will of God, and follow it wherever

it carries you?" He said, "I have never put it in quite that way." I

said, "Will you put it that way to-night?" He said, "I will." Then I

said, "One more thing; do you believe God answers prayer?" "No," he

said, "I do not." He said, "I have often lain awake at night thinking

about that, and I have come to the conclusion that God does not answer

prayer." "Well," I said, I know He does, and you can test it to-day.

Pray this prayer: "Oh, God, show me if Jesus Christ is Thy Son or not,

and if You show me that He is, I promise to accept Him as my Saviour,

and confess Him before the world." He said., "I will." That same week I

saw that gentleman come in to the prayer meeting at the church, a very

unusual thing for him to do, and as soon as I threw open the prayer

meeting, I saw this man rise to his feet. He said "Friends, I doubted

everything; I was in a perfect mist; I did not know what I believed; I

did not know as I believed anything." Then he told us what he had done.

He had been honest with himself and with God and with truth, and he had

done what he had promised to do. "And now," he said, "my mists have all

gone, and I do not know where they have gone." You say, "I doubt that

story." Well try it for yourselves.

Another Man in that same community lived across the street from my

house, and I went to see him one evening; the sun, was just setting,

and I was standing on his front lawn, talking with him, for, though he

was an agnostic and I was a Christian minister, we were good friends.

Christians ought not to get off somewhere where nobody of an ordinary

kind can touch them. The Word says, "Ye are the salt of the earth." You

cannot preserve meat by putting meat in one barrel and salt in another.

Well, I was standing on this man's lawn; suddenly he turned to me -the

sun had gone down and there followed a peculiar glow in the sky, and I

think he felt a strange influence from it- he said to me suddenly, Dr.

Torrey, I am sixty-six years of age, and I have no one to leave my

money to" (and he had a good amount to leave). "I cannot take a penny

of it with me, and I would give every penny of it, if I could believe

as you do." I said, "I can tell you how." He said, "I wish you would."

I said, "Let us go in." We stepped into the house and I asked his wife

for a sheet of paper, and I wrote on it something like this: "I believe

there is an absolute difference between right and wrong" -I did not say

"I believe there is a God;" he did not affirm or deny that, and I began

just where he was- "I believe there is an absolute difference between

right and wrong, and I hereby take my stand on the right to follow it

wherever it carries me. I promise to make an earnest search to find if

Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and if I find that Jesus Christ is the

Son of God, I promise to accept Him as my Saviour and confess Him

before the world." When I had written that, I said, "Mr. H., read

that." He read it. "Now," I said, "will you sign that?" "Why, anybody

ought to be willing to sign that," he replied. "Well, will you sign

it?" I said. "All you ask me to sign is what my own conscience tells me

I ought to do. Anybody ought to be willing to sign that." "Yes I said,

"but will you sign it?" And he said again, "Anybody ought to be willing

to sign that." "Will you sign it?" "I will think about it."

He never signed it, and he died as he had lived, without God and

without hope. He went out into the darkness of a Christless eternity,

and I ask you, "whose fault was it?" Away out in the darkness a light

had been shown to him, and he confessed that his own conscience told

him that he ought to be willing to follow it, and he would not follow

it. Will you follow it? You say you are skeptics and agnostics; so I

used to be, but I was an honest man, and when a way was pointed out I

tried to see where it led, and thank God, it led out of the barrenness

and desolation and darkness of utter nihilism into a clear faith that

cannot be shaken, that that blessed Book is God's Word, and that the

Christ of that Book is the Son of God.

2. Well, some one else may say, "My case is different. I believe in the

Bible just as much as you do, but I am waiting till I have enjoyed the

world enough." There are a great many people of that kind in London.

Some of them have grown old and gray in that condition. They make the

mistake of thinking that when they grow tired of the world, they can

turn to Christ without any sacrifice; they think that after a while a

man will grow tired of the world and give it up without an effort. What

a great mistake! The longer you live for the world the less enjoyment

you get out of it, but the tighter its grip becomes upon your

shriveling soul. There will never be another night when it is so easy

to give up the world as it is to-night. You know that is true in the

case of the drinking man, When a man begins to drink, there is pleasure

in it; the first glass of beer or of wine or of champagne has joy in

it, and exhilaration in it -a man feels like two men; but as a man goes

on drinking there is less and less joy, but the more complete his

slavery becomes, until at last a man reaches a place, which thousands

of men and women in London have already reached, where they hate

alcohol as much as any prohibitionist, but are utterly unable to give

it up. They know it is robbing t

hem of their brains, they know it is robbing them of their manhood, of

the respect of the community, of the affection of their wives, and the

confidence of their children. They know it is taking the bread out of

their children's mouths, and the clothes from their wives' backs; yet,

hating it as they do, they will take up their glass filled with liquid

damnation, and drink it to the dregs. You say, "That is true." It is

just as true of the love of money. The slavery of money is as complete

and as degrading as the slavery of strong drink. I would rather

undertake to save ten drunkards than one money fiend, any day. When a

man begins, there is pleasure in it; the first ten pounds, or the first

hundred pounds, or perhaps the first thousand pounds that he lays by

gives him joy; but as a man goes on accumulating, there is less and

less pleasure, and at last there is no pleasure at all, but the man is

the slave of the degrading lust for gold. I was visiting a man in the

State of Ohio when I was living in Minneapolis, in the Boom days, when

men were making fortunes in a day. The man to whom I refer had a

comfortable fortune of about L100,000, and was now upwards of seventy

years of age. One foot was in the grave, and the other foot almost over

the edge. Only a few weeks before I came to see him, they had to send

post-haste for the doctor to come and pull the man's other foot away

from the edge of the grave. After everybody else had gone to bed, he

said to me in a low tone of voice- what do you think? "Oh," you say,

"something about Heaven, something about eternity; a man with one foot

in the grave and the other almost over would wish to talk about the

future and what it meant for him." But no, he leaned over and said: "To

you know any place up in Minneapolis where I could invest my money

where it would bring big interest?" Oh, some of you men are going ,very

fast that same road selling your souls for damning gold. It is just the

same way with the love for pleasure. The first dance, the first card

party, the first theatre, all the excitement of it and the pleasure of

it and the exhilaration of it; but as one goes on the pleasure of these

things becomes less and less, and more and more complete does the

slavery to them become. The time will never Come when you have enjoyed

the world enough. Furthermore, there is more joy in Jesus Christ in

twenty-four hours than there is in the world in 365 days. I have tried

them both.

Further, suppose while you are waiting until you have enjoyed the world

enough you are called out of the world. "What shall it profit a man if

he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" One night I went down

the aisle almost to the far end of it, and the people were standing up

singing, and I turned to a young lady and I said to her, "Why don't you

become a Christian?" "Oh," she said, "I enjoy the world too much.", I

simply quoted God's word to her, "What shall it profit a man if he gain

the whole world and lose his own soul?' and passed on. The meetings

went on and the last night came. The last meeting had finished, and,

after I had returned to the house where I was staying, my hostess came

to me and said, "Two young ladies want to see you; they are waiting in

the other room." I went in, and one of them was the young lady of whom

I am speaking. I said to her, "Why do you want to see me?" "Oh," she

said, "I do not enjoy the world any more; since you spoke to me your

words have been ringing in my ears: `What shall it profit a man if be

gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' And I have come to-night,

and have brought my friend with me, so that you may tell us what to do

to be saved." Oh, that those words would ring in the ears of some of

you men and women until you cannot rest, until you come to the Son of

God for rest and joy, which is rest and joy indeed.

3. "I am waiting for my friend," says another. That is true of a great

many persons. Young men are waiting for their friends, and young ladies

are waiting for their lady friends, women are waiting for their

husbands, lovers are waiting for their sweethearts- one is waiting for

another. What I say to you is, You come to Christ first, and bring your

friends along. If your friends love you as much as you love them, when

you come to Christ they will come too. It is better that you should

take them to Heaven with you than that they should take you to hell

with them.

I was staying at one time with a minister, and he told me this story.

He said: "After my wife and I had been married for fourteen and a half

years she turned to me one night and said, `Husband, I have made up my

mind to be a Christian and to unite with the Church.'" He said, "I was

very angry; I was the principal of the schools in that town and held a

prominent position, and I said to her, `Why, you must not do it; you

and I have lived very happily together for fourteen and a half years,

but if you become a Christian, I have no intention of becoming one, and

that will just separate us for ever.' But she said to me, `I must be a

Christian. I love you, and would do almost anything to please you, but

I feel I must first please God.' `Well,' I said, `you become a

Christian, if you feel that you want to, but you must not unite with

the Church.' "She regarded my wishes in this respect, and so we went on

for six months, she a Christian, and I not. Then she said to me,

`Husband, I must become a member of the Church of Jesus Christ.'" (Of

course, if a person is converted they will never be happy out of the

Church.) "Then" her husband said, "I was very angry, and said to her,

`If you do join the Church, I want you to I understand that you are

nothing more to me. We have lived happily together now for fifteen

years, but if you unite yourself with the Church from this time on you

go your way, and I shall go mine, and you will be nothing more to me!

She said, `Husband, I love you, and I would do all I could to please

you, but I must first of all please God, and I have made up my mind to

unite with the Church to-morrow.' She went to her room, and I went to

mine. I was very angry with her. I was getting angrier all the time. I

could not sleep. I heard eleven o'clock strike, and I was very angry; I

heard twelve O'clock strike, and I was more angry still; I heard one

o'clock, and I was angrier still; but when two o'clock came, I called

out to my wife, `Wife, I am converted.'" The husband and wife went into

the Church together. He became a minister of the Gospel, and to-day he

is in Heaven. If that wife had waited for him, they would have gone

down to a Christless grave and a Christless eternity together. Oh, men

and women, come to Christ and bring your friends with you. Even if they

do not come, you come to Christ. I would start for Heaven to-night,

even if I had to start alone. I would rather go to heaven alone than go

to hell in company. I believe that one of the darkest experiences of

that dark world will be when a husband that goes there is met by the

wife whom he dragged there.

In one, of my pastorates a solemn thing occurred; before I had gone

there, in the neighbouring township there had been a great awakening,

and many people had come out on the side of Christ, and one night, when

the preacher extended an invitation for all those who would accept

Christ to come to the front, a lady rose from her place to do so. But

her husband, sitting back of her, laid his hand on her shoulder, and

forced her back into her seat. She yielded to him, and she drifted away

from her conviction into skepticism and blank infidelity. That is the

way people become infidels, by resisting the Spirit of God. Show me a

hundred infidels, and I will show you in ninety-nine cases men who were

under conviction of sin at some time or other, but who have resisted

the Spirit of God. This lady became an utter atheist. Some time

afterwards there was a revival in the town. It caused the infidels of

the town to be greatly stirred up. When we get a revival, it stirs up

the infidels wonderfully. They said, "This cannot go on. We will send

off and get one of our infidel lecturers;" and they got their lecturer,

a follower of Ingersoll. Thank God, they did have that lecturer. People

went to hear him; and when they had heard him, they said, "If that is

infidelity, we do not want any of it." While waiting for this

professor, this lady said, "I can hardly wait for Professor\_\_\_\_\_ to get

here." She did not wait. There was a little card party being held on

the Saturday night, and this lady and her friends were among the party.

Eleven o'clock on Saturday night came, and they were still playing

cards; at twelve o'clock they were still playing; and at one o'clock on

Sunday morning-on the Lord's Day-they were still playing cards.

Sabbath-breaking and card-playing go hand in hand, you know. About one

o'clock in the morning this woman sprang to her feet, clapped her hand

on her head, and cried, "Oh!" and dropped dead beside the table. I

shall never forget my meeting with her husband after that awful day. I

had never spoken to him before; but I happened to walk into the

post-office, and this man came in at the same time, and he came across

the post-office and held out his hand, and, with a grip of despair, he

took my hand in his. He knew he had sent his wife into a Christless

eternity. Oh, don't wait for others; come yourself, and bring the

others with you.

4. "Well," some one else says, "that is not what I am waiting for; I am

waiting for feeling.- I believe that is true of a great many. There is

many an earnest soul that would really like to be a Christian, but they

think they have not got the right kind of feeling. Some are waiting for

the joy and peace that Christians talk about. I went to a young lady

once in a meeting like this, and said to her, "Why are you not a

Christian ?" She replied, "I have not the right kind of feeling. These

people have been talking about the joy and peace that they have; I have

not any joy like that, and I cannot come to Christ until I get it." I

said, "But that is the result of coming. You don't expect the result,

do you, before you take the step?" Suppose I should go and see a very

sick man, and I said to him, "What is the matter with you?" and he

said, "`Influenza." Then I might say., "I had the influenza some time

ago, and I took such and such a remedy, and it cured me completely."

Then he would say, "What is that remedy?" Then, when I tell him what it

is, he calls for his man, and tells him to run down to the chemist's at

once and buy it; and when he brings the bottle back, the sick man hands

it to me and says, "Is that it?" and I say, "Yes, that is the

medicine." And he says to me, "You say you took it, and it made you

better right off?" and I say, "Yes." Then he says, "Thank you for

telling me of it; I am so much obliged." Then a few days afterwards I

go to see that man, and expect to find him up and well; but instead of

that, I find him still in bed and sicker than ever. I say to him, "I

don't understand this. Are you not any better?" "No," he says, "I am

worse." "Why, how is that?" I ask; "did you not get that medicine which

cured me?" "Yes, of course I got it" he says; "were you not in the room

when my man brought it to me from the chemists?" "Well, did you take

it?" I ask. "Oh, no, I didn't take it," he says; "you said it made you

a great deal better right off. But I did not feel any better, so I did

not take it!" You would say, "What a foolish man." Is he any more

foolish than you? You cannot expect to have the result of accepting

Christ until you take the step; take Christ and confess Him, and you

will get all the joy you need.

A woman once came to me in one of our missions and said, "I want to be

a Christian." I said, "Become one now." She said, "How?" I said, "It is

just as simple as it is to walk home." "Oh, but" she said, "I don't

feel any better." I said, "Of course you don't. You haven't done the

thing to make you feel better." "But all the other folks talk about

their joy," she said. I said, "Yes, because they have taken the step

that leads to joy. Don't you know you are a sinner, and that Christ

died for your sins, and that He is your rightful Lord and Master?" She

said, "Yes, I know that" "Well"' I said, "will you take Him for your

Saviour, and yield to Him as your Lord and Master now?" She said, "I

will." "Then let us get down and pray," I said. When we had prayed, I

said, "Now it is too late to confess Christ publicly in the meeting,

for the people have nearly all gone, but you confess Christ the first

chance you get." "But I don't feel any better," she said. "I did not

suppose you would," I said; "You have not gone far enough yet. You must

confess Christ before the world, and then the joy and peace will come

to you." The next day, when I went to the town hall, before I went on

to the platform to address the business men's meeting, I received a

note from this lady, which said: "Oh, Dr. Torrey, I feel so grateful to

you; I am so-happy. Fifteen minutes after leaving the hall last might I

had all the joy I could contain. When I got outside I met my brother,

and went home with him: and on the way I told him that I had given

myself to Christ; and as I told him, the joy came into my heart, and

has been there ever since."

Other people are waiting for conviction of sin. They feel that they

cannot come to Christ, because they have not shed tears, and are not

overwhelmed with the burden of sin. I like to see conviction of sin,

but there is no passage in the whole Bible that says you have got to

feel sorry before you are saved. In Isaiah lv. 7 we read, "Let the

wicked forsake his way" (not be sorry about it) "and the unrighteous

man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have

mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." It does

not say "feel sorry for your sin;" it says, "quit your sin and turn to

God." I have seen people very sorry over their sins; they just weep and

weep, and then go right out and do the same thing again for which they

have professed to be sorry. I have known people just as stolid as a man

could be, but they turned from their sin and took Christ in cold blood,

as it were, and God kept His word and saved them. And He will keep His

promise to-night.

On one occasion in Chicago I went to preach for a Baptist minister. In

the second meeting I sat down by a man and his wife, aged about forty

years, and I said to him, "Why are you not a Christian?" He said, "I

would like to be; I hope to be a Christian some day. My father was a

Baptist minister, and my mother is one of the best women that ever

lived on earth." "Well," I said, "come right now." He said, "I want

to." I said, "Then why don't you?" He said, "I have not got the right

kind of feeling." I said, "What do you think is the right kind of

feeling?" He said, "I don't feel sorry for my sins. Don't you think a

man ought to have conviction of sin?" I said, "I think you ought, but I

do not read in my Bible anything that says a man has to feel sorry to

be saved. My Bible says, `Turn from sin and take Christ'; my Bible

says, `Receive Christ.' `As many as received Him -not to as many as

wept over their sins- `as many as received Him to them gave He power to

become sons of God.' Don't you know you are a sinner?" I said. "I know

I am a sinner.," he said, "but I don't feel it." I said, "Don't you

know that Jesus Christ is your Saviour?" "Yes," he said. "Don't you

know it would be the best thing you could do to take Him as your

Saviour?" "Yes, I do." Then I said, "Take Him as your Saviour now." He

said, "Without feeling sorry?" I said, "Never mind the feeling. Will

you take Him?" He said, "I have not any feeling." I said, "See here,

what business are you in?" He said, "I am in the real estate business."

I said, "Suppose that I should come down to your office to-morrow

morning and offer to sell you a corner lot for five thousand dollars,

and you knew it was a lot that you could sell in twenty-four hours for

ten thousand dollars, but, for some reason or other, you didn't feel

like buying it -Would you buy it?" He said, "I would buy it quick,

feeling or no feeling." "My friend," I said, "show the same commonsense

in religion that you do in business. Don't you know it would be the

best paying investment you could make to take Jesus Christ as your

Saviour?" He said, "Yes, I do." "Will you do it, then, feeling or no

feeling?" He said, "Is that all?" I said, "That is all to start with."

"Then," he said, "I will do it." I said, "Will you kneel down and seal

the bargain right now?" and we knelt, and he and his wife took Christ.

I went back to that church in a few months, and that man had come along

so finely that they had made him a trustee of the church.

Men and women., Christ is a Saviour. God offers Him to you; you take

Him and it is done. Feeling or no feeling, will you take Him tonight?

No one has a good reason for not coming to Christ. There are a thousand

reasons why you ought to come. Every year that you have lived has

brought you one year nearer to eternity, and is a reason for coming to

Christ to-night; every year that you have still to live and that might

be a year of service is a reason for coming to Christ to-night. Every

saved friend you have is a reason for coming to Christ to-night, that

you may spend eternity with him in Heaven. Every unsaved friend that

you have is a reason why you should come to Christ to-night, that you

may bring him with you. Every thorn in the Saviour's crown, every nail

in the Saviour's hands and feet, every stroke laid upon the Saviour's

back, when He was wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your

iniquities, and the chastisement of your peace was laid upon Him, is a

reason for accepting Christ tonight. Will you do it? Oh, there is an

awful risk in delay.

A quaint old preacher of the olden days in our country, the Rev. Dan

Baker, puts it in the way of a story. He tells of a man who was

crossing the ocean. He was leaning over the side of the vessel; it was

a bright sunny day, and not a wave broke the surface of the water, just

a little ripple here and there kissed by the rays of the sun. And the

man, as he leaned over the rail of the vessel, was tossing something in

the air, something which, when it fell through the sunlight, sparkled

with singular radiance and glory; and he watched it so eagerly as he

tossed it up and caught it as it fell. He tossed it up again and again

and again, and it threw out its marvelous light as it fell. At last an

onlooker came and said, "May I ask what that is that you are tossing up

so carelessly?" He replied, "Certainly; look at it, it is a diamond."

"Is it of much value?" asked the onlooker. "Yes, of very great value.

See the colour of it, see the size of it. In fact, all I have in the

world is in that diamond. I am going to a new country to seek my

fortune, and I have sold everything I have, and have put it into that

diamond, so as to get it into a portable shape." "Then if it is so

valuable, is it not an awful risk you are running in tossing it up so

carelessly?" was the next question. "No risk at all. I have been doing

this - for the last half-hour," said the man. "But there might come a

last time," said the onlooker; but the man laughed and threw it up

again, and caught it as it fell, and again and again, and once more,

and it flashed and blazed, and looked like a burning coal in the

sunlight, and he watches it so eagerly as it falls the last time. Ah,

but this time it is too far out. He reaches as far as he can over the

rail of the vessel, but he cannot reach far enough. There is a little

plash in the ocean. For a moment he stands aghast, and then he cries,

'"Lost! lost! lost! All I have in the world, lost!"

You say, "No man would be so great a fool as that; that story is not

true." That story is true, and the man is here to-night. Thou art the

man in that ocean is eternity; that vessel you are on is life; that

diamond is your soul, of priceless value, that soul that Christ put

great enough value upon to die for it, to save it. And you have been

trifling with it! I come to you to-night and say, "My friend, what is

that in your hand which you are playing with so carelessly?" You say,

"It is my soul." "Is it worth much?" "More than the whole round earth,

`for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his

own soul?'" "But don't you think you are taking an awful risk?" "Oh,

no," you say, "I have been doing this for the last five years, for the

last ten, fifteen, or twenty years." "Yes, but you might do it once too

often." "Oh, no," you say, and to-night once more you throw it up. But

you may throw it up once too often; it will fall too far out, beyond

your reach; there will be a plash, and you will try to look after it;

not in the impenetrable depths of the blue ocean, but in the

unfathomable depths of the bottomless pit it sinks and sinks and sinks,

and you cry, "Lost! lost! lost! my soul is lost!" That may be your cry

some day. Come to-night, before it is too late, and put your soul where

it will be everlastingly safe, in the keeping of the Son of God.

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XV. EXCUSES

"And they all with one consent began to make excuses."Luke xiv. 18.

In these words our Lord Jesus Christ sets forth the manner in which

God's invitation of love and grace and mercy would be received, and

that is precisely the way in which God's invitation of mercy is being

received by the people of London to-night. When you come to men and

extend to them God's wonderful invitation of grace to His royal

banquet, one and all, instead of accepting it with glad alacrity, begin

to make excuses for not coming. In the parable from which the text is

taken our Lord Jesus Christ represents that the Gospel invitation is an

invitation to a banquet. So it is. Never was there such a glorious

banquet spread on earth as this which God spreads for you and me in the

Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ. God's table is just groaning with good

things. Now, when men are invited to a royal banquet they begin to cast

about for some way to get to it. But when the great King of Kings

spreads His table and invites His guests, so great is the blindness and

madness of the human heart that men try to find some excuse for not

going.

If at the coronation, a few months ago, King Edward had given a great

banquet in this city, and sent out invitations to his guests, every

person who was honoured by an invitation would have moved Heaven and

earth to get to that banquet, because they were so honoured that the

king had sent them an invitation. But when the great King, the Lord God

Almighty, sends out His invitation by His Gospel messengers to His

royal banquet, in the desperate wickedness of the human heart, and in

your stubborn rebellion against the Lord who loves you and gave His Son

to die for you, instead of trying to come to the banquet, you try to

find some excuse for not coming. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the parable,

gives us three illustrative excuses, and each one of these excuses is

perfectly absurd; and that is the point of it. Our Lord Jesus wants us

to see how utterly irrational and absurd are all the excuses that men

make for not coming to Christ.

The first excuse was this: "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must

needs go and see it." How utterly absurd! It sounds rational at the

first hearing, and looks rational at the first glance, but when you

look at it, how absurd it is. If the man had already bought the ground,

where was the need of hurry in going to see it? He could have waited

until the banquet was over. Furthermore, who ever heard of going out at

supper-time, after dark, to see land. He was just making up an excuse,

and his excuse, like most of yours, was a lie. If the man had been a

real sensible business man he would have gone and seen the ground

before he bought it. The idea of a man buying a piece of ground and

then going to see it! I know of a man in America who did that once. It

was up in Minneapolis. The man bought some real estate in that city,

and instead of going to see it first, or sending some one to see it, he

had bought it, and months after he thought he would go and see it. He

went up there and found his land was at the bottom of Lake Harriet.

Very good soil, but too wet!

The second excuse was equally absurd. The man said: "I have bought five

yolk of oxen and I go to prove them." How absurd! There is no hurry;

the oxen were already purchased; he might go to the banquet first and

try the oxen afterwards, and if he had been a real sensible business

man he would have tried the oxen first, and bought them afterwards.

Anyway, day-time is far better than night-time to try oxen.

The third man's excuse was the most absurd of all. He said, "I have

married a wife, and therefore 1 cannot come." I would like to know why

not? If it had been a funeral there would have been some sense in his

excuse, but it was a feast. Who ever saw a bride that was not willing

to go to a feast? Why did he not bring her with him? There was plenty

of room at the feast.

You laugh at those excuses, but I want to ask if there is any one here

to-night with a better excuse? I am going to take up the excuses men

bring forward to-day for not coming to Christ, and show you the utter

absurdity and unreasonableness of every one of them.

The first excuse is this: there is too much to give up. That is

absolutely unreasonable. You say, "Do you mean to say there is nothing

to give up if one comes to Christ?" No. I say nothing of the kind. I

never knew any one to come to Christ yet that did not have to give up

something. The drunkard has to give up his drunkenness, the gambler his

gambling; people who are following the frivolities of the world have to

give them up. I am not saying there is nothing to give up, but still

that excuse is absurd. You say, "Why?" For three reasons. In the first

place, the only things God asks you to give up are the things that are

doing you harm. We read in Psalm lxxxiv. 11: "The Lord God is a Sun and

Shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He

withhold from them that walk uprightly." God has given to each one of

us a guarantee that He will never ask us to give up anything that is

for our good, and that guarantee is His own Son. As we read in Romans

viii. 32:. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us

all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" I do

not think if God has given His Son to die for us, He is going to ask us

to give up anything that is good for us. I remember once in an

after-meeting, I was talking to a young lady about coming to Christ.

She said, "Well, I would like to be a Christian." "Then become one

now." "Oh, no," she replied. "Why not?" "There is too much to give up."

I said, "See here, do you think God loves you?" "Why, I know He does."

"How much do you think God loves you?" "God loved me enough to give His

Son to die for me." "Well," I said, "do you think that God, if He loved

you enough to give his Son to die for you, will ask you to give up

anything that is for your good to keep?" She said, "No, He will not." I

said, "Do you want to keep anything that is not for your highest good?"

She replied, "No." "Then do you not think you would better come to

Christ right now?" She said, "I will," and she did.

The second reason why the excuse is absurd is this: what you give up is

nothing to what you get. It is very easy to give up tin when you get

gold, and it is very easy to give up sin when you get God. It is very

easy to give up painted glass when you get diamonds and rubies and

emeralds and pearls instead. And it is very easy to give up the baubles

of the world when you get the real jewels of Heaven in exchange. I do

not think that anybody ever gave up more for Christ than did Paul, and

yet, when he was sore tried and in prison, writing about what he gave

up, he said, "What things were gain to me those I counted loss for

Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the

excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have

suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may

win Christ." He said, "What I gave up is nothing to what I gained." You

cannot find a Christian on the face of the earth that will not tell you

that what he gave up for Christ was nothing to what he got. Suppose

there was some young woman in this town with a pretty face; a bright

girl, but without very good sense after all, with a good deal of

vanity, and being poor and unable therefore to buy real jewelry, she

bought imitation. She had a brass ring, which she thought people would

think was gold, but no one ever thought so. Then she had another ring,

with two bits of green glass and a bit of white glass in the middle,

and thought people believed it was a diamond and emeralds, but they did

not. Then she had a string of white beads round her neck, and thought

people believed they were real pearls, but no one ever dreamed it. Then

she had a pair of earrings made of brass, with two bits of white glass,

and wished people to believe that they were real diamonds; nobody ever

thought of such a thing. After a while a fine, intelligent, bright,

sensible young fellow falls in love with her. You say that no sensible

fellow would fall in love with a girl like that. But you cannot tell

what a man will do when he falls in love. One night, after they have

become well acquainted, he says to her, "Mary, I wish you would throw

away that brass ring, and that ring with the bits of glass in it, and

that white bead necklace, and those pieces of brass and glass in your

ears. To tell you the truth, I am ashamed of them when I go out with

you, and I wish you would throw them away." She says, "Oh, John, I

think ever so much of you, and would do a good many things for you, but

I can-not do that. They are the best I have, and I really think people

believe they are genuine." "No, no, Mary, they do not; they make you a

laughing stock, and I wish you would throw them away." But she says,

"Well, John, I love you, but I really cannot do it." A few nights after

John comes again. He has a big Russian leather box; he presses a

spring, the cover falls back, and inside it is lined with the very best

of satin, and there is a real gold ring with two beautiful emeralds,

and a beautiful diamond, there is a necklace of real pearls, and there

is also a pair of real diamond earrings. "Look there, Mary;" and, oh,

how her eyes sparkle! "Why, John, are they not beautiful! Who are they

for?" "Well, Mary, they are for you if you will throw away that brass

and glass of yours." How long do you think it would take Mary to throw

away her imitation jewels? Oh, men and women, Cast all the baubles of

this world's pleasures into the fire, and receive the gold and emeralds

and rubies and diamonds and pearls of Heaven.

In the third place, the excuse is absurd, because what we give up for

Christ is nothing to what Jesus Christ gave up for us. Oh, friends,

when we stop to think what Jesus Christ gave up for us, how Heaven and

its glories and came down to earth and its shame, how He left the songs

of praise of angels, and the archangel, and cherubim, and seraphim, and

came down here to be despised and rejected of men, to be spat upon and

buffeted, to wear a crown of thorns, and to bear the nails in His hands

and feet for you and me, how ungrateful, how unreasonable, how base,

how black it is for you and me to talk about what we give up for Jesus

Christ when we think of what He gave up for us.

2. Another man says, "I have an excuse and a good one. There are so

many hypocrites in the church." What shall I say to that excuse? I say

without hesitation that that is the most absurd excuse a man can make.

"What" you say, "Are there no hypocrites in the church?" Of course,

there are. The Bible tells us that there will be hypocrites in the

church. In the passage which I read to-night Jesus said that there

would be hypocrites right up to the judgment day. "Many will say unto

Me in that day, `Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in

Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful

works?' And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart

from Me ye that work iniquity."

Of course there are hypocrites in the church, but I would like to know

how that is an excuse for your trampling under foot the Son of God. The

fact that another man is a hypocrite is no reason why you should

trample under foot the Son of God, God's own Son, Jesus Christ. What

would you think of a man here in London refusing his allegiance to King

Edward, and saying, "No, I will not have him for king; I have got a

good reason." "What is it?"' "Because there are so many people that

profess to be loyal to King Edward who are not." What would you think

of that for an excuse? You would think of that man as a fit subject for

a lunatic asylum. But that is the way you reason. There are so many

people that pretend to be loyal to Jesus who are not, that it excuses

you from even professing to be loyal. Bah!

Then again, if there are hypocrites in the church (and I have no doubt

of it), there are a great many good people in the church. Of course I

use the term church not meaning any one denomination, but the whole

body of believers in Jesus Christ. There are a great many good people

in the church; in fact, all the best people are there. But if there

were a church or chapel consisting of a hundred members, and

ninety-nine were good, straight, upright, downright, Christian men and

women, and there was one poor, miserable hypocrite, you would overlook

the ninety-nine good straight members, and fix all your attention on

the one poor, miserable hypocrite. Yes, you would! And do you know why

that is? It is because you are a hypocrite yourself. You are a

hypocrite outside the church, and therefore you are looking for

hypocrites inside the church to hide behind. Did it ever occur to you

that you cannot hide behind a thing which is smaller than yourself? You

must be a mighty small man or woman to be able to hide behind such a

mean hypocrite as that. God will have you out of that hiding-place. Do

you know what He says about these men who are always talking about

hypocrites in the church? Turn to Romans xiv. 12: "So then, every one

of us shall give account of himself to God." You won't have to answer

for the hypocrite, but you will have to answer for yourself. A friend

of mine was walking in Chicago one night when a young fellow of about

thirty walked up, and my friend said to him, "Are you a Christian?" He

replied, "No, sir, I am not." "Well, why are you not?" He said,

"Because there are so many hypocrites in the church." My friend said,

"I want to show you something," and he opened the Bible at Romans xiv.

12, and said, "Read that." The man read, "and every one of us shall

give account of himself to God." My friend said, "Who have you got to

give account of?" The man replied, "Of myself." He said, "To whom have

you to give account?" The man replied, "To God." He said, "Are you

ready to give an account of yourself to God?" and the man sank down on

his knees in one of the busiest streets of Chicago, and did what some

of you here to-night ought to do; he cried, "God be merciful to me, a

sinner."

One more word before I leave this matter. All the hypocrites are going

to hell. The Bible says so, and if you keep on rejecting Christ you are

going there, too. Now I will ask you a question: Which is better, to

spend a few years with the hypocrites in the church here on earth (and

with all the good people at the same time), or spend eternity with the

hypocrites in hell, with all the bad people? "Well," you say, "that

excuse is absurd, and I will never make it again." I hope you never

will. You will not if you have any common sense.

3. But another man says, "I have a good excuse. I am a pretty good sort

of a man; I do not profess to be perfect, but I think the good in my

life will more than balance the evil in my life, and I think God will

accept me on the ground of the good I have done and the character I

have maintained." What shall I say to that man? I say this to every man

and woman in this building to-night who is out of Christ, "You are a

very wicked man; you are a very sinful woman." I know you will say, "I

am not at all." Yes, you are; and I will prove it to you. I will prove

to you that you are so sinful that you have broken the very first and

greatest of God's commandments. You may differ from some of your

fellow-men and women on the minor moralities, thank God you do. Some

men swear, and. you do not; some men lie, and you do not; some get

drunk, and you do not; some commit adultery, and you do not. On these

minor moralities you differ from some of your fellow-men and women, and

are better than they. But, on the great question of the treatment of

the infinite God, before which all the minor moralities of our

treatment of men sink into utter insignificance, you are all on the

same plane, you have broken the first and greatest of God's

commandments. Turn to Matthew xxii. 37 and 38: "And Jesus said unto

him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all

thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great

commandment." Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your, heart

and soul and mind? Have you put God first in everything, God first in

business, God first in pleasure, God first in polities, God first in

social life, God first in study, God first everywhere. Have you done

this? You say, "No, I have not." Then you stand convicted before God of

having broken the first and greatest of God's commandments, of having

committed the very worst sin that a man or woman can commit. One night

after a meeting like this, a friend of mine, a pastor in Chicago, came

to me and said, "I have a young man who wants to enter the ministry. I

want you to talk to him." He brought up the young man, and I said to

him, "The pastor says you want to be a minister." He said, "Yes, I do."

I said, "Are you a Christian?" He answered, "My, of course I am. I was

brought up as a Christian, and I am not going back on the training of

my parents." I said, "Have you ever been born again?" He said, "What?"

I said, "The Word of God says `except a man be born again, he cannot

see the Kingdom of God.' Have you been born again?" He replied, "I

never heard of that before in all my life." I said, "Do you know that

you have committed the greatest sin a man can commi

t?" He said, "No, I never have." "What do you think is the greatest

sin?" He said, "Murder, of course." I said, "You are greatly mistaken.

See what the Lord Jesus Christ says about it." And I opened the Bible

at Matthew xxii. 37, 38, and he read: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This

is -the first and great commandment." I said "Which commandment is

that?" He replied, "It is the first and great commandment." I said,

"Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your heart and soul and

mind? Have you put God first in every-thing, God first in business, God

first in study, God first in pleasure, God first in everything?" He

answered "No sir, I have not." "Well, what have you done?" "I have

broken this commandment." "Which commandment is it?" "It is the first

and great commandment." "What have you done?" He said, "I have

committed the greatest sin a man can possibly commit; I have broken the

first and greatest of God's commandments, but I never saw it before in

all my life." Probably you never saw it before, but you see it tonight.

There is no difference. Every man and woman out of Christ has broken

the first and greatest of God's commandments, and there is no hope for

you outside the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the Cross of

Calvary. When I was in Sydney, I said that at a meeting, and the next

day I received a note from a lady, who said, "I wish you would pray for

me. I have been trusting in my morality but you showed me last night

that I was a very wicked woman." Oh, may God grant that some of you

here to-night, that have been trusting in your goodness, may see that

in God's sight you are very wicked men, very sinful women, for you have

broken the first and greatest of God's laws.

4. Another man says, "That excuse is not a good one. I wonder that any

intelligent man should ever make it. But I have a good one. I am too

great a sinner to come to Christ." Now, I believe people make that

excuse honestly. I believe there are a great many people who would like

to come, but think they are too bad. What shall I say to them? What God

says in 1 Timothy i. 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all

acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of

whom I am chief." I remember one Sunday morning in my church, one of

the deacons walked down the aisle to a man of about thirty-five years

of age, who was standing up. My deacon turned to him and said, "Are you

a Christian?" "No," he said, "I am not." "Why not become one now?" He

replied, "I am too great a sinner to be saved." My deacon said, "Thank

God." Then he turned to me and said "Come here, Brother Torrey. Here is

a man who is too great a sinner to be saved, thank God." The man stood

in amazement, wondering what it all meant. But I understood, and I went

down and said, "Is that true?" He said, "Yes, I am too great a sinner

to be saved." I said, "Let me show you what God says," and I opened the

Bible at 1 Timothy i. 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all

acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of

whom I am chief." "Well" he said, "I am chief." He was a hardened

sinner; he had run away, from his wife, and gone up to the North-West;

had gone in for gambling, had laid down 35,000 dollars just a week

before, and was it desperate man. "Well," he said, "I am chief." I

said, "It means you, then." I said, "Will you accept Jesus Christ right

now?" and he said, "I will," and he dropped down on his knees and

accepted Christ then and there. He stayed with us about two weeks, and

went up to the North-West, and came back again, and every night was in

the meeting leading others to Christ, sent for his wife, set up a new

home, and was so happy that he adopted a little child out of the orphan

asylum to make his home complete. He was "too great a sinner to be

saved," but he was saved in five minutes.

5. Another man says, "My excuse is different. I cannot hold out." Well,

that excuse is perfectly absurd. "Why is my excuse absurd?" Because God

does not ask you to hold out. Holding out is not your business. That is

the business of the Lord Jesus Christ. We read in Jude, verse 24: "He

is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before

the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Ah, men and women, there

is not a man who is able to hold out in his own strength. But, thank

God, there is not a man or woman so weak that Jesus Christ cannot keep

him or her. A man in New York one night was on the verge of delirium

tremens. He had had it again and again. He had committed 139 forgeries,

all against one man. He went to the Cremorne Mission, and heard Jerry

M'Auley tell how the Lord Jesus Christ had saved him; and when Jerry

said, "If there is any one wants to be saved to-night, let them come to

the front," he went up the aisle, and said, "Pray for me." Jerry said,

"Pray for yourself," but he did not know how to pray; he had forgotten

how; the man had gone away down through drink, and was an outcast.

Jerry said, "Pray for yourself." And Sam Hadley cried out, "God be

merciful to me a sinner," and before he got up he was a transformed

man. Some years after I was in Washington, presiding at a conference.

Mr. Wanamaker, then Postmaster-General of the United States of America,

was there, and he said to me, "I want you to come round to my house to

dinner," and I went round. And when I was ushered into the

drawing-room, who should I see sitting there but Sam Hadley and his

wife, honoured guests in the home of the Postmaster-General of the

United States of America-the former forger! And there is not a more

honoured man in New York City to-day than Mr. Samuel Hadley, as he is

now called.

Oh friends, thank God there is not a man or woman so weak, so helpless

and hopeless, but Jesus Christ can hold them if they put their trust in

Him to-night.

6. Just one more excuse. Another man says, "My excuse is a little

different. God won't receive me if I come." People make this excuse in

different ways.

"I have sinned away the day of grace, I have committed the unpardonable

sin, and He won't receive me if I come." What shall I say to this? I

will say that excuse is just as absurd as any. Why? Because it is

contradicting God's plain statement in John vi. 37, "Him that cometh to

Me I will in wise cast out." Thank God, there is not a man or woman on

the face of the earth, not a man or woman in London, or in this

building to-night, but if you come to Jesus Christ He will take you and

save you. At one time in Chicago I received a letter something like

this: "I have a son who thinks he has committed the unpardonable sin.

He has been for months in despair, has attempted suicide five times. I

wish you would take him at the Bible Institute." That was very

touching. Nevertheless, I felt it to be my duty, as the superintendent

of the Institute, to write: "I sympathize with you deeply, but I cannot

take your son. That is not the purpose of the Institute, which is for

the training of men and women for Christian work." He replied, and

said, "You must take him; if you do not, we do not know what to do." I

wrote again that I had the deepest sympathy with him, but was entrusted

with the funds of the Institute, and it was not right to take his son."

Then some one else wrote to me -a personal friend- and said, "I want

you to take him for my sake." He had been a great friend of the

Institute, and I now felt that I was warranted in taking the young man,

and wrote telling the father to send him. They sent him under guard

-for they dared not trust him alone- and he was brought to me. Mr. Lyon

said, "This is Mr. So-and-so. I suppose I can go now." "Yes," I said,

"leave him alone with me." I said, "Sit down." He looked at me and

said, "I am possessed of the devil." I said, "I guess you are. But

Jesus Christ came to cast out devils." He said, "I mean that the devil

has entered into me as he did into Judas Iscariot." I said, "That's

very likely, but Jesus Christ is mightier than the devil, and can set

you free from the power of the devil." He said, "

I have committed the unpardonable sin." I said, "Jesus said, `Him that

cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" He said, "I was once

enlightened and tasted the gift, I fell away, and it is impossible to

renew me again." He knew his Bible, you see! But I said, "Jesus says,

`Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" He said, "I have

sinned willfully after having received the knowledge of the truth." I

said, "But Jesus says, `Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast

out.' Will you come?" Well, he did not come then. Days and weeks

passed, and then one day I met him in the Institute, where he was

stopping, in the hall-way on the second floor, and I thought the time

had come to have it out. I said, "Sit down," and he sat down beside me.

I said, "Do you believe the Bible?" "Yes," he said, "I do, everything

in it" "Do you believe John vi. 37?" He said, "Yes, and I can quote it:

`Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'" I said, "Do you

believe that?" "Of course I do; I believe everything in the Bible."

"Why do you not come?" He said, "I am possessed with the devil." I

said, "The Bible does not say `Him that is not possessed with the devil

if he cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast him out.' It says, `Him

that cometh unto Me I will no wise cast out.'" He said, "I mean that

the devil has entered into me as he did into Judas Iscariot." I said,

"It does not say `Him that the devil has not entered into, if he cometh

unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.' It says `Him that cometh I will

in no wise cast out.'" He said, "I have been once enlightened, and have

tasted the heavenly gift, and have fallen away, and it is impossible to

renew me unto repentance." I said, "It does not say, `If you have not

been once enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gift, and fallen away, I

will in no wise cast you out.' It says, `Him that cometh unto Me I will

in no wise cast out.'" He said, "I have sinned willfully after I have

received the knowledge of the truth." I said, "It does not say `If you

have not sinned wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, if

you come unto Me, I will in no wise cast you out.' It says, `Him that

cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" He said, "My heart is as

hard as the floor." I said, "It does not say `If your heart is soft and

tender, and you come unto Me, I will in no wise cast you out;' but `Him

that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out..'" He said, "I do not

feel like coming." I said, "It doesn't say `If you feel like coming,

and come unto Me, I will in no wise cast you out.' It says, `Him that

cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" He said, "I don't know

that I will come the right way." I said, "It does not say `If you come

the right way I will in no wise cast you out.' It says `Him that cometh

unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" And the young man had got to the

end of his rope! Now, I said, "Will you come? Get down," and I put my

hand on his shoulder and helped him down. I said, "None of your

foolishness; do you believe in the Bible?" He said, "I do." Then I

said, "Follow me," and I looked up and said, while he repeated the

words after me, sentence by sentence, "O God, I am a miserable sinner,

and do not deserve Thy mercy. My heart is as hard as this floor; I do

not feel like coming; but Jesus says, `Him that cometh to Me I will in

no wise cast out,' and I believe that, just because Jesus says it. Lord

Jesus, the best I know, I come." I said, "Did you come? Did you mean

it?" He said, "I did." I said, "Follow me again and he again repeated

the words after me, sentence by sentence. "Lord Jesus, Thou hast said,

`Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' I have come,

therefore Thou hast received me, and I thank Thee." I said, "Has He

received you?" He said, "I don't feel it." I said,, "I did not ask what

you felt; what does Jesus say?" He said, "`Him that cometh unto Me I

will in no wise cast out." "Did you come?" "I did." "What has Jesus

done?" "He has received me." "Now," I said, "go right to your room. The

devil will give you an awful fight, I have no doubt. But you kneel

right down with both knees on John vi. 37, and fight the devil with it,

and you believe what God says, no matter what the devil whispers." He

went to his room, and the devil gave him an awful time, but he kept

both his knees on John vi. 37, and came out with the light of Heaven on

his face. He soon began to preach and teach the Bible, and is to-day

one of the most useful men on earth.

God's Word is pure, in spite of the devil, in spite of your fear, in

spite of everything. And, standing on God's Word, I proclaim to every

man and woman in this room that if you come to Jesus Christ He will

take you to-night. Will you come?

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XVI. HEROES AND COWARDS

"The fear of man bringeth a snare."- Proverbs xxix. 25.

I have a long text to-night, in fact three texts. The text is the best

part of the sermon. If a sermon is better than the text it is a poor

sermon. A good sermon is simply an exposition of the text. You will

find the first text in Proverbs xxix. 25: "The fear of man bringeth a

snare." Whatever your views about the inspiration of the Bible may be,

you know that this verse is true enough, anyhow. How many times we have

seen that statement of God's Word fulfilled. How many a man and woman

in London to-night has been snared by the fear of man, and ruined for

time and eternity. For example, how many a young man has come up to

London, a pure, innocent, upright, temperate young fellow, and intended

to lead a sober, honest, industrious life in this great city. He knew

something about the perils of drink, and was wise enough not to touch

it; and he comes to London intending to be what every man and woman

ought to be, a total abstainer. One night this young man goes out to

dinner, and the gentleman at the head of the table urges him to take a

glass of wine. But this young man refuses; he says, "I never drink."

The gentleman laughs at him, the other people at the table chaff him,

some say that he is insulting the host or hostess by not drinking to

their health, and the fear of man brings him into the snare. He takes

his first glass of wine, and that leads on to another and another and

another, and to-night he is a drunkard on the streets of London,

because of the fear of man, reputation gone, manhood gone, brain power

gone, business capacity gone, everything gone; the fear of man has

proved his temporal and eternal ruin. How many a young fellow comes up

to this great city of London, an honest young man, who has never

gambled in his life. He plays an occasional friendly game of cards; but

one night, after work, he is out in the company of a few friends and

they are playing cards as usual, and some one of the group suggests

that they should put up a little stake, only a small amount, just to

make the game interesting. The young man hesitates, but they say, "You

don't need to gamble, it is only threepence or sixpence either way; we

are not going to play for high stakes." He says, "I never gamble; I

believe it is dishonest." But they laugh at him, and chaff him, and

tell him he should go along to Sunday School; and he cannot stand their

chaff, and he puts up his first threepenny bit on a game of cards. The

passion of the gambler, which is a more consuming passion than that of

strong drink and more ruinous, takes possession of him; he robs his

employer, and to-day he is in prison, because the fear of man led him

to gamble, and ruined him utterly.

How many a young girl has come up here from the country, a modest,

innocent girl, but without firm Christian principles. She lives in very

poor lodgings; and seeking for a little gaiety and a little brightness

in her humdrum life, she goes occasionally to the theatre, goes to

dances and gatherings. She becomes quite infatuated with the dance, and

one night, a very pleasant and attractive young fellow with whom she

has become acquainted at the dance, makes a subtle suggestion to her

that she does not exactly understand, but at which her modesty revolts,

and she repels it with indignation. But he laughs at her. "Why," he

says, "you don't understand. I don't mean any harm at all; it is quite

a common thing." And that girl has learnt to permit familiarity which

no modest girl would allow herself to permit-for the ballroom admits of

familiarity which is permitted by decent people nowhere outside of the

ballroom. It is the first step to a blasted life, and that girl

to-night is an outcast on the streets of London. The fear of man has

brought a snare which has ruined her.

My next text is in John xii. 42 and 43: "Nevertheless among, the chief

rulers also many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did

not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they

loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Now that was

written about Jerusalem in Christ's time, but it sounds just as if it

were written about London to-day. How many men there are in London,

leading men, just like these chief rulers of Jerusalem, who believe in

Jesus Christ in their hearts, but they do not confess Him with their

mouths for fear of what men will say of them, for they love the praise

of men more than the praise of God. It is moral cowardice. There are

hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands of men and women just as

fully convinced as I am that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and yet

holding back from open, public confession of Christ because of moral

cowardice.

Now turn to the third text, in 2 Corinthians xii. 10. It is a very

different picture. In the two texts thus far we have a picture of the

moral coward; now we get to the glorious picture of the moral hero:

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in

necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake!" Ah,

there is a picture worth looking at! A man who was reproached for the

name of God, persecuted for his loyalty to the truth, but although they

heaped all manner of infamy on him, he looked up with a smiling face

and said, "I take pleasure in infamy." Paul went down to Lystra, and

because of his loyalty to the truth and his outspoken defense of the

truth, they stoned him, after they had almost worshipped him; and they

dragged him outside the city. His disciples stood round thinking he was

dead. But after a while he rose up again, and went back to Lystra. Then

he went to Derbe. Some of the cautious Christian brethren at Derbe,

remembering what had

occurred at Lystra, doubtless said: "Now, Paul, it is all right to be

loyal and to believe on Jesus Christ, but you must be little more

politic. It is no use running so directly against people's prejudices.

Now, Paul, don't you be quite so outspoken here, or they will treat you

in Derbe just the same as they treated you in Lystra. Now, Paul, be a

little more politic and compromise a little bit." And that magnificent

man looked up and said, "I take pleasure in infirmities and distresses

for Christ's sake." Men and women, what you need in London more than

anything else is a few men like Paul, and a few women with the same

spirit, men and women who will stand for Christ and stand for God's

kingdom without compromise, no matter whom it hurts or what people say.

Now my subject to-night., derived from these three texts, is "Heroes

and Cowards."

I wish to say right here at the beginning that it takes courage to be a

Christian, to be a real, true, outspoken follower of Jesus Christ. You

and I live in a God-hating world; we live in a compromising age -an age

in which men professing to be Christians are trying to please the world

and carry on the Church of Christ so that there will be no difference

between the church and the world. Now in a God-hating world like this,

and in a compromising age like this, it takes courage to be an

out-and-out soldier of Jesus Christ. It takes more courage than a great

many of you have got. Many a man to-day who has great courage, who has

courage enough to be a soldier, who has courage enough to go to war,

courage enough to go to the front, courage enough to stand on the

firing line, and stand in the face of a galling fire from the enemy's

guns, has not courage enough to go back to the barracks at night and

kneel down and say his prayers, and endure the chaff of his

fellow-soldiers. It takes Courage, the sublimest courage to be an

out-and-out Christian.

But I will give you to-night five reasons why every man and woman

should publicly confess Christ before the world.

1. In the first place, because He is such a glorious Lord and Master.

There is nothing to be ashamed of in Jesus Christ. A young fellow got

up in a meeting (he had been recently converted), and he tried to give

a little testimony for Jesus Christ. But he was inexperienced in public

testimony and could not talk very well; and, after he had sat down, an

old gentleman got up and said, "Young man, you ought to be ashamed of

yourself. You cannot preach, and you ought not to try; you ought to be

ashamed of yourself." Then the young man rose again and said: "Well, I

am ashamed of myself, but I am not ashamed of my Lord." Ah, the trouble

with some of you gentlemen is that you are not ashamed of yourselves,

though you ought to be, but you are ashamed of the Lord Jesus. I never

met an Englishman who was ashamed of Queen Victoria. I would have been

ashamed of him if I had met one, she was such a glorious Queen. I have

never met an Englishman who was ashamed of King Edward. But glorious a

Queen as Queen Victoria was (and though I am an American citizen I

believe she was the most glorious Queen that ever reigned on earth),

and glorious a King as we expect King Edward to become, the glory of

Queen Victoria and the glory of King Edward pales into utter

insignificance before the glory of Jesus Christ. Oh, men and women,

there is nothing to be ashamed of in Jesus Christ. It is the noblest

thing a man can say, "I am a follower of the perfect Man; I am a

follower of the Son of God; I am a follower of the One infinitely

glorious, Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

2. In the second place, every man and woman should confess the Lord

Jesus publicly before the world for the sake of their influence. Every

man has an influence. There is no man in London that has not an

influence. Every one here has an influence, either for Jesus Christ or

against Jesus Christ. There is no man or woman or child here to-night

who, if they confessed Jesus before the world as their Lord, and lived

in accordance with that confession, would not have an influence to

bring somebody else to Christ. On the other hand, there is no man,

woman, or child here to-night, who if he does not confess Christ, no

matter how well he lives, has not an influence against Christ; and the

better he lives the more his influence is against Christ, for people

look at him and say, "Look at that man; as far as I can see he lives

just as well as these professed Christians, and he is not a Christian,

does not profess faith in Christ, I don't see the need of becoming a

Christian." Oh, every one of you men that are not openly, decidedly,

constantly confessing Christ before the world, you have an influence

against Jesus Christ.

At one time, when Horace Bushnell was a tutor in Yale College, they had

a great revival throughout the college. Horace Bushnell was the most

popular tutor in Yale, but be was not a Christian. And the fact that he

was not a Christian was a stumbling-block in the way of many of the

students. Horace Bushnell knew it, and was greatly disturbed by it. He

went home one night in great uneasiness. Something said to him, "You

stand right in the way of this work; if you were a Christian there are

dozens of the young men of Yale College that would come to Christ."

"But," said he to himself, "how can I come to Christ? I don't believe

in the Bible, and I don't believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

I cannot play the hypocrite, just so as not to stand in the way of

others." He was very uneasy, and walked up and down his room thinking

about it. Finally, a voice said to him in his heart, "Horace Bushnell,

what do you believe anyhow?" "Well, one thing I believe is that there

is an absolute difference between right and wrong." "Well, have you

taken your stand on that which you do believe? You talk about what you

do not believe, think about what you do believe. Have you ever taken

your stand on right, to follow it wherever it carries you, even if it

carries you over the Niagara Falls?" He said, "No, I never have, but I

will." And he prayed, "O God, if there is any God, show me if Jesus

Christ is Thy Son, and if you will show me that I will promise to

accept Him as my Saviour and confess Him before the world," and in a

short time the light burst in upon Horace Bushnell's darkened soul, and

he came out on the side of Christ, and almost every young man in Yale

College was converted.

Oh, friends, if you say you are agnostics, if you say you are skeptics,

have you ever made an honest attempt to get out of your agnosticism? If

you have not your agnosticism is no excuse, none whatever. Ah, if some

of you men and women of London occupying prominent places and

positions, if you took your stand where you ought to take it to-night,

on the side of truth, scores of others would come to Christ.

When Mr. Charles G. Finney was preaching at Rochester, New York, in the

thirties, a great many lawyers came to hear him, and one night, away up

in the gallery, sat the Chief-Justice of the Court of Appeals of the

State of New York. As he sat there listening to Mr. Finney's tremendous

logic, the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals of New York State

became satisfied of the truth of what Mr. Finney preached. Then the

question came to him, "Will you come forward like the other ordinary

men and women to the `anxious seat?'" Something in him said, "It will

never, do in the world. You occupy the most exalted legal position in

New York State; you are the Chief-Justice of the Court of Appeals; it

would never do in the world for you to walk down in front, and seek

salvation kneeling down at the `anxious seat.'" He sat there thinking

for a while; then he said to himself, "Why not? I am convinced of the

truth of that man's position. I know my duty; why should I not do it

like any other man?" He got up from his place in the gallery, and went

down the stairway, and came up the stairs back of where Mr. Finney was

preaching, and Mr. Finney, in the midst of his sermon felt some one

pulling on the skirts of his coat. He turned round, and there stood the

Chief-Justice of the Court of Appeals of New York State. He asked,

"What is it?" The Chief-Justice replied, "Mr. Finney, if you will call

for people to come to the `anxious seat,' I will come." Mr. Finney

stopped his sermon and said, "The Chief-Justice of the Court of Appeals

of New York State says if I will call for anxious ones to come to the

`anxious seat,' he will come. I call for anxious ones now"; and the

Chief-Justice of the Court of Appeals went down and took his seat on

the "anxious seat," and almost every lawyer and barrister in Rochester

was converted, and it is said 100,000 people were converted in twelve

months in that district.

Ladies and gentlemen, there are some of you here to-night who, if you

had the courage of your convictions and came to Christ, not secretly as

some of you want to, but walked right out and took your seat down here

in front when I called you to do it, it would shake London. Are you men

enough to do it? Are you women enough to do it? Your influence may not

be as great as that, but all Of you have an influence. Will you exert

it for Jesus Christ when the time comes to-night?

3. In the third place, every one should publicly confess Christ before

the, world, because it is the only way to obtain the fulness of

blessing that there is in Jesus Christ. In Matthew x. 32, 33, are the

words of the Master himself: "Whosoever shall confess Me before men,

him will I also confess before My Father which is in Heaven; but

whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My

Father which is in Heaven." Oh, friends, think of it-to have Jesus

Christ confessing you before Jesus Christ the Father in Heaven. A

little fellow, a wee little fellow, got up at a meeting one night, with

the tears running down his cheeks -he was a little white-haired Swedish

boy- and said, "Friends, if I confess Jesus on earth down here, then

will He also confess me up there before the Father" and sat down. That

was the best speech that was made that night. Oh, to think of it- to

have the Lord Jesus confess your name before the Father in Heaven! In

our great Civil War, when one of our generals won a great victory, it

was the custom of the Member of Congress for his district to propose a

vote of thanks to him on the floor of the American Congress. It was the

highest ambition of generals to be thus mentioned upon the floor of

Congress. I remember that grand old hero, General Howard, once saying

to me, "Torrey, there was one proud day of my life, and that was when a

vote of thanks was moved to me on the floor of Congress by the whole

Congress for my stand at Gettysburg." But what is it to be mentioned on

the floor of any Parliament or Congress down here to being mentioned in

the court of Heaven by the Lord Jesus Himself? And the men and women

who confess Christ down here in Mildmay Hall, Jesus Christ will confess

you before God in Heaven.

Moreover, when Christ does confess you before the Father then you will

get the fulness of the blessing. When He confesses you then God sends

His Holy Spirit into your heart. I remember one night in a mission at

Atlanta, Georgia, at the close of the meeting, a young man of about

thirty to thirty-five years of age, was brought to me. Some one said to

me, "This is one of the leading advocates of Atlanta. He took all the

oratorical honours in his university. I wish you would lead him to

Christ." I stood a few moments talking to him, then I said to him, "Are

you not a Christian?" He said, "No, sir. I am a church member; in fact,

I am the superintendent of a Sunday School, but I am not a Christian."

"Well," I said, "why don't you become a Christian?" He said, "I have no

feeling." I said, "It is not a question of feeling. Do you believe you

are a sinner?" He said, "I know I am." I said, "Do you believe Jesus

Christ died for you?" He said, "I know He did." I said, "Then will you

take Him for your own Saviour to-night?" He said, "Can I do it without

feeling?" I said, "Certainly; it is not a question of feeling, but of

common sense. Will you take Him?" He said, "I will; if I can I will." I

said, "Let us pray together." We knelt and prayed, and when we got up,

he said, "I don't feel any different." I said, "I didn't think you

would." "But," he said, "a lot of these people say they have such joy."

I said, "You have not gone far enough; you have to confess your Lord

publicly before the joy comes." Almost everybody had gone out of the

big Tabernacle; but he said to the few who were remaining, "Friends, I

have decided to-night to be a Christian; I have taken the Lord Jesus

Christ to be my Saviour." and with a few more words he said,

"Good-night" and went out. Next morning a leading merchant of the town

came to me and said, "You ought to have seen what I saw last night when

I left this building. I had gone only a short way down the street when

I saw \_\_\_\_\_ leaning up against a lamp-post. I knew he did not drink; I

knew he was not intoxicated. I went up to him and asked him what was

the matter and why he was shouting. He said, `I am so happy, I can

hardly stand up.'" I saw him that day, and I told him what my friend

had told me. I said, "Mr. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ said he saw you leaning against a

lamp-post and shouting, and when he asked you what was the matter, you

said you were so happy you could not stand up. Is that so?" He said,

"It was literally true. Ten minutes after I left you last night, such a

joy came over my soul that literally I had to lean against the

lamp-post and shout for joy."

I don't know if it will affect you just that way; it never did me; but

I will guarantee one thing -that it you will accept Jesus Christ with

all your heart and surrender your whole life to Him, and His control,

and publicly confess Him before the world, God will send His Holy

Spirit into your heart, filling it with a joy that you never knew

before.

4. In the fourth place, every man and woman should confess Christ,

because it is the only way to be saved. In Romans x. 9 and 10 we read:

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe

in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be

saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with

the mouth confession is made unto salvation." People say to me in some

places where we go, "I don't believe in this standing up and

confessing;" but I don't care what you believe; the question is, "What

does God say?" And God says, "With the mouth confession is made unto

salvation." There are a great many people who will tell you if a man or

woman believe in Christ in the secrecy of their own hearts they need

never say anything about it, for God sees the heart. He does see your

heart, and if you do not confess Christ, He sees you have not got any

real faith. You say, "Is not a man saved by faith?" Yet, but by real

faith, and real faith always leads to mouth confession. We read in the

very next verse of this chapter, Romans x. 11: "Whosoever believeth on

Him shall not be ashamed." If you are ashamed to confess Him you do not

believe on Him. A faith that does not lead to confession will never

lead to Heaven. There will be no sneaks and cowards in Heaven. Jesus

Christ says in Mark viii. 38: "Whoso shall be ashamed of Me and of My

words, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in

the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

5. Once more, every man and woman should confess Christ for common

decency's sake and self-respect's sake. When you and I stop to think

what Christ has done for us; how He left Heaven. with all its glory and

came down to earth with all its shame; how He was scourged and owned

with thorns; how He bore shame and reproach; how He was spat upon and

buffeted and nailed to the Cross for you and me; how, although He was

rich, yet for our Flakes He became poor, that we through His poverty

might become rich; how, though being in the form of God, He thought it

not a thing to be grasped to be equal to God, but humbled Himself and

took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was obedient even unto

death, yea, the death of the Cross; how He was wounded for our

transgressions and bruised for our iniquities -if men and women,

knowing that you will not confess Jesus Christ because of the fear of

man, or fear of loss in business, or fear of loss of caste in society,

then you are a coward, a poltroon, an ingrate of the basest and

blackest kind. You cannot get around it; you know it is God's truth. I

cannot see how any intelligent man or woman can bear in mind what Jesus

has done for them, and then not confess Him, and still retain their

self-respect.

We have some things we are proud of in America, and some things we are

ashamed of. One of the things we are proud of in America is this, that

all boys and girls in America can get a university education; that the

son of the farmer and the day labourer and the washerwoman can get a

university education as well as the child of the millionaire. Any boy

or girl that is worth educating can go through all degrees of learning

in America. Since I have been in Chicago, the grandson of a man who

used to work for us at home as our gardener, when I was a boy, has been

the mayor of the city of Chicago; and the son of a woman who used to do

the cooking in our kitchen has occupied another high position in the

city. I rejoice in it; it is one of the things that make me glad to be

an American. In North Carolina, one of the poorer states -poor

financially, but rich in men- there was a farmer who had a bright boy.

He had a poor farm, but he said, "MY boy is going to get just as good

an opportunity as a millionaire's son;" and that poor farmer worked and

scraped until he was able to send that boy to the State university. The

boy did well, and his letters home delighted his father's and mother's

hearts, and they felt well paid for all their sacrifice. But after

awhile the father's heart grew lonely, and he said to his wife,

"Mother, I cannot stand it any longer; I just must see the boy." It was

a long way from the farm to the university, and he loaded his wagon and

started on his long drive, and as he drew near to the town he said to

himself: "Well, won't the boy be surprised! He don't know I'm coming.

Won't he be delighted to see his old father?" He whipped up the old

team and hurried on, and entered the town. He was driving up the hill

to the college, and as he went, whom should he see coming down but his

boy with some gay college companions. The old man was driving slowly,

for it was up hill, but when he saw the boy he jumped out and rushed up

to him and said, "Oh, my boy, my son!" The son was ashamed of his poor

old father, and he straightened himself up and said, "There must be

some mistake, sir; you are not my father. I don't know you." I am told

-I don't know it to be positively true- but I am told that father

turned round with a broken heart and went home to die. I can well

believe it. It would break any heart for my boy to treat me that way.

Men and women, what do you say to a boy like that? I say he ought to be

horsewhipped. I say he was an infamous ingrate. But I want to say that

he was not so infamously ungrateful as you men and women in this hall

to-night, who know that Jesus Christ poured out His life unto death on

the Cross of Calvary, and who are so mean and contemptible and cowardly

that you wont stand up and confess Him.

I am not going to stop with that story. It is too dark. I am going to

tell you another story -and thank God it is true- of our home land. A

poor woman in one of our towns, who had to work for her living, for she

was a widow -she took in washing, I think- had a boy, and he was a

bright boy and proved a bright man. I think some of you have heard him.

She sent her boy to school. He went through the schools, did well, came

out at the very top of his class, and was valedictorian of his class,

the highest position, and took a gold medal for special excellence in

study. The day he was to graduate he said to his mother: "You know, I

graduate to-day, mother." She said, "Yes, I know." "Well, get ready,"

he said, "it is time to get off to the church"- where the graduating

exercises were to be held. "Oh, my boy, I cannot go up there," she

said; "I haven't anything fit to wear. Why, all the finest people in

the town will be there. You would be ashamed of me if I went." "Ashamed

of you, mother?" he said; "never! I owe all I have in the world to you.

What is more, mother, I cannot graduate unless you do go; and I won't!"

And he helped his mother to get ready, and pinned the old faded shawl

round her, and made it look as good as possible, and put on her plain

old bonnet, and took her on his arm, and walked down the main street

with the plain old mother on his arm to the church. When they got there

he took her up the centre aisle, and sat her among the finest people in

town. When the time came, he went up to deliver his valedictory address

and to receive the gold medal amid the applause of his companions; and

when he had received it he walked straight down to where his mother

sat, and pinned it on her old faded shawl, and said, "Mother, that

belongs to you; you earned it."

That is a boy worth having. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I want to ask a

question: Do you mean to-night to be like that rascally, scoundrelly

ingrate, that was ashamed of his old father and broke his heart, and be

ashamed of that glorious Christ that died for you; or will you be like

the other boy, and, knowing that you owe everything to Jesus Christ,

stand up and confess Him to-night, and pin all your honours where they

belong, on Jesus Christ!

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XVII. THREE FIRES

"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

-MATTHEW iii. 11.

One night, years ago, I was sitting at my desk in my study late at

night, and the work of the day was done. There was a great deal of

confusion about my study table, for I had just moved that day, and had

not had time to rearrange my papers. The work of the day being done, I

fell into a reverie, and as I came out of that reverie I found myself

gently waving back and forth in my right hand a little four-page

leaflet. I do not know how it got into my hand. I suppose I took it off

the table; but I don't even know how it got on to the table, for I had

never seen it before. I looked at that leaflet, and I noticed these

words across the top of the leaflet in large print, "Wanted, a Baptism

with Fire." It immediately fastened my attention. I said, "That is

precisely what I do want; if there is anybody on this earth that needs

fire, it is I," for I was born, and had grown up cold as an iceberg. So

I had the leaflet. There was not much in the leaflet that impressed me,

except one text, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with

fire;" and that not only impressed me, it kept ringing in my mind and

heart, by day and by night. I could not get away from it: "He shall

baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The following Saturday

evening, when I went to a little gathering for prayer here at my

church, I said to the janitor of the church, when the prayer meeting

was over. "The promise says, `He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost

and with fire.'" A sweet smile passed over the janitor's face, and

there was something about his look which made me think, "Well, the

janitor seems to know all about it. I wonder if he has got something

his pastor has not got." During the days of the next week, when I sat

down in my study, when I walked the streets, that kept ringing in my

ears: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'"

Thursday night came, and at the close of my day's work I knelt down

before God, and asked Him for a text or for a subject for Sunday

evening's sermon. A brother from London was going to preach for me in

the morning. The only text I could see in the whole Bible was, "He

shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," and I said,

"Father, I am not to preach on Sunday morning; that is a Sunday morning

text, and I don't preach in the morning. Mr. Inglis is going to preach

then." I generally preach in the morning to Christians, and to the

unsaved in the evening. "I want an evening text." But I could not see

anything, but just that one text, "He shall baptize you with the Holy,

Ghost and with fire." "Well," I said, "Father, if that is the text you

want me to preach on, evening or morning, I will preach on it; but I

want to know." Just then there came looming up out of the Bible two

other texts, and both of these texts had "fire" in them; and while I

was on my knees God just opened the three texts, and I had my sermon.

The next Sunday night I went to my church and preached that sermon.

When I had finished it I said, "Now all the friends who want to be

baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire to-night, and all who want to be

saved, come downstairs." The rooms downstairs were jammed, and when all

who replied to the invitation had found room, I asked all who wanted to

be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire to go into the kindergarten

room, and those who wished to be saved to go into another room, the

inquiry room, and the rest to stay where they were. They began to go

into both rooms; I went into the kindergarten room, where the people

were sitting in the little bits of kindergarten chairs, and so closely

packed that I literally had to step over their heads to get to the

platform. Oh, what a time we had in that room that night! When I came

out I asked my assistant, who was in charge of the inquiry room, what

sort of a time he had had, and he said, "The Spirit of God was there,

and many people came out into the light." I asked Professor Towner, the

choir-master, who was left in charge of the third meeting, composed of

those who had not entered either of the two rooms, and he said, "We had

no meeting at all; I could not say a word; the people got right down on

their knees before God and talked to Him." I hope God will bless the

Word the same way to-night. I believe He will.

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I. THE BAPTISM WITH FIRE

You will find the first of the three fires in Matthew iii. 11: "I

indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after

me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He will

baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." That is the first of

the three fires, the baptism with fire. -what does it mean? Now we know

what it means to be baptized with water -we have seen that- but what

does it mean to be baptized with fire? You will get your answer by

asking two things: first, what is fire said to do in the Bible? and,

second, what happened to the Apostles at Pentecost when they were

baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire?

1. The first thing that the Bible says that fire does is, fire reveals.

In 1 Corinthians iii. 13, we read: "Every man's work shall be made

manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by

fire!" And the first thing that a baptism with fire does is to reveal

what a man really is, to show us to ourselves as God sees us. I

remember the night before I preached that sermon, late on Saturday

night after the sermon was all arranged, I got down and said, "Heavenly

Father, I think I have a sermon for to-morrow night, but I don't

believe I have got that of which the sermon speaks. I am going to

preach on the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, and how can I

preach on it if I have not had it? Now, in order that I may preach an

honest sermon, baptize me with fire right now." God heard the prayer,

and the first thing that came to pass was that I had such a revelation

of myself as I never had before in all my life. I had never dreamed

that there was so much pride, so much vanity, so much personal

ambition, so much downright meanness in my heart and life as I saw that

night. And men and women., if you get a baptism with fire, I believe

one of the first things that comes to you will be a revelation of

yourself as God sees you. Is not that just what we need, a revelation

of ourselves to-day that will spare us the awful humiliation of the

revelation of self in that day when we stand before the judgment seat

of Christ ?

2. The second thing that fire does is, fire refines, or purifies. In

Malachi iii. 1-3, we are told of the purifying power of fire. There is

nothing that purifies like fire. Water will not cleanse as fire does.

Suppose I have a piece of gold, and there is some filth on the outside

of it; how can I get it off? I can wash it off with water. But suppose

the filth is inside it, how will you get it out? There is only one way:

throw it into the fire. And, men and women, if the filth is on the

outside it can be washed away with the water of the Word; but the

trouble is that the filth is on the inside, and what we need is the

fire of the Holy Ghost penetrating, into the innermost depths of our

being, burning, burning, burning, cleansing. What a refining came to

the apostles on the day of Pentecost! How full of self-seeking they had

been up to the very last Supper! At the Last Supper, they had a dispute

as to who should be the first in the Kingdom of Heaven, but after

Pentecost they no longer thought of self, but of Christ. How weak and

cowardly they had been right up to the crucifixion! They all forsook

Him and fled, and Peter denied Him, at the accusation of a servant

maid, with oaths and curses. But after the day of Pentecost, that time

Peter that cursed and swore and denied Christ when the servant maid

accused him of being a follower of Jesus, faced the very council that

condemned Him, and said, "If we this day be examined of the good deed

done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known

unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the

dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole." Ah,

friends, cleansing is a very slow process by ordinary methods, but a

baptism with fire does marvels in a moment.

3. In the third place, the Bible teaches us that fire consumes. In

Ezekiel xxiv. 11-13, we are told of the consuming power of fire, the

fire of judgment that will consume the filth and dross of Jerusalem.

And the baptism of fire consumes in fact it cleanses by consuming; it

burns up all dross, all vanity, all self-righteousness, all personal

ambition, all ungovernable temper.

We had once at the Bible Institute in Chicago, a young woman who was

much that a Christian should not be. When we heard she was coming, all

of us in authority thought she never ought to have come to the Bible

Institute. I thought so when I heard she was coming, for I had known

her in the school from which she came, and I knew she was one of the

most unmanageable scholars they ever had in the school. She was

stubborn, willful, proud, quick-tempered, boisterous loud, and pretty

much everything a girl ought not to be. When I heard she was coming to

the Bible Institute. I said, "So-and-so coming to the Bible Institute!

What in the world does she want at the Bible Institute?" But her uncle

was one of the best friends the Institute ever had, and so, out of

consideration for her uncle, we admitted her. Now, we require of every

student in that Bible Institute that some definite work to save the

lost should go hand in hand with Bible study; for Bible study, unless

it is accompanied with actual work for the salvation of souls, will dry

up a man's soul quicker than almost anything else. We required the

young woman to go into the tenements, the homes of the poor and the

outcast. One afternoon this girl had been visiting in Milton Avenue and

Townsend Street, two of the poorest streets of Chicago. After a time

she became very tired with climbing up and down the stairs, and going

in and out of the filthy homes; and in-stead of returning to the

Institute, she walked on in a very rebellious frame of mind, and went

down to the Lake Shore Drive, the finest avenue in Chicago, along the

shore of the lake. As she passed by those magnificent mansions there,

she looked up at them with an eye that danced with pleasure, and said,

"This is what I like. I have had enough of Milton Avenue; I have had

enough of climbing stairs and going into tenements. This is what I

like, and this is what I am going to have." She came back to the

Institute, and went straight to her room, still in a very bitter and

rebellious frame of mind. The tea-bell rang before the battle was over,

and she went to the table and took her and sat down, and there at the

tea-table the fire of God fell right where that girl was sitting. She

sprang from her seat and rushed over to a friend at the other table,

and threw her arms around her, and exclaimed, "I am a volunteer for

Africa!", and the fire of God in a moment burned, and burned, and

burned, until that young woman was so changed, her actions were so

changed, her views of life, her tastes, her ambitions, her very face

was so changed in a moment, that when her old friends saw her and heard

her they could hardly believe their own eyes and ears. Later on she

went back to that same school down in Massachusetts, where had been

such a hindrance, and with burning words poured out her heart to the

girls there, and with mighty power led them to the Lamb of God which

taketh away the sins of the world.

Is not that what we need to-night, a fire that will burn up this pride

of ours, this selfishness of ours, this vanity of ours, this

worldliness of ours, burn up all these things that hinder the world

from coming to Christ, because we make men think that Christianity is

unreal? You women with unconverted husbands, is not that what you need,

a baptism with fire, transforming your life and clothing it with

beauty, so that your husband will say, "I must have what my wife has

got?"

4. In the next place, fire illuminates. Oftentimes when in Chicago - I

look off towards the north-west of the city, suddenly I see the heavens

lit up and then grow dark again, then they are illuminated once more

and then darkened. The great foundry doors had been opened and shut,

and opened and shut, and this light in the heavens was the glow from

the furnaces. Fire illuminates, but no fire illuminates like "the

baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire." When a man is baptized with the

Holy Ghost and fire, truth that was dark to him before becomes

instantly as bright as day; passages in the Bible that he could not

understand before become as simple as A B C, and every page of God's

Holy Word glows with heavenly light. A baptism with fire will do more

to take the infidelity and skepticism and false doctrine out of a man

than any university education. How many a young fellow comes out of a

theological education more than half an infidel, but the great day

comes when that half-infidel preacher is baptized with the Holy Ghost

and fire, and his doubts and his questionings and his criticisms go to

the Winds. How many an untaught or half-taught man has so wonderful an

acquaintance with the truth of God that men who are scholars sit at his

feet with profound atonement, because he has been illuminated with the

baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire!

Take the case of this girl again. I was away when the event I described

happened, and the first thing I heard when I returned was what had

taken place with her. I was going from the men's side of the institute,

and was passing between the church and the women's end when this young

girl turned into the gate and met me. She looked up into my face, and

said, "Oh, Professor Torrey, have you heard?" "Yes, Jack, I have

heard." I said, and, by the way, that is an indication of her character

that she should be called Jack; "I have heard what has happened," and

then she just began to pour out her soul. She fairly danced on the

side-walk as she told me, and I knew for once what it meant to dance

before the Lord! Then she closed about this way: "One of the best

things about it is that the Bible is a new book. The Bible used to be

just the stupidest book I ever read, and I didn't believe it was the

Word of God at all. I did believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ,

because your lectures compelled me. But The Bible was a stupid book.

But oh, now God is showing me such wonderful things in the Bible."

Now be honest. Are there not some of you to-night that profess to be

Christians, to whom the Bible is a stupid book? If you would tell the

honest truth, would you not rather read a novel than the Bible? You do

read the Bible, because you think you ought to: but you get no

enjoyment out of it. What you need is a baptism with the Holy Ghost and

fire, and that would make the Bible a new book; glory would shine from

every page.

5. The next thing that fire does is, fire makes warm, it makes to glow.

You stand before a furnace door, behind which is a glowing fire. You

have in your hand a bar of iron; it is cold, and black, and forbidding,

and there is no beauty in it. But you take that cold, dark, forbidding

bar of iron, and you open the furnace door and thrust it into the

glowing fire. Soon it is warm, then it becomes red hot and glows with

marvelous beauty, and you have the cold bar of iron glowing with fire.

You and I are cold - oh, how cold we are! and the Lord Jesus takes us

and He plunges us into the fire of the Holy Spirit. We begin to grow

warm, and soon we glow, glow with love to God, glow with love to

Christ, glow with love to the truth, glow with love for perishing

souls. Men and women, the great need of the day is men and women on

fire. Brethren, that is what we need in the pulpit, ministers on fire.

What cold men most of us preachers are! Orthodox enough, it may be, and

we present the most solemn truth with great force of reason and great

beauty of rhetoric and most convincing eloquence; and our audiences sit

there and admire our strong preaching, but they do not repent of their

sins. Why not? Because we are not on fire. We convince the intellect,

but we do not melt the heart. But put a minister who is on fire in the

pulpit. Wesley was such a man, Whitefield was such a man; Charles G.

Finney was such a man- put a man on fire in the pulpit, and the

audience will melt. But we need that kind of people in the choir as

well. What beautiful choirs we have nowadays. Why, they sing almost

like angels, and people sit there admiring them but nobody is converted

by their singing. But when we get a man on fire to sing, or a woman on

fire to sing, or a choir on fire to sing, something is brought to pass.

That is what we need in our Sunday School classes. We need a young man

or a young woman to teach a sunday school class, and they know the

lesson capitally and study all the latest "helps," and make the lesson

tremendously interesting, but the boys and girls and men and women in

their classes are not converted because the teachers are not on fire.

Oh, men and women of London, the need in London more than anything else

to-night is a baptism with fire on the minister, a baptism with fire on

the elders, a baptism with fire on the deacons a baptism with fire, on

the choir, a baptism with fire on the Sunday school teachers, a baptism

with fire on the personal workers and a baptism with fire upon the men

and women in the congregation. We sang a hymn just now, praying that

the fire of God might fall in Mildmay Conference Hall to-night. If it

does, men and women, if it does, London will be shaken.

6. The next thing that fire does is, fire imparts energy. The men of

science tell us that every form of energy can be transmuted into fire,

and that given fire you can generate any form of force or energy. When

a baptism with fire comes then comes power. That is the principal

manifestation at Pentecost. The fire of God fell, and with the energy

of that fire men went out from that upper room, and 3,000 people were

converted. A man takes me to his factory. He says, "This machinery is

the best in the world." He takes me down into the engine-room, and

says, "Look at that great engine, it is so many horse-power, and there

is power in that engine to move every wheel in this great factory."

Then I go back to the factory and I look around. There is nothing doing

at all. "It is very strange," I say; "did you not tell me that this was

the best machinery in the world for this purpose, and that that engine

downstairs could move every wheel in the factory? Well, I notice the

connections are all made, and everything is in gear, and the lever is

carried the right way, but there is not a wheel moving in all the

factory. What is the matter?" "Don't you know?" he says. "Come

downstairs, and I will show you," and he takes me down again to the

engine-room to the engine, and he throws open the door and says, "Look

in there." And lo! there is no fire in the fire-box. I go off to the

railway. There is a great engine standing on the rails, and I am told

it is the finest engine that was ever turned out from the locomotive

works. It can drag a heavily freighted train up a hundred-foot grade.

The engine has been coupled on to about half-a-dozen unloaded cars. I

look at the engine and say, "What, did you tell me? Can it draw a

heavily loaded train up a hundred-foot grade? Then will you please

explain something to me? That engine has only six empty cars behind it,

the coupling is made, the throttle is open, and yet it is not moving,

and cannot pull a car, and yet you say it can pull a hundred. What is

the matter?" I am taken on to the engine, and the door of the furnace

is thrown open, and when I look in I see there is no fire in the

fire-box. That is what is the matter.

Friends, I go into churches to-day, and oh, what beautiful organization

I see, what magnificent architecture, what eloquent preaching I hear,

what marvelous singing! And yet not a wheel in the whole institution

moving for God. What is the matter? There is no fire in the fire-box.

What we need today is the fire of God in the fire-box, and thank God

the promise is "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire."

7. One thing more about this fire-fire spreads; nothing spreads like

fire. I remember hearing some years ago, before I went to live in

Chicago, about an old Irish woman, who had a little shanty in the city,

with a little shed back of it, in which she kept a cow. And one night

she was milking her cow, and the cow suddenly kicked and knocked over

her lantern. The lantern fell on a wisp of straw, which caught fire,

and set the shed afire. The shed set the shanty afire, and the shanty

next to it caught fire, and the shanty next to that, and the one next

to that, and soon the fire leaped over the south branch of the Chicago

river to the east side, and on and on it swept, and in forty-eight

hours it had cleared an area of one mile wide and three miles long, and

there were but two buildings left in all that section of Chicago. Fire

spreads. If a fire is kindled here to-night it will sweep all over

London all over Great Britain, and Ireland.

That night I spoke of at the beginning of my sermon, we had a stranger

from London in Chicago, who came to hear me preach. He came downstairs

in response to my invitation, and he told us, "I am just in Chicago

to-day from London, and I want this baptism of fire;" and he got it.

When he left the church he went to his room, and sat down and wrote a

letter to the Bible class of which he was a member in London. The

teacher read it to the class, and the fire of God came into that class,

and in about two weeks after he had sent the letter he got word from

London that the fire which fell in Chicago had been kindled in that

church in London. Nothing spreads like fire. Do we not need the baptism

with this fire to-night?

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II. THE FIRE OF JUDGMENT THAT WILL TRY THE BELIEVER'S WORKS.

The second fire you will find in 1 Corinthians iii. 13, 15: "Every

man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it,

because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every

man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall be burned, he

shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

This second fire is the fire of judgment, testing our works at the

judgment seat of Christ. Now you notice the judgment here is not the

judgment regarding our salvation. These are saved people whose works

are burnt up. All the work we do for Christ is to be put to the test,

is to be put to the severest kind of test, the fire test; and, friends,

there is a great deal the Church of Christ is doing professedly for

Christ, and a great deal individual Christians are doing, that will

never stand the fire test. Do you think that these church fairs and

bazaars and all that sort of tomfoolery by which the Church of Christ

is brought down to the level of the dime museum, into which so many

professed Christians are putting their best energies, do you think that

these will stand the fire test? Never! they will all go up in smoke.

You may be saved, but you will lose your reward. You will be saved so

as by fire. A great deal of work that is good, but that is done not to

God's glory but for personal ambition-the good sermon, perfectly

orthodox, severely logical, beautifully rhetorical, the sermon that

even good people applaud, but that is preached not that God may be

glorified in the salvation of sinners, but that the preacher may be

applauded. Do you think that will stand the fire test? Never! it will

go up in smoke. The beautiful solos and the philanthropic work done,

the personal soul saving work done, not for God's glory but for the

exaltation of self- will these stand the fire test? Never! they will

all go up in smoke.

On the night of which I have been speaking in my church, the two

leading singers went down into that second meeting, and the leading

soprano said -a beautiful singer, one of the most beautiful singers I

have ever heard, "I never thought of it before. I don't believe I have

sung a solo in my life for God. I sang it for self." Thank God the fire

of God came upon my leading soprano and my leading contralto, and I

lost them both, for they became missionaries. I would like to lose the

whole choir, if I could lose them in the same way!

Furthermore, let me say, good work, work done for a good purpose, but

done in our own strength and not done in the power of the Holy Ghost,

will not stand the fire test. The sermon preached to glorify God, but

preached with the enticing words of man's wisdom and not in

demonstration of the spirit and power of God, will it stand the fire

test? Never! So, men and women, our work is to be tried regarding its

character, regarding its motive, regarding its power in which it is

done. Will your work stand the fire?

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III. THE FIRE OF ETERNAL DOOM.

We come now to the third fire. We read of it in 2 Thessalonians i. 7-9:

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels,

in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that

obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished

with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from

the glory of His power." The third fire is the fire of eternal doom.

Every one of us must meet God in fire somewhere. Some of us, I hope,

to-night will meet Him in the fire of baptism, with the Holy Ghost and

fire; some of us, I know, will meet Him in that great judgment day,

when the fire will try our work, of what sort it is; and oh, friends,

some of us, I fear -God grant it may be very few- may meet Him in the

fire of eternal doom. Some one says, "Do you think it is literal fire?"

I will not stop to, discuss that. Take it as a figure if you will, but

remember that figures always stand for facts. Some people, if they find

anything in the Bible that they do not like, say "It is figurative,"

and they think that has swept it all away. Remember, who uses the

figures; they are God's figures; and God's figures stand for facts, and

God is not a liar, so God's figures never overstate the facts they

represent. And how terrible must be the mental and spiritual agony

described by that figure, if figure it be! Were you ever severely

burnt? Did you ever see any one severely burnt? I have been. And how

awful must be the spiritual or physical agony, whichever it is; that is

represented by such a terrible figure as this.

The superficial thinker says, "Oh, I cannot believe that; I cannot

believe that a merciful God is going to let men go on suffering day

after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year,

with no hope." Open your eyes. Look at what is going on right around

you in London. Is not God permitting men and women who sin, especially

in certain specific forms of sin, to suffer most awful agonies day

after day, month after month, year after year, without one hope of

relief unless they repent; and when the time of possible repentance is

passed -and it must pass some time- when the time of possible

repentance is passed, and this goes on and on and on, ever worse and

worse, what have you got but hell? You don't get rid of hell by getting

rid of the Bible, or by getting rid of God; hell is here; hell is a

fact in London to-night. The only change the Bible and God make is that

they open a door of hope, and when you banish God and the Bible the

only change you make is that you shut the only door of hope. The

infidels are guilty of the amazing folly of trying to close hell by

shutting the only door of hope. Hell is here. It is a present-day fact,

and unless there is repentance and acceptance of Christ it will be an

eternal and endless fact. You say, "For whom?" Listen: "Rendering

vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the

Gospel."

First, "to them that know not God." That is plain English for

agnostics. Do you know what "agnostic" means? A great many people are

proud of saying, "I am an agnostic." Well, agnostic means "know not" or

"know nothing"; it is used of those who "know not God." So our text

says God will render vengeance to agnostics. Some one says, "That is

not just." I cannot help that: it is a fact. But it is just. You ought

to know God; you have no excuse for not knowing God. The most solemn

duty that lies upon every man is to find out about God, and there is a

way to know God. The trouble is you don't want to know God. Any

agnostic that wants to know God will soon get acquainted with Him. I

was once an agnostic, but I was an honest one, and I did not take long

to find God.

Only the other night a man said to me, "I am an agnostic." I pointed

him to a way out of agnosticism, a reasonable way, and asked, "Is not

that reasonable?" and he said, "Yes." "Then I said, "Will you try it?"

and he said, "No, I won't." His agnosticism is not his misfortune; it

is his sin. The first and most solemn obligation resting on the

creature is to know and worship and serve the Creator. You ought to

know God, and if you refuse to know Him, the Lord Jesus will be

revealed at last rendering vengeance to you and other agnostics.

But not only, to agnostics, but "to them that obey not the Gospel."

Many a man is not an agnostic, but he does not obey the Gospel. There

are many of you people who would support what I say about agnosticism,

but you do not obey the Gospel. You do not believe with real faith,

which means absolute surrender to and confidence in the Lord Jesus

Christ. You do not obey Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master. You do

not openly confess Him as the Gospel commands. He will render vengeance

to you; you shall be "punished with everlasting destruction from the

presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power!'

Men and women, every one of us must meet God in fire. Oh, to-night do

you not want to meet Him in the glorious fire of the Holy Ghost,

refining you from sin, cleansing the dross and filth, illuminating you

with God's glorious truth, warming the cold heart until it glows with

holy love, energizing you with the power of God, and spreading wherever

it goes? Or do you wish to meet God in fire at that judgment day, that

will try your work as to character, motive, the power that wrought it,

and send all your works up in smoke, and leave you there stripped,

saved "so as by fire?" Or will you meet God in that awful fire of

eternal doom, when the day comes that the same Christ whom you have

rejected and trampled under foot comes back again in the glory of the

Father, with His mighty angels, "rendering vengeance to them that know

not God and obey not the Gospel?"

THE END.

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