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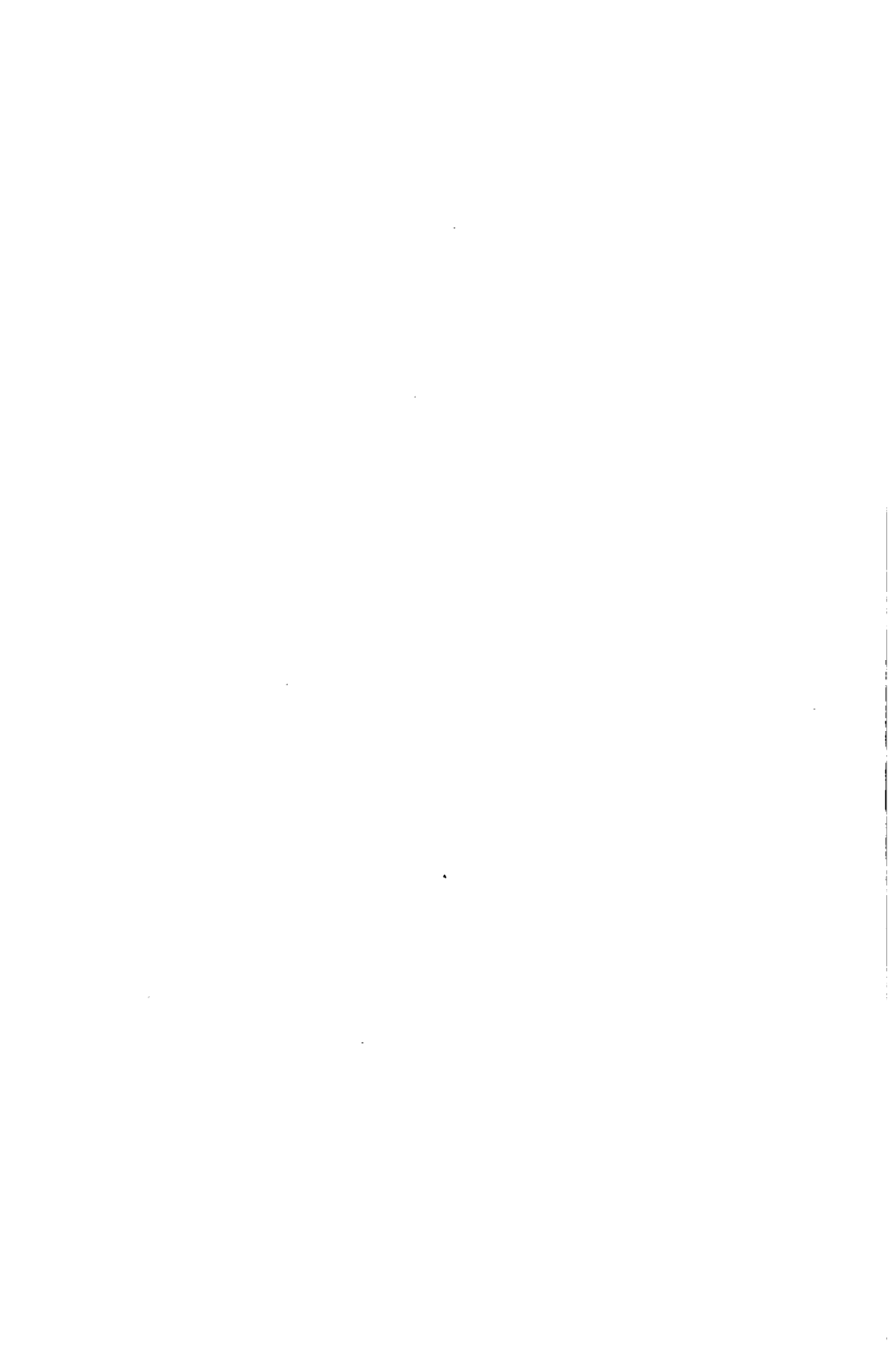




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*William Chapman*

# Evangelistic Sermons

By

**J. WILBUR CHAPMAN; D. D.**

*Compiled and Edited by*

**EDGAR WHITAKER WORK, D. D.**



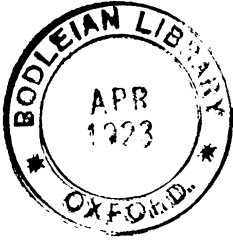
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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

**E**ARLY in his ministry J. Wilbur Chapman was called to do the work of an evangelist. Even while he was in the actual pastorate of churches, his ministry was evangelistic in tone and method. When the time came he gave up a pastorate of signal usefulness and power in New York City, and devoted his full energy to evangelistic work in the churches. No man of his time did more to promote the aggressive preaching of the gospel of salvation. In his own denomination he is credited, together with John H. Converse, with starting a movement for community and pastoral evangelism which is not likely to spend its force in many years—a movement strong enough in fact to change to an important degree the very character of a great Christian body. He was an intense lover of the Church, and a staunch advocate of the ministry of the Church. Believing so thoroughly in the divine origin and authority of the Church, he never threw stones into the well that gives water to the world. That he gave to evangelism so much of spiritual dignity and grace, was due to his own profound respect for religious propriety as well as to his singularly fine and noble personality. It was not in him to do anything otherwise than decently and in order. With him

the preaching of the gospel was never trivial: least of all could it partake of anything clownish. He was quiet, both in manner and speech. It was never necessary for him to shout to produce an impression. If he studied the art of making impressions, it was nowhere apparent. He was never other than a simple, quiet, direct preacher of the gospel. Yet there was a deep fervor in his speech that made itself felt in his audiences. He produced an atmosphere of his own, and it was one of profound quiet and responsiveness.

Few men in the history of evangelism have been more truly masters of assemblies. To speak of his quiet manner does not mean to say that he lacked in aggressiveness. On the contrary, he was richly gifted in the persuasive ways of evangelism. He could woo his audience by his voice, or even by a striking attitude, or a startling word. Many will remember his sudden enunciation of such words—as “Hear me!” and “Listen!” He well understood the latent dramatic power of the gospel. At times he was vividly dramatic. Often his language was picturesque and appealing. He could tell a simple incident or story in such a way as to melt strong men to tears. There were occasions when he burst into unusual utterance and method. Frequently he would say to an audience that he would gladly change his method, if only he could win souls. Like the Apostle Paul, he was willing himself to become almost reprobate in sensationalism

if by that means he could persuade others. Nevertheless, the foundation of his work was the quiet persuasiveness of a heart deeply in earnest, and filled to overflowing with a passion for souls. It was not necessary for him to resort to mere by-play. Soul-winning was far too impressive a process to be punctuated with gales of laughter. No one ever went away from his meetings with a mere feeling of having been entertained. He meant that every sermon, every prayer, every song, should remind men of the Saviour's call.

It is not difficult to state some at least of the elements of Dr. Chapman's power as an evangelistic preacher. He believed profoundly in the Word of God, and preached it fearlessly to men. He taught with tremendous realism the power of sin and the certainty of judgment. With equal passion he preached the doctrines of grace. A man may be a great sinner, but he has a great Saviour. The old message of faith and repentance faithfully reiterated brought many thousands to the Saviour. He was careful to explain that repentance means turning away from sin, as well as feeling sorry for sin. The doctrinal background of his preaching revealed his careful training in theological truths, but it was doctrine brought to the level of common understanding. One is often amazed at the skill with which he teaches profound truths of religion in utterly simple fashion.

His desire to see men saved was at the root of



his passionate preaching. He knew that men were lost without Christ, and he preached to lost men with the passion of a true ambassador of God. Close to this deep passion of his heart for the souls of men, was his power of pathos. He readily admitted that he was emotional, but emotionalism with him was not mere excitement. What he had was depth of feeling, great tenderness of sympathy, strong humanistic understanding of life—in one word, *pathos*. The word does not necessarily mean tears; certainly it does not mean loose and irresponsible utterance. In Chapman's case it was accompanied by a voice of extraordinary quality. It was musical, yet it was more than musical. It was sympathetic, yet even this does not express all that it was. There was a wooing note about it, a profound tenderness of feeling, an echoing persuasiveness, such as are found in but few human voices. He could hush an audience into deep stillness with a word. Without striving for effect, he could speak single words so that one would remember them. His pronunciation of the Master's name—"Jesus"—was always deeply impressive.

The unusual richness of his voice, together with his vivid imagination, and his intimate appreciation of humanity's varied life, gave him remarkable power in reciting incidents, stories and experiences that were related to his themes. From a wide knowledge of men he gathered many narratives of life which he used with telling power in his ser-

mons. In this art of sermonic narrative, indeed, he has had few equals. Whether he turned to the scenes and persons of the Scripture, or to the experiences of every-day life, he made his hearers understand the realism of the gospel he preached. Thus his preaching came to have personal and tangible values, that remained in men's hearts.

Not the least of the elements of his power was his reliance upon prayer and the profound effect of the Holy Spirit's direct ministry with souls. It was scarcely possible to hear him preach on his favorite subjects of sin, repentance, faith, the Holy Spirit, the love of God, the saving power of Christ and the cross, the return of the Lord in glory, without hearing the echo of spiritual voices from afar.

It is remarkable that a man, who was naturally timid and shrinking in his own nature, who loved quiet and privacy rather than the murmur of great assemblies, should have been so powerfully used of God with the multitude. His evangelistic ministry carried him to almost every corner of his own land. His work extended also to Canada. Calls came to him again and again from lands over the sea. He preached the gospel in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, in Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, in the Philippine and Fiji islands, in Japan, in China, in Korea, in Ceylon. Everywhere the simplicity and fervor of his message gained for him wide and sympathetic hearing. In Australia, where he carried on evangelistic work

twice, the results of his preaching were beyond calculation. Certain of Dr. Chapman's sermons have had, through frequent repetition, almost a world-wide hearing.

The sermons included in this volume were preached in 1916, a little more than two years before his death, which occurred in New York on Christmas day, 1918. They represent the full maturity of his experience, as well as the full measure of his power. They are reproduced here from stenographic reports made at the time of their delivery. The editor has done his utmost to preserve the form and manner of the evangelist's speech, as well as the incidents and atmosphere of the meetings as they were conducted by Dr. Chapman and the master of song, Charles M. Alexander. The sermons are thus to be read here in their spoken form. The action of the preacher may be seen, and the presence of the great audience is often distinctly felt.

With the hope that the sermons of our own great American evangelist may help to deepen the life of many ministers, leaders, and churches in our own and other lands, the editor, grateful for the privilege of preparing them for publication, sends them out to the Church at large.

**EDGAR WHITAKER WORK.**

Fourth Presbyterian Church, New York.



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## THE MASTER IS COME

**M**Y text is in John 11:28—"The Master is come and calleth for thee." This passage takes us to the home in Bethany where Jesus loved to be. It has to do with the sickness and death of Lazarus, and his resurrection from the dead. Some years ago I heard a distinguished man of God preach from this text. The light of heaven was on his face and the fire of heaven was in his message. The outline of his sermon remains with me still, and I am going to use his outline as I preach to you from this text.

It must have been a very remarkable family that lived in the Bethany home. Martha and Mary and Lazarus. It may not have been the largest house in Bethany, nevertheless Jesus loved to tarry there. If you tell me that you have the finest home in this city and Jesus is not there, then it is not the finest. If you tell me that yours is a home of poverty and Jesus abides with you, then I know that you do not mind your poverty.

No one can think of the Bethany home without being deeply touched. Martha and Mary and Lazarus and—*Jesus!* One day there came a cloud, the size of a man's hand, over that home in Bethany.

Lazarus was sick. The cloud increased from day to day until it covered all the sky. When the sisters knew that their brother was sick unto death, they called a messenger and sent a message to Jesus. They did not say, "Go to the Master and tell Him that Lazarus is ill," but they said this, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." They knew that Jesus would know. How they watched for the return of the messenger, but the messenger delayed and Lazarus died. In those countries the preparations for death must be made very quickly. So they laid Lazarus at once in the tomb. When they went back to the home everything spoke of him. The old couch on which he rested, the manuscripts he read, the sandals he wore, the robe that was wrapped around him,—everything spoke of Lazarus, and Lazarus was gone. Just when their hearts were aching to the breaking, a messenger came saying that Jesus was coming to Bethany. Mary sat still in the house, but Martha went out to meet him, and when she met him she began in a tone of complaint, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." It was then that Jesus spoke his wonderful words: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Something in what he said and in the way he said it touched Martha's heart, and she rushed back to her sister and cried out in the words of the text, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." Then the sisters went out

together to meet Jesus. Presently they were standing at the tomb and weeping. Jesus was weeping too. Then He stooped down to look into the tomb from which the stone had been rolled away, and cried out to the dead man, "Come forth." I scarcely need to rehearse the story to you because it is so familiar. And now I follow the outline that I have mentioned, and in so doing we shall find suggested in this story the steps that are essential to a revival.

First, when Mary and Martha wanted Jesus they did not go themselves to Jesus, but they sent a messenger. I have always had an idea that if they had gone themselves, saying, "Master, Lazarus is sick, and if he dies our hearts will be broken and our home desolate," perhaps Jesus might have come back to Bethany with them at once and stayed the disease. They did not go themselves. They sent a messenger. And do you know that this is the way people expect revivals nowadays? They are anxious to have them come, but they do not put themselves into the work. They send someone else. In earlier days when people desired a revival, they waited upon God in fasting and prayer. They even spent nights in prayer. They forgot to eat and sleep. Fathers and mothers became concerned for their children. Wives were in agony about their husbands. Ministers stood up to preach and they looked like dead men. Often they preached to the accompaniment of sobs. When men and women



sought God for themselves in this spirit the foundations were shaken, the heavens were opened, churches were quickened, and souls were converted.

I believe in the work of the evangelist with all my heart. I keep before me two or three ideals. My greatest inspiration is Dwight L. Moody. Almost all that I know of evangelistic work I learned at his feet. I continue to use his methods. I have prayed God through all the years that I might have his spirit in preaching. I came in touch with him first when I was a university student. Later I sat at his feet as a young minister. I entered evangelistic work under his direction. I used to take his after meetings when he was unable to take them after preaching. Yet much as I believe in evangelists, there is not an evangelist in the world who has the power to bring a revival to your soul. You can have it only by seeking after God for yourself. We have praying ministers here and splendid committees at work, yet the revival tarries and men are not saved. People are not asking with sobs: "What must I do to be saved?" Thus far I have received just two letters from people who were concerned for their children. Let us not make the mistake of the sisters in Bethany, who did not go themselves to seek after Christ, but sent a messenger instead.

Something else is to be noted. Only one of them went after all. Martha went, but Mary stayed in the house. This is the way revivals begin. No

man has ever known of a whole community being roused at once. No minister can tell of a whole church being on fire at one time. One will be interested and will go forth to meet Christ like Martha. This city will never be moved by masses of people who are interested in revival. No, it will begin with individuals. Some minister will have a deep concern. He cannot eat or sleep. He feels as if he would die. He sits at his desk with tears running down his cheeks. Or some old saint of God will cry out, saying: "Oh, Lord, revive Thy work! Revive Thy work!" When the revival of '57 swept through New York, it was traced to one man who spent days on his knees alone with nobody to pray with him. Then another came, and another, and another, until there was a whole company of praying people. New York was stirred. Philadelphia was shaken. Chicago was moved. The whole American continent was stirred. The revival swept across the sea to Great Britain. It started with one man on his knees. There may be some man in this audience now who feels that his life has never counted much for God. To-night he feels that he will lay hold of God and never let go. This is the way revival begins, with one soul that is truly seeking God.

When I began my ministry in Philadelphia, I succeeded Dr. Arthur T. Pierson. It was a perilous thing for a young man to do. Mr. Moody told me that if we could have a revival, everything

would go well. I stood up before the people and said: "All the people who are willing to help me, come and tell me what you will do." A famous merchant was my chief elder, and he said that I could have his carriage to make pastoral calls. Another said that he would pay the expenses of the advertising. Others came and said that they would do this and that. Finally, down the central aisle of the church came an old Scotch woman, Mrs. Thompson. She took my hand, and, looking at me, said: "Do you mind the little room at the head of the stairway in my house?" I said, "Yes, Mrs. Thompson." "Very well, minister," she said, "every day at twelve o'clock I will be in that little room. I will be on my knees, and I will never let go of God for you." In a short time I stood in my pulpit there and received four hundred and forty-four people. Of these, sixteen came as a direct result of the personal influence of this old Scotch woman. If there is one thing that we need more than anything else just now, it is an overmastering concern for people who are out of Christ.

Martha was not fit to talk to Mary until she had seen Jesus. At least, she had no influence. Mary said: "You might as well go and meet Him and talk to Him." Mary herself sat still in the house. You know what that means. Teeth set together, lips closed. Martha talks and talks, but Mary will not move. Finally Martha went out to meet Jesus. The moment she caught the look on His face and

heard the ring of His voice, she rushed back with a new light in her eyes, a new sound in her voice, a new power in her testimony, saying, "The Master is come." When she saw Jesus, she could talk to Mary as she had not done before. You want a revival, you will have to see Jesus first. Many of us want to see this city moved for God. We must be alone with him first. Oh, my God, send a revival! We beseech thee, send a revival.

I was preaching in Lincoln, Nebraska, when I heard a woman say to her pastor: "I want you to pray for my husband and two boys." I was shocked when he said, "I shall not do it." When I asked him about it he said: "She is the most worldly woman in this city. She has led her husband and two boys into the world after her. It would be absolutely useless for me to pray so long as she professes to be a Christian and is not." This woman went to her home and said to her husband: "I want you to forgive me. I have been a church member, but a false one. I have been a professed follower of Christ, but I have denied Him. I want you to forgive me." I saw her husband converted, and the two boys came with their father. That man is to-day an elder of a church in his city.

A woman came to her minister in Springfield, Ohio, and said: "Pray for my boy." The minister said: "Absolutely useless." He told her to go back and get her boy. I had a letter from her

in which she told me the circumstances. "My boy came from the Central Methodist Church, where Bishop Bashford was preaching. He said to me: 'I am about persuaded to be a Christian. If you will go with me to-morrow I will settle it.'" His mother said to him: "I cannot go, I have an engagement." Writing to me, she said: "To my shame, I confess that my engagement was at a card party. I kept the engagement and my boy never went back to the Church. I wrote to him like this: 'Dear Son,—Your mother's heart is broken. When you were a little boy, and your father insisted that I should have you sleep alone, I put you in the cradle and you cried yourself to sleep. When I woke I saw your arms stretched out towards me. Now, my boy, it is your mother, with her face tear-stained, who is stretching out her arms for you. Please come.'" I saw the minister ten years afterwards and asked him about it, and he said that the boy had never come to Christ. He was absolutely unmoved. Some of us in this city might speak and have no power. Might preach and plead and fail. We must get right with God. To your knees! To your knees!

When they reached the tomb, Mary and Martha and Jesus, the sisters were weeping. Almost the sweetest words I know are these: "Jesus wept." Tell me this. Did you ever know a revival that did not begin with a baptism of tears? Tell me, did you ever have a revival by just appointing commit-

tees, organizing a choir, and putting money into the treasury? No! I will tell you when revivals come. They come when men begin to say to their ministers: Pastor, will you pray for my family? When mothers come to the evangelist and say: Pray for my boy. When wives are so deeply interested that they say: If my husband does not come, I shall die. When signs like these appear, then make ready. I remember an experience in the village church in New York, where I was a pastor in my early ministry. I had been preaching for a long time, but there was no yielding of hearts. I called my officers together and asked them to tell me what was wrong. They could not answer me. There was an old farmer in the congregation whose name was Herman Kramer. He could not pray in public, nor could he sing or speak. On the next morning after I had talked to the officers, he hitched up his horse to the cutter. A snow-storm had come in the night, and the fences were covered. This man of seventy years of age got into his sleigh and drove four miles across the fields and fences until he came to a blacksmith shop. Hitching his horse on the outside, he went in to where the young blacksmith was hammering away on his anvil. The blacksmith looked up and said: "Mr. Kramer, what in the world brought you here?" All he could do was to catch hold of the blacksmith's bench with one hand to steady himself from falling. Reaching out his other

hand, he said: "Your father and I were friends from boyhood. When he died I promised him that I would look after you and try to lead you to Christ. I have never spoken to you about your soul. Oh, Tom!" That was all he said, and he turned back home. It was not long before the blacksmith came to the meetings, driving through a blinding snow-storm. When he gave his testimony, he said: "I have never been moved by a sermon in my life, but when Herman Kramer stood there sobbing in my shop, I said to myself, it is about time Tom Funston was in earnest himself." Revivals come with tears.

When Jesus stood by the grave, I can hear Him saying: "Take ye away the stone." He could have done it Himself, but the Master will not do what you must do yourself. His word to us tonight is: "Take away the stone." I am speaking to you all in a kindly spirit, but I testify to you that there will never be a revival until many of us take away the stones that are in the way. Some man has not spoken to his boy about Christ. Someone who calls himself a Christian has never said a word to any of his employees. Talk about the difficulties between capital and labor—I believe there would be no such thing if the spirit of Jesus controlled both sides.

Take away the stone. When they took away the stone at the grave of Lazarus, can you not see Him? Hallelujah! What a Saviour! I can shut my eyes

and see Him as He stooped down and looked into the tomb. I can hear Him say: "Lazarus, come forth." Mr. Moody once said that He called him by name because if He had said, "Come forth," everybody who was dead would have heard Him and gotten up ahead of time. So He said: "Lazarus, come forth." Your boy might be saved to-night. Your girl, your husband, if you would take away the stone. Oh, if we would begin to do this, there would not be an indifferent Christian left in this city. The floodgates would be opened and God's power would pour forth. Now, my friends, I have preached my sermon. I have nothing else to say, except that my heart aches and my soul longs to see the power of God manifested here. Frequently, in Australia, when Mr. Alexander led the choir in a song called "Someone's Denying the Master To-night," it was hardly necessary for me to preach. I saw eight hundred men one night pressing their way into the inquiry room and dropping on their knees to say: "I yield." I saw them rising up and singing: "He breaks the power of cancelled sin, He sets the prisoner free."

Let me say the text over again: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." There can be no doubt about it. Maybe you are a Christian, and maybe you are not. Let us get right with God now. Let us open our hearts to His Spirit.

Blessed God, our Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, we pray that the Spirit may



search us to-night. We pray that everything that is wrong may be taken away from us. Let the Holy Ghost come like a fire upon us. Oh, our God, if there is anything in our lives that stands in the way, take it from us. Oh, God, do not let us drift from Thee. Do not let us be a barrier in the way of others. In Jesus' precious Name. Amen!

## II

### CHASED OUT OF THE WORLD

**H**ERE is a striking Old Testament text—  
Job 18:18: “He shall be driven from  
light into darkness and chased out of the  
world.” This eighteenth chapter of Job is a de-  
scription of a sinner, and the eighteenth verse is  
the climax of the story. The man who has resisted  
God has come to the end. There could hardly be  
a better description than this: “He shall be driven  
from light into darkness and chased out of the  
world.” A remarkable text found in a remarkable  
book. I have been praying God that the results of  
this service may also be remarkable.

The driver is Satan, and the one driven is a  
human soul. Let me give you the text once more,  
for if you forget every word of my sermon and sim-  
ply remember the text, you will do well: “He  
shall be driven from light into darkness and chased  
out of the world.” This is not the way the evil one  
begins. He begins by wooing. He starts with  
fascination. He never comes at once with hoofs  
of iron, and a tail. He comes in the most sooth-  
ing way possible. He allures in every way, but  
when the end comes, my text is the description of  
his last lash. From light into darkness and  
chased out of the world.

I do not believe that men and women would start in the ways of sin if they could see the end from the beginning. Not a great while ago a young woman in Newark, New Jersey, graduated from one of our great institutions. She was the child of honoured parents. Her father was a man of wealth and position. She began a life of sin in college. It started with an innocent game of cards and an occasional taste of wine. Before she reached the end of her college career she was disgraced and dishonoured. Within a short time after she left college the girl, who would naturally have taken the honours of her class, was seated in a hovel where sin had driven her, within three blocks of her father's mansion. Feeling that the end had come, she put a revolver to her temple and went speeding into the presence of God. I know that no girl in this city would start in sin if she saw the end.

My great alarm about sin is this—that we begin in such small ways. You have a temper and you do not curb it. You have a passion and you do not bind it. You have a disposition to say unkind words, or to take things that do not belong to you. You take the name of God in vain. You look at a picture that is not pure. You hear a tale that is not clean. I am alarmed, because in that way men and women start in the way of sin. When they reach the end, my text is a true description.

Mr. Alexander and I were crossing the Tay

river in Scotland a little while ago. We went over on the new bridge. It is a marvel of mechanical skill. Just as we had fairly gotten on the bridge, looking out of a window on the right I saw some great iron girders rising out of the river. The guard on the train said to me: "That is the wreck of the old Tay bridge." I recalled the incident. When that old bridge was completed everybody said that it was perfect. But one night, while an express was thundering across, suddenly the whole bridge shivered and went down. Scores of people were killed, and many were seriously injured. When the Government made a careful study, they found that there was just one blister in the iron of one of the girders. It had been overlooked, but it was enough to weaken the girder. So the Tay bridge went down with a crash. One little place of weakness may be enough. I say again to-night that I am concerned because sin starts in such small ways. It seems such an insignificant thing to do some little doubtful act, but the first thing you know you have taken the next step. There are some of our social customs that look innocent, but in some cases they lead to gambling. I know what I am talking about to-night when I say that it is easier to save a drunkard or a libertine than to save a gambler. When a man has a passion for gambling it burns like a fever in his veins. I have had men stand before me and say that they would cut off their right hands and pluck out one of their

eyes, if they could but undo the harm that had been done to them through gambling. Watch against the beginnings of sin.

Let me give you a picture of the text. We are in darkness by nature. I know that this is an old-fashioned thing to say. Some people tell us that if Adam ever existed at all, he never fell, and that if he fell he fell upward. But this is not true. We know perfectly well that everybody since Adam has come into the world with a twist in his nature. We are by nature in darkness. We are bound by sin. If you do not think you are a slave to sin, try to give your sin up. A man staggered up to this platform the other night, tears running down his cheeks, and when I put my arm around his shoulder, he sobbed as if his heart would break. "You are going to turn to Christ?" I asked him. "My God!" he replied, "If I only could. If I only could." Sin is slavery. Not only so, but we read in God's Word that we are dead in trespasses and sins.

What is the cure? Some people say that all a man needs to be delivered from sin, is better sanitary conditions, better environment, better moral surroundings. This cannot be true. And the reason is plain. The trouble is on the inside of your life. Sin is there, and being there it binds you and blinds you. It makes you quite helpless.

But there is a way of escape. I do not think that I have told you of the day when we were sum-

moned by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, in Australia, to hold our services, which were scheduled for the afternoon, at noon-time. The Lord Mayor sent word that the mounted police would clear the streets unless we came at once. The building was opened. The crowd was pushed in by the policemen and twenty pickpockets, who had been following us around, were shoved in at the same time. One of these men heard a sermon for the first time in fourteen years. He was impressed. When I came out of the service a letter was placed in my hands which read like this: "Please pray for me, for I am an outcast, a pickpocket, and utterly hopeless." I found that man and took him to my room. He got down on his knees. I heard him cry to God for deliverance. He told me that he had been in prison fourteen times. If he went again, it would be for life. I saw him converted, there in my own room. Before his conversion his eyes were close-set, his brow low and unshapely, his fingers long and tapering. He would approach you like a sneak thief. After conversion the very shape of his face seemed to change. His eyes seemed to widen. His fingers looked different. When we crossed the sea he came to America with us. He began to study in a Bible School. He took every prize. One day he came to me, saying: "I think I have a call to preach." I said: "If you have, I will do everything to help you that I can." He entered the Theological Seminary. Two years later the Presi-

dent wrote to me: "Of all the men we have here your man is the leader in spiritual power. He is the greatest of them all." He graduated with honor. Five years from the time he staggered into our meeting a pickpocket, a thief, five years to the very day, he was seated in a church as an ordained minister, celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. To-day he is pastor of a church in this country, and a magnificent pastor. If sin is bondage and darkness and death, there is a way of escape, and that is for the sinner to cry out, "God, be merciful to me a sinner."

It is wonderful how the light begins to break in, how the Holy Spirit begins to strive. With men in their state of darkness the Spirit comes in small ways. A man hears the gospel message here and something seems to say to him: "I ought to be a Christian." The light is already breaking in. Another man says to himself: "If I only were true. My God! How I would like to be true." The light is almost in. Another man, two-thirds back in this center section, half arose, but sank back into his seat. He could not be persuaded to come forward. The light was struggling to get in. To-night the Spirit of God is in this meeting. I know He is here. When my friends were singing, and Mr. Alexander was leading, when the minister was praying, I knew that the Spirit was here. I know that He is here at this moment and He is pleading. Pleading with those of you whose mothers started

you right, with those of you whose fathers taught you about God, with those of you to whom the ministers have preached for years. The Spirit is here and the light is trying to get in. Now, the text again: "He shall be driven from light into darkness."

How does Satan do that? Well, he goes to the man who says I wish I were free, and says to him: "Be careful. You have a greater freedom than the people in the Church. If you do this thing at all, do it secretly. Don't walk down that aisle. Don't make a spectacle of yourself. Tell the minister you will join the Church, but you won't do it in his way." While the tempter does not altogether drive out the light in this way, he goes a long way toward doing it. He comes to one who was almost persuaded to rise this afternoon, and says: "Be careful. You will not hold out. If you start and fail, people will point their fingers at you." I stand here this evening as a minister of the Gospel to say: "No, *you* cannot hold out." Neither can I in my own strength. But I know of One whose story is written in this Book. One who puts round about us His everlasting arms and holds us up. When the waves beat against us, when temptations beset us, when trials are upon us, then He holds us fast. Some of you men are listening and you are almost persuaded, but the Devil is telling you falsehoods. He is trying to drive you out into the darkness.



This is not all. Satan may use conscience as a whip. Some of you have committed sins that you would not dare tell to anyone. Let me say that sometimes it is a very dangerous thing to make confessions to men. Of course, if you have wronged another, then you must make the wrong right. If you have stolen money, you must make restitution and ask forgiveness. But the devil comes to you and says: "That old sin of yours!" Then he lashes you. Yes, he fairly lashes your memory. And facing the memory of your sin, you are afraid. There is a woman in this city of advanced years. She would take her stand for Christ but for this. I have heard it, not from her lips, but through one who is a friend of hers. This aged woman feels that if she should take her stand for Christ now, and ask for membership in the Church, the Church people would turn against her and shun her. I am standing here as the representative of the Church in this city, and I say that Satan is using this thought as a lash to drive this woman from the light into the darkness.

When we were in Springfield, a woman came to the front whose face had a strange look. She was introduced to me by a gentleman. Later the gentleman came to me and said: "The name I gave you is not her name. She has been a wicked woman in this city for years. About five years ago she gave up her life of sin, closed her house of shame, and for these years has lived a good life to

the best of my knowledge. She has tried to undo her past sins and the effect of them. She wants me to ask you this. Are you prepared to say that if she takes her stand for Jesus Christ the churches will receive her? She is afraid." So I turned to one of the leading ministers of the city, pastor of one of the great churches, a very conservative church. I told him the story. He sent a message to the woman, saying to her: "Come into our church. You are as welcome as anybody in the city. Our ladies will call upon you, and I will put your name on our books, for I believe Christ has written it in heaven." Some of you are almost persuaded, but the devil is lifting up your past sins and telling you that if you turn to Christ these sins will have to be answered for. I say to you that if you will turn to Jesus Christ to-night, Christ Himself will answer for your sins, and the doors of the Church will be thrown wide open to you. Don't let Satan drive you from light into darkness and chase you out of the warmth of the spiritual world.

I want to close with this. Put your hands over your eyes and think. Did you ever see a Christian die? How about your mother, and what about your father? When William Ewart Gladstone died, he had his room full of singing birds, and just as he was passing away, he said: "Our Father who art in heaven." When William McKinley was dying, and the doctor said to him:

"Mr. President, this is the end," he smiled back and said: "If this is the end, sing a hymn," and they sang the hymn which we all call McKinley's hymn,—“Nearer, My God, to Thee.” When the great evangelist Dwight L. Moody died, his son Will was by his side. They thought Moody had gone, but he came back, as it were, from the skies. With a radiant face he said to his son: “Will, this is wonderful, perfectly wonderful. Earth is receding, heaven is advancing.”

Tell me this, did you ever see a godless man die? I asked this question one evening at a meeting, and a physician rose in the meeting and said: “I have seen two to-day, sir, and God keep me from ever seeing another.” The text is a true description. Driven from light into darkness and chased out of the world. Oh, to have no hope! No Saviour! How dark the world is without Him. But the end is not yet here. You are here in life and strength. You have the power to decide. God is waiting to serve you, men and women. For the sake of Jesus Christ, turn. For the sake of your people, turn. For the sake of the town in which you live, turn. For the sake of these ministers who are anxious about you, turn. Husbands and wives come forward together. How wonderful that would be! Turn to-night! What a memorable meeting this would be if a stream of people would push their way up to the front, finding their way into

the light. Don't let Satan drive you from light into darkness and chase you out of the world. Christians, turn to your friends by your side and say one word,—Come!

### III

#### ETERNITY

**M**Y text this evening is one word. Ever since I have been a minister I have asked God to help me say two words and say them properly. It is said that Whitefield used to say "Oh!" in such a fashion that his hearers were convicted of sin and some of them would cry out for mercy. The first word that I would like to say properly is "Lost." I have never yet spoken it as it ought to be uttered. I have tried my best and failed. If I could say it as the Son of God appreciated it when, fainting beneath the weight of the Cross, He staggered up Calvary's hill, I would not need to preach. To me it is the most striking word in the English language. The other word I have asked God to help me say is the word of my text. It is written in Isaiah 57:15. It is the word "ETERNITY."

A thousand years from to-night we shall be somewhere. Ten thousand years from to-night. Increase the multiple and you only increase the truth. How can a man speak a word that takes in the ages of time and all beyond it. ETERNITY! The old cobbler sat day after day on his little bench, hammering away at the shoes, and before him was an

*A fac-simile of Dr. Chapman's sermon notes,  
showing the outline of the last sermon he preached,  
Dec. 15, 1918, ten days before his death.*

"LORD TO WHOM SHALL WE GO" John 6:68

Many Pathetic | Stoning  
Whom. men say? Now TEXT  
Reg of Ministry | Judea | Of | Cannot Ask  
Went Gal | Rand | May go "

In all Ages - been sifting | I see them leaving | TEXT

1. Intel. Dif { sop - give up what then?  
easier { Spoil - flower { My  
Mar pict { own  
Injure stat { EX
2. Trial -  
"Ye heariness" { 94 souls - always -  
Heart strings snapped.  
What gave him?

God holds the key of all unknown,  
And I am glad;  
If other hands should hold the key,  
Or if He trust'd it to me,  
I might be sad.

The very dimness of my sight  
Makes me secure;  
For groping in my misty way,  
I feel His hand - I hear Him say,  
"My help is sure."

3. Sin { slowly { fellowship - strained  
surely { for one brief moment -  
What gain if go on? | Acc Con  
Sleepless  
High

I What old sin it is?

Reg. Adam - Flood. Israel - time xt | Not str  
NOW

1. Some dead - some Run - James -  
or Judas -

2. Some Reg. Means grace | Bible  
Prayer Tichen  
Confess Some  
Reg Church

II

To what ove Assoc kt?

Do not forget Gods Sovereign Grace

1. Birth - John McNeil -
2. Parental Consecration (Indian)

III

Reasons not hearing -

"Too many Mysteries | our firmament  
Cannot of Creation | 18 Mil - Sm  
+ Beyond That

I prefer stand firm } made stars Gen 1:16 } Cannot think  
 } Talents No. Ps 147:4 } Chance  
 } Holes in hand Rev 2:1 }  
 Some call - Sup Mind - 1st Cause = I God

A still small voice in childhood  
 A beckoning hand in youth  
 An impulse prompting Justice  
 A heart inclined to truth -  
 A firm resolve to follow  
 The path where saints have trod  
 Some people call that Conscience  
 And others call it God

A will to face the darkness  
 Of life's last setting sun -  
 An uncomplaining spirit  
 When the race of life is run  
 Or we lay our best loved treasure  
 Beneath the wounded sod.  
 Some people call it courage  
 And others call it God

2. Cannot account for Sof | Hear Isa 43:2-3  
 3. No help for Sinner | Away fr Him | Survival | fitment  
 | With Him | Hard  
 | | Just  
 | | Forg

Let imag. Away -

1. No Bible - | hard ship - Without ship  
 Bible | Ho Thirsteth " Thirst  
 says | Refuge " No-hope  
 | Come Me " Heart Break

2. No Sar - ☉ to have no Hope

3. No hope death When | Stone rolled Aq Door  
 Carry | Say Good bye End  
 With Xt | Gran Lost hct dead  
 | Heat " St  
 | We meet Aq }





old-fashioned clock. After a while he thought that the pendulum of the clock was speaking to him and he heard it say as it swung one way,—*Eternity*, and when it went the other way,—*Where?* And the old clock became a preacher and he heard it speaking like this: “Eternity, where? Eternity, where?” The question is a solemn one. Eternity, where?

The word becomes all the greater when I add to it a part of the verse in which the text is found: “The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.” What a subject for thought is here. I speak of this One and they tell me that He is omnipresent, that is, everywhere. I speak again of Him and they say that He is omnipotent, that is, all-powerful. I talk of Him again and they tell me that He is omniscient, that is, all-knowing. We have come in contact with great minds. This is the greatest. We have been influenced by great personalities. This is an infinite personality. When I put these words together, the statement of my text is startling. “One that inhabiteth eternity.” He is infinite. He is eternal. He is unchangeable. Eternity is the place of His abode.

Answer me this question: Where will you spend eternity? Nobody can answer it but you. If I could answer it for you, God knows I would. If the mother who wrote this request that I hold in my hand and said: “My heart will break if my boy is not saved”—if she could answer this ques-

tion for her boy, I know she would. God has placed the power of choice and determination in our hands. God may love, and Jesus may die, and the Spirit may plead, but you alone can settle the question of eternity. Answer me this: Where will you spend eternity?

I was preaching in Lincoln, Nebraska, when a professor of mathematics stepped up behind me and said: "Eternity begins where computation ends." I said: "Professor, what does that mean?" "It means this," he said, "that when the man with the greatest mind the world has known thinks his way out and out and out into the future, and his mind fails because it can go no farther, that is the beginning of eternity." There is no end. Sometimes men try to measure the depth of dark caverns, but the plummet is not long enough. So they measure the depth like this: They take a stop-watch in one hand and a piece of rock in the other, and note the time when the rock drops from their fingers, and listen as it strikes the bottom, noting the time it has taken to fall. If you know the weight of the rock and the time of falling, you can measure with some degree of accuracy the depth of the darkness. They tell me that sometimes they let a stone fall and there comes back no answer from below. To-night I stand on the edge of the precipice of time, and I cry up into the light and into the darkness: "How long art thou, Eternity?" I get the answer from this Book. "The

peace of the righteous is everlasting. The doom of the wicked is without end."

Where will you spend it? I have no apology to make this evening for asking you to think about Eternity when there are so many problems in time. I have no apology for asking you to think about the future when on all sides of us there is the cry of the needy, burdens that must be lifted, and tears that must be wiped away. I cry out for this reason. A man is never fitted for time until he is prepared for eternity.

One of the members of my household was dying. She came to the time of crisis. The doctor took her pulse. It was six o'clock. "She will pass the crisis at midnight," he said. I remember how we stood and watched her white face, and then the clock. The hands seemed never to move. Every second was a minute. Every minute longer than an hour. Six hours seemed an age. If every day were like that, we should still have no conception of eternity. When my father slipped away into eternity, one of his friends gave me his pocketbook. I opened it and found inside a piece of poetry, stained on one side as if with tears, and pasted together on the other as if worn with much reading. Some of the verses I remember after all these years:

" How long sometimes a day appears,  
And weeks, how long are they.

Months move as if the years  
Would never pass away.

But days and weeks are passing by,  
And soon must all be gone.  
For day by day as moments fly,  
Eternity comes on.

Days, months, and years must have an end,  
Eternity has none.  
'Twill always have as long to spend,  
As when at first begun."

Tell me, this evening, where will you spend it? Here in this world you have crowded God out of your life. You have lost consideration of Him. You have divorced your business from Him. You have built your home without Him. You are training your children without Him. Yet you were made for God. Nothing less than God can satisfy you. If I had a place on which to stand and could hurl into space a million worlds like ours, I could never fill space. When I open my Bible, I read in the Psalms: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Whether I climb up into the light or go down into the darkness, in the day-time, in the night-time, I find God. Only God can fill space and only God can fill my life.

You are going out into Eternity. God pity you. Oh, to have no hope, no Saviour. How long and dark the way is. Answer me this question: Do

you not think that in these days, especially these prosperous days, we are thinking too much of time and all too little of Eternity? There is a great war filling the world at this moment, and we are a neutral nation. Multitudes of homes in the nations of Europe have marks of mourning upon them. I received a letter this morning from a friend in Glasgow. He wrote me about one of our dear friends. He said: "Lady Maclay is aging rapidly." Grief for her lost boy is turning her life into winter. When that great day came, June 29th, and the British soldiers charged on the Dardanelles, her boy went down in a moment. And here are we, in this great protected nation, with no roar of cannon and no breaking of hearts. We are pursuing wealth and pleasure. We are forgetting God. I want to ask you this question: Do you think that we ought to be called to serious thought? I am neither a prophet nor a son of a prophet, but I know what will come to America if in her pursuit after pleasure and her love of power she continues to forget God. Judgment will fall. Judgment! I tremble for the country that will not hear when God speaks, and for the man who builds for time and has no thought of the future.

Answer me this question: Do you really think that men at heart are indifferent? Let your mind run over the list of men you know. Do you think that they are indifferent? I do not. I know men fairly well. I know what they sometimes say with their

lips. If I were to go through your shops and some of the workmen would tell me they were not interested in God, I should know they were not speaking the truth. If I were to go through your college halls and some student would say that he was not interested in spiritual things, I should know that he was speaking falsely. They are not indifferent. You walk the streets some day and your best friend passes you and you never see him. You take your seat by the fireside with the newspaper that you never read a line of. You were saying as you walked the streets, or as you sat by the fireside, or as you tossed restlessly upon your pillow: "God! Eternity! My soul! What must I do to be saved?"

A Christian gentleman went to one of the judges in the state of Georgia and said: "Judge, I hear that you and your wife are to separate." He was highly indignant, and said: "Sir, that is an insult. No two people in this world have loved each other more devotedly. Separate! Nothing could separate us." His friend said: "But, Judge, your wife is a Christian. She is far from well, and the doctor tells me that she cannot live long, and you are not a Christian. Your wife will go straight to God. You are turning your back on Him." The old judge stood with tears running down his cheeks and lips trembling as he said: "My God! I never thought of that."

Men are not indifferent. Answer me this: Are

you reckless? A friend of mine crossed the Alps, and in crossing he came to a dangerous pathway, not much wider than my two hands. Deep abysses yawned on either side. He was a courageous mountain climber, but he said: "I shall not cross it." The guide, throwing away his alpenstock and putting his hand over his eyes, started on the narrow pathway, making his way carefully across, until at last he turned and beckoned to my friend. This old Book that I hold in my hand says: The path of life is a hand's breadth, and life itself is a vapor. With no desire to appeal to your emotions, I say what every doctor would warrant me in saying: There is one heart beat between you and Eternity. Yet you hold back as I plead with you, as your old mother prays for you, as your wife is in agony about you, as the ministers are heartbroken over you—and to-morrow, to-morrow may be Eternity. Got pity you. I do not understand you. Why do you not come to Jesus?

Answer me this: Are you satisfied? I mean the man without God. I had a dear friend in my first pastorate in New York. He was the president of the village. A great warm-hearted man. I loved him devotedly and he returned my affection. The devil tripped him and he began to drink. I hate the devil for that. It has often seemed to me that men like my friend are just the men the devil trips up. Not narrow, stingy men,—he has them anyway—but big hearts, big men. So my friend went



down. When he had no home I took him into mine, but he would not stay. He was a great friend to me in the days of his prosperity. I was pastor of two little churches, and every Sunday I went up the Hudson and preached at my second church. I had to hire a horse and buggy, and I had about as much money as country ministers usually have. It cut in on my savings. One day I heard a ring at the door, and there stood my friend with a big fur coat on. He said: "Hurry, hurry." I thought there was some danger near, and so ran and put on my coat. He took me by the arm and around to the rear of the house, and there, hitched to the telegraph pole, was a gray horse and cutter. I have seen a good many horses in my time, but that one was perfection.

We got into the cutter and drove to the river where the ice was three feet thick. We drove four miles up the river, and then he put the reins in my hands and said: "Now, you drive." No little boy sitting beside his father was ever prouder than I was when I took the reins in my hands. When we got to the end of the drive, we came to my house and stepped out of the cutter. It was at that moment that he threw his arm around my shoulder and said: "This is yours." Imagine my delight. And the devil got that splendid friend of mine. One night I saw him all in rags, and I went to him and said: "Thank God, you are coming back." "Not so fast," he said. "But you are.

Mr. D——, think about your old mother.” She was dead then. “Remember your wife and boy.” The boy was dead. I had buried him. Nothing moved my friend. Finally, I said: “You are not satisfied, are you?” He sprang to his feet and held on to the back of the chair, swaying for the moment as if he would fall, and said a thing that I can hear him saying now. “Satisfied! What has it cost me? I, the president of the village, and homeless. My mother dead of shame, my wife in the insane asylum, my boy in his grave. Satisfied!”

No man in all this world is satisfied without God. You are not. To-night as I close my appeal I say to every man in this building: In God’s name, why don’t you turn? Why don’t you turn? Drifting, drifting, drifting, out into the sea of Eternity! And I stand lifting the warning cry: Why don’t you turn? Tell me why. The very atmosphere of this place seems filled with God. It may be that God is giving some of you your last call. The door is open and it may shut again. Turn now. Why will you die?

You know this old story. I happen to know the real truth about it, for a friend of mine was in a way associated with it. On the Harlem railroad, a man kept the bridge. It was an old-fashioned draw-bridge that turned with man power. You remember how he got a message to keep the bridge shut because a special was coming. However, just

as the order came he heard the whistle of a little tug boat, and saw that he only needed to throw the bridge a little to let the tug boat through with her flagstaff. After he had let the tug through he turned to throw the bridge back and something was out of order. He bent to his task, pulling and pushing. The sweat came in great drops from his brow. An agonizing cry rose from his heart. The special came down the track and through the open bridge, and scores of people were killed. The keeper of the drawbridge was a man under fifty, and in the night his hair turned as white as snow. My friend went to where they kept him until he died, and the man walked up and down in his little padded cell like a caged tiger, by day and by night, rarely sleeping. One thing he kept saying over and over again: "Oh, if I only had. If I only had. If I only had." When he became exhausted he would fall on his cot, only to rise again and say: "Oh, if I only had."

To-night the door is wide open and people are praying and God is waiting. It would be an awful thing to go out into Eternity saying: "If I only had." To-night I plead with you. I think God has sent me to some of you to give you another call. These meetings are going on because God in his mercy is flinging wide the door once more. Come in. Come in. You fathers here, you can never expect your boys to go in unless you go yourself.

If my mother had not been a sweet, consistent Christian, dying at thirty-four, I wonder where I should have been. You young men, you boys and girls, everybody, come in!

## IV.

### SOWING AND REAPING

**I** AM bringing to you what I think is a very solemn subject. I have no apology for speaking on solemn themes, for we are living in a day when many people seem to be turning to light and trifling things. We have reached a time when men regard God lightly. In fact, many seem to have put Him out of their thoughts. It used to be, in olden days, that men were afraid when they sinned. When they transgressed God's law they thought of judgment, and their minds went forward to the thought of final punishment. Now men sin with impunity. They brush God aside. They appear to think that if there be a God at all, they can escape His judgment. They are clever and rich. They are too important for judgment. So I bring you to-night a message which I hope and pray may help us all to think. It is a comparatively easy matter to lead people to Christ if they will only think.

The text is in Galatians 6:7—"Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Do you not see how this fits in with my preliminary statement? Stop a minute and think about God. He is infinite. He

is eternal. He is omnipotent. And if you resist Him to the end, His power must be against you. He is omniscient. He knows what we are thinking about and what we are doing. What we say and do is written, and one day the books will be opened. He is omnipresent. He is everywhere. He is here to-night as I magnify Jesus Christ. He was in your room last night when you sinned against Him. He was in the drug store when you slipped in and bought drink against the law. He sees you in the darkness of the night and in the brightness of the noonday. He is always about you. Think of His greatness. He holds the winds in the hollow of His hands. He speaks and it is done.

Now come back to the text again—Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. What does this mean? I will tell you exactly. It means that God is not to be ignored. Many of us have actually done this in our actions, if not in our thoughts. The revelation contained in the Bible counts for nothing. The gift of His Son Jesus Christ—you are not bothering about it. The love of God—you have no use for it. You have turned your back upon God.

But the text says: Be not deceived. God is not to be mocked. You may think you can mock Him, but some day you will face Him. Oh, it is well enough to think that you can get along without God when you are well and your family circle is un-

broken and your friends are many. But some day, with a broken heart, and broken health, and a broken family circle, and friends forsaking you, where will you be when you have reached the end?

You remember the old story of the stage driver who was so profane that the people who travelled with him marvelled at his profanity when he led such a hazardous life. They wondered that he would risk blasphemy. They talked of Christ, only to hear His name blasphemed. People who came to like him urged him to become a Christian, but he resisted all pleas. At last he came to the end. He was dying. They thought that he had gone, when suddenly they saw one foot moving and they heard him say in a whisper: "I am on the down grade and I can't find the brake." Some day, some day, men and women who have resisted God, spurned His love, and trampled it beneath their feet, will come to their end and they will not be able to find the brake. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

There is a general principle of judgment which runs all through God's book. If you start in Genesis and go through to Revelation, you will find the thought mentioned many times. But I should like to speak particularly of two judgments. Watch very carefully, if you please. Revelation 20:11— "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven

fled away; and there was found no place for them." Can you stand a judgment like that? If there has been a record made of your life to the present time, all your profanity, your intemperance, your impurity,—answer me, could you stand that? It goes on to say, "and the books were opened." Down South the colored people have a song that they always sing in the minor key. It runs like this: "He sees all we do. He hears all we say. My God's a writing all the time." We, too, are writing our own record. I am writing, and so are you. That sin of yours last night that your mother does not know about,—it is written down. That sin that your wife does not know about,—it has made its record. That sin you committed in Pittsburgh, in London, that sin of yours in Chicago, that sin committed in New York. I was saying this in Scotland, and Mr. Alexander said I went far afield to say, "that sin committed in New York," for the people in Scotland had never seen New York. At the close of the service three men came forward, and one of them said: "You have uncovered a sin I have tried to hide for years. I went to New York for five days, and was so far away from home that I thought I might give way. I sinned, and I have covered it over all my life. I thought no one would know it." The surest thing about sin is that it makes its mark. The books, God's books and your book, shall be opened. Hear the text again—



Be not deceived. God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Not a very great while ago, on Long Island, not many miles from my home, a young woman turned away from her husband. He was a man of wealth and position. No one ever knew why she left him. She went away with another man very much her social inferior. Her husband's heart was broken. He did everything he could. He wrote and sent messages to her. He sent his father after her. She would not return. There was only one thing to do to protect his name and household, because her sin was so very great, and that was to divorce her. He was forced to do it. She married her companion in sin and all seemed to go well, but one day the New York papers contained an announcement that she and her companion were dead. They had died in a New York hotel together. She left this letter: "My friends, Fred and I have been young and heedless and cynical, living in this great wicked city of New York. We have often laughed at what the preachers say. We have often sneered at the words: 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,' and 'The wages of sin is death.' People say it is old foggism. Fred and I know better. We are reaping the harvest and we cannot stand it."

It seems to me as I stand here this evening, that I am preaching to some person who needs my message. It may be that God has sent you here to

listen to what I am saying. The time has come when someone must speak for God to you and say: Be not deceived. God is not mocked. If you sow you will reap. Of course, if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you have nothing to do with the "great white throne of judgment." I was a Christian for years before I knew this. I had thought that I should have to stand face to face with God and hear His "depart" or "welcome," but there is nothing like this in the Bible. If I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, I have already appeared in judgment in his person, and I shall never stand in judgment again. But unless I take Him, unless I yield to Him, and in sincere and honest repentance turn from sin, then judgment is awaiting me.

So many young men seem to think that they can sow their wild oats with impunity. I have heard men say that wild oats must be sown, but hear me when I say, if you sow your wild oats you will reap the same harvest, the same harvest! Just so surely as God lives and you do not repent, hear me, one day the reaping time will come. I am greatly concerned about men who do not come to Christ. I have come to feel in these days as if I were preaching to my own people. I have come to know you well. I have been in intimate touch with many of the students. I have lost all thought of a promiscuous audience. It seems to me as if I were standing here pleading for my own. Hear me then,

my friends, as I say: Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. It is written plainly in God's Word. It is proved by experience. We shall reap if we sow. Sow a thought and you reap an act. Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny. It is written in God's Word that we shall reap what we sow.

A well-dressed man came to me in one of the meetings in Ohio and slipped a letter into my hand. It said: "My name is so and so. My telephone number is so and so. You may call me if you wish. I lived a wicked life before my marriage. I was false to everything that stood for manhood. I thought that I was too clever to be trapped. I married. My wife was beautiful. There came to our home a little child. I thought sunshine had come at last. I loved the child devotedly. I used to take her in my arms and fondle her, covering her face with my kisses. One day I noticed something wrong with the child and I took her to a great specialist. He came to my home and called a conference of other doctors. They went over my little baby, studying every part of her body. They came to my library, for I am a man of position and means, and they said: 'Sir, what was your life before marriage?' My God! I had to tell them that my life before marriage was in open rebellion of God's laws. Then the doctor led me over to the

side of the room and put his hand on my shoulder, and said: 'Sir, this is your harvest. Your baby will go through life, if she lives, with a twisted spine and shut eyes.'"—Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

When we were going around the world we stopped one day at Thursday Island, and there I heard a sorrowful tale. There is much leprosy on the other side of the world, especially in the tropics. One day, not far from Thursday Island, it was found that a little boy and girl belonging to a good home were lepers. The laws are very strict, and while the wealth of the father of the children was great, it was decided that the family should live alone on another island. The mother stole away with the children and was lost in Sidney for two years, until, strange to say, her children were admitted to the schools. Then the law found them again and they were taken back to the vicinity of Thursday Island, and the law began its operation. The children were separated from the family and sent to the leper island. But how did they become lepers? How? The mother, with her love of social position, thought the cares of motherhood too heavy, so she had a South Sea Island woman to care for her children, and she was leprous. This was the story, and when I heard it and saw what a harvest had come to that woman for the seeds she had sown, I could not withhold my tears. It

is hard to sin when sin hurts yourself and tosses you on your bed so that you cannot sleep, and you say: Will the morning never come? But it is harder still to sin and to hurt one's wife and children, or other dear ones. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

I have come to the close of my appeal. I do not need to preach longer. In the light of my text to-night, I say to all of you that we reap the harvest of what we have sown. The harvest may be an impaired will, a ruined character, injury and sorrow to others. Hear me again,—be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. My heart grieves for any sinner who stays away from the Saviour. I have a mind to give my place on the platform to someone else, so that I might go back through the building to this one and that one, and say: Turn ye! Turn ye! For why will you die? I have a mind to lay hold upon you and compel you to come, for there is only one way in all this world to escape the law of which I am speaking. That way is this: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Can I say any more than this? God help you! Some of you are sitting there and saying to yourselves: "I am too timid." Come down when

the crowd rises. Some of you are saying: "I can settle it here." It would be worth everything for you to come out in the open and walk down this aisle. Come forward and let me take your hand, and let me hear you say: "God being my helper, I am going to turn to Christ to-night." Now is the time.

## IV

### “WHERE IS ABEL THY BROTHER?”

**Y**OU will find my text in Genesis 4:9—  
“Where is Abel thy brother?” When the first man had sinned and was seeking to get away from God, God went seeking him and saying: Where art thou? The first question put by God to man had to do with his personal relationship to God. The second question has to do with man’s relation to his brother. I bring you this second question: Where is Abel thy brother?

Stop for a moment and think. Do you know where your brother is? Whether the man by your side is a Christian or not, he is your brother. Can you answer the text? Daniel Webster once said that the greatest question a man has to face is his individual responsibility to God. I know what the second greatest question is. It is the question of our relation to those about us. Cain and Abel met in the field, and in a fit of anger Cain slew his brother. God came seeking the brother, and when he put to Cain the question of the text, he fixed a mark upon Cain which he bore to his death. God always puts a mark upon us when we sin. Sometimes it is in the look of the eye. Sometimes it is in the sound of the voice, or in the way we stand.

Often there is a nervous restlessness in sin. The sad thing to me is that we transmit that mark from generation to generation. You sin to-day and fifty years from to-day someone may rise up to curse you. Sin is awful.

I have an idea that there is also a mark for faithlessness. You have lived with your husband for years, with your boy from his birth, with your Sunday School class for years, with your associate in business for years, and never a word about Jesus. In one of our meetings I saw a woman sobbing violently. I took my place by her side, and all I could get her to say was: “I never warned him.” Finally, to another minister she said: “I was betrothed to a gentleman. I loved him dearly. I had been a member of the church since childhood. I knew he was not saved. Last week he died. I never warned him.”

I believe there is a great opportunity here for a sweeping revival. Hearts are open. Men and women are awaiting approach. But I know this also, that hundreds of people in this city will never be saved unless you approach them first. I wish I could persuade ministers to double their efforts, to increase their visits, to give up even their pulpit preparation and go from house to house, and street to street, saying: I beseech you be reconciled to God. I wish I could persuade every Christian Sunday School scholar in this building to resolve, before leaving this service, to speak to someone



about Jesus. To-morrow night we would see them pressing their way into the Kingdom like doves to their windows.

Often there is only a word needed. Not a great while ago a friend of mine told me of a young fellow entering the ministry. My friend asked him how he gave himself to Christ and to the ministry. His answer was this: "I was a caddy on a golf course. Monday morning, the Hon. Hugh Hanna, of Indianapolis, came to play. I was his caddy. He turned to me and said: 'I suppose you are much rested this morning.' 'No, sir,' I said, 'I am very tired.' 'How is that,' he said. 'Because I caddied all day yesterday.' Then the Christian gentleman said to me: 'My son, you should not do that. You should keep God's day holy. Are you a Christian?' 'No, sir,' I answered, and the great man said: 'Well, my son, I wish I could help you to be a Christian. There is nothing in this world like it.'" Hugh Hanna forgot the conversation, but the boy never did. Soon he went to school. He worked his way through the university. He started on his way to the ministry. One word did it. I wish I could help you to understand, this evening, what personal influence is, how, when a life is yielded to God and the Spirit of God fills the life, God may use even a trivial thing to win a soul.

When we were in Scotland I learned an interesting fact of history, which, of course, is familiar to

many. Two hundred and fifty years ago an ordinary peddler sold a book to a comparatively unknown man. That man was Richard Baxter. He read the book and wrote “The Saints’ Everlasting Rest.” This book fell into the hands of a man named Philip Doddridge. He read it and wrote “The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.” This book in turn fell into the hands of Wilberforce. He read it and wrote “A Practical View of Christianity.” This book fell into the hands of Leigh Richmond, who wrote the “Dairyman’s Daughter.” This book fell into the hands of Thomas Chalmers, who became Scotland’s greatest preacher. He was not a Christian, he says, at the time he read the book, although he was already preaching the gospel. His soul was fired, and he dropped on his knees in his study in complete surrender. To-day they refer to him as the greatest theologian and preacher of all Scotland’s great history. A peddler on one hand, Thomas Chalmers on the other. Oh, if I could help you all to feel the power of influence.

I believe we have come to a place in these meetings where as believing men and women we must throw ourselves at the feet of the Master. Where is Abel thy brother? I think I know what the trouble in the Church is. I know that the churches do not mean to be inconsistent. Church members do not mean to turn away from the service of the Master. I resent the criticism which some hurl

against the Church. Yet I know the weakness of the Church.

When we were in England, I read in one of the London papers how two men, standing on a dock in one of the harbours, were pushed into the water. They were strong swimmers, but the tide was so swift that they were borne away from the dock. It seemed as if they would surely lose their lives. The harbour authorities were notified, but they said: This is not our business. Word was sent to the district authorities, but they replied: This is not our work. At last, the harbour people notified the Superintendent of Police, but there had been no drowning recently, and when they went for their appliances they were out of order. Finally, a man threw himself into the sea, battled his way out to where the men had last been seen, and found that they were gone.

This is an exaggerated picture of the Church. It would be an unfair criticism to say that the Church is like this, but I do know that many people in the Church are excusing themselves. They think that their minister should do all the personal work, or they think that the Sunday School teachers should make a specialty of winning souls. They can understand how, when I stand here night after night, I should preach with tears and cry out until I can plead no longer for lack of physical energy, but they do not understand that they are expected to do something themselves. God has a plan of

economy of his own. He means that every Christian, every Church member, every Sunday School teacher, every scholar, should be on the lookout for souls. Where is Abel thy brother? If all of you would help, a thousand people would be brought to Christ this week. Your leading citizens would come down these aisles. Your representative women would find their way to the front. Scores of young men and women would push their way forward.

In an Indiana city, a gentleman who is a member of Congress said that God had spoken to him very clearly. He went home and tossed on his bed all night without sleeping. He rose in the morning at five o'clock, made his way to the house of his law partner, and rang the bell. When the servant had dressed himself and opened the door, he found this distinguished man waiting. “I must see Mr. so and so,” said the visitor. In ten minutes the gentleman of the house was in the library, thinking something was wrong. The member of Congress put his arm affectionately around his friend’s shoulder and said: “Tom, you and I have loved each other for years. We were boys together in the country school. We carved our names together on the wooden desks. We have been law partners for years. I love you. I am a leader in the Church, but I have never spoken to you about your soul. Oh, Tom!” No other word was spoken. A little later I saw that friend walk down the aisle

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of a crowded church and say: "I will accept Christ as my Saviour."

Somebody must speak the word. Prayers must be sobbed out. Letters must be written. Personal visits must be made. I know how it was when I was a student in the university. When the days of revival were on, the Christian students would go from room to room, speaking to men that were careless. When work like that is being done, souls begin to flock into the Kingdom like doves to the windows. There is not a young man in the college yonder but would be moved if the right man went to him saying, with tears in his eyes: "I am concerned for you." Hear me. Where is Abel thy brother?

Suppose you had a boy who had been cured of a dangerous disease. You were fortunate in finding a doctor who understood the case. And suppose you knew of another man whose boy was dying with the same disease, and there was no doctor to cure him. Would you sit with your arms folded reading the newspaper, or looking into the fire? You would not stand on ceremony. You would not wait for an invitation. You would go to this man and say: "My boy was sick unto death. I want to introduce you to his doctor."

I was walking along the streets of London. The streets were crowded with soldiers. As I came to a little narrow alleyway I saw that the crowd was surging there, and I heard a voice say: "Won't

somebody help me?" I looked around, and there was a blind man. He could walk in the alleyway, but he was afraid of the crowd. Do you suppose that I could turn my back on a man in that plight? Hundreds of us in that crowd felt like stopping to heed his cry. Yet in this city of culture and refinement, and even of boasted education, there are people who are blind. Shall we not help them to see? Where is Abel thy brother?

There is a man in New York of great wealth. He has a country home on Long Island Sound on an island just out from the mainland. His family so enjoy the country home that they stay late into the autumn. One day this man and his son left New York for the country place. They were accustomed to go across from the mainland in a launch, but for some reason the launch was out of order, so they took a rowboat and started across. A sudden storm came up and the boat was capsized. The father could swim, but the boy could not. Both of them went down. The father came to the surface and threw his arm around his boy, shouting for help. A man on the shore heard the cry, but there was no boat at hand. The boy went down again, and again the father caught him as he came up, battling all the while with the waves. Losing hold with his hand, he caught the boy with his teeth, but the coat gave way. Shouting for help, he made one more clutch at the boy and missed him. It was the last he ever saw of him. I under-

stand that father's frenzied effort. If my boy were in physical danger I should be frantic. But if I should get a telegram saying that he was facing death and had no Saviour, I should be in an agony. I cannot understand how men are so greatly concerned about the physical danger of their loved ones and are indifferent to their spiritual danger.

Where is Abel thy brother? Tell me. I know what you are saying. You are saying just what an old man said this afternoon. One of our workers talked to him, and the old man, with tears in his eyes, kept saying: "Sometime, sometime, sometime." And you, too, are saying—sometime. You are going to speak to your boy to-morrow morning. At breakfast the bell rings and your boy is not present. You wait and he does not come. You listen for his footsteps and cannot hear them. Presently the mother comes, and pushes open the door. You can see anxiety in her face. Your boy is sick unto death. When you meet God, the question will be asked: Where is your son? Why did you never invite him? Why did you never call him? Why did you never tell him about Christ and eternal life, and the judgment? Some day he will face the judgment, and you also will face it.

I must close my message, but I must not leave this platform to-night with the impression that all the responsibility is upon me and my brethren in the ministry, or upon the Christian people of this city. I turn to you, my friend, and I say: How

about yourself? You are not a Christian, and like the old man to-day, you are saying: Sometime, sometime. In Dundee, Scotland, a wild and reckless boy broke his mother's heart. He went from one depth of sin and shame to another, and then fled from home. Blindly drunk, he made his way to a ship, and when he awoke in the morning, he was at sea on the way to Australia. They would not let him off. After a while he reached the gold fields. There he had common miner's luck, until one day he struck a pocket of gold. One nugget after another came up out of that pocket. In the morning he went out poor, and by high noon he stood with gold heaped about his feet. Of whom do you think he thought first, standing there with the gold at his feet? "Mother," he said, "I will go back to old Dundee and buy you the finest house in the city. I will get you the best car that runs." Soon he was on the sea, going back to Dundee. Arrived in the old town, he was soon standing in front of the little house. There was no light in the window, no smoke coming out of the chimney. When he rapped at the door, there was no answer. Then he went to a neighbour's house. They said to him: "Jack, stay with us until morning and we will tell you." When morning came they took him out to the churchyard. The place is not far from Mr. Carnegie's castle. Past this grave and that they went, until at length they came to a new grave. It was his mother's grave. On the front board he



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read his mother's name, and the date of her death. He got down on his knees and buried his face in his hands and sobbed as only a big man can sob. "Mother, mother," he cried, "I did love you. I did love you." The one who stood by his side later became his wife. Very gently she said to him: "Jack, you told her too late." Yes, it was too late.

Some day you expect to be saved. You want to be with your family, with your mother, in the skies. You would like to see your sweet child again who has gone on before.

"And if you still this call refuse,  
And all His wondrous love abuse;  
Soon will He sadly from you turn,  
Your bitter cry for pardon spurn.  
Too late, too late, will be the cry,  
Jesus of Nazareth has passed by."

I have finished my word to you to-night. I stand just a moment longer and say: "Where is Abel thy brother? Where is he, and where are you?"

## VI

### THE ACCEPTED TIME

**M**Y text is familiar—II Corinthians 6:2 —“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

This text is generally made use of in appeals to those who are not Christians, but if you will read the verses preceding and following the text, you will see that it is an appeal as well to those who are already Christians. Let me say in the beginning that salvation has been provided by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This is an old-fashioned statement to make, but I am an old-fashioned preacher. It is the sacrificial death of Christ that brings salvation to man. Salvation is a very broad and inclusive word. It means for one thing that we are justified. If you realized the meaning of this word justification, you would shout. It means to stand before God as if you had never sinned. It means to have every sin put away. It means to stand in God's sight with your life as clean and white as the pages of this Book. Also it means redemption. I want you to catch a vision of the marvelous thing that is yours when you accept Jesus Christ. “We are redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.”

I was standing the other day in Tiffany's, in New York, and I overheard a woman asking to see some pearls. The salesman placed on the counter some wonderful pearls. I heard him say that the price was \$17,000. When I looked at them, they seemed overwhelmingly splendid. This sum represented Tiffany's estimate of the value of the pearls. You may say that your life is not worth very much, but I tell you that you are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. I tell you that in the sight of God you are worth more than all the gold in the hills, all the diamonds in the fields. Salvation! It is a wonderful word. It means forgiveness. I wonder if we truly appreciate what divine forgiveness is. Suppose you do me an injury, and I say that I will forgive it. I mean it, too. But you meet me five years hence, and you find me still thinking about the injury. I have forgiven, but I have not forgotten. One of the most wonderful things written in God's Book—it makes my heart burn and brings tears to my eyes when I read it—is that when God forgives, he forgets. He puts my sins behind His back, casts them into the depths of the sea, hurls them as far as the east is from the west. I am a quiet man, not much given to shouting. I like very well what one of the papers said the other day, that when I wanted to make a special emphasis, I lowered my voice instead of raising it. But it seems to me that I want to shout to-night as I am telling you about salva-

tion. Salvation means redemption. It means justification. It means divine forgiveness and forgetfulness of sin. When I read my text in the light of this statement, it grows wonderful. Behold, now is the day of salvation.

What does the text really mean? It means that now is the day to present salvation to others. Now is the day to tell them about it. To-day is the day to announce it to your children, to tell it to your classmates. Now is the day when a business man should speak to his employees and tell them about salvation. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

If you study God's ways, you will notice that He is always planning, by His providential arrangements, to bring within the reach of our influence people whom we may turn to Christ. Keep your eyes open and see. Keep your ears unstopped and hear. You will meet a man in the street, you will travel with a man on the train, and God has sent him to you. Someone will visit in your home, or be in your employ. God is bringing him within your reach. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Do you remember when the Government sent astronomers to Africa to witness the transit of Venus? These men were especially chosen and commissioned to watch for the wonderful spectacle in the heavens. There will be a critical moment, and they must watch. What if they had been list-

less and careless? What if one of them had been reading a book? What if another of them had been star-gazing without an instrument? Everyone must have his eye at the glass watching for the moment. Who knows but that the critical moment is here to win hundreds of people to Christ. I have been a member of a certain club in New York for years. One Sunday I went there for dinner. I had been preaching in one of the churches. One of the strong business men of the city came in, and when we met I asked him where he had been. "I have been to church," he replied. I said, "Where?" and he told me. One of the best known men in the country was the minister. I noticed that the man was deeply impressed, and I said to him: "You must have liked the sermon." His lips trembled and I saw tears on his cheek, although he is not an emotional man. Then he said: "When Dr. B. closed his sermon, if he had asked, is there a man here who will come down and accept Christ, I would have risen in the audience and walked down the length of the church, and taken my stand for Christ. My heart went like a trip-hammer. But the invitation was not given." There are critical moments in the history of souls, and we must be watching for these moments. "Behold, now is the day of salvation."

If I knew how you could become rich and prosperous, I would certainly tell you about it. It is a strange thing that when we know how men may

become Christians, and have their sins forgiven, our lips are so often sealed. It is easy to talk about almost everything under the sun, but when we begin to talk about Christ, a strange expression comes into our faces and our voices take on a forced tone. I am preaching to myself about this, as well as to my brother ministers and to all the Christians. Why do we not talk naturally and urgently about Christ?

I plead with you all to join hands with me and unite your faith with mine. Let us go out and talk to men urgently, and tell them that "now is the accepted time." I never mean to preach unkindly to anyone. I would not preach unkindly to you if you were a sinner. I do not expect to preach with fists clenched. I remember a lesson that I learned when I was preaching before the professors in the theological seminary. The text of my sermon was: "What lack I yet?" No doubt I was very severe. When I had finished, one of the old professors, a very kind man, said gently to me: "Brother Chapman, you will never win your way in the ministry like that. Don't preach that way. Double up your fists at men and they will double up their fists at you." I mean to speak kindly; nevertheless, I shall speak directly and sharply. I may say some things that will make you cringe. I shall say some things that will uncover hidden sins, but I promise you this, that I

shall say them with a warm heart and sometimes with a sob.

May I pause to say to the ministers that we are apt to forget that our principal business is winning souls. We think that we must build up the saints. Ministers must be on the watch for the critical moment: for the accepted time in the history of souls. Alas, for any minister who is not watching thus. When we were in Scotland, I had a little time at my disposal, and I used it in reading the lives of Scotch ministers of different denominations. I read the life of Thomas Chalmers. One day Chalmers went to visit a man past eighty. He knew that he was not a Christian. He sat and talked with him a long time with never a word about his soul. In the night there came to Dr. Chalmers a hurried message telling him that the man was dead. He hurried away to the home. This is what he says: "I made my way to the house and walked up and down the room with tears. I asked the man's family to forgive me, and then I went out and walked in the woods until morning came. Oh, my God, if I had only been true."

A man came into my study in Albany and said to me: "Will you come and talk to a young man who is dying?" On the way the man said to me: "The young man is dying of consumption, and you must not speak to him about death." I sat by his bed and talked to him for some time. We talked about music, in which he was interested. We dis-

cussed politics. Then the visit ended, and I said good-bye. I can feel his cold hand in mine even to this moment. As I walked to the door and looked back, I caught a glimpse of his white face and deep-set eyes. They searched me through and through. I went home, but early the next morning I went back to the sick man's house. I was just entering his bedroom when someone said to me: "He died yesterday, an hour after you were here." I would give anything if I had spoken to him. I do not know whether he died in the faith or not. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Anyone of us ministers would feel complimented if men should say: He is like Paul. Would not that be wonderful? I would like to resemble Paul in this. It is said that he went from house to house saying to men and women: "I beseech you to be reconciled to God." It is said that when he wrote he stained his manuscript with his tears. If some of us should begin to do that and should go from house to house, and from man to man, saying: "Behold, now is the accepted time," how long do you think it would be before this city would be stirred? It is a pity that parents forget that this is the "day of salvation" for their children. There are men and women here who would do anything for their children. There is not anything that you would not give them, education, books, travel. But let me ask you, how many of you parents here to-night have spoken to your chil-



dren about Jesus Christ? You say the minister will win them, or the Sunday School teacher, or the evangelist. I would be ashamed if I thought anybody in this world had more influence with my children than I. It is a dreadful thing to rear children and never try to win them to Jesus Christ.

There trudged along a Scotch highway years ago a little, old-fashioned mother. By her side was her boy. The boy was going out into the world. At last the mother stopped. She could go no farther. "Robert," she said, "promise me something?" "What?" asked the boy. "Promise me something?" said the mother again. The boy was as Scotch as his mother, and he said: "You will have to tell me before I will promise." She said: "Robert, it is something you can easily do. Promise your mother?" He looked into her face and said: "Very well, mother, I will do anything you wish." She clasped her hands behind his head and pulled his face down close to hers, and said: "Robert, you are going out into a wicked world. Begin every day with God. Close every day with God." Then she kissed him, and Robert Moffatt says that that kiss made him a missionary. And Joseph Parker says that when Robert Moffatt was added to the Kingdom of God, a whole continent was added with him. There are critical times in the history of souls. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." If you are a father, go home this evening and speak to your boy. If your

own life has been inconsistent, tell your boy so. You will win him to Christ. The influence of a father upon a boy is wonderful. Fathers and mothers, why don't you win your children to Christ? You Christian workers, how you let opportunity slip! An opportunity missed is a tragedy in one's life.

When we were in Belfast, Ireland, I said in one of the afternoon meetings—everybody who was converted in '57 and '59 stand up. A great many white-haired people arose. Afterwards a man came to the inquiry room and rose for prayer. He said: "I was converted in '57, and I had two years of great joy in the Christian life. One night God came to me and said: Go and speak to such a one, twelve miles away. I did not go. He called again, and I did not go. In a day or so, a letter came to me telling me that the man was dead. He died unsaved." There was an agonizing expression in the man's face as he told his story. It was a picture of sadness that no artist could have painted. With trembling lips, he said: "All these years since that time, I have had a great sorrow in my soul." I saw him drop on his knees and heard him sob like a little child. "Now is the accepted time."

In Peoria, Ill., a man said to Mr. Wm. Reynolds: "Mr. Reynolds, why have you not asked me to be a Christian? Did you know I was not a Christian?" Mr. Reynolds replied: "Yes, I

knew you were not a Christian." "Well," said the man, "did you care?" "Yes, I have cared, all the time I have known you." "Why, then, did you not ask me," said the man. "Well," said Mr. Reynolds, "if you will come to my office now, I will spend the rest of the day with you." Then the man smiled and said: "I was converted yesterday." He told the story of how he was converted. He entered a train in Chicago, and took the only unoccupied seat in the car. Just as the train was pulling out, a burly sort of a man entered and sat alongside him. He dropped his traveling bag, and took out a book and began to read. It was the Bible. After a while he closed the Bible and looked out of the window, and said: "What a wonderful day." The other man replied, "Very wonderful." Then the big man saw the harvests in the fields, and said to his companion: "You have fine harvests out here." "Yes," was the reply, "very wonderful." Then he added: "Is not God good to give such harvests as these?" There was no reply. "Why, are not you a Christian?" said the big man. "No, sir," was the reply. "Why, how could you not be a Christian? Read this." And with this he opened his Bible and began to read him some verses. Presently he said to him: "Why don't you bow your head on the back of the seat in front, and let me pray with you?" Telling his story, the man said: "Before I knew it my head was bowed and his arm was

around me. When I lifted my head, I was a saved man. The train stopped at a station, and the man started out. He was almost gone, and I remembered that I did not know his name. I rushed to the car door, and put my hands to my lips and shouted—‘What is your name?’ He looked over his shoulder and said one word—‘Moody.’”

It is said of Mr. Moody that he never let a day go by without speaking to somebody about Christ. He went to bed one night and could not sleep. Twenty minutes after eleven, and still no sleep. A quarter to twelve, and he was still awake. He had not kept his promise. He arose and dressed himself, and rushed out of the house. As he turned the corner he ran into a man who said something that I cannot repeat in public. Mr. Moody shouted out to him: “Are you a Christian?” The man said: “None of your business.” Mr. Moody said: “Why, yes, it is my business.” The man squared himself up and said: “If it is your business, then I know your name. Your name is D. L. Moody.” It was a marvellous thing that a man could be so true to Christ, so loyal to his Master, that a man who met him in the dark knew who he was when he spoke about the Saviour.

I do not know whether I shall ever preach again. I must speak this text to you, with the greatest emphasis of which I am capable. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Why don’t you take Him? Tell me,

friends, why don't you take Him? Why don't you accept my Saviour? An old woman walked down the steps of a Boston police station and caught her heel and fell. They put her in the patrol wagon and took her to the hospital. A doctor, bending over her, said: "She will not live." She heard him say it, and spoke: "In the little package I brought to the hospital you will find a picture. It is a picture of my boy. He ran away from home in Colorado, and I sold my property and have searched for him everywhere. I have been going to police stations and hospitals, but I have not found him. I want to leave this picture with you. If you should see my precious boy, tell him that there were two in this world who never gave him up." The doctor bent over her and said: "Nurse, she is going." Then the nurse stooped down and said: "Mother, tell me the names of the two so that I may tell him." She lifted her face, lighted already with the light of heaven, and said in a whisper: "Tell him that God and his mother never gave him up." Then she was gone.

My God whose love fills this Book; my God who gave His Son to die, has not given you up yet. Your sweet old mother, your dear father, your wife, your friends, your minister, none of them have given you up. Let us pray.

Blessed God, our Father, in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour, we pray for everybody here who is unsaved. We pray especially for those who

have said: I want you to pray for me. Oh, God, help them all and bless them. Do not let any of us be indifferent to the opportunities sent us of God. Bless all the ministers and workers. May there fall upon us such a blessing as we have never known before. Graciously use us these days, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## VII

### “PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD”

**T**HE subject for the evening has been announced as *Preparedness*. I might well speak to you to-night concerning preparedness for the nation, but I have a greater subject than that. I have something of greater importance to say. My subject deals with time and eternity, and the preparation we must make in time for eternity. You will find my text in the Book of Amos 4: 12: “Prepare to meet thy God.”

Before you sleep this evening I wish that you would open your Bibles. I would like you to start with the first words—“In the beginning, God!” This is the right starting point for a man’s faith. Forget God, and there is disaster ahead. Build your plans without God and the storms will overtake you. Try to build character without God and defeat is certain. “In the beginning, God!” Now turn to the last Book in the Bible, to Revelation 20: 12: “I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.” Start with the one and end with the other, and this is the story of God’s dealings with His people. We see Him as creator. We behold Him as the ruler of nations. We see Him as the judge of His ancient people. We behold Him as the father of Jesus Christ. We hear Him

crying out through the lips of His Son to a wicked generation. At last we see Him seated upon the Throne. Time is being finished. The Books are being opened, and the dead, small and great, are standing before God. I wish I could give you a right conception of God. I think your faces would whiten and your lips tremble. Stop for a moment and think about Him. He holds the winds in His hands, yet last night you took His name in vain. In the hollow of His hand the seas beat and throb, yet to-day you blasphemed Him. He has showered His love upon you ever since you came into the world, yet you have resisted Him. Prepare to meet thy God. Prepare to meet Him, because He is God.

We read in the Old Testament—"the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Only a fool could say that. Think of the old argument of cause and effect. I see effects all about me, and I must go back to the great "First Cause." Then there is the old argument of design. I see design everywhere in this world. The seasons coming and going. Stars moving in their courses. The world turning on its axis. How suggestive all this is. The sun rising and setting with such precision that the scientists can tell you days, weeks, months, and years ahead, the exact moment of rising and setting. Who has done all this? The little flower that lifts its head at your feet, how perfectly formed it is. The bird that flies above your head,



with the colours of the rainbow in its wings. What artist has done this? Then there is the old argument suggested by the longing of our natures for God. If you go to the savages of dark lands, where heathenism reigns, and the savage in his blindness bows down to wood and stone,—why does he do this? Because he longs for something greater than himself. Then look at these enlightened times. The aspiration takes better shape. The longing grows to a higher kind. I know that this longing in my soul for God and eternal life was placed there by Himself. Just as the fin of the fish is the prophecy of the water in which it swims, as the wing of the bird is the prophecy of the air in which it moves,—so I know that this longing in my soul is an unanswerable argument for his existence. I know, and so do you, that God is. Prepare to meet thy God.

The closest fixed star is so far away that if you had an airship and should attempt to reach the star, you would require ages and ages of time. If you should pay but a small amount of money per mile for your passage, it would take millions upon millions of dollars. Yet men say there is no God. The sun sends down its light, and has been sending light and heat and warmth through all the years and ages past. When we estimate the distance of the sun and the length of time that light takes to travel, can you say that this is all by chance? No! Hear me! Prepare to meet thy God.

God is all powerful. I can take a cannonball in my hand and throw it a little distance. Some of these strong young fellows from the college would far surpass me. Driving through the streets one day, a friend said to me: “Did you see that policeman?” “Well, what about him?” I answered. “He is the champion thrower of the hammer in all the world,” said my friend. “It was he who came out first in the last Olympian contest.” But God took not only our world, but countless worlds like it and tossed them into space as I might blow a bubble. He is omnipotent.

He knows everything. You may deceive me. I know men fairly well, but you could deceive me. You cannot deceive God. One of these days you will face Him. One of these days your record will face you. One of these days you must answer before God for a misspent life. He knows you through and through.

God is everywhere. Listen while I read this Scripture: “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.” You cannot get away from God.

One day, in one of the schools of Chicago, a gentleman wanted to illustrate a point. He drew an eye on the blackboard. It was so perfectly drawn that the children in different parts of the room thought that the eye was looking straight at them. The School Board insisted that the eye should be erased. The children were becoming nervous. Men trample God's love beneath their feet and go their own way in life. There is one verse of the Bible that they forget. It is this: "Thou God seest me." He saw you yesterday, or last night, in your sin. What He saw was written in a book. Men are always making records. I saw in the British Museum a piece of stone the size of my book. They told me that it was six thousand years old at least. Right in the center of it there was the print of a bird's foot. When the stone was soft, six thousand years ago, the bird put its foot there and left an imprint. Six thousand years of record! So I cry out to you, young men and older men, business and professional men, men from the shops, women of society, prepare to meet thy God. You have been guilty of adultery, you of drunkenness, you of something else. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened." Because they will be opened,—prepare to meet thy God.

God has equipped us all with capital. He gave you your mind. He gave you your hands, your will, your heart. He gave you your feet, your lips,

your eyes. You must give an account. Have your eyes looked upon that which is evil? Has your heart held thoughts that were impure? Has your mind been in rebellion against Him? Have your hands pushed down instead of lifted up? To what houses have your feet taken you? Prepare—prepare to meet thy God. I ask you to prepare because you may meet Him sooner than you think. I have no desire to frighten anyone, but I would do even that if it were the only way. I do not wish to appeal to your emotions, but I would do that if it were the only way. Perhaps you may soon face Him. You may meet Him before to-morrow morning. How do you know that you can keep an engagement at nine o'clock to-morrow morning? There is a doctor of repute beside you. Turn and whisper to him. How about it, Doctor, nine o'clock in the morning? I know what his answer will be. He will say: Only God knows. When you close your eyes in sleep to-night your vitality will drop, and drop, and drop, until at last it will reach the lowest point. Then it will rise again until the day is born and you awake—unless God should touch you with His finger. I don't understand why men stay away from God. I don't understand you young college men. There has never been a day since colleges were established when trained intellects were at such a premium. Trained minds and strong characters can do more to-day than ever before. Yet business men, professional men, and

students, too, plunge into sin. To-morrow is eternity.

I stood at the foot of my pulpit and a man came to me and said: "I wish that you might have such perfect health as I have. Never in my life have I had a headache, never a pain, never have I called a doctor for myself." I was his minister. A few months after, my telephone bell summoned me to his house. An excited voice said: "Hurry, Hurry." I went, to find his daughter alone with him, the rest of the family had gone away. Her father had risen saying that he must keep an early business appointment. "Meet me in the breakfast room," he said. In fifteen minutes she was there, but her father was not. She climbed the stairway to his room and found him seated in his chair with a newspaper on his knees, head back, eyes shut. Never an ache or a pain! Never a doctor! Fifteen minutes' warning! Dead! But you young men say: How old was he? Past sixty. We were seated in a hotel in Australia and were resting for the evening, when a quick knock came at the door. I took a cable from the boy, and got the code book and deciphered this: "Charles died to-day. Sick two days." He was dead. My nephew. A promising athlete, trained in a military school. Never sick a day in his life. Not a man in the college could surpass him in physical strength. Gone in two days. Prepare to meet thy God.

There is only one way to be prepared. Science

has a fine ministry in the world, but it does not get you ready for eternity. Philosophy is interesting as a study. It is wonderful in its teachings, but it stops this side of eternity. Infidelity seems to be all right when your health is fine, your friends many, and your family circle unbroken, but when your heart aches, and your baby dies, and you get a telegram saying: Mother is dead, or—Father has gone,—then all the infidelity in the world will mock you.

Let me say a word to you men. I want to say that if you turn away from God's only means of preparation, you miss the best for this life. There is only one way to prepare. What is it? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! Turn from your sins! Accept Him! A friend of mine was going to preach in a country village. One of the officers of the church met him, and, as they walked along an old-fashioned board walk, my friend stopped and said: “What is that?” There came from the window of a house near the board walk an agonizing cry of a man. As they listened, they heard the voice say: “Oh, Jesus, can't you help me?” The church officer said: “The man who lives there is dying, and he has rejected God all his life. He has led scores of our boys and girls away from the faith of their fathers. He is dying in infidelity.” And the cry came again: “Oh, Jesus, can't you help me?” Every minister in the community was trying to help him. Many of the Christians were

interested in him. He could not find the way. The last thing they heard him say was the sentence: "Oh, Jesus, can't you, can't you?" Prepare to meet thy God.

I do not want you to think that God is other than just, or that He is other than loving. It is true that ever since you came into the world He has been seeking you. Jesus Christ came all the way to Calvary for you. He is seeking you now. Listen! He is seeking you now. Don't reject him. Hear this text again: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Driving swiftly down the streets of one of our western cities, a man lost control of his horses. A courageous man, springing from the sidewalk, brought the horses to a standstill and saved a man's life. By a strange coincidence the man whose life was saved was charged with murder. The trial judge was the man who had saved him. Later the trial came on. The lawyers had made their pleas. The judge had charged the jury. They had reached a verdict, and just as the judge turned to speak to him, the prisoner arose and said: "Your honour, I don't think you know me." The judge said: "Answer my question. Have you anything to say why a sentence of death should not be passed upon you?" Stretching out his arms, the prisoner said again: "I don't think you remember me. I am the man you saved. Don't you remember? Have mercy! Have mercy!" The judge leaned forward with

tears on his cheeks and said: “Yes, I do remember you. I have known you ever since you came before me, but then I was your saviour, now I am your judge. I must sentence you to die.” And to-day He is your Saviour, tears in His eyes, blood upon His brow, scourges upon His back, agony in His heart, saying: “Turn ye, Turn ye, for why will you die.”

I had read the funeral service in a beautiful home, when the undertaker came to the door and said: “Will all the friends kindly retire. The members of the family are coming in.” The daughter of the home came in leading her father. The mother was lying in the coffin. The old man bent forward and said to the wife who had journeyed with him all the years: “Good-bye. I will soon see you.” The daughter said it after him, and two or three of the boys said it. The eldest boy was a drunkard. He stood inside the door with the hot tears running down his cheeks. I walked over to him and said: “Tom, come and say good-bye to your mother.” Partly from weakness, and partly because he was under the influence of drink, he staggered forward. But I never heard a boy cry like that. Such sobs as came from his heart! Over and over he kept saying: “Mother, Mother!” His sister stepped forward and said: “Tom, don’t take on so. Mother has gone to Heaven, and you will soon see her.” He threw one arm around my shoulder and the other around hers, and cried out:



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"Oh, my God! I am not going. I am not going."

Prepare to meet thy God. Acknowledge your sins. Accept Him as your Saviour. Confess Him before men. Follow Him faithfully. One day you will meet God, and will hear His welcome—  
"Well-done."

## VIII

### LOSING AND FINDING JESUS

**I** HOPE that my subject will prove practical and helpful. It is: *Losing and Finding Jesus!* There are hundreds and thousands of people who start to follow Him and then, for some reason, they are turned aside. Perhaps, like Demas, the pleasures of the world entrance them. At any rate, they lose Jesus. There are some in this audience now to whom the subject applies. My text is found in Luke 2:46—"After three days they found him."

I tell you the hopeful thing about it at the very start. We may lose Him, but He does not lose us. He is not far away, and if we are willing to seek after Him, He will surely be found of us. After three days they found Him! This text brings first of all an Old Testament picture before us. Turn to the Book of Exodus, the twelfth chapter. It is night. The night of doom. Homes are in danger. The Passover lamb has been slain. The blood has been collected in a basin. A bunch of hyssop has been dipped in the blood and the blood sprinkled on the posts of the door, for the word of God was, "When I see the blood, I will pass your door." Now turn from the Old Testament to the New, to the words in I Corinthians 5:7—"Christ our

passover!" I know, as you do, that the Old Testament loses its power over us unless we put Christ into it, or unless we find the Christ who has always been there. So the Old Testament passover links us to the New Testament passover, our Lord Himself. Then turn to Matthew 26:18, and read the latest mention of the passover in the Gospel. The disciples have come to the Master, saying: Where shall we eat the feast? And the Master said: "Go into the city to such a man and say unto him, the Master saith, my time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples." Oh! this was a memorable keeping of the feast. Judas was present, and the Master said, "One of you shall betray me." They began to say: "Lord, is it I?" and Jesus answered, "It is he who dippeth in the dish with me." Then Judas turned to go out, and Jesus said: "What thou doest, do quickly." Just here a suggestive sentence is found. "It was night." I stop long enough to say that when a man turns his back upon Jesus, it is always night. You cannot drive back the darkness and the gloom. Turn your back on Jesus, and just so surely as you do the darkness will begin to settle about you.

It was a memorable feast, too, for this reason. It says that when they had sung an hymn, they went out. Here is a new picture of Jesus. We have seen Him under many different circumstances and conditions. We have seen Him at the marriage feast in Galilee, when the conscious water

saw its God and blushed into wine. We have seen Him stop the funeral procession near Nain and take the boy by the hand and give him back to his mother. We have seen Him with His disciples about Him, teaching them to pray. We have seen Him sleeping in a boat. But this is the only time in His earthly ministry when we find Him singing. I wish I might have heard Him. I heard Patti sing once, and I heard my mother sing many times. I know what sweet singing is. But to have heard Jesus, what a joy that would have been! Just to see His face light up, His eyes glisten, and His lips tremble as He sang. When they had sung an hymn they went out!

It will be well to know something about the importance of the celebration of the passover in the estimation of the Jewish people. A month before the feast, special preparations were made. Roads were made level and easy to travel. Bridges over streams were strengthened. As the time of the feast drew near, there was great excitement. The night before the passover, every Jewish house was cleaned thoroughly, and when the last bit of cleaning was done, the head of the house said something like this: "And now, if there is any leaven in this house (leaven in Jewish thought meant the principle of evil) it is here against my will." Would not that be a fine thing for a Christian to say when he is asking God to search his heart? When he realizes that he has lost power and that he is in

spiritual darkness, let him say: Search me, oh, God, and try my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me. And then let him add: "If there is anything in my life that is displeasing to Thee, it is here against my will."

In the morning, the people who were waiting for the passover were awakened suddenly, as the new day was born, by the sound of trumpets. Then they sang together the 113th Psalm—"Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." The whole city sang it. Can you imagine the power and the thrill of it?

We know of three persons who were present at the celebration of the passover mentioned in our Scripture. They were a father and a mother and a boy of twelve. Of all the people in the city that day, the boy of twelve alone knew the depth of the meaning of the passover feast. He knew about the slain lamb. He knew about the sprinkled blood. He knew about the ascriptions of praise to Jehovah. So these three kept the feast together. When the day is finished and they are ready to start home, messages of farewell are spoken. They journey with the crowd, and, as they go, they talk of the joy of the occasion. Suddenly, the mother of the boy turns to her husband to say: "Where

is Jesus?" Their faces whiten and they begin to search for him. Now, I want you to notice this very significant expression, "and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance" but could not find Him. Three days they sought Him, and at last they make their way back to the city where they kept the feast, and here they find Jesus, sitting in the presence of the wise men asking and answering questions. Now come back to my text—"After three days they found Him." Losing Jesus and finding Jesus!

In order to find Jesus, it is necessary to walk with Him. It is possible for any of us to walk with Jesus. Put that down and never forget it! Enoch walked with God. Dr. Andrew Bonar of Scotland used to say that they walked so long together, and climbed so high in their journey, that at last the Lord turned to Enoch and said: "Enoch, we are much nearer heaven than earth. Why not pass in now?" And the doors swung open and they passed through the gates into the city. The disciples at Emmaus walked with Jesus. They did not know Him, but as they walked and talked with Him, suddenly their hearts burned within them. They knew that there was a marvellous person with them, but they could not quite interpret who he was. As He sat at meat and blessed the food, there was something in the way He lifted His hands or bowed His head—and they knew Him. We can find Jesus in just such simple

ways as this. Walk with Him and talk with Him and you will know Him. The more you talk with Him and about Him, the better you will know Him. If you have lost Him you can find Him.

Then do the thing that he wants you to do, and suddenly you will face Him and He will face you. You can find Jesus by doing His will. Probably the sweetest thing you know about your father is that he walked with Jesus and talked with Him. It is not because he was rich that you remember him. You remember him because he walked with the Master. Let me paint a picture for you. It is a picture of an aged man who has been in the habit of attending church all his life. Now he is an old man, walking with feeble step, yet every Sunday morning he makes his way to the house of God. He prefers to walk when the weather is fine, although he has a thoughtful boy who is ready to take him in a car. He faces the preacher at the front, although he can hear very little of what is said. Many persons would think that a reason for staying at home. He loves to worship God in the church. The few words that he hears cheer him mightily. As he meets his pastor at the door, the old man clasps his hand and says: "I know that my Redeemer liveth!" "So you heard me say that, did you?" said the pastor. "Yes," said the old man, "I heard you say that, and it made my heart burn." Faintly he had caught, too, what the minister was saying about family worship. He thought

they were taking account of how many observed family worship, and he raised his hand as high as possible and held it up as long as he could. Yes, he was saying to himself, I have had family worship ever since I have had a home, and I have walked with Jesus all the days of my life. Is there anything more beautiful than this? It is in these simple ways men find Jesus.

The sweetest thing you know about your mother is this—she walked with Jesus. Do you remember when sickness came and your brother died? The light of life went out of your home, and your father and mother came back from the cemetery and sat by the fireside. For a long while neither of them spoke. Then at last one of them said: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away." And the other promptly answered: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Listen to me! It is possible to walk with Jesus in the storm, to walk with Him in the gloom, to walk with Him when the stars are dead and the moon refuses to shine.

It is a sad thing to walk without Him. The sad part of it is that you never quite miss Him until the crisis comes. Oh, you can go along with a jaunty step when your health is perfect, with a laugh and a cheer when everybody is applauding you. You think you can do without Him when your bank account is abundant, but when the day is dreary and the night is long, then to walk without Him, ah, that is the tragedy of life! To walk



without Him when temptation and trial come! Oh, if I could only make plain to you what this means! All of us need Him more sorely than words can express. If we have missed step with Jesus and have lost Him any way out of our lives, let us go back to Him to-day.

Mr. Alexander and I were in Kentucky at an old mountain school for whites. As I was speaking to the students, I noticed in the audience a woman dressed in deep mourning. Afterwards I spoke to her and she told me that her heart was broken. She said: "I had one boy, and he was drowned the past summer. He was driving down the country road in a buggy with his sweetheart, and the horse took fright and upset the buggy in a narrow road. They were thrown into the river, where there was a swift current. The horse and harness and wheels and buggy-top all became entangled. My boy saved his sweetheart, but he himself was drowned. I was sitting alone in my room while they were dragging the river for him. My dear old mountain mother, my boy's grandmother, came to see me, and she said: 'Have you prayed?' I was too heartbroken to pray, but we got down on our knees and my mother prayed with me. I had one great concern, now that he was dead. I was afraid that when they dragged the river the hooks might catch his precious face and mar him. My mother held me in her arms as if I were a baby, and we rocked back and forth in the old-

fashioned chair and prayed together—"Blessed God, when this boy's precious body is found, don't let the hooks catch in his face. Let it be in his garments, or in his belt." And do you know, sir, that before I had stopped sobbing, I heard a noise in the yard, and I ran to open the door. There was his body, and the hooks had caught in his belt." I have learned that while you can get along without Christ when the sun is shining, you cannot get along without Him when your heart is broken. It is a sad thing to walk without Him.

They sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance and could not find Him. Is not this a pathetic thing? Oh, it is sad indeed for a boy to search for Christ in his mother and not find Him. For a boy to come to the Tabernacle and hear the songs and sermons, and then say: "I know where I will go, I will go home and ask my mother about Jesus." And then, not to find Him! What a tragedy that is! For a child to say: "I will go out of this building and go back to my father and speak to him and find Jesus." Then not to find Him! The other day, in the Art Institute in Chicago, a mother was walking carelessly among the pictures. She stopped with her little child before a great painting, and somebody said: "That is Jesus." The little child, looking up to her mother, said: "Who is Jesus?" And the mother, catching the child's hand, said: "Jesus was a man. Come along!"

There is another story, and it is this: A plain little home had undecorated walls, except for a very poor print of Christ before Pilate. The picture showed Him standing there with head bowed, and hands bound. A little child, playing about the room, said: "Who is that?" "Why, my dear," answered the mother, "that is Jesus." "And what did Jesus say?" asked the child, simply. The mother took her in her arms and held her close. This is what He said: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Happy is the mother who can help her child to find Jesus!

Oh, it is a sad thing to try to find Jesus in anyone whom we trust and not to find Him. It is sad to seek for Jesus in a minister and not find Him. I was preaching in one of the Pennsylvania cities, when a reporter came to a young minister and asked about myself. "How do you like him?" The young minister answered: "I don't like him at all. I have not the slightest interest in him." Well, I don't wonder that people say that about me. But I went to this young minister and said to him: "Why did you say that to the reporter?" He was a thorough gentleman, and he answered: "Well, I will tell you. I don't believe what you preach. I took a fellowship in philosophy in the university where I graduated. I have studied a great deal, and I cannot agree with you. I stand with the critics. I cannot accept the authority of

Christ. Jesus was a marvellous man, but I cannot accept His deity." I said to the young minister in the friendliest way I could: "I never took a fellowship in philosophy, and I have been a very busy man, but I have found Jesus, and I know Him well. I have known Him under all circumstances and conditions. As for this book, I look into it and tell you that if you read it merely with a critical eye, it will shut itself up like a sensitive plant, but if you go at it with love, it will open up like a rose." "Tell me something more," said the young minister. So I went on. I gave him a text to preach from. I said to him: Preach this—"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." He took that text and preached with tears, and a hundred people in his church wrote or telephoned him that it was wonderful. It was the first time anybody had thanked him for preaching. It is a sad thing to seek for Jesus in a minister and not find Him.

All the time without Him is lost time. One day to lose Him! Three days to find Him! All the time without Him is lost time. You might as well make up your mind to this now—that your time is not worth anything to you or to God if you are without Jesus. Come back and keep step with Him.

They found Him where they lost Him. Where did you lose Him? Somebody will say in a whisper: "I know where I lost Him. I lost Him when

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I was impatient in my home and did not ask for forgiveness. I was indignant and unfair to the children, and did not confess it. I was harsh with my servants, or unfair in my business dealings. In that way I lost Him." Others will say: "I lost Him at the dance, or at the card table. I lost Him when I lifted drink to my lips. I lost Him when I stopped studying this Book. I lost Him when I was too busy to pray."

Oh, well, it does not make any difference where you lost Him. Come back and find Him, and you will find Him with the same great-hearted love. You will find Him with arms outstretched. You will find Him saying: "I will restore the years that the canker worm has eaten." Come back! Come back! God help you to do it! He will, if you will trust Him.



## IX

### THREE GREAT THINGS

**I** AM speaking to-night of three great things. The text is in II Samuel 12:13—"And David said unto Nathan: I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David: The Lord also hath put away thy sin."

This is one of the saddest stories of the Old Testament. It makes our faces flush hot with shame. It is a sad thing to be disappointed in a man, as in this case to find a man who on one side is capable of writing the Twenty-third Psalm, and on the other side capable of committing a great sin. But this is the way of sin. It is dark and insidious. The explanation in David's case is not far to seek. It was not that he had a bad heart, but that he looked upon sin and sin carried him away. There is an old saying that runs like this: "The idle brain is the devil's workshop." And there is another saying, equally old and equally true: "The idle brain always tempts the devil." Your strongest temptation never came to you when you were busy. It was when your hands were not reaching out to help others, when you were sitting in idleness, while others were moving. David was on the roof of his palace, and he was tempted to sin. But the temptation itself was not the cause of David's

fall. Sometimes when we have been in holy places, even on our knees, sinful thoughts have flashed through us. The purest and best people have said this. This again is the way of sin. David's trouble was this: He looked at sin a second time, and then a third and a fourth, and very soon the man who was strong enough to do marvellous things for God trembled and fell. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

There is one great text in the Bible that is intended especially for those who are sorely tempted. It is this: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Your trouble was not merely that you were tempted. Rather the trouble was that when you were tempted you did not immediately turn to God for deliverance.

After David's sin, God sent Nathan to him to speak to him. You remember what Nathan said: There was a certain man who had nothing save one little ewe lamb. I imagine as the story went on David's eyes began to flash, and his fingers to twitch, and as Nathan finished his story: "They took the ewe lamb and put it to death," David the King sprang to his feet and said: "The man who would do that must die." Then Nathan came out with his startling words: "Thou art the man," and David stood before Nathan a convicted man. With a cry of his soul, he said: "I have sinned against the Lord," and Nathan promptly replied: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin."

There are three great things here to be considered.

First, a great sin. It was a great sin because he knew better. It was a great sin because it was against his position as a king. When David sinned the whole house of Israel suffered. When you sin your friends suffer, your children suffer, your mother suffers, Jesus Christ suffers. All sin is great for this reason. It is against God. I hold up before you this Book, because I want you to understand that there is something in this Book that men need who have sinned. This is atonement. The atonement that is provided in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. There are two verses of Scripture that come before me at this moment. One, "the wages of sin is death." The other, "the soul that sinneth it shall die." God has never taken those verses back. But there is a third verse that says: "Christ died for our sins." According to the Scripture, if you have sinned there is a way of escape; the Saviour of the world has made atonement.

Second, a great repentance. You have probably read the Fifty-first Psalm. You can hardly forget it. David wrote this psalm after he had repented. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and purge me from my sin." It was a great repentance. Remember that repentance is not merely sorrow. Sorrow is the beginning of repentance, but it does not go far enough. Remember



also that repentance is not mere remorse. Remorse is a part of repentance, but it is not the whole thing. I suppose there is not, in all the world, a man who realizes his sin and does not suffer. He has sorrow enough and remorse enough, but sorrow and remorse are not all of repentance. Listen! You never truly repent until with God's help you turn away from sin unto God. This is repentance, and I want to say that if you feel that you cannot do it yourself, if you have no strength to do it, I want to say that just so soon as you know that you are a sinner and lift your eyes to Christ the Saviour, that moment all the strength you need will be yours. You can turn away from sin, for God will help you. David did, and so may you.

Third, a great forgiveness. Read the Thirty-second Psalm. David wrote it after he had been forgiven. The Thirty-second Psalm is a perfect picture of one who has been forgiven. We are told that there is a covering for sin. What is this covering? You have tried to hide your sins, but you cannot do it. You think that you can hide sin, but it will come forth. I was preaching in a town in Ohio where there is a college and I heard a story about the President of the institution. One morning he was leading a Sunday School. It was Decision Day. A teacher came to him and said: "I want to give you something. You don't know me very well, but I give you this letter and in it is something I want you to dispose of." The Presi-

dent opened the letter and found inside a very beautiful lace handkerchief. This was the letter he read, and which afterwards he showed to me: "When I was a little girl in a Sunday School, somebody walking down the aisle of the School dropped this valuable lace handkerchief. I stooped quickly and picked it up. I am now a woman grown, and have children of my own. I have tried to dispose of this handkerchief and I could not. I have tried to give it away, and I could not. I have tried to destroy it, and I could not. Somehow it always keeps coming before me. To-day I am giving it to you, asking you to do with it what you please. For years it has hurt me." It is impossible to cover up sin.

The other day in Springfield, someone went to one of the ministers and said: "I want you to take this bit of money. I took it wrongfully when I was little more than a child. I have compounded the interest and this is the full amount. All my years I have tried to cover this thing over. Whenever I have knelt to pray, whenever I have tried to do Christian service, this money has risen up before me." But in this Thirty-second Psalm we read that our sins may be covered. How? If there is in your life something that is wrong, some sin that you have tried to hide, take Jesus Christ as your Saviour to-night and His precious blood will cover your sin out of sight. A great forgiveness!

My friend Samuel H. Hadley, of the Water Street Mission, New York, was sitting outside his Mission door one day when a little boy came and said: "Mr. Hadley, will you ask Mrs. Hadley to give me a piece of cloth and a needle and thread?" "What do you want them for?" asked Mr. Hadley. The boy answered: "To mend my trousers." My friend said that he looked at his ragged clothes and it seemed as if they were not worth mending. He hesitated a moment, and the child burst into tears and started down Water street, turning under Brooklyn bridge. But Mr. Hadley ran after him and said: "Come back. You go upstairs and Mrs. Hadley will take care of you." When he came down, his clothing was mended and he was leaving the Mission. My friend said to him: "What is your story?" He answered: "I stole \$20 from my father in Philadelphia, and then I came to this city. I have spent all the money and I am afraid to go home. I have been sleeping nights wherever I could." "Well," said Mr. Hadley, "go back home and your father will take you in." "Oh, no, he won't," said the boy. "Well, come into the Mission," said Mr. Hadley, "and I will send your father a letter." This is what he wrote: "Dear Sir: Your boy is very, very sorry for his sin. He is in my Mission here and he wants to come home. What shall I tell him?" The letter reached Philadelphia in the morning, and before eleven o'clock a telegram came back to Mr. Hadley, at 316 Water

street: "Tell the dear boy he is forgiven and I want him to come home at once."

This is my message to you this evening. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary, His heart broke for the sins of mankind. Forgiveness was born then, and to-night God is saying: Turn ye, for why will ye die? Mr. William Reynolds, of Peoria, Illinois, was one night invited by the Governor of Illinois to meet him at the prison in Joliet. He made his way to the prison, and at the request of the Governor spoke to the prisoners about the Gospel. Then the Governor stood up, and holding a long envelope in his hand, he said: "Men, this is the day on which I said I would give a pardon to one man in the prison." Mr. Reynolds told me that every man in the prison broke the prison rules and leaned forward. Every man was saying to himself: I wonder if it can be for me. Then the Governor said: "This pardon I am going to give is for a life prisoner." At once every man in the prison sank back except the life men. You could pick them out all over the prison. Then the Governor spoke again: "This pardon is for ——," and then came the man's number and his name, but nobody moved forward. After waiting a moment, the Governor suggested that the man whose name had been announced should put his hand up. A white hand went up in obedience to the Governor's suggestion, and suddenly a man fell with a thud on the floor. They carried him forward, and the

Governor came down from the platform and put the pardon in his right hand. My friend helped to carry him out into the sunlight.

I am preaching a short sermon, but I want everybody in the audience to hear me. I have a pardon, signed and sealed. It is full and free. You may have it if you will take it. It is sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ. I plead with you to take Him, and in taking Him to accept this pardon. Weeks have passed by and some of you are resisting still. Some of you have never yet said "yes" to the call of Christ. Say it to-night! Come!

## X

### YOUR SINS

**T**HIS is our text. It is startling and illuminating. You could find it in any part of the Bible, in Genesis or Revelation, Exodus or The Epistles. But I find it especially in Isaiah 59:2. First of all let me say that it is extremely personal. Not your neighbour's sins, nor your husband's sins, nor the sins of your friends, but—*your sins!* I want you each to have this text as your own.

Let us begin with secret sin. The sin you think nobody else knows about in the world. I might as well tell you in the beginning that you cannot hide sin. You may think that it is possible, but the friend who walks with you knows by the way you walk. The one who talks with you knows by the manner of your speech. The one who lives with you knows what are your habits. You cannot hide sin. If sin can be hidden from men, it cannot be hidden from God. It is done in the light of God's countenance. No, you cannot cover sin. I speak to you this evening about this subject, not because it is pleasant to talk about personal sin. I have another reason for speaking about it. I know that if I could turn your attention toward Jesus Christ, everybody would leave this building with bondage

broken, chains snapped, darkness dissipated, doubt removed. So my subject is your personal sin.

Take up the newspaper of this morning or this evening and turn over the pages one after another. Everywhere there is the mark of sin. Sin has hurt some father, injured some mother, handicapped the life of someone who had started out well. Or if you do not read the newspaper, go into your library, take down a book and read history. You will see that the story is the same. Go into the art gallery and in many pictures you will find some suggestion or mark of sin. My subject is very practical. Your sins! Not the sin of the man at your side, not the sins of the church. Your sins!

If you will turn over the pages of God's Word you will find the story of sin from the beginning. Follow this:

ADAM—The beginning of sin.

CAIN—The mark of sin.

ABSALOM—The dividend of sin.

' BELSHAZZAR—The prejudice of sin.

JUDAS—The disloyalty of sin.

Listen to this question: Is your heart right with God? Your sin! I do not need to tell you that sin is bondage. It is worse than bondage. The man who told me last Sunday afternoon that he would break away from impurity if he could, and added "My God, I cannot"; the woman who wrote that she would give up drugs if she could and said, "But, my God, I cannot"; the young fellow who

stopped me on the street and made a similar confession—all these show that sin is bondage. Now go back to the text again and say—your sins!

I want to keep as close to the Scripture as possible in my illustrations. With all my heart I want to help you. Let us finish this text. Your sins have hid His face from you that he will not hear. There are a great many people who say that it is hard for them to begin the Christian life. Probably there are a hundred people here now who are saying quite honestly that they would begin the Christian life if they understood fully about it. I need not waste five minutes trying to prove that it is the right thing to be a Christian. You were saying that there are difficulties in the way. I will tell you why. You have started wrong. You want to be a Christian, but all the time there is something wrong in your life, some hidden sin, something you have almost forgotten. You are groping for God and saying: "Oh, that I might find Him!" You have heard me speak of Jesus night after night. I have told you that anybody who accepts Jesus will never come into condemnation, never stand before God at the great white throne of judgment. That is past forever. And you say: "Oh, that this might be true in my case." I will tell you where the trouble is. Your sins! They hide God's face.

I throw out a challenge this evening to everyone in this building, especially to the old soldiers here.



If you will turn away from every sin, so far as you know it in your life, and faithfully accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, I stand here to say that you will be a saved man or woman. I am willing to say that if your acceptance of Jesus Christ and your turning away from sin did not save you, I would renounce my own salvation if I could in your behalf. I long to see you come to Christ. You never can come to Him until you turn away from sin.

Look at Jeremiah 5:25—"Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good from you." Listen to that. "Your sins have withholden good from you." I am wondering if some of you say: Why are you asking us to join the Pocket Testament League? Why do you want us to carry this little book with us? Some of you are saying: I have read that book and it does not interest me. I will tell you why. You have read it with some sin in your life that you would not give up, and sin has blinded your eyes. When you read God's Word with sin in your life the devil always makes it uninteresting. Sin withholds good things from you. It keeps you from appreciating Christ.

One of our workers went down one of these aisles the other evening and stopped to speak to a woman. He was speaking to her about Jesus Christ, and the woman said: "Never again speak His name to me. I hate Him." I became a Chris-

tian when I was a boy, and I have been serving Jesus Christ all my life. I am not a fanatic. I know life, and I want to say that Jesus Christ is the dearest friend I have ever had. There have been times when all the stars went out of the sky in my life and He has been near me. There have been times when my heartstrings were strained to snapping, and I have felt His loving arms around me. There have been times when I have carried my best and dearest to the grave and He stood near and comforted me. The only reason in the world that you do not accept my Saviour and come down this aisle and take my hand and say: "From tonight I choose Him,"—the only reason I know of is your sins. Your sins! They have witholden good things from you and kept you back from the best. No man in this city need tell me that he is satisfied in his heart without Christ. I know that he is not. You can gain the world and your heart will still ache. You can have all the wealth of the world and carry a broken heart. You can gain fame and die in misery. There is only one way to find peace. Turn away from your sins and take the Saviour.

The last time I was with D. L. Moody was shortly before he died, in Pittsburgh, in the old First Presbyterian Church. We were holding meetings. He was too weak to take all the service, and I came to take part of it. He would preach and I would come forward and take the after meet-

ing. The last illustration I ever heard him use was this: He was on the battlefield in the Civil War, with the Christian Commission, and he came to a soldier who was all shot to pieces. They stopped long enough to straighten out his limbs, and moisten his lips with the water in his canteen. The touch of the water revived the boy and he opened his eyes. "Can I do anything for you?" Moody inquired. "Chaplain," was the reply, "I think you could read to me." "What shall I read?" "Sir," said the soldier boy, "put your hand in my pocket and pull out my little Testament." There was blood on it, and on his hand, too. He said to him: "Where shall I read for a time like this?" And the boy answered: "The fourteenth chapter of John." "And so," said Moody, "I went down on my knees with the blood-marked Testament in my hand. I read twenty-six verses of the fourteenth chapter of John, and the dying soldier never opened his eyes. He was lying there breathing heavily and drifting out into eternity. But when I came to the twenty-seventh verse—'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you,' the boy opened his eyes quickly and said: 'Chaplain, don't read any more. I have that peace.' Almost immediately his eyes closed and his heart became still." I saw the great evangelist lean over the church pulpit as he told this story, with tears running down his face. He knew,

as he stretched his hands out to the great audience, that he himself was not far from the end.

Some persons seem to think that it is only peace for the hour of death that comes to a Christian, but I know that it is peace for every day and every hour of every day. Some of you have not got it. You old soldiers of the Grand Army of the Republic, you are getting fewer in number. Mrs. Chapman and I were in Washington, D. C., when you were having your grand review. Every time I passed an old soldier I wanted to salute him. It seems to me that you deserve the best. It grieves me as I look into your fine old faces to think that sin might withhold good things from you.

Let me say another thing. Your sins have kept back deliverance in the hour of trial. All of you have had heartaches. You have had times when the shadows have fallen across your home. You have followed some loved one to the grave, and you have said: "My God! I think my heart will break." You have come back from the cemetery and have stood alone by your fireside. What you needed was the consolation of the Saviour's presence. It would make the last of life beautiful. It would make the beginning of life great. It would make the meridian of life marvellous—to have Him. Take Him; Oh, take Him! Your sins have withholden good things from you if they have kept you from Christ. They have robbed you of that which makes life truly worth while.

I was sitting in my study in Philadelphia one day when I heard a quick rap at the door. Without rising, I said: "Come in." A gentleman opened the door and cried out: "Hurry across with me, please. Mother is dead." Then he went on: "We found her dead this morning. She was with us last night, apparently well. She sat with us as we sang the songs of the Church at family worship. She said good night with a smile. My mother always had a strange habit. She carried with her in her hand as she went to her room a little old-fashioned lamp. She would hold it in her hand and stand at the door, and, with a smile on her face, she would say—' Good night, good night! I will see you in the morning.' She said it last night and I thought that she was sweeter than ever as the old-fashioned lamp lighted up her face. She climbed the stairway, and this morning we waited and she did not come. I went to her door and rapped, and there was no answer. Then I opened the door and she seemed to be sleeping. I walked over to her bedside, and mother was dead." And the great strong business man sat in the chair by my desk and dropped his face in his hands and cried as if his heart would break. Then suddenly he stood up and said: "But I will see her in the morning."

I turn again to the Scripture. Here is a wonderful sentence, in Isaiah 1:18—"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

When we were in Australia, a gentleman came to me and said: "Did you ever know that if you take a piece of red glass and look through it at a red object, the red object will become white." The next day was a beautiful summer morning. I took a piece of red glass and held it over a red flower. I looked through the red glass and the red flower was white. It seemed marvellous to me, but I know something more marvellous. It is this: To-night, if I could only persuade you to accept the invitation to come to Christ with your sins, you would see something marvellous. Though your sins be like scarlet, God will look at them through the blood of Jesus Christ and they will be white. You old soldiers, come to Christ with your sins and let God make them white. I am a conservative old-fashioned Christian, but I can never say what I have just said without crying—Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

The other night, in Atlanta, I said in a meeting: If there is a poor, fallen girl in this building who has found her way in here, and has no one to help her, if she will lift up her hand and turn to God in penitence, He will save her through Christ. Away back in the audience a fallen girl from the streets who had drifted in, quick as a flash, put up her hand. A beautiful woman went to her and spoke to her. She took her to a house near by and led her to Christ. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

I come to the close, but I must tell you a little about the cure. I John 2:12—"Your sins are forgiven." There is a difference between human forgiveness and divine forgiveness. One day a man came to one of our meetings. I had never seen him and he had never seen me. He hated the truth for which I stood, and he began to talk about me. He went up and down the streets saying things derogatory to my character. Men began to whisper them on the streets, and the man himself was gone, five hundred miles away. I sent for him and talked to him in a room in the hotel. I said to him: "Did you ever see me before?" "Never," he said. "Are these things you have been saying about me true?" I asked. "No, sir," was his reply. "Why did you say them?" I asked. "Because, sir, I am ashamed to say I hate the things you have been preaching, and I thought that I could silence you." I had an officer of the law at hand. I could have had him arrested and tried and sent to prison. I walked across the floor and said: "I want to tell you something. I am going to forgive you freely. One of my children might hear this vile slander, but I will forgive you." His face became deathly white. "You don't mean it," he said. As he walked out of the room, he said: "Thank you, sir. You really are a Christian. Thank you." I did forgive him, but to this day I remember how my face flushed and my heart quickened, and my tears fell. I thought that I would

die when I imagined that people might think ill of me. I forgave him and remembered. That is human. But when God forgives, when I come with my sins and face them and turn away from them, when I say with all my heart, I will give them up—God forgives, and He forgets. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

A minister had preached a great sermon. In his youth he had broken almost every law of God but one. He had shattered his mother's heart, so he said. But he had found his Saviour, and now he was preaching His wonderful Gospel. When he finished his sermon, all over the audience people began to rise and come forward. His officers gathered around him and said: "That was the greatest appeal of your life." Then there came down the aisle of the church an old woman. Her hair was gray, but it was like a halo of glory. Her brow was furrowed, but it was like the touch of angels' fingers. When she reached the great strong minister, she looked at him a moment, and then put her hands behind his head and drew his face down until it was level with hers: "Jimmie, my precious boy," she cried, "what made you tell it? What made you tell it? You never were bad like that." She had forgiven and forgotten. But I know something better than that. When I stand face to face with God, not a single sin I have ever committed will be mentioned. He has forgiven and forgotten.



Your sins can be blotted out. This is the chemistry of the Gospel. Your debt can be paid. This is commercial. The stain can be taken away. There is a story about one of your governors that has interested me. He was a Christian. There was a boy in the city of Philadelphia who was high in social life, but he had been guilty of a capital crime and was in prison. His friends did everything they could to save his life. But the governor said: "No." The boy's mother swooned in his office, and they carried her out. Then the governor said: "I know what I can do. I can go to Philadelphia and tell that boy how to die." It is on record that he went into the cell of the boy. The prisoner did not know him. There sat your governor with his open Bible, telling the condemned boy how to die. The boy listened, and not knowing his visitor, he said: "Well, sir, if I must die, I am not afraid after this." Then the governor arose without revealing himself and said good-bye. The boy stood with his face against the bars, looking after the governor as he went down the corridor. When the warden came he said to him: "Warden, tell me who was the man in my cell a moment ago." And the warden answered: "Why, man, that was the governor." Then the prisoner, holding on to the bars of his cell, threw himself back at arms' length, and as he fell he said: "Oh, my God! The governor in this cell and I never knew it! Why didn't you tell me?"

If I had known, I would never have let him leave the cell until he had given me my pardon." He kept on saying: "The governor here and I never knew it." There is a greater than the governor here. I put my hands to my eyes and I can see Him. He is very near. Anyone of us can touch Him. Though your sins be as scarlet! Take Him! Take Him!

## XI

### WHAT MEN DO WITH THEIR SINS

**I** HAVE no apology to make for speaking many times about sin. It is the world's great sore spot. I have this conviction, that if I can say any word that will lead men to hate sin, they will be forever grateful. I have a text of Scripture which will be found in Proverbs 5:22—"He shall be holden with the cords of his sin." This text brings before you a picture. You see a man bound with chains. Nevertheless the chains are invisible. They are the chains of his passions, his habits, his evil deeds. How easy it is to turn to God's Word and find a text like this. What a marvellous Book it is, any way we take it. If anybody in this audience has reached the conclusion that the Bible is not an interesting Book, he has come to this conclusion for one of two reasons. Either that he has ceased to study it, or that there is some sin in his life that keeps him from appreciating the Bible. I do not know anything in the world that will so strengthen your mind, so help you in the building of character, so deliver you from the power of sin, as to keep this Bible close to you. I advise you to carry it with you, at least some portion of it, and when you have a bit

of spare time, take it out and read it. If we regard it only as literature, it is the very best the world has known. But we know that it is vastly more.

A text like this one is very striking—"He shall be holden with the cords of his sin." Sin always has small beginnings. A friend of mine was standing one day on the piazza of his house while it was storming. The property had been his father's, and he had spent his boyhood days on the estate. A terrific wind came with the storm, and from his place on the piazza he saw the finest tree on the place come down with a crash. Waiting until the storm was past, he went out over the lawn and found the secret of the fall of the tree. He remembered when he was a boy crossing the lawn one day with an axe in his hand and, carelessly swinging the axe, he had cut into the bark of the tree. Before the bark healed, water seeped in, which worked its way to the heart of the tree. For years it had been slowly decaying, and at length the end came. Every failure that comes into life through sin is a story of a small beginning. The progress is slow, but it is sure. There is a certain insect in India that has a sharp sting. The moment after the insect stings you, your eyes grow glassy, your lips become blue, your face white, and although you may have been in perfect health, the sting of this insect means certain death. When men drift away from God, their consciences become seared and they

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lose their sensitiveness to sin. In earlier years they would have checked sin, but now they commit it with impunity. So it comes to pass that men are "holden with the cords of their sins."

But what do men do with their sins? To answer this question I turn to my Bible. In Genesis, the fourth chapter, I read about Cain and Abel in the field. When Cain struck the blow that killed his brother, and when the murderer was asked: "Where is Abel thy brother?" he tried to evade the question by asking another question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" There are thousands of men like Cain. Oh, yes, they believe in a manner the teachings of this Old Book. They know that "the wages of sin is death"; that "God is not to be mocked"; that "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." But they think that they are so clever that they will be an exception to the rule. They think that some time they will turn away from their sin and that God's law will forget all about it. But you cannot evade sin.

I may have told you the story of a splendid policeman whose position is at the most congested center on Fifth avenue in New York. He was the master of the traffic. He did it so magnificently that prominent men on their way to business would ask their chauffeurs to slow up so they could greet him. Beautiful women often greeted him with a smile. He was on his way to promotion. He almost reached one of the highest positions that a

policeman can occupy in New York. One day there came a message to him calling him to appear in the office of his superior. He went with fear and trembling. The moment he entered the office his conviction that something was wrong deepened, and when his superior turned to him with a strained look in his eye, saying: "Officer, I am sorry," he never allowed him to finish the sentence. He walked towards his superior and began to take off the star, the sign of his authority. He reached for the mace that he carried. Then he drew off his coat and laid it at the feet of his superior, and began to tell his story. He said: "I knew it would come. I did it thirteen years ago, sir, and for ten years I thought that I had escaped it. I buried it so deeply that I thought there could never be any resurrection of it. But for three years, since I knew that promotion was ahead of me, I have never been without fear that this would come." He backed out of the office, went to the lower room, and resigned his position. Nobody knows where he is to-day. He had sinned against God, against his wife, against society. He thought he could escape. but he found otherwise. I say to you all: "Be not deceived. God is not mocked." You cannot evade sin.

Some men encourage sin. There is no more striking illustration of this than Judas Iscariot. When the ointment had been poured on Jesus, he said: "It might have been sold and the money

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given to the poor." From that time he started on a downward way. It was because he was a thief that he said this, and step by step he got further away from Jesus, until at last he made his way into the presence of the enemies of Jesus and bartered for his Lord's death. In those last hours, when they sat all together in the little upper room, Jesus turned to him and said: "What thou doest, do quickly." Judas rose and passed out of the room. A Scotch poet has imagined that as Judas was leaving the room, he looked back. The Master saw him and raised His hand and beckoned to him as if He was saying: Come back! That is not mere imagination. It is a perfect picture of Jesus. How could Judas ever have resisted that beckoning hand? Some men go deeper into sin. They encourage sin.

There is, of course, a natural drift in men towards evil. When I take away my hand from the book I am holding, it drops to the floor. There is a law that pulls it down. So there is a law of moral gravitation, which pulls us down. Unless we resist it we shall sink to lower levels. Some men encourage sin by failing to resist it. What a terrible end awaited Judas! Burdened with his sin, he passed the rope around his neck and swung out over the abyss. "The wages of sin is death." This is the story of Judas Iscariot. But if you are encouraging your sin, I want you to keep in mind

the picture of Jesus beckoning to you and calling you back.

One day in Mr. Wanamaker's Sunday School in Philadelphia, an English minister was present and addressed the school. When he had finished the address, he sat beside me and told me a story, part of which I had heard before. It was the story of a young girl who had drifted into a life of sin and shame. Her mother was broken-hearted, and she came to this English minister and said: "My daughter has gone. Can you win her back to me?" The minister said: "Bring me all the pictures you have of yourself," and she brought them. He placed them before him and dipped his pen in red ink and wrote at the bottom of each picture two words—*Come back!* He took these to all the mission stations and haunts of vice as well. Three months passed, and one night, as the girl was going into a place of sin, she suddenly lifted her eyes and saw the face, the first that had looked into hers with love. At first she could not read the words for her tears. At length she understood the two words that were written in red ink—*Come back.* Along the streets of London she went, out to the edge of the city, paused for a little while before a small house in the darkness, and then stole up to the door, lifted the latch and drew it back. Once she started to turn away, but she came back and lifted the latch again. All at once the door yielded to her touch, and the moment the door was opened



two arms were around her neck and her mother's face was buried on her shoulder. Over and over again the prodigal girl heard her mother saying: "My dear, ever since you went away the door has been open. I have left it on the latch ever since you started away." Oh, if there is a sin in your life that you have been encouraging, to-night I lift before you a face purer than any mother's face, and I read beneath it these words, not in ink, but in blood: Come back! Come back! Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Again I ask, what do men do with their sins? Some men try to cover them like Achan. Do you remember the Old Testament story? God's ancient people had moved up against the city of Jericho, and for seven days they had been marching around the city. On the seventh day they shouted and shouted, and the walls of the city fell down, and the city was taken. Then the same people went up to a little town called Ai, and there they met with defeat, because there was one man who was guilty of sin. That man had seen a Babylonish garment and a wedge of gold, and he had taken them to his tent and covered them over. Because Achan sinned, the people suffered defeat. Do you remember how it runs in the story? *I saw, I coveted, I took, I hid!* I am afraid that there are people in this city who are covering their sins.

I am not here to hear confessions, unless it be that you could tell your story to me as a stranger better than to anyone else, and it might help you to do so. The other night, in Springfield, I had a letter from a gentleman who said: "I am prominent in this city. If you were to read my name, everybody in the audience would know me. My heart is broken." Then followed his story, which I will not dare to repeat. But what he told me in substance was that for two years past he had been seeking some one into whose ears he could pour his story. There is great help oftentimes in confessing one's sin to some one whom you can trust. But there is one thing that you can always do with your sin. You can confess it to God. You can stop trying to cover it, and with God's help you can turn away from it. Then God Himself will cover your sin and blot it out forever. There is one hymn that we sing almost every night. It is my favorite hymn:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins;  
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
 Lose all their guilty stains."

No, you cannot cover sin yourself. To-night, I make an earnest appeal to you to confess your sin to God and ask Him to help you to turn away from your sin.

I come to the close of my message. There is no use trying to cover sin. Acknowledge it to God.

David said: "I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me." Do you know I think that David's sin was one of the worst in the Bible, but David did not go on. He acknowledged his sin. Listen to me, men. Listen to me, women, and young people. When we talk about acknowledging sin, this means all sin. You cannot start and then stop, holding on to one sin. You cannot say: "I am determined to drop one sin at a time and after a while to get into the Kingdom." The only way to escape is to acknowledge all sin and turn from all sin. Mr. Alexander's secretary, in traveling across the Pacific some time ago, had a conversation with a medical man of authority, who told him this story: A certain scientist in Australia has been for years experimenting with the venom of snakes, in the endeavor to discover an effective antidote. He kept in a deep pit on his property in Sidney, Australia, a number of snakes from which he extracted venom from time to time. Finally, he discovered an antidote which proved to be effective. With the recipe in his possession, he sailed for India, hoping to sell his remedy to the Indian Government. He believed that it would make him worth millions. Now, listen. One day he was demonstrating the power of his antidote before a number of scientific and professional men in India. For the purpose, he took a small but very deadly serpent, and allowed it to sting him several times on the wrist. Then very quickly he

applied the antidote. Everything seemed all right, and the representatives of the Government said: "This recipe is worth a fortune." Full of joy, he went away to luncheon with some of the scientists. At luncheon he suddenly realized that the venom of the serpent was working in his own veins. In a short time he was dead. He thought that the serpent had stung him only three times. He had treated three stings and missed a fourth. This evening I stand here and say to you as a minister of the gospel, that there is only one sure cure, only one way of escape. Acknowledge all your sins. Turn away from all your sins.

How I wish that I could take you by the hand, men and women, and speak to your very heart. It does not make any difference what your sin is. Turn away from it, and God will cover it up with the sacrifice of His Son. Listen to me. I am telling you the truth of the gospel. Will you accept it?

You can repent of your sin. What is repentance? I remember once speaking to an audience in New York, and I asked the people to tell me their idea of repentance. One man said: "Repentance is sorrow for sin." Why, it is not that at all. If that were repentance, then everybody here that has ever sinned has repented, for everybody is sorry for sin. Another man said: "Repentance is remorse for sin." No, it is not that. If repentance is remorse, then everybody in this

building has repented. One never sins without remorse. What is repentance? I will tell you. Repentance is being so sorry for your sin that with God's help you turn away from it immediately and give it up.

I would give anything I own to win you to Christ. I would gladly change my methods, if that would win you. I would ask God to put more pathos into my voice, if that would bring you to Christ. Come! Come! God wants you. If you have sinned, He still loves you dearly. Don't go on sinning against His love. There is a story of a boy up near New York, who was arrested for murder. They took him to the prison and sent immediately for his mother. She came hurrying to her boy, and they allowed her to go into the cell alone with him. As she sat beside him with her arms around him, she said: "Tell your mother. Did you do it?" He was just about to confess that he had done it, when he caught a look on her face, and he said: "Mother, I didn't do it." She brushed away her tears and started out of the cell. Friends came to see her, and she said: "It is very kind of you to sympathize with me, but my Jim did not do it. He never did it." The trial came on. The judge and the prosecuting attorney said that if the prisoner would change his plea and acknowledge his guilt, they would take into account his youth and his family and lighten his sentence. The old mother spoke up and said: "It

is very kind of you to do that, Judge, but my boy Jim never did it. He told me that he never did it." The trial went on, and they convicted him and sentenced him to die. As the sentence was about to be carried out, the chaplain went to his cell and said: "Jim, tell me. Did you do it? You are almost in eternity. Did you do it?" The boy looked at him in a frightened way. "Chaplain, I did it. Go and tell mother." The chaplain hurried away to her house where she sat with her face in her hands. He spoke to her, but she never lifted her head. He said: "Mother, Jim did it. He says that he did it." She gave one great shudder. Then rising from the chair and putting her hand on the table, she said: "Chaplain, go back as quickly as you came and tell him that with all my heart I love him. I love him!"

I stand here to tell you that God in His infinite mercy loves you. If you will turn from your sin, He will save you. I cannot say anything more to you. To-day, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart. Take the Saviour to-day!

## XII

### “WHAT WILT THOU SAY?”

I AM calling your attention to a passage of Scripture which is found in Jeremiah 13:21—“What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?” Until I read this verse in the light of the marginal reference, I did not understand it. It seemed to me to be so out of harmony with all that I have learned of God. It may be so with you also. There may be an instinctive shrinking from this text. Nevertheless, I beg you to hear me patiently.

My message for the most part was suggested to me by an experience in New York. I was invited to sit one day with one of the judges of the court. It was a very special day. The judge was to sentence a number of prisoners, some of them for gross crimes, and others for minor offenses. He was not only a distinguished jurist, but a very great Christian as well. He said to me: “I have an idea that perhaps you will learn something to-day that will be of value to you and your hearers.” And, truly, as I sat beside him I learned a great deal. I learned something, too, about this text of mine: “What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee?”

You remember that Jeremiah is called the weeping prophet. If you understood sin as Jeremiah understood it, perhaps you would weep too. I suppose that no minister would covet the title of weeping minister. Tears are sometimes thought to be an evidence of weakness, but anyone who knows the sinfulness of sin, how it is blighting lives and breaking hearts, is warranted in weeping. I can understand how it is that the prophet cried out: “Oh, that my head were waters and that mine eyes were a fountain of tears, that I might weep for the slain of the daughter of my people.” When you study this Old Testament prophet, you find, too, that he is seeking to arouse the people by repeated references to judgment. He says that it shall be a day of wrath. When you think of God’s wrath, you must think of His nature. Men are filled with wrath because of envy or weakness or sin, but God’s wrath never comes from any such source. Yet sin is the occasion of divine wrath, so Jeremiah says that the day of judgment will be a day of the pouring out of vials on the earth. “It is a day,” he says, “when men shall try to flee from God and shall be as drunken men. The father shall turn against his son, and the son against his father, and when men try to escape, it shall be a slippery path that they travel, and the way of escape shall be impossible.”

There are two views to take of God. One is that God is a consuming fire, and the other is that God



is love. God is a consuming fire to us when we turn our backs upon Him, trample His love beneath our feet, spurn His mercy, and resist the power of His Holy Spirit. When these things are done, then God is a consuming fire. But the moment you turn to Christ and receive Him as a Saviour, and accept pardon at His hands, from that moment God becomes matchless love. So I feel like stopping for a moment to ask the question of the text: What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee? I want to make it plain to sincere Christian believers that they need have no fear of final judgment. We shall all stand at the judgment bar, but they who have accepted Christ shall have nothing to fear. You remember what the Apostle Paul says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour? Do you believe that He died for you on Calvary? Well, if He died, what was the purpose of His death? He took your place under the law. He died in your stead. He died that you might live. So do you not see that it would be unfair and unjust for God to accept Jesus Christ as my substitute, answering every demand of the law, and then let me stand trembling at the judgment bar. This text is not for the man who has accepted Jesus Christ. What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee? It is not my nature to cry out concerning God's wrath. I prefer to speak of His love. I

prefer to win men with the thought of the mercy of God in Christ. But the preaching of love seems sometimes to fail. Love sometimes seems powerless. Prayer sometimes seems to be in vain. To-night I speak of wrath and punishment. Some have long resisted Him. My text is for you—What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee?

One day I counted the number of chapters in the Bible. If I remember correctly, there are 1,189. Three chapters tell us whence we came. 1,186 chapters tell us whither we are going, and seek to make us ready. There are only two ways of going out of this world. You may go out with faith, having found Jesus Christ and a life of trust. Then all is well. Your loved ones gather about you and witness your departure. They watch your face whiten and your eyes grow dim. You are safe in the Lord's keeping. As we passed out of New York harbor on our way around the world we heard the voices of our loved ones plainly, then not quite so plainly. Presently only half their sentences reached us. At length we heard no words at all, but we saw their waving hands and caught the white messages of their handkerchiefs. And so it will be with you. Quietly and peacefully you will close your eyes and go home. This is well.

The other way of going out of the world is to go with no Saviour to help you. No hope to sustain you, no promises on which to rest. The future will be dark to you and full of despair, and in your

heart you will be saying: If I only had! If I only had! Answer me! What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee? Have you sometimes seen the clouds heavy in the morning? Every moment it looked as if rain would come. Suddenly, just about as the day was dying and the wind was hushed to a whisper, the clouds broke, the thunder rolled, and the lightning flashed. So it will be with men who continually reject Jesus Christ. God in His mercy is holding back the judgment, but some day, and it may be soon, it will come. What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee? A miner in the Rocky Mountains, the owner of a big mine, struck a rich lead one day. At the beginning of the day it looked quite favorable, and by the close of the day it was marvellously rich. The following day he sent an invitation to all his miner friends to come and rejoice with him. So they came and sat around his table. He was from New England, and his friends had sent him from his old home a fine barrel of New England apples. He said to his friends, some of whom were Yale and Harvard men: "Friends, we are going to have an old time treat." Turning to one of his servants, he said: "Go down in the cellar and bring up the apples." The servant came back laden with the fruit. He went down with a lighted candle and came back without it. The miner said to him: "Where did you leave the light?" "Oh," he said, "I left it in the cellar on a barrel of sand." With-

out showing the least excitement, the miner walked carelessly to the door. When he was out of sight of his friends, he gave a sudden spring and reached the candle in the cellar. It was flickering on a barrel of blasting powder. He knew that in a moment the foundations of the mountain would shake. Catching up the light, he was just in time to save his own life and the lives of his friends. If I could speak to-night as God would have me speak, if I could perfectly portray the teachings of this Book, if I could help you to feel that your resistance of God's love and of the gospel of His Son is dangerous! To-day may be your last day, to-morrow may be Eternity. What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee?

The word punish is explained in the margin. The text should read somewhat in this way: What wilt thou say when He shall visit thee? This verse is a forerunner of that impressive message in the New Testament: "Be not deceived. God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Do you not see? Can you not understand? The prophet is saying that when the last restraining influence is removed, when the last prayer has been refused, when the last invitation has been spurned, the question then is: What wilt thou say when He shall visit thee? I spoke of sitting by the judge on the bench and watching the prisoners pass in front of him to receive their sentences. My mind went to this text. One of the

things I learned that day has to do with youth. The judge said to me: "Forty-two per cent of all the sentences are upon boys, youths from sixteen to twenty-one." No doubt it is so throughout the entire country. And, he added: "Not in five years have I passed a sentence upon a boy who has been faithful in the Sunday School. When they have grown up and left it, and become too big for it in their own estimation, then sometimes they come before me, but not if they have been faithful." Then he said this impressive thing to me: "As a matter of fact we have determined the sentences before the prisoners appear. You see that man coming in. I am going to tell him what his sentence is. It was decided last night." I said to him: "Why, judge, that is like the Scripture. 'He that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed.'" Do you see how this is? Condemned already. But the marvellous thing about God's judgment is that it is reversed when we put our faith in His Son. Judgment is taken away if we lift our eyes to Jesus. Oh, how plain it is!

Two men came before the judge charged with crimes of equal seriousness. One received his sentence immediately, and the other was given another chance. I said: "Why?" "Well," said the judge, "the first one had no one to speak for him. The second one had another judge to speak for him. A merchant also spoke for him. They have presented extenuating circumstances." I said:

How like the Saviour again. How like God's judgment. Here I am, weighed down with my sin, condemned because I have not believed and taken my stand for Christ. Instantly Jesus Christ, my Saviour, steps forward to take his place at my side. He bares His wounded side and stretches out His nail-marked hands and I go free. The Redeemer speaks for me. What wilt thou say when He shall visit thee?

I have been turning over the pages of the New Testament to see what men have said in judgment. Some have tried to justify themselves. "Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?" Did we not do good deeds? Were we not kind and merciful? Did we not go to church occasionally? And I think I hear the Master saying this: "Step into the balances and be weighed. Let all the motives back of your services be tested." Could you stand this? If you ask me whether I can stand it, I answer promptly: Not for a moment. But when I step in with all my weaknesses, and Christ steps in with me with all His strength, then there is all the difference in the world. Faith in Jesus Christ makes a difference. I turn again to my Bible, and I read that some men cry out when it is too late: "What have I done?" You had your opportunity, but you did not take it. The door was open for you, but you did not go in. You knew your duty, but you did not do it. You heard the warning and you did not heed it. You resisted the call, and the

door was shut. Too late! Too late! Some men will stand in terror when God visits them. It will be as it is described in Revelation—"Rocks and hills fall on us and hide us from His face." Only there will be no rocks to hide you in the last judgment, and no hills to cover you. In the judgment a man will stand face to face with God. So many prayers, so many sermons, so many strivings, so many mothers' tears, so many pleadings of a father,—they will go rushing past you in memory on the day of judgment, and you will be speechless. I plead with you to-night to turn to Christ. There can never be a better time than this. God loves you, and He is ready to save you.

A southern gentleman sent his son to a northern university. Time went by, and one day he came back again with his diploma, but, alas, he came as an inebriate. When his mother kissed him, she caught the smell of drink, and it broke her heart. In two weeks she died. The father did all he could for his boy. He loved him dearly. It seemed almost unbelievable to his neighbours that he could go on loving a son like that. One morning the father drove to town, and as he stepped out of his carriage the drunken son came forward and struck him. The old man threw his hands up to his head. They put him in his carriage, and sent him home. For a moment he sat in the house, and then he rose and walked out of the house and crossed the grounds to a grave. There he got on his knees, and

burying his face in his hands he cried aloud. They say that the neighbours heard him on the next place. His heart broke there. When the boy came, the old man said to him: “You will have to go away. You dishonoured my name, and I still loved you. You killed your mother, and still I loved you. But this morning you struck me, and you will have to go away.” A friend of mine who knew the circumstances told me that the boy turned away and staggered down the road. He became a wanderer in the world. But God is a better father than that. To-night He is saying to you: You have spurned my love and still I love you. You have resisted my Son, but I have not taken my love away from you. You have said “no” a thousand times to my gracious invitations, but still I love you. I love you! He pleads with you to turn. To-night you can do it, this very minute.



## XIII

### A NEGLECTED TRUTH

**M**Y text is very familiar, although it speaks of a much neglected truth—John 3:7—“Ye must be born again.” If your Bible is open before you, you will notice that the marginal reading says: “Ye must be born *from above.*” Salvation is not a human effort. I am saved, not because I struggle nor because I attempt to do good. Neither do I become a Christian by giving generously of my means. These things are all worthy, but they do not bring salvation. We must be born again. Jesus said this, and Jesus knew. What a marvellous provision for salvation. It goes to the root of things. People sometimes say: I wish I could begin life all over again. I wish I could take the experience of past years, all that I learned in college, all that I have learned in the school of adversity, and then start life all over. Just this you may do if you are not yet a Christian and will accept the teaching of God’s Word. Jesus had in mind the starting of life all over again when He said, you must be born again.

There are few chapters in the Bible with which we are so familiar as the third chapter of the Gos-

pel of John. You know it contains the great statement of the sixteenth verse, which one of the reformers said was the gospel in a nutshell. If we should lose the rest of the Bible and had only this verse left, we would know God's love and would understand something about the death of Jesus. It was in this same conversation with Nicodemus that Jesus said: "Ye must be born again." I confess that there is no doctrine in the Scripture which I find so difficult to make people understand as this subject of regeneration. Nevertheless, it is a doctrine that can be easily illustrated.

Some years ago we were holding a meeting not far from my home in New York State. There was an old man in the village who for years had never darkened the doors of the church. He was passionately fond of music. He heard about the singing, and with a hungry heart he made his way to the place of worship. When he saw the crowds he started to go back to his haunts of sin, but the old hunger for music checked him and he staggered back to the door. Despair had gripped him. His wife was dead, and his children were in the poorhouse. With great hesitation he pushed the door open. The only vacant seat in the building was away at the front. Someone led the old man to that seat. I do not know that he heard anything of my sermon, but he was all attention to the singing. When the appeal came, his hand was instantly lifted. When I invited the people to come to the

inquiry room, he was the first to respond. He was on his knees when I entered. I laid my hand on his gray head, and said to him: "Mr. Firth, you may take Jesus Christ to-night if you will, and if you take Him, He will change your life." The old man hesitated a moment, dropped his head a little lower, and I heard him say: "God be merciful to me a sinner." He rose to his feet a changed man. To the day of his death, fifteen years afterwards, he served his Master faithfully. Only once was he tempted to drink. Crossing a bridge one day, the temptation came to him. He fairly ran to his home, called out to God for help, and escaped temptation. They made him a church official in the church where he was converted. He stood up before a large audience and testified that God had taken away the appetite for drink and had given him a new name and a new nature. I give this as an illustration of my text. I am not discouraged when men tell me that they are sinful men, for I know that God can make them over and give them a new start. It is because I believe this that I bring you this text—"Ye must be born again."

People often say to me that they are troubled by perplexing questions. I talked last night to two intelligent men, both of them honestly interested and desirous of becoming Christians, but I found them sorely troubled by some questions. I said to them: No man's faith has ever been increased if he just sat and waited. No man has ever come to

know Christ as a Saviour unless he has started forward. The mysteries of the Bible are hard things to understand. The wonderful doctrine of atonement! Things like these will clear up the moment you start and turn your face towards God and move in the line of His teaching. Some years ago a man came to Mr. Moody with a long list of questions. They seemed serious questions to him, although some of them were not important. He said: "Mr. Moody, if you will answer these questions, I will become a Christian." Mr. Moody, who knew him, said: "See here, I will make you a proposition. If you will give your heart sincerely to Jesus Christ to-night and accept Him as your Saviour, come to-morrow morning and I will answer every question you have propounded." That night the man became a Christian. The following morning he came to Mr. Moody, and, without waiting, he said: "Mr. Moody, this is the most remarkable thing I have ever heard of. You do not need to answer my questions. Every question that troubled me last night is plain this morning." Let anyone start toward Jesus Christ with a sincere faith, and the dark things will begin to grow light. Sins that have bound will begin to snap. Passions that have hindered you will be overpowered. Come to Jesus! "Ye must be born again."

If you will turn to this chapter again, you will see what Jesus says—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the

Kingdom of God." I am not at all clear in my own mind that the reference here is to the water of baptism. Well, you ask me naturally, what does it mean? Of course, you need not accept this statement of mine, but it seems to me that when Jesus was speaking to this man who had had an Old Testament training, he must have spoken of water as it is spoken of in the Old Testament, as an emblem or symbol of the Word of God. So it is as if He said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of the Word and of the Spirit." This, too, is what the Apostle Peter says: "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." I hold this Book before you. It is God's Word. It is the seed of life. If you would be saved, just take this Word into your heart and hold it there. There are some things you may be unable to explain, but hold it in your heart. There may be mysteries here, but stand upon it just the same and God's Word will do its work. You will be born again.

I do not expect much of the man who professes to be a Christian and does not take his stand upon the sure Word of God, and for this reason: If he stands on emotion, emotion will pass. If he stands on feelings, feelings may change. If he should stand by the singing of this great choir, the choir will soon be a memory. But if he stands on this Book, believing its promises and accepting its faith,

heaven and earth may pass away, but this Word will never pass away.

Some years ago there came to our meetings a man who afterwards became a bishop. I was asking the people to say how they had become Christians, and he gave his experience. Said he: "I was reared in a family, every member of which was a perfect battery of emotion. I was not. We never had a revival that they did not call me to the altar, but I never quite found myself in sympathy with it. I entered college, still not a Christian. One day I was seated under a tree on the campus, preparing a New Testament lesson. It was John, the third chapter. I came to the sixteenth verse, and when I read it, it seemed new. I rose to my feet, opened my little Testament again, and read it over once more. 'For God so loved the world.' I said, that is big enough for me. 'That He gave His only begotten Son.' That is provision enough for me. 'That whosoever believeth in Him.' Surely that is definite enough for me. 'Should not perish, but have everlasting life.' That is sure enough for me." And, said the man who afterwards became a bishop: "I took my little Testament in my hand and held it above my head, and solemnly I said these words: 'Oh, God, standing on this campus to-day, I accept this Word which Thou hast spoken. I will hold to it, so long as I live. When I die, I will take it to the judgment with me, and if I am not saved it will go hard with Thy Book.' And suddenly my,

tears were running down and I was crying as if my heart would break. I rushed into the building to tell my friends that I was saved." Then he added: "I have been a perfect battery of emotion myself ever since."

I am trying to make all this plain this evening. I am so anxious to have everyone understand. This is a foundation principle: "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit." What does this mean? The Spirit of God is in this world, revealing Jesus Christ, making Him plain to men, making His teachings quick and powerful. I know quite well that some men are far more eloquent than I. I know that many have deeper scholarship than I, but I hope that no man can surpass me in loyalty to Jesus Christ. When I hold Him up before you this evening, and your hearts are stirred and your tears start, and you move forward, all this is an illustration of my text. The Spirit of God is at work! He takes the hymns, He uses the incidents and the illustrations, He brings to memory your mother's prayers, He is here, and all you need to do is to surrender to God.

I was preaching in New York one time, and I saw a splendid man move forward at one of our meetings and confess Christ. I went to my home with a feeling of satisfaction because I believed that I had been used of God to win a great soul to Christ. The following day was a day of prayer.

After I had preached my sermon, as the people were leaving, down the aisle came my man of the night before. He held a little boy in his arms. The child's face was white and thin. He carried a little pair of crutches. I could see the little fellow's leg swinging against his father's side. The father put the little fellow down gently on the platform, and walked over to me. "I am going to introduce you to my little Joe," he said. Then in an undertone he added: "Joe cannot stay with us long." He did not need to tell me that. The little fellow had crossed a street in New York and had been struck by a truck. Tuberculosis of the hip joint followed. As his father brought the little fellow forward, I saw the perfect love of his heart for the child. Is there anything that can make a father's face quite so beautiful, is there anything that can make his arms quite so gentle, as a little lame child that he calls his own? I took the boy's hand. I can almost feel it still. His father said: "This is little Joe. He was the means of my conversion." I remember the feeling of disappointment that entered my heart. I thought that I had been instrumental in his conversion. The father went on: "Every night my little boy has been saying to his mother: 'You take father and I will stay at home and pray,' and every night when we came home I would hear the *thud, thud* of his little crutches on the hall floor. Then the door would swing open and he would spring into my arms and



say: 'Father, did you come?' But last night when I put my latchkey into the door I heard him coming; and when he sprang into my arms, he never asked me at all; he just buried his little white face in my neck and began to cry out: 'Oh, father, you came! You came! I knew you would.'"

And this is what the text means. The Spirit of God takes a memory, a face, a lock of hair; it takes a baby's smile, or a mother's death; it takes this marvellous Word. It takes the sound of preaching. It takes the testimony of some sincere Christian. "Ye must be born again." We cannot always trace the influence, or mark out the way. The Spirit has many ways of touching human hearts.

How plain God's Word is! The smitten Israelites in the wilderness looked on the brazen serpent. Some saw plainly, no doubt; others saw dimly. Some could hardly see at all, but they turned their eyes, all of them, towards the uplifted serpent, and they were all healed. You do not need to come to Jesus as I came. I came to Him quietly. You may come to Him with a shout or a sob. You may come with powerful emotion, or you may come with a still heart, but you need to come. To-night, if I can persuade you to come right now where you are sitting, you may know at once what it means to be born again. Oh, if I could persuade you! How can you stay back?

A young girl came down the aisle in another city. One of the ministers said: "It cannot be. Yes, it

is. She is the daughter of the most prominent judge of this city." She was there but a moment, and when I looked again she was gone. The minister was greatly concerned. He thought that some worker had offended her, but she was still in the building. She had gone straight to her father, thrown her arms around his neck, put her face against his, and sobbed out her words. The minister found her there, and heard her saying: "Father, I cannot stay there without you. I cannot stay there without you." The distinguished man rose, walked down the aisle, and took his seat at the front. I want you to do that. Your mother has come. Your wife has come. Your child has come. Why do you not come to-night? How can you stay away? How can you resist Him? How can you shut your eyes to Christ? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." How can you spurn Him?

#### XIV.

### “IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?”

**I** TURN to an Old Testament book for my text, Lamentations 1:12—“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?” My subject is *Indifference*.

Jerusalem was beautiful for situation. In the day of its glory it was the joy of the whole earth, yet at the time of the text it was in desolation and despair. For some unaccountable reason the people were indifferent. Temples and walls and houses were down. Yet as they passed along the highways, there were some who had a sneer upon their faces. They even cast stones at the ruins. So Jeremiah, who has been called the weeping prophet, realizing the condition of the people, spoke to them in the words of the text—“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?”

Really, it is hard to understand indifference. Especially is it difficult to understand indifference to Christ, and indifference to the spiritual interests of others. A little while ago, when one section of our country was covered with floods, an appeal was made in New York for funds. In a single morning thousands and tens of thousands of dollars were contributed. This we can understand. I remember when we were going around the world, and were

in a beautiful harbour, I was gazing one day at the hills and the sky, when I saw some people reading a newspaper. I went over to them carelessly, and in great headlines, larger than this book in my hands, I read a sentence announcing the sinking of the *Titanic*. Faces were white. Some men grew sick. I myself thought that I would faint, for some of my friends were on the ship. All over the world there was a wave of sympathy. Everywhere interest was quickened. Funds were quickly forthcoming for those who needed help. Is it not strange that in this city there are thousands of men and women without Christ, and we who are Christians are not much concerned about them? If they should die they would be hopeless. If they should go out into eternity this evening, their blood would be on our heads and hands. Is it not strange that we sit with folded arms and sealed lips? I think I can forgive a minister almost anything. I could forgive him if he were without culture or great intellectual ability. I know I could forgive him if he were without eloquence. But I cannot forgive a minister who is not on fire with a passion for souls. I am appealing not only to you who stand in the pulpit, but to you who are in the pews also. There is only one thing needed here now. We have a splendid union of ministers and churches. The thinking people of the city are behind these meetings. If I could be assured this evening that you who are believers would go back to your homes and

fall upon your knees and never rise until you had placed yourselves at God's disposal, then I should prophesy one of the most wonderful miracles of grace I have ever seen.

So I am preaching to you to-night on indifference. Is it nothing to you that men are in danger? Is it nothing to you that the fields are white with the harvest? Is it nothing to you that a thousand people could be brought to Christ in a week? Is it nothing to you that to-morrow may be the beginning of eternity?

I want to speak very frankly. In the light of the text I ask first of all: How can you be indifferent to God? I speak first of God. How can you be indifferent to Him when you have His Word? Do you really believe the Bible? Tell me honestly, do you believe the Bible? Well, if you do, tell me what you think of this: "He that believeth not is condemned already." Or what do you think of this: "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment." Or what do you think about this: "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the heaven and earth fled away and the books were opened." I believe that if I could bring you face to face with the teachings of God's Word, you would go forth to shake this city for Him. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" Do you feel that God is so merciful that He is going to let you shirk your responsibility; that He is going to permit you to be

indifferent to your children and unmindful of the spiritual condition of your friends? Listen to the words of Jesus, when He commands you to go into the fields that are white to the harvest. “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?” Do you imagine that while there is a responsibility upon me to preach and upon your ministers to preach and work,—do you imagine that you yourself are free? Can you find a verse of Scripture to stand on to justify you in this faith? There is as much obligation on me as on you, on you as on your ministers, and Sunday School teachers. When a spirit of concern takes possession of us, such concern as will drive sleep from our eyes and send us after our friends, then we shall see wonderful things.

Is it nothing to you that in this city five hundred wait for some man’s tears, some man’s hand, some man’s invitation. Well, you think that there is time enough. Some of you are saying this. You are saying, some day I will do this. You have not spoken to your friend, even to your own boy, but you expect to do so. You have not spoken to the commercial salesman who comes to your store, but you expect to speak to him some day. Some day you will not rise from your bed. Some morning they will wait for you at the breakfast table. Some morning your boy will mount the stairs to your room and push open the door, and then he will go rushing down the stairs again to his mother, and say: “Father is dead.” I am not trying to appeal

to your fears, but I am perfectly willing to appeal to your emotions. I am myself emotional. I think it is a wonderful thing to stand with one's heart full of feeling between God and dying men.

To-morrow may find you in eternity. Is it nothing to you that the time is short? I ask another question: Would you be prepared if you should have to stand face to face with God to-morrow? I am not now questioning your personal acceptance of God. I am not now questioning your position in the Church, but I am asking about what you have done for others. You have children at your table. You have a man working for you. There are many whom you know intimately, and you have never said a word to any of them about Christ. What can you say about this when you stand face to face with God?

I cannot understand how anyone can be indifferent to Christ. There was an old man in my church in New York State. He was taking me out one day to see some work that he was doing, and as we went along he told me of an experience he once had in Cork, Ireland. He said: "I was standing on the ground looking at a building and saw that a ladder was going to fall. Two men were on the last rung. I put my hand to my mouth and shouted: 'Men, step aside!' They were near the edge of a scaffold. One stepped aside safely, but the other lost his balance and fell from the third story. I saw him coming down, but I was rooted

to the spot. I could not move. There was a man by my side who stretched out his arms and caught the falling man. The man who fell was scarcely injured, but the man who caught him had his arms broken and driven into their sockets. His spine, too, was twisted out of shape. They carried him to a hospital.” Eagerly I asked my friend: “What became of him?” He replied: “He still lives. I was in Cork a few summers ago and saw him working his way along the streets of the city. A terrible sight to see!” Then it suddenly occurred to me to ask about the man whose life he had saved. I wish you could have seen him when I asked the question. He told me that the man he had saved had made over half his property to his family, and had entered into a covenant to give him half of all the money he ever made. Fine, wasn’t it? What if he had told me that the man had turned his back upon him? But wait! The Lord Jesus Christ came into this world and lived and suffered and died to save me. Let me tell you. I think I ought to be busy, in season and out of season, for Him. I think I ought to go up and down the streets and into the shops to tell men about Him. Oh, if we can get that spirit to-day, the work will be wonderful.

There are three illustrations with which I hurry to a close. They are scriptural. Jeremiah 9:1—  
 “Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night



for the slain of the daughter of my people." It is a picture of sin. Do you know that not in all the world's history has there been such sin as to-day. Do you know that your boys cannot walk the streets without having injury done to their souls. Your girls cannot go about without seeing things that mar their spirits. It is fifty times harder for your boy to be true than it was for you when you were a boy. There are ten thousand ways leading straight to perdition. How can any of us be indifferent to sin? How can any of us be careless of the slain of the daughter of the people?

The second illustration is this: It is that picture in the New Testament where the Jews are stoning Jesus. A little further on in the narrative it says that the Jews took up stones again with which to stone Him. His blessed face was bruised before the time, and the blood gushed out and fell upon His breast. Then it was that Jesus said in His tenderest way: "Many good works have I showed you from my Father, for which of these do you stone me?" I think it would be better even to stone Jesus than to be indifferent to Him.

The third illustration is where St. Paul says: "I am willing to become accursed for my brethren." These are the words of a man who was living for other people. How can any of us be indifferent to people in the sight of God? There is one prayer that I want you to offer for me. I have been a long time in evangelistic work. Perhaps longer than al-

most anybody now in the field. My time may be short. I do not know. The prayer I have been offering is the one I want you to make for me, that I may preach this year with a broken heart because people are lost. Is it nothing to you? You Sunday School teachers, tell me, is it nothing to you that your scholars are out of Christ? I sat years ago in a Methodist Sunday School, in Richmond, Ind., by the side of a little old-fashioned woman. Some one was speaking from the platform, who that somebody was I cannot find out now, but I remember what he said. He said: “Stand up and confess Christ.” The little old-fashioned woman looked at me and said: “Wilbur, better stand,” and when I did not respond, she put her arm under my elbow and lifted me and I arose. That little old-fashioned woman still lives in Indiana. I heard from her the other day, and she said: “I am glad I put my fingers under your elbow and lifted.” Is it nothing to you, teacher, that in your class there is a boy who might some day preach the gospel or sing the songs of Zion? Is it nothing to you, fathers and mothers, that you have a boy in your home who might some day shake a continent for God?

I said to my church officers in New York City one day: “How many have you won to Christ?” One man, a banker, replied: “If you will excuse me, I will go home. I have four boys. One of them is a deacon in the church, but I have not

spoken to the others about their souls." He went home and went up to the room where the boys were sleeping, and bending down he kissed one of them. Then he said to him: "My boy, I have come home to ask you to become a Christian." I took that boy and one of his brothers into the church the next Sunday. Is it nothing to you that there are boys and girls very near to you who ought to be brought to Christ?

Is it nothing to you that up and down the streets of this city men are walking, bound with passions, held by sin, hurt by the influences of the devil? Tell me, is it nothing to you? Is it nothing to you? Down in one of the southern cities where we were working there was a young doctor who had graduated with highest honors in Philadelphia. He was beginning to win renown as a surgeon. No doubt he would have become famous. In an unguarded moment he began to drink. There was a sleeping demon somewhere in his being. The young doctor headed straight to destruction. He lost everything. One beautiful Sunday morning in October his little boy and girl were out gathering flowers and nuts in the woods. They had a hammer to crack the nuts. They had come back into the house, still cracking the nuts with the hammer. The father came in wild with drink and turned like a demon against his wife. The little boy, hammer in hand, stepped forward and said: "Father, please don't hurt mother." He killed both the boy and his sis-

ter, and even took the little baby from the bed and killed it. He was a man of fine sensibilities when he was sober. Sin had chained him. To-day he is behind prison bars for life. Up and down the streets of the town where his wife had lived like a queen, she walks now earning her daily bread with hardest toil. Is it nothing to you that sin can do deeds like this? Is it nothing to you that there are people without hope, homes that are desolate? Is it nothing to you that the Saviour is here ready to save men from their sins?

In a moment the service will close. Mr. Alexander will start the singing. You may stay if you will. Oh, my God! If only there might be in this city a wonderful revival. Heavenly Father! If only there might come to the ministers the blessing their hearts are seeking. If only I might have the ability to preach so that men's hearts would break. If only Mr. Alexander might sing so as to help men feel the presence of Jesus Christ. Give us such a look in the eye, such a ring in the voice, as shall make men serious. Oh, that there may come to fathers and mothers such concern for their children, that they shall say with tears in their eyes: Turn to God. Oh, that there may come to ministers such a passion for souls that tears may fill their eyes and longing may speak in their voices. Why not? Oh, God! Why not? Amen.

## XVI

### THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

**I** AM preaching to-night on what I believe to be the most important subject in the Bible. Of course, anything that has to do with Jesus Christ is of vast importance. My text is found in the First Epistle of Peter 1: 19—"The precious blood of Christ."

The Apostle Peter, as we all know, was a fisherman in his earlier days. It is wonderful that he became the leader and writer that he was, and, strange to say, the word that he uses many times is this word—*precious*. He speaks of precious promises. He says of Jesus: "Unto you that believe, He is precious." It is just about the last word that you would expect a fisherman to use. He was probably an uncultured man and a stranger to the schools. Before he began to follow Jesus, he had the habit of profanity. There was an occasion when, in an unguarded moment, his old habit took hold upon him and with an oath he said: "I know not the man." All this goes to show that if one accepts Jesus Christ as a Saviour and yields himself wholly to him, the Master will take complete possession of him and fashion him all over again. The power of old habits will be broken and the influence of evil associations will be overcome. When

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once Jesus comes into our lives, we are literally a new creation.

The word of the text is the word of an artist. It is the word of a man who feels power in his soul. When the Apostle Peter caught a vision of Jesus Christ, his soul was on fire, and he used this word: The precious blood of Christ! All too little is said in these days about the blood of Christ. Some of us seem to avoid the subject as much as possible. The other evening I spoke about the personality and influence of Satan. If there is one truth more than another that Satan would oppose, it is the truth of this text. If there is one subject that he would like to turn our minds away from, it is the blood of Jesus Christ. He tells us that we can be saved by reformation, by good deeds. He tells us that we can be saved by doing our best. But all the way through the New Testament we find that the only way to God is a blood-marked way. The precious blood of Christ! I suggest that you take a little camel's hair brush some time, and a bottle of red ink, and go through the New Testament, marking with red every passage that has to do with sacrifice, with the death of Christ. Every passage that speaks of salvation as the result of the shedding of blood. Well, you will mark a great many passages. You will redden everything that deals with pardon and peace, and forgiveness, and joy, and salvation, and the very music of heaven itself. Then when you have marked these verses red, take

a little pair of scissors and clip out every red verse. Then you will begin to understand how large a place the blood occupies in the salvation of man. The apostle knew this, and because he knew it, he said: The precious blood of Christ!

If you go through the Old Testament, you will find that the way to get back to God is the way of sacrifice. There it was the blood of bulls and goats, but these were not sufficient. When sin was too great, and human nature too weak, then Jesus Christ came in the flesh. He lived and loved, and suffered and died, and His heart broke. From pierced hands and feet and broken heart His blood poured forth, and because of this sacrifice, the Apostle Peter writes: The precious blood of Christ. In the Old Testament there are many figures that are used to make it plain. For example, when judgment was hanging over the homes in Israel, and the first born was about to be slain in Egypt, then the lamb without spot was sacrificed, the blood was collected in a basin, a bunch of hyssop was dipped in the blood, and the blood was sprinkled on the doorposts, and the word that came to the people was: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Remember the lamb was to be without blemish. Jesus met this condition. The lamb was to be slain. Jesus died that we might live.

I allow no one to go beyond me in paying tribute to the earthly ministry of the Master, to the marvellous words He spoke, and the great deeds He did.

But I wish to say that I think I can prove that there is nothing said in the New Testament about our being saved by His life. I know there is one expression in the Epistle to the Romans which might seem to teach this: "Saved by his life." But literally this means—Kept safe in his life. The message of the Apostle Paul here was not to the unsaved, but to the saved. He is telling us that when once we have accepted Jesus Christ as the Saviour, then we have him as our environment, as our protector. His arms are underneath us and round about us. His wings are above us and we are kept safe in His life. But God's Word teaches clearly that I am saved not because he lives, but because he died. One of the greatest preachers in England said the other day something like this—"Some men have a way of saying in these days very much about the works of men and very little about the death of Jesus Christ." But if I should lose out of my thinking the death of Christ and the shedding of His blood and all that it means, then I should have a wrong conception of God and His righteousness and justice. Also I should know that there was no chance for me to be saved, for if God could look upon sin and pass it over without an atonement, without something to blot it out, I think I should lose my great conception of God. I should also lose my joy as a saved sinner. But when I realize that He may be just, and the justifier of them that be



lieve, when I know that He may hate sin while He loves the sinner, when I know that His own Son bore in His body our sins upon the tree—then I can sing and shout for joy, for I know that I am lifted from despair into hope, from darkness into light, from bondage into freedom. The Apostle Peter knew this, so we hear him say — the precious blood of Christ. How plain it all is, prefigured in the Old Testament, perfectly illustrated in the New. Listen while I give you some passages of Scripture.

Jesus Christ died, and in dying he paid the penalty for my sins. His death was, therefore, penal. Galatians 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." You remember the story of Father Damien. I recall when he started away from our country to the Hawaiian Islands to become a leper and to die as a leper for the sake of the lepers whom he served. Yet this is a poor illustration of Jesus Christ. He came into this world and suffered in my stead. He bore the shame of the cross. He was made a curse for me. As by faith I lift my eyes to Him and take Him as my Saviour, I take His place in the love and favor of God.

Listen again. It was a voluntary death. John 10:18: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." I wish that I could help you to see what my salvation and yours cost. He turned away from the joy of heaven to the shame of earth. He turned away from the vast throngs

saying — *Holy, Holy, Holy*, to this world where they veiled his face and smote him. He turned away from the immediate presence of the Father, and came down into this world where men spat in His face and heaped shame upon Him, and even placed the cross upon His tired shoulders. They did even more than this. They put Him on the cross and drove nails through His hands and feet. They lifted Him up between heaven and earth, as if He were unfit for earth and as if they would hold Him back from Heaven. He came down to earth to meet all this and He did it willingly. He was ready to suffer, ready to die for you and me. To-night, all you need to do to have the bondage of sin taken away and to have sin cast behind God's back, is just to take Him as your personal Saviour, and with His help to turn away from sin.

It was a substitutionary death. In these times men seem to shrink from this thought. I have no harsh word for any man who cannot accept my theological position. I have no harsh word for the man who cannot at first accept a substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. But let me explain the meaning. It means that He takes my place and offers up Himself for me. I only know that I find this throughout the Word of God, and it takes hold of my soul and grips me. II Corinthians 5:21: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin." There are some things in this world that are so dreadful that we cannot think of them

without growing sick. We cannot speak of them without suffering. So it is when we think of sin in connection with Jesus. Yet we are told that He was made sin for us. When men come to my room and tell me that they are drunken and lecherous, that they have secret sins and passions that bind them, I can only go so far with them. These things I have not experienced, except through my sympathy. Yet while my Saviour did not sin, He was made sin for us. When the man who was a drunkard comes to Him, or the lecherous man, or the dishonest man, or the woman who is weak, my blessed Redeemer knows all about their trouble, and knowing their trouble and staggering beneath the weight of the world's woe, He hurries to the cross and dies. St. Peter knew this when he said — The precious blood of Christ!

Hear me, too, when I give you this text from the Old Testament. Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." What does this mean? It means that when Jesus Christ came into this world and lived and loved and suffered; when His heart broke on Calvary's cross and the blood poured from His veins, He was laying down His life for you and for me. Of course, if I should lay down my life for you, it might avail in a certain way, but the value of the life determines the value of the blood. Do you not see this? I stand here to-night preaching and I know that there are some rich people here who are nevertheless very weak.

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There are some who are high in social life, but they have gone astray. Some are poor, too, and they have turned away from God. But no matter who you are, my Saviour is groaning upon Calvary and shedding His blood. He is able to save you all. The Apostle Peter knew this, and he said — The precious blood of Christ. I am hurrying to the close of my message but I want you to know the hope that is in the blood of Christ. Do not resist Him, my friends. Do not reject His precious blood.

My friend, Dr. Geo. F. Pentecost, was determined to climb Pike's Peak alone. His friends said to him, "You cannot do it without a guide who knows the way." But Dr. Pentecost said, "I know that I can climb it alone." So he started off. They told him that at a certain curve in the mountain there was a hut, open to any traveler, if by any chance he should miss his way going up. He was getting along very well, when suddenly a snow-storm overtook him. Without warning the blinding snow covered him and he began to drift. He staggered and fell, and then there came to him the warnings of his friends. He had practically given himself up to die, when he realized, as he lay upon the ground, that his hands were touching some dry twigs. It came to him that if he could start a fire he might still escape. He felt in his pocket for matches, and found one. But the wind was blowing a perfect gale. I heard Dr. Pentecost say that

he took that single match and, shielding it in his hands from the snow, started to strike it, but he was afraid and he put it back into his pocket again. Finally, in his desperation, he got up closer under the shadow of a rock and struck the match, shielding the little flame as best he could, and touching it to the dry twigs. The fire was started, and his life was saved. There was just that one little thing between him and death. What a blessing that he did not treat it carelessly. To-night I am standing here to say that there is just one thing between you and judgment, and that one thing is the precious blood of Christ. I beg you not to treat it carelessly.

But someone is saying,— You don't know my sins. You don't know my habits. If I should start this evening, my old habits would come back at my heels like hounds scenting blood. True, I don't know your habits, but I do know my Saviour.

Do you remember the story in Scottish history, when they were seeking to take Bruce the King? They heard that he was in his palace and they started after him. The King heard that they were coming, and escaped with his trusted few. They made their way through the fields and into the forests, and when they thought that they had escaped, in the distance Bruce heard the baying of bloodhounds. They were his own bloodhounds. He gave himself up for lost, but in the distance he heard the babbling sound of a little mountain

stream. With his faithful followers he went into the stream and by going up the stream some distance and across to the other side, they covered their trail. When the hounds came to the stream, so history tells us, they lost the trail and Bruce was saved. But I know a story a thousand times better than this. Yes, I do. I ask you to give your hearts to Christ, and then start, and the moment you start, all the old habits of your life are after you again; the old passions and lusts and desires. You have only half started when you sink back and say — It is hopeless. But wait a moment. You can cover your trail. Mr. Alexander and I landed one night, four hours late, on the Fiji Islands. We were to have held services there. The service had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, we decided to stop, for we wanted to say at least that we had been in the Fiji Islands. While we were there, we heard in the distance what sounded like a cannon. We were told that it was calling the people to the House of God. A man stood with a mallet by a hollow log of a special kind of wood, and the sound could be heard for miles. We climbed up the hill and found a multitude of people with black skins and strange hair waiting for us. They sang two songs, in which Mr. Alexander led them. One was the "Glory Song," and the other was the song which belongs to our subject this evening. We did not know the words, but we knew the music. We have heard this song in every land under the sun. We have heard

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people sing it with tears rolling down their cheeks. We have heard it sung while multitudes pressed up to the altar and sobbed their way into the Kingdom of God. This is the song they were singing in the Fiji Islands—

“ There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins.”

Can you not see it? Plunge in! Plunge in! To-night! To-night! Nobody is too sinful!

Nobody is too sinful. Nobody is too far away. The precious blood of Christ can cleanse and save unto the uttermost. Nothing less than his blood can do this. “ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

I can say no more. With all my heart I wish that I might. I can only add this. I love Him. I love Him. He is to me as real as you are. I love Him. I want you to love Him. I want you to take Him. I know that there are people who want to say this evening—“ Pray for me.” Lift up your hand to express this desire of your heart.

## XVI

### A FORSAKEN LEADER

**Y**OU remember the words that are found in II Timothy 4:10—"Demas hath forsaken me." They form my text to night and my subject is: "A Forsaken Leader."

There are some expressions in the Bible that are so full of pathos as to be indescribable. In the first book of the Bible you hear God saying to a wandering child of his, "Where art thou?" A little later the word is, "Where is thy brother?" Further along you hear Jacob saying, "Me ye have bereft of my children. Joseph is not. Simeon is not. And now ye will take Benjamin from me." You remember what Moses said: "Let the children of Israel return, but if not!" Mr. Moody used to say that there was the power of a sob in that unfinished sentence. Then hear David, as he staggers from between the gates, saying, "Oh, Absalom, my son, my son." It is the same in the New Testament, as, for example, when the Master says: "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, and ye would not." I say that there are expressions in the Bible that for pathos have never been equalled.

This text of mine is an example of the pathos of



the Scripture. The Apostle Paul is at the end of his journey. He is weary and worn. He is old before his time. His hair thin, and streaked with gray. His body frail, his back bent, his heart-strings strained to the snapping. He is just at the time of life when he needs human sympathy. It was then that he had his experience with Demas. Writing his letter to Timothy, the last letter, indeed, that he ever wrote, he slips in this little sentence, which is a revelation of his heart: "Demas hath forsaken me." Very little is said in the New Testament about Demas. There are only a few references, yet we know a great deal about him. In Colossians 4:14, we read: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas." Certainly he is in excellent company here. We say that a man is known by the company he keeps. Demas and Luke the physician must have had fellowship together. No doubt there was something fine about Demas. Turn to the Epistle to Philemon, 1:24, and you read: "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas." He is still in good company. Now look at the text of the afternoon: "Demas hath forsaken me."

This is all that is said about him, but it is enough. They tell us that a man who is a scientist can take a single bone of an animal and build from that bone the structure of the whole animal. We do not need many verses about Demas. We do not require elaborate description. These few hints are enough. The picture is something like this: A

bright, cheery young fellow, an attractive personality, one who would be greatly influenced by such a personality as that of Paul. When Demas heard Paul's message, it stirred him through and through, and, without counting the cost, he made up his mind that he would follow this great leader. Everything goes well for a season. It is a great thing to be in the crowd and hear the people applauding the apostle. To be in such company was wonderful. He did not mind being stoned once, but being stoned two or three times was different. It lost its charm. It might be well enough to be in prison once, but when the experience repeated itself, the chill of the prison began to be too much for him. Then it was that the remembrance of the world, its brightness and charm, came back upon him, and so, having loved this present world, Demas turned his back upon the apostle. Just when Paul needed him most, he was not there to comfort him.

I can imagine the apostle with tears in his eyes and a sob in his voice, as he writes to Timothy, saying: "Demas hath forsaken me." I learn certain lessons. You can easily remember them because they begin with the same letter.

The first lesson is about the power of personality. It is very wonderful, either for good or for evil. They say that when Napoleon was at the head of his army, he could dismiss twenty thousand men and retain the army's strength. Napoleon was worth twenty thousand of his men. That is per-

sonality. I heard a minister say that he opened his church for Catherine Booth to tell her story, but he did so reluctantly and with prejudice. But when Catherine Booth told her story, with tears rolling down her cheeks, he said: "I made up my mind that if Catherine Booth wanted me to follow her to the ends of the earth, I would do so." He was a prominent minister, but he said that he would be willing to go on his hands and knees to help her in her work. Such is the power of a consecrated personality.

You know what I mean when I talk about personality working for good or evil. There are persons whose names I could speak and it would give you a shiver to hear them. They would make your heart sink. If they should come to visit you, you would almost backslide. A man came and stayed with me for three weeks. He had been there two weeks and we could not have family worship. We began one morning, and I asked my brother, who was also visiting me, to pray. He whispered back to me: "Pray yourself." I could not pray, and nobody could. It was just a personality let loose in our home that put us all on edge.

There are other personalities that make life brighter and better. When I lived in Winona, we often had the privilege of having Samuel H. Hadley with us. You know he was Jerry McAuley's successor in the Water Street Mission in New York. He always came in the summer. I remember how

we went down to the station to meet him and take him to the house in the country. As soon as word got around, other people would come in to see him and the house would be crowded. You could scarcely drive the children to bed, nor could you drive them to play. They wanted to sit close to him and hear every word. At those times we always had poor service at the table, because the servants would forget to pass things. They would start around with a plate, and then they would stop and listen to what he was saying. He was a perfectly wonderful man. When his visit closed, we would follow him to the door. The neighbours came out and stood on the porch to say farewell. Sometimes I would take him to the station, and other times I would give the children the privilege of taking him. We would stand, brushing away our tears with one hand, and waving our handkerchiefs with the other, and calling out "Good-bye, Good-bye." I can see him now, turning his great shining face back and shouting, "Good-bye." Then we would go back into the house and say: It has been like heaven to have him here. We never lost the influence of his presence. Personality *plus* Jesus Christ. The story of the apostle Paul is like this. He had wonderful power with men. It was so no doubt with Demas. Demas heard him speak one day, and was moved to follow him. He was with him almost to the end, and then he went back to the world. What a pitiful story it is!

The next thing I learn in this story is the privilege of fellowship. Did you notice what I read a little while ago in the New Testament? "Luke the beloved physician and Demas." Demas had every opportunity for fellowship. When Luke went about with Paul the apostle, he must have watched him very carefully for he was a physician. He saw when his eyes were flashing and when his face was flushed. He noticed if his fingers twitched. He knew when he could not sleep at night. Now Demas was with Luke, and I have always thought that he might have been a kind of nurse to the apostle. Often, no doubt, he quieted him; touched his hand tenderly, or spoke softly to him. Maybe he sang some hymn that the apostle loved. It was a very close fellowship. So now when Paul is almost at the end, and he looks for Demas, he finds that he has gone. No wonder that there is a sob in the sentence he writes: "Demas hath forsaken me."

Demas had wonderful privileges given to him. I should like to make you feel to-day, if I can, what it means to do little or great things for Jesus Christ. Just a kind word, just a clasp of the hand, just a smile, just a cup of cold water—things like these mean fellowship one with the other and with Him. When we were closing our first journey in Australia, Mr. Alexander and I came finally to Adelaide, in southern Australia. We had been so long in the country that we were known by the people. The

Australians are such gracious and kindly people, particularly to Americans. By the time we reached Adelaide, crowds thronged us everywhere. If we went on the streets, they would gather around us and insist upon a service. One day in Adelaide I was exceedingly weary. It was raining, as it only can in Australia when the rainy season is on. I said to Mr. Alexander: "I will take the service first and you the singing afterwards." The church was crowded, and notwithstanding the rain, many hundreds were standing outside. I finished my part of the service and started away to another church. I was pushing my way to a cab when a very plain, ordinary-looking man stopped me and took my hand and pulled me over into a puddle of water. A crowd began to gather around us. I do not know whether I looked mad or not, but I said: "You must not stop me. You must not draw me into the water." I remember how his face looked, little bits of red eyes and a little bit of a worn cap. He smiled and said: "Well, you must excuse me. I only wanted to give you some money." Then I was willing that he should pull me into the water again. He added: "I want to give the money to you to give to Mr. O'Brien." Mr. O'Brien was a missionary from India. He had come to Australia and was preparing one of the fields for our coming. One day he was walking on a railroad track and fell into a cattle pit. Half stunned, he climbed out, when a train came along and ran over one of

his hands. They took him to the hospital, and the Australian people were sending him money. The old man wanted to give a present to him. I thought it might be a pound, that is, five dollars. I said: "Come around to-morrow morning and I will take the money." When he came, he laid down a check for one hundred pounds, that is, five hundred dollars. "Oh," I said, "are you going to give so much as that? Then you must take it to the hospital, and we will go with you." So we got into a cab and started for the hospital. On the way I asked him about his occupation. He said: "I am a station man." I thought he meant a railroad station man, but he explained: "I live on a great ranch." I said: "How large? Five hundred acres?" He began to smile, and said: "Well, sir, it is two hundred and fifty thousand acres. I have two hundred thousand sheep grazing on it, and there is a railroad forty miles long on my place." Then I was not sorry that he was giving one hundred pounds. When we reached the hospital, a nurse took us to the room, and there, lying on a cot, was the missionary. His arm was bandaged and his eyes shut. The nurse said: "Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander are here." He opened his eyes quickly and smiled his welcome. I said: "Yes, we have brought you a friend who wants to give you one hundred pounds." "Did you say one hundred pounds?" he inquired. I have never seen anything like his face in my life. His eyes filled

with tears. I said: "Yes, one hundred pounds." "Oh," he said, "all last night, when I could not sleep, I was praying for one hundred pounds. I want to send to India for my wife and children." And I turned to the farmer and said: "Mr. MacBride, give him the money." He laid the check upon the bandaged hand of the missionary, who said: "Thank you, sir." Then the old farmer turned and threw his arms around me and said: "Is this Christian work?" I said: "Yes, this is Christian work." "Very well, then," he said, "I know what a thrill means. I have it in my heart now. I shall give my life to Jesus Christ, and my station, and my all to Him." We went back three years later, and found that he had kept his word. He had sold his great ranch and was giving away his money by the thousands. Only yesterday a letter came from Australia saying that he was still doing it. If I could only help you to understand what it means to have fellowship together in doing good. It was work like this that Demas turned his back upon.

Another lesson to be learned is the pathos of a forsaken leader. I can see the apostle with tears in his eyes, for he was very human. Demas had gone. It is a picture to make one's heart sad. But I know something sadder even than this. I know of another Forsaken Leader. You know whom I mean. Who is forsaking Him? There is some church member here who used to serve Him faith-



fully. Your heart would thrill as you did His work. Maybe you were a Sunday School teacher, or a soul winner. Alas! the world came in between you and Jesus. The fascination and glamour of it blinded you as it did Demas of old. You are here to-day and you have no peace. You have forsaken your leader.

Who is forsaking Him? Some church officer, it may be. There was a time when you served the elements which represent the broken body and the shed blood of Christ. To-day your name may be on the church roll, but you have no peace. I was preaching in a university town for five or six days. There were crowds in the church, but there was no blessing. I said to the minister: "You must let me go." "Wait until to-morrow," he said. When the morrow came I was preaching in an afternoon service. I had lifted my hands to pronounce the benediction, and the minister came down the aisle with a judge at his side. The minister lifted his hand, and I dropped mine. The judge at his side was the chief usher of the church, but his life was wrong. When he walked down the aisle, people would whisper "hypocrite." The minister had gone to him in the meeting and said: "Judge, if the things that they say are true, I want to help you. If they are untrue, I will defend you." And the judge replied: "Everything they say is true. I am a broken-hearted man." The whole congregation was sobered when he came walking down the

aisle with the minister to take my hand. They knelt together at the altar. Presently the judge arose, and, lifting his hands before the congregation, he said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I used to be an elder in the church. I was superintendent of the Sunday School. I had a family altar, but for years I have denied the Lord that bought me. I have gotten right with my minister. I want to get right with you. I hope you will forgive me." There was no benediction pronounced. The people passed by and took his hand. That night, when I finished my sermon and made my appeal, the first man to come was the judge, and he did not come alone. He had his arm around a young fellow who was a drunkard. He had come back to his Forsaken Leader, and he had brought another with him.

Who has forsaken Him? Is it some minister? There was a time when you preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified. To-day you think you have another gospel to preach. I never mean to say sharp things to men who do not agree with me. I think there is only one thing for a minister to do. When he comes to the place where he believes the Bible is not the Word of God, and that Jesus Christ is not very God of very God, I think he should resign. He should leave his pulpit. He ought not to accept a salary for preaching the gospel and yet not preach the Gospel. If there is a minister here to-day who used to preach with a burning heart

and shining face in the olden days, but who has forsaken his Leader and lost the power of His presence, all I say to you to-day is this—Hear Him calling you to come back. Come back to your Forsaken Leader.

I hurry to the close, but I want you to notice one thing more. I have spoken of the power of personality, the privilege of fellowship, and the pathos of a Forsaken Leader. Now think for a moment of the prostitution of a privilege. Demas might have gone on to glory. He might have stood with Paul at the end, and all the generations would have honoured him. It would have been a wonderful thing to have stood with the apostle and served him to the last. He missed a great privilege. Of course, it was not easy, but who wants an easy time? Do you? I do not. One reason why we fail as Christians is that we are losing the heroic element. Our work is too easy. There is not enough of a fight. There is a friend of Mr. Alexander who is a blacksmith. His name is Tom Sexton. Tom was soundly converted. He does not know the first principles of the English language. He can hardly speak three sentences correctly. Sam Jones sent for him to speak in his tabernacle, and he said that he looked like a man who had swallowed a watermelon. He introduced him like this: "Brothers and sisters, here is Brother Tom Sexton. First time I have seen him. He is not a very likely looking preacher, but they say he can preach. I will turn

him loose." Tom preached on Paul and Silas. He described how they had been beaten with stripes, and how they had been cast into prison. After they had been in the cell a little while, Paul turned to Silas and said: "Let's sing." And Silas said: "Well, you sing if you want to. That last lick I got took all the sing out of me." And Paul said: "Well, we might as well sing, anyway. Let us sing something." And Silas answered: "Sing if you please, but I will do no singing." So Tom Sexton said that Paul began to sing. He was wrong in his chronology, of course, but he was perfectly right in principle. He said that Paul sang:

" Must Jesus bear the cross alone,  
And all the world go free?  
No, there's a cross for everyone,  
And there's a cross for me."

He said that is what he sang. Whether Paul sang that or not, we have all got to sing it if we want to be true. Who wants an easy time? Isn't it worth while to do hard things for Jesus? How fine it would have been if Demas had bared his own back to the smiters; if he had even given himself to be beheaded, and then had swept through the gates into the City!

Oh, it would have been wonderful if he could have followed Paul into the presence of the Master! We were in Bendigo, Australia, and at the close of an afternoon's service our chairman came to me

and said: "You and Mr. Alexander must go and make a call." I had been preaching six times a day, and I said: "I cannot go." "Well," said the chairman, "you must go anyway." So we got into an automobile and started across the town. After a while we came to a little vine-clad cottage. It was in the height of summer, and the flowers were indescribably beautiful. We had come to a minister's house. He had once made a moral slip, but God had taken him back, and he had stood in the streets singing and preaching. It was Mother's Day. Here we use a little white flower. There they use a blossom that is peculiar to Australia, the wattle blossom. The old minister's wife went ahead, and the minister was lying on his couch with a little piece of wattle on his garment. "Husband," she said, "here are Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander." Instantly his eyes opened. Mr. Alexander reached him first and took his hand and said: "Can you sing?" "Oh," he said, "I wish you could have heard me sing when I was at my best." "Well," said Mr. Alexander, "let us sing the Glory Song." I have heard the Glory Song sung in Melbourne with fifteen thousand people and a choir of thousands lifting it to the skies, and I wondered if heaven's music could be half so sweet. But I never heard anything to equal the singing of that old man—

"Oh, that will be glory for me."

He sank back on his couch and I took his hand and said: "Well, this is the end, and it is all well with you." I think I can remember what he said. Horatio Bonar wrote the words:

" On the jasper threshold standing,  
Like a pilgrim safely landing,  
See the strange bright scenes expanding,  
This is Heaven at last."

The old man was still a moment, and then he half rose, with his arms stretched out:

" Christ Himself the living splendour,  
Christ, the sunlight mild and tender,  
Praises to the Lamb I'll render,  
This is Heaven at last."

## XVII

### THE PRODIGAL

**W**E are looking to-night at one of the finest parts of the New Testament Scripture. I except, of course, those portions that refer directly to Jesus. I put them aside by themselves. They are incomparable. But I say again that my text is taken from one of the finest parts of the New Testament. It is in that old familiar chapter, Luke 15, and is a part of the stories which our Lord spoke in answer to censure. They said: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Then he turned to them with infinite patience and kindness and began to speak. It is a part of one of his stories that gives me my text. Luke 15:14—"And he began to be in want."

I have often said that I thought that this expression hardly describes the boy who was away in sin. I have said that I thought possibly it ought to read like this: He began to appreciate his want. He began to understand how far he had wandered. When a short time ago there was placed in my hands a translation of the New Testament into modern English, made by Dr. Moffatt, of Oxford, I turned to this passage and read my text in these words: "And he began to feel in want." So I

saw that I had had the right idea all along. I know that this boy who grieved his father and hurt his mother did not first begin to be in want out there in the land of sin. It was back there in his father's house that he began to be in want. He was restless under parental restraint. He was indifferent to home influences. He was grieving his mother and making his father's heart ache. He was in want even then. While he would not have said it with his lips, yet down in his heart he said it—"With all my heart I wish I were true." His fatal mistake was that he did not speak it. He did not follow his better instinct. If I could help you young men and older men to speak out what is in your hearts, I might save you from many tears and heart-aches. I might save you from a ruined character. Suppose the boy had slipped away to his mother's side and told her of his unrest, or suppose he had walked in the fields with his father and had unburdened his soul.

Some time ago an unscrupulous politician in this state influenced a banker to permit him to overdraw his account. It was a time of great excitement politically, and the deed was done under the pressure of the time. In order to save himself, the officer of the bank began to manipulate the funds of the bank. But the overdraft was not made good. Then the bank examiner came, and the moment he entered the bank the officer knew that disgrace was awaiting him. He slipped quietly out of the bank,



went to his home and to his room and locked the door. Just before he drew the trigger he wrote his wife this letter: "My dear, I have had an aching heart ever since I committed the first wrong. There have been nights when I could not sleep. There have been days when I thought I would die." Then he said two things: "If I had only told you, and if someone had only spoken to me." If I could persuade you, knowing that your heart is not right, to speak to somebody, it might help you to find God. It might help you to be right with God. I do not covet your confession, but I do covet your confidence. If you could speak out the thing that is ruining your life, I feel that it would help you. It is when we first begin to be in want that we should turn to the Saviour.

Of course, this boy was a prodigal long before he ever left his father's house. Sin is not merely an act. Sin is a state. You do not need to act sin out to be a sinner. Just have a rebellious spirit, a mind at enmity with God. Just allow some sin to drop into your heart and stay there without sincere and honest repentance. This is enough. In his home the boy was a prodigal. So one day the sin that was in his heart bore fruit on his lips, and he said: "Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me." A little further on you read this: "And not many days after he gathered all together." There was a lapse of time between his getting his goods and his leaving home. No doubt

he was just a boy like some of you here this evening, and I think I know what he did in the interval. He must have gone to visit some of the places dear to his boyhood. I think I can hear him saying to himself: "I have half a mind not to go." I can see him following his father around at his work. And when the father turned to him and said, "My son, I wish you would not go," the boy almost decided to stay at home.

The son of one of my friends in Chicago said to him one day: "Father, I am going to leave home. I am tired of it all. Your restraints and mother's piety are driving me away." The morning came when he was to leave. His father heard him tip-toeing down the stairs an hour before the time he usually arose. He went to the door, and, throwing it open, called out: "Charlie, come in." When the boy entered the room of his father and mother, the old gentleman walked towards him, put his arm around his shoulder, and said: "Your mother and I have not slept all night. We think there must be something wrong in our lives, and before you go we want you to forgive us." The boy, whose name everybody in this house knows, looked at his father's tears and his own began to flow. "Father," he said, "the trouble is not with you and mother, the trouble is with me." Down on their knees together they went, the mother on one side of the boy and the father on the other side. When they arose, the boy started the Christian life. So I think it may

be that the father of the prodigal said to him: "My son, I wish you would not go."

But the day came for his departure. I know that I am drawing upon my imagination, but why did God give us this power if we are not to use it? Where is there a book that stirs the imagination like this Book? So I have always thought that when the boy started his mother must have gone with him. She walked a little way, and then she said: "My son, I cannot go farther." Then her arms went around him and her face was against his, and she whispered: "Oh, my boy, don't go!" And I can almost hear the boy saying, choking back his sobs: "I believe I will not go." But suddenly he pulls himself together and breaks away from his mother's arms, and starts on the way. Oh, that was his great mistake. To resist the pleading of those that loved him! When I stood here the first night pleading with you to come to Christ, and you did not come, that is where you made your mistake.

I can see the boy going on up the hill, until he reaches the top, and then he looks back. He can see his mother's smile, although he cannot hear her voice. He sees her beckoning hand, and he says to himself: "I believe I will go back." But he turned away. Last night when I stood pleading here, and one of you young men back yonder half arose and then sank back, it was just like the prodigal. So he went down the other side of the hill and around the curve in the road until he came

to the last place where he could see the old home and the sweet old mother standing on the road. Now he cannot even see her smile or her tears, but he sees her beckoning, and he hesitates and turns half round. But once more he turned back. "Oh, well," I hear him say, "I will go on a little way." That was his fatal mistake. I am speaking to you slowly and tenderly. I am asking you, with all the pathos of voice that God gives me to use, not to resist Him. To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart. Harden not your heart!

Oh, it was fine to be free on the open road. No father's restraint, no home influence. Free! But of course it does not last long. I was walking down the streets of Paris one evening, and I saw some blazing lights just above the walk on which I was treading. I do not know French, so I said to a friend who understood the language: "What does it say?" There was a great stream of young people passing under the sign, and I wanted to know about it. My friend translated it—"Nothing to pay." We stood where we could see through the swinging doors, and from behind the doors we heard entrancing music. Then we heard the loud voices of drunken women and the oaths of intoxicated men. There was the sound, too, of policemen taking drunken people out. Nothing to pay! My God! Everything to pay! Loss of manhood, sacrifice of womanhood, ruin of soul! The boy thought that it was all well with him. Then comes the text:

“He began to be in want.” There was a mighty famine in the land. At first it seemed well enough with him. Everybody applauded him. He was well dressed. The first thrill of passion was upon him. The glamour of sin was about him. It was all well with him as long as his goods lasted. Then the famine came. No friends, no resources. This is the sad thing about sin—that it brings men to want. Some of you have been listening to my pleading night after night, and I have not seen you turn to Christ. I have preached with earnestness, even with tears, yet some of you are holding back. This may be your last call. Who can tell? The ministers have been pleading. Friends have been praying. Mothers have been crying out to God. If you do not know that you are in want, let me assure you that you are. Sin always makes a mighty famine, but it isn't too late to turn back to the Father's house.

A friend of mine stepped into a New York Central train in Albany, and there was only one vacant seat in the day coach. He sat down beside another man. The man proved to be an interesting talker. He had been reading a letter, he told my friend: “This letter is from my mother.” “Oh,” said my friend. “Yes, it is from my mother,” he went on. “I don't know whether you are a Christian or not, but this letter made me a Christian.” So my friend said to him: “Would you mind letting me see the letter? I would like to see a letter that would make

a man a Christian." So the man passed it to him and said: "Before you read it, let me tell you it was not any single sentence that she wrote that made me a Christian. But I want you to notice how she signed her name, and how crooked the lines are, 'Lovingly, Mother.' My mother is an old woman. She is the last of the family. She has prayed over me ever since my birth. When I saw that signature, I said, 'If she should die before I am saved!' And just before you came into the car I dropped my head in my hands and accepted the Saviour." What if your mother should die. What if your wife should die, and you are not saved. God pity you!

He went and joined himself to a citizen of that country and he sent him into his fields to feed the swine. There is an old story often used by ministers, which tells of a king who said to one of his subjects: "Make me a chain." So he made a chain for the king with just a few links, and the king said: "Double it," and he doubled it. Then the king said: "Double it again," and he doubled it again. Once more the king said, "Double it," and he doubled it again. And when the servant came back with the chain trailing at his heels, the king said to the other servants: "Bind him hand and foot." It is only a fanciful tale, but it tells the truth. Not holding to the truth, not yielding to parental restraint, sinning against your father's honour, trampling underneath your mother's love,

telling the first obscene story, looking at the first vulgar picture, hiding some special sin, taking money that is not your own, lifting the cup to your lips! At length you are in a meeting like this and you hear me pleading, pleading, pleading, and you half rise up and then you sink back and say: "My God! My God! I am in bondage."

Henry Clay Trumbull tells in one of his books the old story of an animal trainer in London, who came out on the stage before a great audience with a number of lions about him. There was one especially, a Numidian lion, that attracted attention. He spoke to it and it cowered at his feet like a frightened dog. There was a Bengal tiger too. The trainer cracked his whip and the tiger ran like a cat. Finally, they brought in a great serpent, and the trainer stood while round and round his body the serpent wrapped itself. At length the serpent's head was at the man's neck. When the trainer speaks of course the serpent will unwind. He speaks and waits. Something is wrong. Those who are close to him notice that his face is beginning to whiten. Presently there is a sound of bones cracking; in a moment he dropped dead. He had bought that little serpent when it was eighteen inches long. He could have killed it with the pressure of his fingers. But it killed him with its mighty power. I do not know any other name to give to sin. I do not know anything hateful enough to say about sin. It is a serpent and it will crush you. I am afraid

to let this meeting close unless you are saved. Come, friends, come! There is a way of escape. It is blood-marked. It is by way of the Christ on Calvary. What a wonderful Saviour we have! Come!

I can see the boy coming home. Not as he went out. Dogs snarl at him. Men shout at him. Children cast stones at him. There is this about coming home. You have to go back as far as you went away. This is what repentance means. But there is this fine thing about coming back. When you went away, you walked alone. When you come back, you walk every step of the way with Him. He says: "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you." The prodigal's father saw him and took him in his arms. The boy was in rags, but his father kissed him and put a robe about him and gave him shoes to wear, and took him home. Now once more, I look at the scene with my imagination. I have always thought that when the boy got inside the house (tradition says that while he was away his mother died) he must have looked all about him. Do you remember the day of your mother's funeral? Do you remember the afternoon you came back after leaving your boy in the grave? Do you recall that when you came back to the house it seemed barer than ever. Your voice had a kind of an echo. There was a deathly chill in the house. So I can see the boy come in and look around, and then I can hear him say with a sob: "Father,



where is mother?" Ah, that is the tragedy of sin. Sin makes great differences in life. We cannot forget, but God both forgives and forgets. To-night He is calling, calling!

A Salvation Army woman was going along the streets of one of the cities of Canada, and she noticed a certain house and knew that there was something wrong. She rapped at the door and there was no answer. There was no fire in the stove, and there was a chill about the place. She walked through the rooms and came to a bedroom, a very little room, and there on the bed she saw an unconscious woman. Quickly she started the fire and made some broth and pressed it to the cold lips. Soon a touch of color came, and the eyes opened. As she bent down she heard the woman saying: "Thank you. I never thought I would come to life again. My boy went away and left me. I have had nothing to eat. I was starving." When she got a little more strength, she said: "They say he was a drunkard, but he always loved his mother. He used to come in drunk at night, but he would never go to sleep until he had patted my face and smoothed my hair. He used to say: 'Mother, sing to me.' I would sing, and often he would come out of his drunken stupor. If he were only here I know I could speak to him and he would answer."

The Salvation Army woman ran away to Police Headquarters, and came back with a phonograph. She put it on a table by the woman's bedside, and

put the receiver close to her mouth, and said to her: "Now, speak." And this is what she said: "My precious boy, your old mother has been very sick since you went away. Her hair is whiter. Her hands are thinner. Her voice is weaker. But, oh, my boy, if you would only come back, I would take you in my arms and kiss you and sing to you." With that she dropped on the pillow and was gone. They took the record out to the mountain and sent it out among the miners, for they knew that her boy was there. One day a Salvation Army worker, who had discovered the boy, said to him: "If you will come with me I will let you hear a special record." He set it going and went out of the room. The boy dropped on his knees, and when the phonograph stopped he rushed out of the room and cried: "Come back. That is my mother's voice. Start it again." So the phonograph was started again, and the worker states that later when he came back into the room, he found the boy on his knees with his face buried in his arms, sobbing as if his heart would break. "Mother, mother," he was crying, "I am going home. I am going home." Sweeter than any mother's voice is the voice of Jesus, saying to-night: "Come back! Come back!"



## XVIII

### GOING HOME

**T**HE subject of my sermon is "Going Home." Perhaps it might be better to call it an interrupted confession. I am speaking again about the Prodigal Son, but now I wish to emphasize his going home. The text is in Luke 15: 22—"But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet."

Can you imagine yourself for a moment at the boy's side, when, broken-hearted, he determined to go back to his father's house? He has even made up his mind what he will say. "I will say, oh, father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and I am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants." But he never said all that. Open your New Testament and see where the father interrupted him. The prodigal is almost home, and looking up he sees his father coming out to meet him. His father is almost too far away to hear, but the boy starts in with his confession, anyway. "I have sinned against Heaven, father. I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." And just there his father interrupted him. The father said to his servants:

“Bring forth quickly the best robe and put it on him and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet.” Just the moment the boy confessed himself wrong, that moment his father gives him the kiss, sends for the ring, bids them bring the robe, and starts back with his long-lost son to the desolated home. I can imagine how the heart of the father, as well as the heart of the boy, must have overflowed with joy.

I bring you this message this evening, because some of you here must start home to-night. I was standing one day in the prison in Joliet, Illinois. I was an invited guest to see the institution, and as I was standing there a messenger came from the warden and asked me to preach on the following Sunday. I said that I would do so, and the messenger started away. In a moment he returned, and said: “By the way, the warden told me to say to you, sir, that if you could come next Sunday, he requests you not to preach on the prodigal son.” And then he added, with a smile: “We have had twenty-four ministers, by actual count, and every single one of them has preached on the prodigal. Those poor fellows, who can’t go out of church when they don’t like the preacher, have had as much prodigal as they can stand. So don’t tell the story of the prodigal son.” I was younger in my ministerial experience then, and so I said to him: “Very well. Tell the warden that I shall choose another theme.” But I have often thought that it was a

mistake. Nearly always when I have an opportunity to speak in prison I turn instinctively to this picture.

What a marvellous picture it is. Indeed, the whole picture is wonderful. You see the lost sheep and the shepherd searching, the lost piece of money and the woman seeking, and, finally, the lost boy and the father waiting. It is all a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ in his matchless love, and of God, the Father, in His never-ending mercy. And one of the finest touches about it all is this interrupted confession. Just as the son had confessed that he was not worthy to be called his father's son, and was on the point of asking to be made one of his hired servants, just there the father burst in with a command to his servants—"Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." That is a revelation of the father's heart. I must remind you once more that the boy's sufferings really began before he left home. He had never acknowledged with his lips, but out in the land of sin he had more sorrow and pain than his heart could hold. The sad thing about it, though, was that he did not realize in his wanderings that he was hurting others even while he was hurting himself. If I could help you all to understand this, every father here would be a Christian, and every mother would turn her face towards Christ. You resist Jesus Christ as a father, and you give your boy a handicap in the race of life.

You turn away from Christ as a mother, and your daughter has a barrier over which she can hardly pass. I went one day, years ago, in the northern part of New York, to ask a boy to join the church. His answer was: "I shall do so when my father joins." Then I went to the father, a great paper manufacturer, and I said to him: "Mr. So and So, I have just asked Dan to be a Christian." "Well, what did he say?" He said that he would do so when you took your stand. Instantly he dropped his pen and turned to me and said: "If I am a barrier in my boy's way, I shall meet you at the church this evening." We help or hinder one another.

Every boy in this building whose life is wrong strikes a blow at his father. Every boy or girl who is living a prodigal life strikes a blow at the mother. Sam Jones told me a story the last time I saw him that I have never forgotten. "An old, gray-haired man in my town," said the evangelist, "sat waiting in his room till the clock struck one. His two boys came staggering home into his presence. He rose with a white face and, with eyes that could not shed tears, walked to his desk, opened a drawer and took out two revolvers. Then he turned to his boys, who were trembling in their sin, and said: 'Boys, I have a request to make of you. I want one of you to take this revolver and the other the other one, and I want you both to climb the stairway to your mother's room and I want you to kill your mother

instantly.' They were sobered in a moment. 'Why, father!' they said. Then the old man's tears came like rain as he said to his boys, in a hoarse whisper: 'Ten thousand times better than that you should kill her by inches. She has been crying all night since you went away. She has suffered beyond human description.'” Somehow when we sin we seem to forget that we are hurting others as well as ourselves.

This boy was unmindful of the end. In his prodigal life everything was going out and nothing coming in. You are making a terrible mistake, one that will last on into eternity, if you fail to lay hold upon that which is spiritual. If you are trained mentally, and not spiritually, if you are trained physically and not spiritually, when the crisis of life comes you will have no power to resist evil. Everything going out and nothing coming in. This boy seemed to forget, too, that his life was a revolt. This is what sin is. Everyone who is away from Jesus Christ is at enmity with God.

A gentleman wrote to me this week, asking a question: "What constitutes a Christian?" I replied: "The personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as a Saviour, and a sincere surrender of one's will to God." I believe that this constitutes a Christian in the first stages of Christian living. I stand here to say that unless you lay hold on Jesus Christ, unless you take God's plan for your life, and live it out, when the crisis comes there will be no help.

Temptation will be too strong. Doubt will be too severe. I said in a speech one evening that a man may be worth a million, but if he has no faith in Jesus Christ, and his baby should die, all his fortune would profit him nothing. I saw a man rise hurriedly from the audience and walk quickly out of the door. Two or three days later I met him, and he said: "I am the man to whom you spoke that night. I have a million and more, and I have a little baby boy. When you said that, I made my way from the church to my house and to the boy's nursery and knelt down by his crib and I said: 'Oh, God, if this little boy should die, it would kill me. All the money I have in the bank would not keep my heart from breaking. With my face buried in my hands I took your Saviour.'" This is what I want you to do this evening. I do not know how I can present additional argument. For four long weeks I have stood on this platform pleading with men and women to come to Christ. I have tried to lift up Jesus Christ and present Him as the only Saviour. If you will but turn your eyes toward Him, you can be delivered from sin. You can be set free from bondage. To-night I plead with you to come.

The other day in Brooklyn a prominent minister was called to conduct a funeral service. The funeral was in one of Brooklyn's most magnificent homes. The daughter of a multi-millionaire had died. When the minister entered he spoke to the



father and mother and then to the son, who was plainly intoxicated. Later, when he arose to read the burial service, suddenly the old man, the gray-haired millionaire, pushed his way past him, took hold of the side of the casket, dropped his head, and was heard to be whispering: " Daughter dead, son disgraced, billiards, society, the club, bank all week, club every evening, automobile all day Sunday, money, wine, cards, no Christ, no family worship, no Bible, no hope!" The old man stood for a moment staggering as if he would fall, then he dropped his head in his arms, this man of millions, and cried as if his heart would break. Something like this must have come to the boy there in the land of sin. Everything had been going out and nothing coming in. Then it was that he said to himself: " I will arise and go to my father." When the father heard him confessing his sin he interrupted him with these words: " Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." Oh, the wonderful love of the Father! Oh, the pardoning grace of Jesus Christ!

I need to say but two or three things to you. The prodigal came to himself. That is, he began to think. Mr. Alexander told me that when he walked down one of these aisles last night one of your prominent citizens said: " Mr. Alexander, I am going to do this." And Mr. Alexander said to him: " When?" " I am going to do it before your meet-

ings close," was the reply. A week ago to-day a gentleman whom we all knew was singing in the choir. To-night he is gone. There is in this audience a young man brought here by one of his friends, bound with a passion for drink, struggling with all his might to be free, but he has failed again and again and again. If I could only help him to come to himself to-night. When the sinner comes to himself, he sees his sin in a new light. We are almost at the close of the meetings. I do not know that I shall ever lose out of my mind the impression of your faces. To-morrow may be eternity. I say when a man comes to himself he understands the real facts of sin. He knows what a terrible master it is and what poor wages it pays.

When the prodigal came to himself he said: "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare." There is a fine touch there that I do not want you to miss. The prodigal was out there among the swine, feeding upon the husks, and suddenly there came to him a vision of his home. It must have been a good home. Otherwise the memory of it would not have come to him in that way. I want to ask you fathers and mothers, what kind of a home are you giving to your children? What kind of an atmosphere are you making for them? If I should go back through this crowd this evening and find your boy and speak to him, would your life as a father or a mother help me to win him to Christ? Stop a moment and

think about this. What kind of influences are you fathers and mothers throwing about your children? You who are prominent business men, what kind of an example are you setting to the younger people of your city? You are hesitating to rise and walk down one of these aisles, and take your stand for Christ. You have been saying to yourself: I will go into the church, but I will not walk down the aisle. If one of you strong successful men should come down here and take my hand, some boy yonder, it might be your own boy, would be profoundly moved. Is it not worth while for a strong man to set a good example before a boy or girl? The prodigal had a vision of his home, and he said: "I will arise," and he was back home even before he started. All you need to say is: I will. I like people to sob their way into the kingdom. I like to hear people shouting. I like the method of the Salvation Army, the penitent form. We have a way of being too easy about going into the kingdom. We enter in too gentle a fashion. It might be well if some would come with a shout. Then I like also the quiet way that many have of coming to Christ.

In one of the churches of Philadelphia a great manufacturer sat listening to a sermon by his minister. Suddenly he folded his arms and dropped his head and said to himself: "I will settle it here." When he had an opportunity he said to one of the officers: "When will the church officers

meet?" "To-day," was the answer. "Then I will go and meet them." Taking his place before the officers, he said: "I have for years had an intellectual perception of Jesus, but this morning I made up my mind that I owed it to Him and to myself to announce my faith, and I now accept Jesus as my Saviour." One of the officers said: "I move that we receive him at once." As quietly as a June day is born he came into the kingdom. I like these little inquirer's cards that we use at the meetings. A man may take his pen in his hand and put down his name and thus sign away a million dollars. So a man may take this little card and sign his name and settle the question for eternity. But hear me, whether you sob at an altar, or sit quietly in the conference room, or hold your pen in your hand and write on a card,—You can never be saved until you say: **I WILL.**

When he came to his father to confess his sin, the father interrupted him in the midst of his confession. I think this is fine. So many men have said to me: What about my past sins? What about my failures in past years? The moment you come to God through Jesus Christ and accept His Son as your Saviour, God will be satisfied and you will be justified. Do you know what justification means? You see these white pages in the little book in my hand. Now do you know what justification means? It means this: That when by faith you accept Jesus Christ and turn from your sins,

God, for Christ's sake, receives you and you are justified every whit. And in the sight of God your life is as clean and white as the pages of this book. If I could only get you started to Christ. If I could only bring you to say: I will. I am perfectly willing to make you cry if only you can be made ready to decide. I heard General Booth say once that a man was never at his best until he either laughed or cried. If I could start your tears and move your wills, and hear you say: "God be merciful to me a sinner," I would gladly do it.

I know a doctor who was coming up one day on the Southern Railway from Atlanta. On the train he noticed a man who was very nervous. He would put on his overcoat and take up his travelling bag and walk up the aisle, and presently he would drop into his seat again. My friend said to him: "What is the matter with you?" "Oh," he replied, "I have been in Atlanta and I am going home. I went down a blind man. I have been in the care of a physician. He operated on my eyes and I can see. Do you know I have lived on this railway all my life and I have never seen these towns before?" They passed another town and he rushed to the window to see it. He went on talking: "I expect my wife and children to meet me at the second station from this. I have never seen them before, but I can see them now." When the train reached the station, the man with one spring was down the steps and rushing through the crowd.

My friend saw him catch his wife in his arms. She kissed his open eyes again and again. His children clung to the skirts of his coat. The train started to move, and as my friend sprang back on the steps, he heard the man say: "Glory, glory, I can see, I can see!" As the train pulled out he could still hear the words: "I can see, I can see." I would give anything in the world to-night if I could put those words on your lips. It would be a wonderful experience if you could cry out to-night: I can see, I can see.

Did you ever notice what the father did? He kissed him. He did not wait until he was cleaned up. Sometimes a man says: I am going back home, and I am going to quit this or that bad habit. You are starting wrong. Come first. Come right away. I like this old hymn:

"Just as I am without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me."

Just as you are, come. And the father said: "Bring the best robe." Then he put the robe on him from his head to his heels, and the robe covered the marks of his wanderings. And then he said: "Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet." The ring stands for reconciliation with the father. The father puts a ring on the prodigal's hand and shoes on his feet. He is a slave no longer. He is a son. He is fit to stand in the presence of his father. Listen to me. I bid you come. Come!

The other day a cashier in a bank in New York was sentenced to Sing Sing for ten years. He had begun to go wrong some years before. Many times he had been asked to accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour, but he had spurned Him. And now the tide of the world was against him. When he came up for trial they told the judge about his wife and daughter. His friends said to him: "Deal with him as kindly as you can." So he was sent up for ten years only. His little girl came home from school and said: "Mother, I am never going back to school. I heard a girl say that my father is a thief." Next morning she was too ill to rise. The next day she was in a fever, and the next day she was hovering between life and death. The Governor of the State sent a message to the prison: "Send that man back to be with his daughter over night." When he reached the house, he went up into the room tip-toe, for she was sleeping. The sound of his sobs awoke her, and smiling up at him she said: "I knew you would come back. Put your face down on my pillow as you used to do, and, father, kiss me." And the father put his lips against his child's face and kissed her just as she went home. The doctor said she died of a broken heart. The man never knew when he started to sin and spurned his Saviour, he never knew that he was going to kill his child. You never can tell how far sin will reach. You cannot tell when you say "no" to Christ, how far your decision will reach. It is a

blow to those who love you, but I will tell you something more. When you resist my Saviour, it is a blow to Him. The Bible says that rejecting Christ is crucifying Him afresh. Every refusal is like driving the nails through His hands and feet. Take Him then to-night. Come, my friends, and take Him to-night. I have finished my message. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow!







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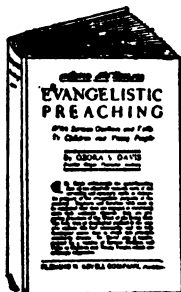
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