

“Doing” or “Done”

BEING A SERIES OF
GOSPEL ADDRESSES

By Dixon Edwards

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast”—Eph. 2: 8, 9.



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THE WAY OF CAIN, AND THE FAITH OF ABEL

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts” (Heb. 11 : 4).

IN God's sight man is a moral ruin, a sinner with a corrupt nature, and the only way of return to God is by “the more excellent sacrifice.” We learn this in the history of Cain and Abel. They were born outside of Eden, the paradise on earth; both were, in the words of the Psalmist, “conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity;”¹ both were sinners by constitution, as springing from fallen parents.² In a word, we see in these two men an exemplification of the truth,

“THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE.”³

Mark well, these men were born *outside* of Eden, where God had placed Adam and Eve. They fell, being disobedient to God—transgressing His distinct command. God then clothed them with skins, and drove them out of the garden; and when thus *outside*, their family was born to them. Now, just as with the two sons before us, so with the whole human race. All have descended from the first Adam; all have sinned, and all are separated from God. There is not one solitary exception to this; for all are sinners, and as such are lost. This is

¹ Ps. 51: 5. ² Rom. 5: 19. ³ Rom. 3: 22.

where the world stands. The most moral, the most benevolent, the kindest person, is a sinner—has in him the nature of sin the same as the drunkard, the swearer, the outcast of society. Yes, from its highest and most refined levels to its lowest and most debased, all, in whatever circle they move, whether rich or poor, high or low, have in them this nature of sin, and *in this respect*, “there is no difference, for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”¹ There are but

TWO CLASSES OF PEOPLE

here to-night, and only two in the world—the lost and the saved. *All out of Christ* compose the former, and *all in Christ* make up the latter. My hearers, to which do you belong? The children of God are the saved; the children of wrath are the lost. Which are you—a child of God or a child of wrath? How plain it is then that you must be *born again* in order to enter the kingdom of God.² Have *you been born again?*

Let us go back to Cain’s boyhood. Doubtless, as a good mother would, Eve would take Cain upon her knees and instruct him in the things of eternity. Cannot you imagine her saying: “Cain, come, my boy.” Fondly caressing him, she begins: “A few years ago, my child, your father and I were placed in the Garden of Eden. There God had given us a command—we were forbidden to eat of one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in it. We broke this command; we sinned against God, and thus sin entered into

¹ Rom. 3 : 22, 23.

² John 3 : 7.

this fair and beautiful world; and death comes by sin. But the Lord God, after our fall, made us coats of skin and clothed us with them; and by this He taught us that it is through the death of a substitute only that we can have a covering to fit us for His holy presence; and that by having such a robe, we, even we, who through our sin have lost a lovely paradise on earth, can yet be in a far brighter paradise in heaven, to enjoy there God's company for ever. You see, Cain, God taught us that He had placed the *death* of a substitute between Himself in His holiness and ourselves in our ruin, as *that only* could meet His righteous claims against us, and our deep need as sinners. Then, my boy, your father and I were driven out of the Garden; it was after this you were born, and then Abel your brother, and you are sinners as ourselves—both of you. There is no difference as to your state of sin before Him. Both of you have a sinful nature from your birth."

The mother ceases, and Cain goes, as boys do, to his play and pastimes. Years roll on, and the boys have passed into manhood. Let us visit Cain, who is grown up. We reach his dwelling. He is a tiller of the ground, an agriculturist, as we observe by his horny hands; his brow, we notice, is sunburnt. Evidently he is a man who has toiled in the burden and heat of the day. Perhaps we notice a sober, thoughtful expression upon his countenance. Let us ask him: "Cain, is anything troubling you?" He replies, "Yes; last night, when I had retired to rest, I began to think more soberly than hitherto; I thought of *God*, of His holiness,

His majesty, and then my mind reverted to what my dear old mother in bygone days used to tell me concerning Eden and my parents' fall; and then I thought of my own state before God."

"But Cain," we ask, "why should that trouble you?" "Oh," he replies, "how shall I be able to meet a holy God?" My hearers, have *you* ever been in the same anxiety? God is infinitely holy, and you are a sinner. No wonder that Cain was troubled.

ARE YOU TROUBLED?

Let us suppose we revisit Cain another day, to see if his trouble is over. We find him still depressed. A thought strikes him; he wends his way to his field with a sickle in his hand to the standing grain. He puts in his sickle, and a sheaf is reaped. He returns to his dwelling. Outside of it he builds an altar of stone; he kindles a fire, and places the beautiful sheaf upon the altar; then kneeling down, he looks up to heaven and says: "I have brought Thee, O God, this offering; accept me, O God, accept me, because of my offering." Then, methinks I hear a still small voice saying to Cain: "Cain, I cannot have respect to thee and to thine offering. No, Cain, I cannot."

Let us once more speak to the rejected man: "Cain, have you toiled hard for this offering?" "Yes." "Have you sweat in the noon-day heat for it?" "Yes." "And won't God accept you?" "No," he replies; and adds, "It is the *best* I had, the very best sheaf I could get, and now God refuses it."

Do you know, my hearers, what Cain was? He was the

FIRST UNITARIAN,

He left out *death*; he omitted the blood-shedding of a substitute. What was it his mother had told him? Had she not taught him that he could not meet with God in peace unless death were placed between God and his soul? There was no death in that sheaf of wheat. True, he worked for it; true, he labored for it. But there was no blood shed in Cain's offering, and God said, "Cain, it will not do." Oh, how angry Cain got! And that is just the way many people are in to-day—just the way, perhaps, of some here.

In my travels I have met many curious people. The most curious is a woman who is too good for Christ; she is here to-night. She is moral, cultured, benevolent, a good mother and a loving wife; but she is

TOO GOOD FOR JESUS.

Woman, is it you? Moralist, is it you? Sunday-school teacher, is it you? Preacher, church deacon, teetotaller, art thou too good for the Saviour? Art thou the man? Too good for Christ! I will tell you what I have never discovered yet—a man or woman, youth or maiden, too *bad* for the Son of God—no, not one! If heaven itself were to visit this earth, and look from north to south, and east to west, it could not discover one sinner in this wide world too sinful for God's Son to save and to bless. Alas, there are many too good for Jesus! and maybe one sits before me to-night. But you

say, "No, no; I am not too good for Christ, but I want to win God's favor, and I am really doing my best to obtain it." My dear hearer, you are following in the way of Cain when you talk about *doing your best*. You have never yet learned that you are

LOST!

notwithstanding all your works, your self-sacrifice, and your good deeds. Doing your best, indeed! Why, you are doing your best to go to perdition in trusting to your works, like Cain. But you say, "What is to be done?" Well, I say, you have done far too much! Cease doing what you are doing, viz., following your own way, instead of turning to the Saviour.

A little time ago, after a gospel meeting, an aged man—a church member and an office-bearer—came up to me, and with tears in his eyes, he said, "I could not go home to-night without telling you that I have been

A CHURCH MEMBER FOR FORTY YEARS,

but I never knew Christ as *my* Saviour until to-night."

Near him stood his wife. "Madam," I asked, "and what about you?" Between her tears, she said, "As with my husband, so it has been with me, but God has saved me to-night." Who are those who go "in the way of Cain? Those who think they will reach heaven by what *they* can do. Ah, my hearers, if you did your level best, if you said prayers until they piled up to the sky, if you wept until you made a river of tears, if you were

the most outwardly moral being, and yet had not Christ, you would still be

FOLLOWING IN THE WAY OF CAIN.

Your works, unconverted man, are *dead* until you have trusted the one atoning sacrifice of Christ. *His* redemption work *alone* can save you. 'Tis all of grace.¹ In Cain's history, can you not read your own? Though he believed God to be holy, yet he knew not the brightness of that holiness; and though he may have partly believed in his own sinnership, yet he was wilfully ignorant of the utter debasement of his nature; there was no acknowledgment of his utterly ruined moral state before God. You, scoffer, you laugh at me, saying, "What a fool the fellow is! We are in the 20th century, my dear sir. The address you are giving is played out. We are civilized; we are educated, cultured, religionized; and you are preaching out-of-date doctrine. It is too old—too ancient."

Skeptic, lend me your ear for a moment. The world, which you extol as being better, has grown worse than when Jesus was here. Why, 1900 years ago it murdered Christ in cold blood; has it ever repented of that act?

I believe at the time of the Indian Mutiny, a

DAY OF NATIONAL HUMILIATION

was ordered in Great Britain. Men and women who, perhaps, never before cried to God, did so on that day, as they thought of outraged and murdered women and children, and massacred officers and

¹Eph. 2: 8.

men. Yes, people then humbled themselves in a way they perhaps never did before. But the world! Has it ever appointed a day of universal humiliation for its treatment of God's beloved Son? The world! Its hands are red with the blood of Jesus, and it has never yet humbled itself for its insult to God and the murder of His Son, nor repented of its act. *That* is the 20th century world.

Come to the cemetery with me, young man. Show me your mother's tomb. There it is, and her favorite text inscribed upon the headstone. As I stand there, you say, "If ever a fellow had a good mother, I had one." I produce from my pocket one of the world's latest comic songs, and taking my stand upon the tomb, I begin singing it. What would you do, young man? Methinks you would strike me down, saying, "How dare you act in such a revolting manner!" But do you worldlings know what *you* are doing? You are singing your comic songs upon the tomb of Jesus. That worldly young lady sings and dances on the tomb of the Saviour, and what does God say? "You insult Me and my Son." Ah, *that* is the world. Do you belong to it? You say to me, "Don't *you* belong to it?" No! ten thousand times, no! I belonged to it once, but God has saved me and delivered me from it, and said: "There—you do not belong to it any more." Nor does any Christian. Thank God, Christian hearer, you are

NOT OF THE WORLD.¹

But there is another thing Cain did—he murdered the very man who offered the right kind of

¹John 17: 14.

sacrifice. Now, do not be surprised at the charge I bring against you worldlings. Witness, ye heavens! Witness, O earth! I charge the unsaved here with

THE MURDER OF THE MAN

who offered the acceptable sacrifice.¹ Who was that? It was *Jesus*. Yes, Cain murdered Abel, and the world has murdered Christ. O sinners! you are part and parcel of *that* world; and each time you reject the Lord of glory, it is as though you heartily concurred in that awful act of the murder at Calvary. Now, what will you do to-night? Let me persuade you to bow down before God, to own your guilt to Him, and to confess the world-rejected Christ as your own precious Saviour and Friend.

And now, let us learn something from Abel. He also would doubtless have heard from his parents the story that Cain had listened to. He grows up side by side with Cain, and advances into manhood. Let us pay him a visit. We find him on his way to his flock. He builds an altar, seizes a lamb, kills it, and places the lamb upon the fire. Perfect and spotless, the animal seemed to be the best of the flock. Kneeling down, casting his eyes upon the smoking sacrifice, he smites his breast as the publican in the New Testament, and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner."² A voice reaches him from heaven—the voice of God—saying, "Accepted, Abel, accepted. I have respect to thee and to thine offering; I accept thee on the ground of thy sacrifice." My hearers, do you understand this?

¹ Acts 3: 14, 15.

² Luke 18: 13.

Abel has *in faith* offered the right offering. He has placed *death* between his soul and God, as that which alone can satisfy the claims of God's holiness and meet the sinner's need. He has set the victim lamb between his sins and God; he has, in faith, I say, put the lamb upon the altar—faith that saw in that sacrifice a type of the Eternal Sacrifice of the Cross—it looked forward to Calvary; and God accepts the sacrifice, and receives Abel on the ground of it—on that ground alone. Cannot *you* learn in that the way to be saved? It is so simple! The lamb died for Abel, Jesus died for sinners. That is God's way of salvation. Mark well this, that in Cain's offering there was no blood shed, in Abel's there was. In Cain's offering there was *no* death, in Abel's there *was* death. Cain did not acknowledge that because of sin he was

UNDER THE SENTENCE OF DEATH.

Abel owned it, and placed the life of another in his stead upon the altar, and God accepted that life, the life of the lamb, for Abel. How simple! That is the way of salvation for you. If you only get down before God as a guilty sinner, owning that you can do nothing: that you are lost, that you are ruined; but pleading the death of Jesus—the very moment you do *that*, God will receive you and save you for ever.

Let us dwell a little longer upon this. Somebody might be saying, "Well, I see now the difference between the two offerings. In the case of Cain there was *no* death, and in the case of Abel there *was* death, and *that* made all the difference. And

I see that *my* works will not do, but that Christ's death will do." Now, if you want to be saved to-night, and you come to God, and say: "O God, I'm a sinner, but in faith I bring the death of Thy dear Son to Thee. I have no other plea than this, that Jesus died for sinners, and therefore for *me*." What will God do? Blessed be His name, He will receive you on the spot, because of the value of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Yes, it is due to Christ, due to His sacrifice, that all who plead it before God should be accepted according to the value of that sacrifice. This is God's way of salvation.

Now, why should you not be saved at this moment? Oh, come as a sinner to God, confessing to Him your guilt and your need of Jesus. Plead Christ's death for you, and God will receive you in the

VALUE WHICH THAT DEATH HAS TO HIM.

Let us now see what the value of the death of Jesus is. Suppose that you have a city office. Tomorrow morning you say to your clerk, "Smith, take this check to the bank;" and you put it in a cash bag, which you hand to him. He says, "What is the amount?" You say, "Oh, never mind, take it to the bank, and the banker will pay you in cash." Off he goes, and on his way he says to himself, "Perhaps it is a check for \$100." A little after, "Perhaps it is a check for \$300," and when he reaches the bank, "Maybe it is for \$500." Coming into the bank, he hands the bag to the banker, who withdraws the check, looks at it for a moment,

and then pays the clerk \$1000. Now, how is it the banker cashed the check to that extent? The clerk's estimate had gone up to \$500, the banker gave him \$1000. Why? The banker cashed that check according to *his* knowledge and value of it—not the clerk's. Now the clerk represents the needy sinner, the check signifies the precious blood of Christ, the banker speaks of God. The sinner places the check before the bank of heaven. His faith is but small at best, but God knows the value of that sacrifice—the sacrifice of His Son—and He says,

“I WILL HONOR THAT SACRIFICE.”

God only can value it aright. And what is His value? Listen, “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin.”¹ Thank God, this is the value of Jesus' name in heaven.

Perhaps, my hearers, you have thought that the precious blood of Christ only cleanses from your sins committed up to the date of your conversion, but God says, “cleanseth us from *all* sin”—from *every* sin of your life—for the value of Christ's sacrifice is ever before God. If you have never yet believed God's value of this check, believe it tonight.

Let me show you further the value of Christ's atoning sacrifice. When He went to the cross for sinners, when He stood for them before God, what was it that fell upon Him there? *The judgment of God.*² Now mark this: when Abel placed his offering upon the altar, the victim was consumed by

¹ John 1: 7.

² Mark 15: 33, 34 and 37, 38. 2

the fire; but on Calvary's altar, the fire, *i. e.*, the judgment of God, was

CONSUMED BY THE VICTIM.

The precious Saviour, in those three hours of darkness upon the cross, exhausted for believers every atom of judgment against them. Thank God, to-night the Christian can look right up through the firmament, right up through the heavens, right up to the glory of God, and reverently say, without the shadow of a doubt or a vestige of fear—look up to God and say, “There is not a speck of judgment left for me on account of my sins, for my precious Saviour has been beneath Thy judgment against my guilt, and has exhausted it for me.”¹ Oh, thank God, this can be the truthful language of all who rest upon what Jesus has done.

I have read of a man on horseback traveling across large prairies. He dismounted, and put his ear to the ground; then looking back, he muttered, “It is as I thought, the dry grass is burning; I hear the rumbling fire in the distance; the sky, too, is lurid.” His steed would not take him beyond the reach of danger. The fire came on apace. Our traveler struck a match and fired the grass at his own feet; the breeze fanned it, and it forged its way ahead, consuming the withered grass as it went. Waiting a time for the ground to cool, he walked his steed upon it for some distance, and took his stand. He was between two fires—one forging ahead, the other approaching. He felt the heat of the flame of the latter, as it neared; but lo, when

¹John 5; 24.

it reached the burned space, its course was arrested. Why? Because he stood where the fire had been.

Sinner, where has the fire been? On Calvary. Then take your stand *there*.

Yes, *there*; and when the fire of judgment shall overwhelm the ungodly, it will not touch you, because you

STAND WHERE THE FIRE HAS BEEN.

Oh, thank God, a believer in Jesus can lift up his heart to God, and say, "I am accepted in all the value of the blood of Christ, and there is not an atom of the divine judgment left for me."

Listen to the words of our Lord, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."¹ Mark those words, "Shall not come into judgment." *He* says it. The Son of God says it. Is He entitled to say it? Yes. Why? Because of *who* He is and of *what* He has done. He is the everlasting Son, and He has borne the full weight of the judgment in our behalf. He has in the glory of His person sustained it all, and He has emerged from it the risen, victorious Saviour, the same Blessed One who entered into it for us. Yes, *He* has drained for the Christian that judgment that would otherwise have fallen upon him, and Christ says, "Shall not come into judgment." Is it not both gloriously grand and sweetly simple?

I should like to press another point here. The precious blood of the Redeemer is *ever* before God in its wondrous value.² It is before Him to-night.

¹ John 5 : 24.

² Exod. 12 : 13.

He looks upon *it*. His gaze rests there, and on Him who shed it; and God says, "Any poor sinner may come to Me by the blood, and be reconciled to Me." The blood will thus be before God through the ages; it will never lose its value; and it is ever seen by God in its cleansing virtue and its solitary glory.

IT "CLEANSES FROM ALL SIN."

If in Jesus you have trusted, there is *for you*, before God, placed to your account the priceless value of the blood of Christ, of which God has testified in these words, "cleanseth us from all sin."¹

I read of an old Scotchman who, when reading his Bible, would place his finger on a verse, saying, as he read it, "I think Thy thoughts after Thee, O God." Let us all do like him. I want you to

THINK GOD'S THOUGHTS

about that blood. It is so precious in His sight that He only could value it aright. He has not left it to angels or to men to value it. No, *He* has valued it and declared its worth in His sight—it "cleanseth from all sin."

Refer again to your Bible, and read those words, "God testifying of his gifts."² Sometimes I meet people who say they do not *feel* they are saved, and yet they tell me they truly believe in the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. But God does not give a testimony to *our feelings*. To what then is God's testimony? Why, to the sacrifice of the Cross and its value to Him.

¹1 John 1: 7.

²Heb. 11: 4.

Now, what is *faith* in the blood?¹ It is the reception in the soul of God's testimony to its value. Will God ever vary or alter His testimony to the preciousness of that blood? Never! You and I change oft—in the same day, perhaps; but Christ's atoning sacrifice will never alter, and never change, and

GOD'S TESTIMONY TO ITS VALUE

will always be the same.

A story is told of a servant of God in Scotland, that one evening, when out on horseback, a fog overtook him as he was crossing a moor, and he lost his way. The mist was so thick that he was unable to regain the track; so, throwing the reins upon the horse's neck, he looked up and said, "Lord, take care of us." After an hour's traveling a light glimmered in the distance, and making toward it, he found it proceeded from a cottage. Knocking at the door, it was opened by a young woman, to whom he said that he had lost his way, and inquired whether he could pass the night under that roof. "Certainly, sir," she said, "come in." Tying his horse in one of the outbuildings, he entered the cottage. "We have no spare bedroom for you, sir, but no doubt you can make yourself comfortable in the kitchen," said the girl. "Anywhere for a shelter," he said, as he entered. Soon he was stretched out by the fire and dozing, when a side door was opened, and as he started up he saw a priest pass through. The young woman followed to let him out, and as she retraced her

¹ Rom. 3: 23.

steps, the servant of God said, "Is there somebody ill here?"

"MOTHER IS DYING IN THAT ROOM,"

was the reply. "Can I see her?" he enquired. "Yes, but come quietly." He entered. The mother was evidently near death. The priest had just given her the last rites of her church. The servant of God, looking at her, said softly, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." It was like new life to the dying soul. She started up in her bed, and said, "What is that?" He repeated it. Sinking back on her pillow she exclaimed, "O God, that is

JUST WHAT I WANT;

but why didn't the priest tell me?" A smile passed over her face, and, looking up, she repeated, "Just what I want," and her spirit fled to God.

My hearers, it is just what we want for eternity. We need the precious blood of Christ. Come, then, to Jesus now; rest upon His all-sufficient sacrifice, and receive the salvation of God. AMEN.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

“But He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13: 37-39).

I WANT to talk about this wonderful subject—
“the forgiveness of sins.” We will consider four points in connection with it, namely :

- (1) The One who forgives.
- (2) The ground of His forgiveness.
- (3) The manner of His forgiveness.
- (4) The extent of His forgiveness.

Remember these four points, and it will help you to follow me.

I.—THE ONE WHO FORGIVES

I suppose every one here believes that in is always committed against God. We find it so stated in Scripture. When the apostle Peter charged Ananias and Sapphira with their sin, he said : “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.”¹ When David sinned so grievously against Uriah, he said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord;” and again in psalm 51, “Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.”² Let me assure you of this, that every sin of *your* life, of *my* life, of every man’s life, is against the living God Himself. I don’t wonder at David saying in the book of Psalms, “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark

¹ Acts 5: 4. ² Ps. 51: 4.

iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared.”¹ Yes, who could stand in the judgment before God, if He marked their iniquities? Sinner, remember this :

YOUR SINS ARE RECORDED

in God’s books,² and no mistakes are made there.

Suppose that a commercial man is in difficulty, and finds it necessary to employ a skilled accountant. He instructs him to look through his books and ascertain the truth of his position. Now that accountant, skilful as he may be, *might* make a mistake. Another accountant might discover a blunder that the first one had made. But there are no errors in God’s records as to sins—sins of omission and commission; sins of night and sins of the day; sins of the moment and sins of the hour, of the week, of the month, and the year; sins of manhood, of womanhood, and of youth. All sins, both in public and in private life, God has put them down in His books.

Sinner, when you think of this, and of how by-and-by you have to meet God, does your heart not quake? What an awful

EXPOSURE OF SIN

must take place before the Great White Throne when “the books” are opened! The sinner’s guilt will all come out in the light there. But oh, my hearer, if you would only turn to God and have all out with Him now; if you would but say to Him, “Search me, O God;”³ if you would but come to

¹ Ps. 130 : 3, 4. ² Rev. 20 : 12. ³ Ps. 139 : 23.

Him with the confession, "I have sinned"—then He would point you to the sacrifice of His blessed Son on the cross, and would assure you from His Word that, by that wondrous offering, the sins of all who rest on the Saviour's blood are put away, to be remembered *no more*.

Are you afraid to be searched by *God*? If so, you evidently do not know *His* way of blotting out sin. Let me explain it by a parable. In England there are certain game laws making trespassing on another man's land, in pursuit of game, a penal offence. This is termed "poaching." Now suppose a man gets a dishonest living by poaching. His heartbroken wife has often said to him, "Jim, give it up;" and he has as often answered, "I won't; I like it, and it brings us food and money." One morning, before sunrise, Jim returns to his cottage with his pockets loaded with partridge and pheasant, the results of a poaching expedition. Hanging his coat on the back of the kitchen door, he goes up to bed and is soon asleep. His wife gets quietly out of the bed and goes to the window. Opening the blind, she sees in the morning light the game-warden and a policeman approaching the dwelling. She trembles with fear for Jim. She rushes down stairs to find his coat. Jim hears her, and calls out, "Mary, what is the matter?" "The gamekeeper and a policeman are coming," she replies, and I'm searching your pockets to take out the game and bury it in the garden." "That's right," he says, "bury all out of sight; don't leave a feather behind."

Now Jim would not have asked the policeman or

the keeper to search like that. No, no ; they would have searched to expose him *for judgment*. But he asks his *wife* to search. Why ? Because she has a wife's heart, and searches in love, with the object of removing all trace of Jim's guilt. My hearers, this is how God searches :

HE SEARCHES IN LOVE,

He would like to *bury* your sins. You need not be afraid to be searched by Him. Let Him search you thoroughly now, and show you the hideousness of your guilt. He will tell you that, deep as your iniquity is, yet if you confess your guilt, and believe on His dear Son, all shall be buried for ever—put out of sight in the death of Jesus—not a trace of them left behind. Listen to the Psalmist, “There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.”¹

Think of the great and blessed God appealing to you to-night, and saying, “I have pardon for you.” He says to you drunkard, to you sinners, there is forgiveness, full, free, eternal, for you. Yet, alas, people turn away from Him and His blessing, and in their heart, if not in words, they say, “I pray Thee have me excused.”²

Can any but God forgive sins ? No ; a thousand times, No ! It is God, and God alone, who can bestow the priceless blessing of forgiveness. O my friends, look up to Him to-night as the One who alone can forgive you your sins.

¹ Ps. 130 : 4. ² Luke 14 : 18.

2.—THE GROUND OF HIS FORGIVENESS.

God is light, as well as love, and if He forgives sins, He must have

A RIGHTEOUS GROUND

for doing so. In the old city of London is a narrow street called Paternoster Row. Shops are on either side full of religious publications. You can get books to suit any and every creed. I fear "the Row" is similar to many in this audience,

RELIGIOUS, BUT——

A person walked into one of the shops I have mentioned and purchased an illuminated card, bearing the text, "God is Love."¹ He then asked for one with "God is Light"² upon it. The bookseller said, "I am sorry we cannot oblige you, but we do not have it in stock; there is no demand for it."

NO DEMAND FOR IT!

Ah, friends, people do not care to hear that God is *light*. They would fain regard Him as *all* love. He *is* love, but He is *light* as well. If He pardons you He must have a righteous ground for doing so. Supposing that God said to me, "You have been a great sinner, but I'll think no more about it. Go; you are pardoned." Why, that would be a false God. *That* God might suit some of you, but that is not the true God. He says to me, "You deserve, on account of your guilt, to be cast into hell; but in love to you I have given my Son for you to bear the judgment due to your sins; and the moment you trust in Him, you shall be eternally forgiven."

¹1 John 4: 8. ²1 John 1: 5.

Has this no charm for my heart? God laid upon His blessed Son what we deserve, even judgment, and He gives all who believe in Jesus what that precious Saviour deserves—even life, favor and glory. Is not that good news for you to-night?

Now let this sink deep down into your soul—that

GOD MUST JUDGE SIN.

Yes, I press that point—He must judge sin; we can't be saved without His judging it.

Then here comes the problem: How can God be holy and yet have us in heaven? How can His grace be shown to us and yet He judge our sin?

Now mark this: if God judges sin on *us*, He must banish us from His presence for ever. Yet His desire is to have us happy and at rest in His own heavenly home. You know what a weir is. In it are floodgates. If the gates are closed, the water is pent up behind, and of course the channel in front is low, or dry. If you wish the water to rush down the weir, you have only to open the floodgates. Well, the pent-up water pictures the river of God's grace; the closed floodgates represent the claims of God's holiness; and the dry channel, the avenue into our hearts. God, in love to us, gave His blessed Son, who came down into the dark waters of death, and there, in the greatness of His grace, and the holiness of His person, He, in those terrible hours of darkness and suffering under God's judgment against sin on the cross, placed His mighty hand upon the floodgates and opened them wide apart, so that the river of grace

might come rushing down in the Holy Spirit's power into the hearts of men and women here to-night. Yes,

THE FLOODGATES ARE OPEN,

for Jesus, as the sin-bearer on the cross, has met the full tide of divine judgment against sin; He has satisfied all the claims of divine holiness, and has told out the deep, boundless love of God's heart.

And remember this, ye men and women, that the death of Jesus did not *make* God love us, but was in itself the blessed

PROOF OF DIVINE LOVE

for us; as it is written, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."¹ God has, in the death of Jesus, found a righteous ground by which He can bestow His choicest blessings upon the darkest sinner that ever lived. "On a *righteous* ground?" Yes, it is the finished redemption-work of Christ.² People often look in themselves to find there some ground for God to bless them; but I tell you that you need to

LOOK OUT, NOT IN.

You would never think of peering down a coal mine to find a star. So, don't look into your own heart, but right out to Calvary for the ground of God's grace. You will then see that the Lord Jesus, by His atoning death, opened up the way for God in righteousness to bless the sinner that comes to Him in the name of Jesus.

The ground of God's forgiveness is clearly the

¹John 3: 16. ²Rom. 3: 25.

death of the Saviour. Your works have no place in that. People say to me, "Don't you believe in good works?" I answer, "I do;" and they say, "In what works?" I tell them, "In the good works of a Christian—after he has become a Christian through resting his soul upon the finished work of the Cross." Some people make the fatal mistake of waiting for the blessing of forgiveness up in heaven, to be got after they have passed into eternity. But God's gospel is that forgiveness of sins is a

PRESENT BLESSING;¹

it is permanent and eternal; received *now*, upon this earth; not on the ground of *your doing*, but on the ground of what Christ *has done*. Man's gospel is *Do!* Whereas, God's is *Done!* Not what you can do, but what Christ has done.

I remember hearing of a lady who went to see another lady, and said to her, "I hear you are distressed about your soul." She replied, "Yes, I am." "And what do you think is the way of peace?" asked the other. "I am doing my best," she answered. "Oh," said the other lady, "There's a difference between your religion and mine." "Indeed, what is yours?" "Mine," she answered, "is

NOT 'DOING' BUT 'DONE,'

whereas yours is 'do.'" "Whatever do you mean?" her friend asked. "I mean that you are resting in what *you can do*, but I am resting in what *my Saviour has done!*" The other looked up thoughtfully, and exclaimed, "Yes, that is the mistake I have

¹Acts 13: 38, 39.

made." The dear soul got peace through that visit, and so will you get peace *to-night* if you will only rest your soul in what your Saviour has done, and not in what you can do.

Supposing I want a new buggy, and I go to a carriage-maker; my order is for a buggy well built, well finished, and handsome, regardless of expense. Calling again in three months' time, I am taken into the showroom to view the newly-made buggy. There it is, evidently well built and handsome. Addressing myself to the carriage-maker, I say, "What can be done to finish it?" "Finish it! Why, it is finished," he says. Still I ask, "What can be done to make it perfect?" "Perfect! Why it is as perfect as man can make it." "Oh," but I say, "surely I must be able to do something to it!" And the tradesman answers, "Yes, if you wish to do something, go and get your horse, hitch the animal to the buggy, and drive away." Yes, the buggy was *finished*, and nothing more could be done to it. So Christ's redemption work is a finished work. You can add nothing to it; receive it with faith, and let grace convey you all through your life, and then into heaven. Don't talk about adding to what is complete and perfect. Don't dishonor Christ's work by wanting to add something of your own to it.

And where is the Saviour who did that work? He is not in the Virgin's arms; neither is He upon the cross, nor in the tomb. I often think that the Roman Catholic never gets farther than the Virgin with the Babe in her arms; the Protestant, that is the Protestant in a general sense, has got no farther than

Christ on the cross ; but true Christianity reaches farther—it reveals Christ on the everlasting throne at God's right hand. God has set that blessed Saviour up there on the highest heights of glory.¹ Yes, there at the right hand of the majesty on high sits the blessed Christ of God, who has been down to Calvary for you and me. God has found eternal satisfaction in what Christ has done on the cross for His glory and our need.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS CLAIMS ARE SATISFIED

in all His requirements, in all the demands of His justice and the claims of His holiness, God has been fully and perfectly satisfied and glorified by the Saviour's work, and we can be satisfied too. If God's requirements have been so fully met by the death of Jesus on the cross, surely the needs of my poor soul are met by the same blessed work. Yes, here is our resting-place.

A young fellow wrote me a letter some time ago, to the effect that he had been troubled for the previous two weeks about his soul, but that he had learnt a wonderful truth, namely, that God was satisfied with Jesus' work on the cross, and he was satisfied as well.

Supposing the roof of this hall were taken away, and yon heaven opened before your eyes, and you were given the power to see right in, you would behold on the throne

JESUS, A REAL MAN,

with the bright glory of God in His face² instead of

¹ Phil. 2 : 9 ; Heb. 2 : 9. ² 2 Cor. 4 : 6.

the marks of the world's mockery. We should cry, as we beheld Him, "It is Jesus! Jesus!!"

Yes, God has placed His Son as Man on the throne. Praise God, that the work of Calvary has been done to God's eternal satisfaction and for your eternal blessing; and you have but to receive it, and rest where God rests.

Where does He rest? In Christ! Where do I rest? On Christ!—blessed resting-place! Sinner, you have never rested there; but oh, rest there to-night.

3.—THE MANNER OF HIS FORGIVENESS.

Let me take a Scripture incident. There was a poor, sinful woman, a fallen sister of society;¹ she heard of Jesus. It may have been that on a previous occasion she had heard Him preach in her own town that beautiful message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now it is told her that He is in Simon's house; she hastens to the dwelling, and entered the room where the feast was held. She did not advance toward Peter, and say, "Will you introduce me to Christ?" or to John or James with the same request—and I hope none here to-night will ask me to introduce them to Jesus, because I cannot—the *gospel* does that for you. It introduces Christ to you and you to Christ. The woman stole quietly up to the blessed Lord, and with fast-falling tears, sobbed out her contrition at His feet. She knew to *whom* to go. She had the right Per-

¹ Luke 7: 36-50.

son before her soul, even her Saviour-God. And, my friends, He is the same for you as for her. Then the Lord turned to her, and said:

“THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN.”

This is the way He did and still does. Is it not charming? He did not upbraid her. Oh, no; but in wondrous tenderness and love He said, “Thy sins are forgiven.” What a wonderful touch of love; it was

THE SAVIOUR'S TOUCH.

He made that woman to hear His blessed peace-giving words, “Thy sins are forgiven.” Have *you* heard those peace-giving words?

It is related that, in the American Civil war, there was a young soldier badly wounded and lying in hospital. His mother was sent for. On her arrival, the surgeon told her that her boy was delirious, was hovering between life and death, and that she could not see him until the next day. “I *can't* wait till then,” said she; “oh, let me see him.” The surgeon opened the door of the ward, and there on a bed lay the poor young fellow, tossing about in delirium. The mother said, “Doctor, do let me go to him—I must, doctor.” “No, you can't go in,” was the reply. The mother stood for an hour or two, and at last, as the doctor again passed, she said to him, “I shall go mad if I don't go in to sit with him!” “You must not go in,” again repeated the doctor. A thought struck her. Could she not be allowed to take the nurse's place at the bedside, promising not to utter a word, so that the boy could not recognize her at all? “Oh, let me

sit by his side and watch him," said she. With some reluctance the surgeon consented. The mother took the nurse's place by the side of the cot. The soldier's face was turned from her, and he was moaning in delirium. Presently she put out her hand and touched his fevered brow, when he at once said, "That's like *mother's* hand!" Ah, a mother's touch could not be imitated. Have you ever known the Saviour's touch of grace? There is

NO TOUCH LIKE HIS.

He heals the wounds, and bids you dry up your tears, and go on your way rejoicing. Oh, what a touch is that of Jesus!—"Thy sins are forgiven."

If here to-night Jesus passed up and down the seats, and said to each of you, "Do you know Me? Look at My hands and My feet that were nailed on the cross; look at My side that was pierced—I am the One that died for you!" Would you not put out your hand, and say, "O Lord, I want the touch of Thy love—there is no touch like Thine!" And He would do it. Yes, though you were now on the brink of hell, yet there's a Saviour for you, and He desires to save you now.

4.—THE EXTENT OF HIS FORGIVENESS.

The book of the Acts of the Apostles tells us that "All who believe are justified from *all* things."¹

A merchant, involved in financial difficulties, says to his clerk, "Robert, I am afraid to face my ledgers to ascertain what I owe. Perhaps it is \$50,000." Soon after, a friend meets him, and no-

¹Acts 13: 39.

ting his downcast appearance, asks the reason of it. He replies, "I am in debt and owe at least \$50,000." His friend says, "Send your books round to my office;" adding, "Perhaps you don't know that thirty years ago your father befriended mine, and through it I am a millionaire to-day, and if I could now help *you* I should be glad. I will gladly pay the \$50,000—or more, if you owe more—and we will say no more about it."

The books are sent round, and on careful examination, the man's indebtedness is found to be about \$100,000. The kind friend, however, pays *all* in full; the receipts from creditors are attached to the various accounts, and the books returned. When the merchant looks over his books, to his astonishment he finds that his debt was double the amount he had thought, and that his friend has liquidated *all*. "Oh," he says, "I never dreamt he would be so kind, so good to me!"

Friends, we little know the extent of God's forgiving grace. What little knowledge we have of our guilt, of our sins! But, thank God, the Christian can say, "Though I may not know the full extent of my liabilities and the full deserts of my sins, yet I do know that

CHRIST ANSWERED FOR ALL

by His death; and that I am forgiven *all*." "All who believe are justified from all things." It does not mean those who think they have done their duty, done their "best." The Scripture says, "All who *believe* are justified from all things"—believe in the Saviour, not in themselves. And how many

things are they justified from? "All." Does that not take in the future? Yes, for all my sins were in futurity when Christ died on the tree 1900 years ago.

Should Satan come to you to-night, and ask, "Do you believe the gospel which you heard in the hall to-night?" and you answer, "I do;" and then he adds, "You say that *all* your sins are forgiven? Remember, they are countless as the stars in the heavens, and as numberless as the grains of sand on the seashore. *Your* sins forgiven? Impossible!" Now what will you answer to this? Let it be this, "Satan, look at this book,

THE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.

It reads: '*All who believe ARE justified from ALL things!*'" Then the devil will retreat from you.

Let me ask you to take God's Word as *God's* Word. The skeptic and the infidel trifle with Scripture; and, maybe, some person here who professes to believe in Christ, doubts it too. But when the heavens shall have passed away, and the earth shall have been burnt up, that blessed Word of God shall stand. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."¹

Perhaps some one asks, "Can *I* get forgiveness?" Yes—NOW! Yes, my friend, it is for *sinners*; and are not *you* a sinner?

I recall an incident of prison authorities who arranged that five men should be pardoned for good behavior, and that it should be the five highest on the prison roll—regardless of who they

¹ Matt. 24; 35.

were. When the day arrived to declare the names, it was done at the prison service. The first name was "Reuben Johnson." The chaplain called out, "Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon." Reuben only looked round to see who the fortunate man was. "Reuben," said the chaplain, "you are free." Again Reuben turned to see a Reuben rise up. The third time the chaplain said, "Reuben! *You* are the man." Then the truth dawned upon him; he got up, and wept like a child. When the service was over, Reuben, however, was going off with the prison gang as usual, and the chaplain had once more to call to him: "Reuben! step out of the ranks; you are free! Then he stepped out, and passed through the prison gates—*free!*

Are any of you like him? What is your name? It is *sinner*. God speaks to such, and offers pardon. Are you saying, "There must be a mistake; I'm not worthy." My hearer, pardon is offered you—not because *you* could ever be worthy, but because

JESUS IS WORTHY.

God desires to bless you, the *unworthy*, because of Jesus, the *worthy*. Will you be set free from your sins to-night?

When Wilberforce, that noble philanthropist, through great exertions obtained the emancipation of the West Indian slaves at the cost of British millions, there were no cables and no telegraph; the news was sent by a sailing vessel. When the islands were reached, the captain stood on the bridge; he put a trumpet to his lips and shouted—"FREE!" The blacks, who studded

the shore, were wild with joy; some stood on their heads; others turned somersaults; others shouted, "God bless Britain!" All this was produced by that one word, "*Free.*" Now, let me put the silver trumpet of the gospel to my lips to-night. Sinner, slave of sin and Satan,

THERE IS FREEDOM FOR YOU!

Freedom—not at the cost of millions of money—but at the priceless cost of the precious blood of Christ! Oh, listen to-night: "Freedom at the cost of Jesus' blood!" I proclaim it in the ear of all people—Freedom for the slave!

Oh, that God Himself may break your fetters and bonds to-night, and set you free with this sweet word ringing in your heart: "ALL WHO BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS." *Amen!*

“TRUMPETS!”

“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (1 Cor. 14 : 8.)

MY subject to-night is “Trumpets!” And I shall address my remarks to three classes of people who, doubtless, are within the walls of this building—*careless sinners, anxious souls, and Christians*, with special reference to *backsliders*.

A story is told of the times of Charlemagne, the great Emperor of the Franks, that when his army was hotly pursued and hemmed in by three terrible divisions of Saracens, a Frank warrior stepped forward and blew three terrific blasts with his bugle. The first blast brought the pursuing army to a standstill, the second spread consternation through their ranks, at the third they broke rank in great disorder, and fled from the field.

I want to blow three trumpet-blasts in the ears of the careless sinner to-night. And let me tell you, O man, that, like the Saracens, there are

THREE TERRIBLE POWERS

against you: three fearful powers—the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*. If God, by the trumpet-blasts to-night, should deliver you from Satan’s power, and from the power of the flesh and of this world, and set you free for Christ, what a note of triumph from my lips and my heart shall arise to His praise !

This is the triple alliance—The World, the Flesh, and the Devil—which are arrayed against you to-night—*offensive*, in making you sin against God; *defensive*, in causing you to turn away from God's love. This three-fold power is bent upon your destruction! Let me put the trumpet to my lips and blow the first blast :

REPENT !

God put a trumpet into the hands of John the Baptist, sending him into the wilderness with it to summon people to "Repent!" The people of Judea flocked out by hundreds to the preaching, and were aroused by it.

Would to God that this whole city should hear that blast—"Repent!"; that every sinner in this hall would listen to it now—the liar, the drunkard, the adulterer, publicans and Pharisees alike—and repent.

A young fellow touched me on the shoulder the other night after a gospel meeting. On my turning round, he said, "I am such a *hypocrite!*" I replied, "Thank God!" He seemed surprised, and said, "Why thank God? Is it because I am a hypocrite?" "Oh, no," I answered, "but because you have acknowledged it."

Thank God for that. And thank God to-night for any man or woman, youth or maiden, who will bow down before God and say, I confess I am a poor, guilty soul. Have *you* ever cried out in that way to God?

After John the Baptist had blown the trumpet, we read that the Lord Himself blew the blast,

“Repent!”¹ Then Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, sounded it forth²; and subsequently Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. Listen to his conscience-reaching words, “God now commandeth all men everywhere to *repent!*”³

My friends, that command is to you. Acknowledge before God that you are guilty and lost, that you have no claim to glory; that you have no title to heaven; but, thank God, an honest confession of being a *sinner* gives you a title to Christ. He, as the Saviour, stepped from the unsullied light of God’s presence down into this poor, wretched, guilty world, and died for sinners, so that He might put His everlasting arms around you, and say to you, “Salvation has come to thee to-night!”⁴

It becomes evident that many

TWENTIETH CENTURY PREACHERS

omit from their sermons the word “Repent.” They preach an “only believe” gospel. Now, do not misunderstand me here. Blessed be God, the way for a sin-burdened heart to obtain pardon is to “only believe” on the Lord Jesus Christ. Show me an anxious soul, show me the broken-hearted sinner, and with joy let me bring forth this balm of Gilead for that soul.

But why should we say to the careless sinner, the profane, the indifferent, the blasphemer, the skeptic, the drunkard, the liar, or the formal religionist: You need “only believe.” Nay, this is but *part* of the truth, for they must first *repent*. Repentance

¹ Mark 1: 15.

² Acts 2: 37, 38.

³ Acts 17: 30.

⁴ Luke 19: 9.

is the result produced in a man's soul when he bows to the truth concerning his guilty state before God; when he owns that what God declares of him is true—in a word, when he justifies God in His judgment of him.

O unsaved hearers, you are *lost! lost!!* You are passing into eternity with rapid pace. An eternal hell is before you.—Don't say to me, "Sir, do not be so terrifically in earnest." Oh yes, I am in dead earnest in pleading with you. Live on you must—aye, as long as God Himself—and 'twill either be in heaven or in hell. Men, your souls are in peril; your sins are dragging you down to a lost eternity! *Repent*, then, *REPENT!* Wait not until to-morrow; it may be *too late* then.

Now let me blow another blast. 'Tis this :

BELIEVE!

Somebody may be saying, "I am not indifferent or callous about these matters; I am truly troubled and anxious about my soul; I really wish to know what to do to be saved." Listen, then, to the sweet bugle note found in Acts 16 : 31. The Philippian jailor asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Directly the answer comes to him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." How is it that people always want *to do* something in order to be saved? How many are trying by their works, by their own endeavors, by a bit of church-going, a bit of religion, to fit themselves for God's presence. *They never will succeed;* for how could a sinner ever fit himself for heaven and God's presence? God says:

“NOT OF WORKS.”¹

But they say, “It is of works”—which is right?

Come with me to a mountain region, and let us travel up that winding road which gradually leads to a town some 5,000 feet above sea level. We find some sharp turns here and there, with deep ravines on this side and that. As a precaution against accident, wooden railings have been erected along the precipices. We meet an aged man going up along the road; he carries a pack on his back, and being fatigued, on reaching the railing, he lays his pack on the ground, and leans against it to rest himself. Suddenly there is a crash, and he is over! Poor fellow, he is dashed to pieces at the bottom of the ravine! Ah, the railing was rotten, the weather had spoiled it. I say, with all my heart, “Would there had been no railing there.” Better none than rotten ones.

My religious hearers, you who have not been “born again,” your works are

LIKE THE ROTTEN RAILING;

they will utterly fail you; and if you continue to trust in them, you will go over into the everlasting burnings with them. Give up this trust in your doings, and receive the precious gospel found in those soul-emancipating words, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”²

What fools people are who, zealously enough, are going about seeking to establish their own righteousness, instead of submitting themselves to the righteousness of God!³

¹Eph. 2: 9. ²Acts 16: 31. ³Rom. 10: 3.

I have read a story connected with a place in a European country called "The Deer's Leap." A stag, being hotly pursued by huntsmen and hounds, was arrested in its race for life by a deep chasm eighteen yards wide. The poor thing crouched, gathered up all its strength for a final effort, and made a desperate spring. Its forefeet just failed to touch the opposite side, and down it fell, and lay quivering in death on the rocks at the bottom. O religious sinner, read your own history in this. You are trying to reach God in your own way. When your deathbed is reached, a chasm still separates you from heaven's shores. The fatal leap is made, and you fall into the abyss—*lost for ever!*

O sinner, *your* works will never carry you into God's glory. "Doing your best" will not avail. And what does "doing your best" mean, after all? What would you think of me if to-morrow, in passing down the street, I picked up from the gutter some cast off garment,

LIKE FILTHY RAGS,

and then came to your residence. Pressing the electric bell, you come to the door, and I offer you the filthy rags as a present; what would you think of me? You would esteem it a gross insult! And rightly so. Now what must God think when a man or woman presents to Him filthy rags, as our righteousness is called. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."¹ They will certainly never provide you a covering suitable for the bright glory of God.

You must get *Christ*—not your rags, with which

¹ Isa. 64: 6.

to come before God—and Christ’s blessed atoning work will *save* you. Some people are extremely fond of

BLOWING THEIR OWN TRUMPETS.

Listen to some of the notes as they peal forth : “I’m not a drunkard,” “I’m not an extortioner,” “I’m not a gambler;” “I attend church fairly regularly,” “I sometimes read the Bible,” “I teach in the Sunday-school,” etc., etc. It is all *I, I, I*. Just like the Pharisee of Luke 18: 11: “God I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.” A true Christian—one truly born of God—speaks not in this fashion. “Not I, but Christ,” rings out from such a heart. Depend upon it, proud Pharisee, you are blowing your own trumpet. See, by way of contrast, the attitude of the publican; he did not begin with

THAT BIG UGLY “I.”

No, he began with *God*: “God be merciful to me a sinner.”¹ A man might say, “That is all very well, but surely there is a work to be done!” Yes, certainly, there *was* a work to be done—a *great* work, a *stupendous* work. Satan whispers in your ear, “You must do it.” It is his lie. God says to you, “My Son has done it.” This is God’s truth. Which do you believe, the devil’s lie or God’s truth? Harken to those words of Jesus when on the cross:

“IT IS FINISHED!”²

There is the resting-place for your soul. “Finished” by the Son of God. Oh, solid, blessed, im-

¹Luke 18: 13. ²John 19: 30.

mutable resting-place for our souls ; it shall stand for ever.

To "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" is to rest your soul's salvation upon the redemption accomplished by the blessed Son of God at the cross. Behold Him now on the throne, in glory; view Him there as Man risen from among the dead, raised by the glory of the Father, and crowned with glory and honor in heaven as the

PROOF OF GOD'S ACCEPTANCE

of what He did upon the cross ; it has completely satisfied God, and met our deepest need. Oh, broken down sinner, believe in Him, who in the glory of His person and work, can never break down. He never failed in the *past*, He cannot fail in the *present*, and He never will in the *future*. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, then, and thou shalt be saved.

Now let me blow another blast. We have already had two blasts : "Repent!" "Believe!" and the third is contained in the one word,

"NOW!"

"Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."¹

You will leave this hall to-night either softened or hardened by what you have heard.

Do you know whose is the hardest heart here ?

We go to an old country village, to a cottage with thatched roof, surrounded by a garden, and addressing ourselves to old John, who has lived there

¹2 Cor. 6 : 2.

all his life, we say, "Where is the hardest patch of soil in this place?" He replies, "I don't know." We ask for his spade, and endeavor to dig beneath the eaves of the roof. But it is too hard. The dropping of rain from the roof has made the earth like a crust of iron. Now *that* is the hardest heart here to-night. Yon old man, upon whose heart the gospel rain has been dropping for twenty, thirty, forty years, and still unsaved! Oh, that God might plough up his conscience and melt his heart to-night! *Now* is the day of salvation; but the devil says "to-morrow!"

Someone has called procrastination the

"RECRUITING SERGEANT OF DAMNATION."

Maybe the devil has sent an emissary to this hall to-night to whisper in your ear, "It's all true, but put it off." To the mother he whispers, "It's all true, but put it off; you have a family to look after; there's plenty of time yet to think of these things." To the father he says, "They are going to make you Mayor, and perhaps you may be in high political office very soon; put off salvation to-night, else your prospects may be blighted." But God says, "*NOW* is the day of salvation."

A ship was going down in Dublin Bay, and four sailors were clinging to the rigging, when they heard, through a speaking trumpet, these words from the shore: "We're going to throw you a life-line and basket; get in; and when we signal the word 'Now,' let go the rigging; we'll pull you ashore!" All is ready, and they wait the signal "*Now!*" Two of the men quited the wreck and got

ashore all right; the other two still clung to the rigging, and were drowned. The incident has been recorded in these verses :

"God's *Now* is sounding in your ears :
Oh, let it reach your heart ;
From every trust but Christ alone
He bids you part.

"Your righteousness, as filthy rags,
Must all relinquished be,
And only Jesus' precious blood
Must be your plea.

"Trust now the one provided rope,
Quit now the broken mast,
Before the hope of safety be
For ever past.

"Fear not to trust His precious Word,
So sweet, so tried, so true ;
And you are safe for evermore,
Yes, even you !

"There is one hope, and only one ;
You may be saved, but how ?
The rope hold fast, but quit the mast,
At the trumpet signal, '*Now !*' "

Maiden, mother, son, father, will you trust Jesus now? Throw yourself at the feet of Christ, and say, "Lord, I am a guilty sinner; save me, or I perish!" and He will put His blessed arms around you, and send you home to-night with the joy of salvation in your soul, and you shall pass down through time into eternity a happy, joyful Christian. Will you become a Christian to-night?

Now let me sound another trumpet note:

“WHEREFORE, SIR, BE OF GOOD CHEER; FOR I BELIEVE GOD THAT IT SHALL BE EVEN AS IT WAS TOLD ME.”

I suppose you have read of this shipwreck. It says, “And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away.” Then by an angel God told Paul, “Fear not, Paul: thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.” Paul believed God, and, when to all appearance there was nothing but death for them all, he stepped forward, saying: “Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me.”¹ What a cheering bugle note that was, above the howling of the wind and the roar of the tempest! Truly *their* extremity was God’s opportunity.

Now, perhaps, some distressed soul here to-night is saying, “But I’m such a sinner; all is dark to me, though I *do* believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Let me, then, like Paul, sound this sweet bugle note for your comfort, my hearer: “Be of good cheer, for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me.” And pray, what has God told you? Listen: “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.”²

Now, do you confess Jesus as the Lord and the Saviour? “Yes,” you say, “I do.” Do you believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead? “Yes,” you reply. Then God says, “thou shalt be saved.” Shalt *confess*, shalt *believe*,

¹Acts 27: 25. ²Rom. 10: 9.

shalt be *saved*—three lovely "*shalts.*" You say the first two are true of you. If so, God says that the third "shalt" is also true of you. Shalt be *saved!* It does not say *feel* saved, but "*shalt be saved.*" It is one of God's *facts* concerning you—not one of your feelings.

Now take God at His word. Faith does this. It believes God, because it is *God* who says it. Now, God says that JESUS DIED FOR OUR SINS,

I BELIEVE IT BECAUSE GOD SAYS IT.

"I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me."

Now I want to speak especially to the backslider. In my travels I have found the happy-go-lucky worldling; I also have found the bright, happy Christian; but I have never yet seen a happy, joyful *backslider.*

What do I mean by a backslider? I mean one who has been born again, but who has wandered away from his Lord. A child of God he is, but he has wandered away from Christ. After he was converted how bright he was; he confessed his Saviour before his fellows; the name of Jesus was continually upon his lips. It was said of him: "Well, what a change!" Now, alas, we again have to say, "What a change!" You never hear the name of Christ upon his lips now. Instead of his Master's name being read upon his brow, unhappiness and discontent are seen there. He has not lost salvation, but the joy and happiness of it have vanished from his soul, and power for testimony has gone

from his life. Now, here is a trumpet blast for the backslider:

“WHEREFORE HE SAITH, AWAKE THOU THAT SLEEPEST,
AND ARISE FROM THE DEAD, AND CHRIST SHALL GIVE
THEE LIGHT.”¹

Backslider, why are you sleeping? Turn to the book of Judges, in the Old Testament, chap. 16 : 1-21, “And Delilah made Samson *sleep* upon her knees ; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head ; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times *before*, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison house.” Ah, poor backslider, your head is on Delilah’s lap now—it is on the *world’s* bosom. Once you nestled

ON THE LORD’S BOSOM,

that you might learn the deep throbbings of that blessed heart, filled with eternal love for you. And *now* you repose

ON THE WORLD’S LAP!

Poor backslider, your spiritual eyesight is gone ! Of course you neither see nor enjoy the preciousness and beauty of God’s word now. It has grown dull to you. You take it up as a mere duty. You

¹ Eph. 5 : 14.

find more *delight* in the newspaper or the novel. The world makes sport of you. Listen to their conversation about you: "He confessed Jesus once, but there was nothing in it; he goes to the shows and attends the race-track, just as we do." That is how the world scoffs at and makes sport of you.

Backslider, come back to the Lord to-night! Awake, arise from among the dead, and Christ will shine upon thee. Oh, to get those blessed rays of light from Him once more in your soul! Oh, to be once more in His company! Remember, *He* has not altered; He pities and loves you still. If you will come back to the Lord to-night, He will welcome you. The devil, I know, will keep you away as long as he can; but Jesus intercedes for you, and waits for your confession and return.

A man once dreamt that the devil was presiding among his subordinates. One emissary said, "I got a lot of Christians on a ship, and raised a storm and sank the vessel, and they were all drowned." And the devil said, "That is no good, because they all went to glory." Another emissary said, "I set the world against a number of Christians, and they were burnt at the stake." And the devil rejoined, "What is the good of that? Their souls went to glory." Another dark fiend reported that he stood for ten years by the side of a Christian, and did his best to get him off to sleep; at last he succeeded, and he left him sleeping. At this the devil rejoiced, and the hosts of hell added their plaudits.

Oh, sleeping backslider, awake! awake!

THE SLEEP OF DEATH IS UPON YOU!

Awake! Look up to your Lord in heaven; tell Him everything—spare not yourself. Judge yourself in His presence. Have all out with Him. Go back to the very point where you left your Lord. Have no reserves with Jesus; make full and frank confession, and He will restore to you the joy of salvation. The point of departure is the point of recovery. Return to the former and you will know the blessing of the latter. Seek the face of your gracious though offended Lord. Tell Him all, and, while you seek His forgiving grace, let Him show you how you have gone astray.

In closing, let me sound a trumpet note for Christians, a beautiful note—“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”¹

It is said that in the ancient Grecian games they had a racecourse a furlong in length. There were three pillars erected in the course; one at the beginning, upon which was written, “Show yourself a man;” the second was placed midway, and had inscribed upon it, “Make haste;” the third was fixed at the end, and bore the sentence, “Arrest your steps.”

When the Christian started on his heavenward course, God said, “Quit you like men;”² then we hear Him say to us, “Make haste.” Our desire

¹1 Thess. 4; 16, 17. ²1 Cor. 16: 13.

should be to be active for God in our earthly journey; to RUN on His errands; to go about doing good, like our Master; to be guided and led by the Holy Spirit, and to win others for Christ. Then, as we finish our course, we shall hear:

"ARREST YOUR STEPS!"

Won't that be glorious when we hear that lovely bugle note, "Arrest your steps!" and we rise from earth to meet the Lord in the air. The Lord is coming for His people, and the return of Jesus for us is near. We are, I believe, just on the verge of it, and we wait and look for the time when He shall leave the throne and come into the air, and by His own mighty power catch away to glory every blood-bought saint. Does it not make your heart burn as you hear the sweet words of Jesus, saying, "I am coming?" Yes, Christ is coming for us. Till He come, let your hearts beat for Him, your whole being be consecrated to Him, and say, "Lord Jesus, it will be my delight to hear Thy shout in the air, and to dwell in yon glory-home with Thee for ever." Thank God for that bugle note.

But you, unsaved hearers, if you receive not Jesus as your Saviour, remember there is the lake of fire for those who despise or refuse Him. I charge you, men and women, rest not until you *have* Him as your precious Redeemer. If you die without Him, or if you are unsaved when He comes, you must be shut out from His bright presence for ever. Oh, that God may thrill your souls by this appeal to-night, and bring every unsaved one to Christ.

AMEN.

JUDGMENT!

I will speak on the subject of "Judgment" to-night, and I turn to four passages of Scripture:

Rev. 20: 11-15—"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Matthew 27: 46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

John 5: 24—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."

2 Cor. 5: 10—"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.

There are two or three occasions in the New Testament in which our Lord draws aside for us the curtain of time, to direct our gaze into the unseen world—into eternity.

Such an instance you will find in the 16th chapter of St. Luke, in the well-known parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

THE ETERNAL FUTURE

is discovered to us there—whether it be of eternal bliss or of eternal woe. Again, in the 20th chapter of Revelation, we are placed, so to speak, on the border of eternity—time ceases to be. The heavens and the earth flee away from the presence of Him that sits upon the Eternal Throne, and those that were dead now stand before Him for judgment.

Have you, my hearers, ever gazed into eternity? It truly “staggeres humanity!” It is the moment of moments in a man’s life when God, as it were, places His hand upon him, and says to him, “Look into the Great Beyond!” In view of this, ask yourself: Where shall I spend eternity?

What is eternity? It is

THE LIFETIME OF GOD.

Ah, ye infidels, ye skeptics here to-night—ye who profess to deny the immortality of the soul, I tell you that every man has

AN ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

God created him an immortal being, and his fall has in no way touched or altered that, as to his soul. Have you never learnt the difference between eternal life and eternal existence? The devil has the latter, but, certainly, *he* possesses not the former. Only the Christian has eternal life, through faith in the Son of God. But every man has an eternal existence.

When that suicide hurried his soul out of this world, did it end his being? Oh, no; he still exists. Answering the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, the Lord said to them: "As to the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, *I am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?—God is not the God of the *dead*, but of *the living*,"¹ "for *all* live unto Him."² They may have passed away from *our* sight, but not from God's. My friends, you must live for ever, either *with* God in His bright glory, on the ground of the redemption work of Jesus, or *away* from Him in eternal gloom. Which will it be?

"I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat upon it." Why does the apostle John not say, "Jesus," instead of "Him?" We know it is the Saviour who sits there, for we read that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."³ Yes, the *same One* who was despised and down-trodden, and rejected on this earth, has all judgment placed in His hands, and is

THE JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND OF THE DEAD.

John is so awed by the awful glory of this judgment-scene, and by the appearance of the Lord as the righteous Judge who sits upon the throne, that he can only say, "*Him* that sat upon it." Well might his soul feel the awfulness of the moment, and would to God that everyone here to-night might feel the same.

O men and women, do not question, I beseech

¹Matt. 22: 31, 32.

²Luke 20: 38.

³John 5: 22.

you, the righteousness of Divine judgment. Do not lend your ears to those who would fain persuade you that when you die there is an end of you, or that the judgment of God is but temporary, as lasting only for a certain period. Oh, turn from these wretched fables, and listen to the declaration of the inspired Word of God. But, you say, "There are good men who tell us that hell is not everlasting." "Good" men, do you say? Good men, forsooth! How can such men be *good* who deny the plain statements of the Scriptures? Jesus speaks of "hell fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."¹ "Let God be true, but every man a liar."² My friends, depend upon it, that as God is eternal, *so* shall His blessing be upon the sinner that comes to Jesus; and *so* shall His judgment be upon all who cling to their sins and reject the Son of God.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." What an awful death it is to "die in your sins!"³ And, remember, that to die without Christ is to die in your sins. As you sit here tonight, O unsaved man, your terrible position is this—you live "without Christ," "without God," and "without hope."⁴ If you die as you are, you die "without mercy,"⁵ and for ever and ever you will be "without" the heavenly city.⁶ What

FEARFUL "WITHOUTS"

are these!

I have heard folks say of the death of men who have apparently lived careless and regardless of

¹Mark 9: 44, 48.

²Rom. 3: 4.

³John 8: 24.

⁴Eph. 2: 12.

⁵Heb. 10: 28.

⁶Rev. 22: 15.

their souls, "He died like a lamb." Aye, so it may have *seemed*; but who shall tell the agonies of that soul who passes hence *unsaved*? What shall arouse you, ye careless sinners? Your sins are damning you! The judgment of God awaits you! Time is on the wing; a few more beats of the heart and you are gone! Yet you are neither alive to your danger nor to your need of Christ.

See that canoe moored to the river bank, with its owner asleep in it. Somehow it gets loose from its mooring and quietly glides down the stream. Its occupant sleeps, unconscious of everything. The rapids are ahead; the boat reaches them, and its pace is quickened. Bystanders on the river bank shout to see if anyone is in it. No response comes. They shout louder. No answer, but the echo of their own voice. "Thank God," they say, "no one is in it." The rapids have increased, and on and on the craft is borne. Hark, what is that? 'Tis the roar of the cataract; it falls upon the ear of the sleeping man. He awakes! At one glance he sees his danger. He tries to turn the boat, but he might as well try to turn back the waters. There is one chance; a rock rears its head out of the rapids; he seeks to lay hold of it as the canoe shoots by; he fails; a few more yards, and alas, man and boat are swept over the falls and are seen no more!

Oh, sinner, in this illustration learn your own position, voyaging through life in thy frail canoe. The gospel preachers warn you, plead with you, but you are as the deaf adder "that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charm-

ers, charming never so wisely.”¹ But what our voices fail to do, the

ROAR OF GOD’S JUDGMENT

will do. Then you’ll wake up, but ’twill be too late. You will be swept by the overwhelming flood into a lost eternity!²

“The dead, small and great.” Who are they? All who have ever died in their sins. The mightiest monarch, the lowliest menial, the wealthiest millionaire, the meanest mendicant, the highest born, the lowest bred, the refined and the rough, the intelligent and the ignorant, the murderer and his victim, the deceiver and the deceived—all will be there, standing before the judgment throne.³ But no believer in Jesus shall stand there. The almighty power of Christ will bring up the dead in this resurrection to judgment. It is the

FINAL GREAT ASSIZE,

before which every unsaved person shall appear and confront the history of his life on earth.

“AND THE BOOKS WERE OPENED.”

What are these? I have no doubt they are

*The Register of Your Life, and
The Word of God.*

And then another book is opened:

The Lamb’s Book of Life.

Would you care to have the register of your life read out before this audience? Would any uncon-

¹Ps. 58: 4, 5.

²Rev. 21: 8.

³Rev. 20: 12.

verted person like to have his deeds exposed to our gaze this evening? I trow not. How will the hypocrite stand there? How shall the Christless professor stand before that Judge who sees the thoughts and intents of the heart?¹

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT CHRIST!

Men and women, if in this hall some of your sins were written up for all to see, you would rush away from the meeting. A cold sweat would pour down some man's face if his guilt were exposed here to-night.

Men and women, our lives shall be manifested in the presence of all. The register kept in heaven is a faithful and accurate record. *There are no errors there.* Perhaps you are saying, "What about yourself, preacher?" Oh, let me tell you that my guilt is as deep as yours, my sins as countless, my heart is as yours; but, blessed be God, He has drawn me to Himself through His Son. He has saved me by His grace. He has assured me by His Word that the guilt of my life has been answered for and fully met by the precious blood of Christ; and, my friends, the God who has done this for me, is the God who would find His deep delight in blessing you after the same fashion this very hour. If you have not come to Him before, oh come to Him *now*.

THE WORD OF GOD OPENED

The Word which men have refused, the Word to which they were disobedient upon earth, shall be opened. Has not the Saviour said, "The word

¹Heb. 4: 12.

that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”¹ I believe that every Christ-rejecter will be confronted with some scripture which, some time or other in his lifetime, was a direct appeal from God to his soul, and which he deliberately refused. Just like a lady I heard of who, during a gospel address, coolly rose from her seat and walked out. She said afterwards to a friend, “I wouldn’t stay any longer, or I must have been converted, and *that* I did not want!” Ah, there will be many a man and woman who will have to say, “Lord, I trembled under a gospel appeal, but I made up my mind not to be converted.” Oh, sinner, the very page of Scripture you scorned shall be read against you in the judgment. Aye, that which might have been your salvation now will be your condemnation then.

“Another book was opened—the book of life.”² The present day is a great one for registration. Land titles are registered; births, marriages, and deaths must, by law, be duly recorded; commercial companies are registered, and shareholders’ names; and how careful you are to be duly registered as such.

A WONDERFUL REGISTER

is kept in heaven, and yet you have never been in the slightest degree anxious to ascertain whether or not your name is enrolled in that book—the Lamb’s Book of Life.

I read of a soldier mortally wounded on the battlefield. The Christian surgeon attending him saw

¹John 12: 48.

²Rev. 20: 12.

he was dying, and bending down whispered in his ear: "Brother, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." A smile crossed the dying face, and the soldier said, "Hush!" and pointing his finger heavenward, as if he heard the calling of the muster roll, he answered, "Here!" and he passed away. His name was written in heaven. Is *yours* there? It may be in your church's communion roll; but, my friend, that is only for *time*. What about *eternity*? Think of that judgment scene, when the Book of Life is opened in the presence of God, of angels and of men; and,

IF YOUR NAME IS MISSING,

there will be no use to plead that you were a church communicant, a baptized professor, an ordinance observer. None of these things avail for eternity. Truly the Christian ordinances have their place in time and for time, but they give no title to dwell with God in glory. Unsaved hearer, think of what it will be to die in your present condition, to stand before the Great White Throne, and pass into an everlasting hell with the knowledge of your terrible guilt and the sin of rejecting Christ!

"They were judged every man according to their works."¹ Mark these words,

"ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS."

All will come out there. It will be a day of great disclosures; and judgment will be "according to your works." Sinner, how will it fare with you?

¹Rev. 20: 13.

Christless professor, how with you? "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire!"¹ Do you say, "Oh, 'tis only a figure; I don't believe in a real hell-fire." My hearers, *if* it is a figure, it is

A FIGURE OF REALITY;

and if the figure is so awful, what must the reality be! "The Lake of Fire!" Oh, don't trifle with God! An escape from this terrible judgment is afforded you to-night; shelter provided in Jesus. Flee, then, to Him. Come to God, through Christ, and your song of praise shall be unto Him "who hath delivered us from the wrath to come."²

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CROSS

I turn to the second text: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"³ Oh, for speech to sound forth suitable praises unto God for the gift of His Son for us! Oh, for broken hearts, as we dwell upon the Cross of our precious Saviour, through which the gospel blessings flow down to us! The dark picture of the coming judgment, which has so far occupied us this evening, will throw into brighter relief the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I asked a lady the other day what these words meant: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" She was troubled about her soul, and yet ignorant of the way of peace, going hither and thither to hear all kinds of preachers, but finding no rest. She answered that she did not know. I

¹Rev. 20: 15. ²1 Thess. 1: 10. ³Matt. 27: 16.

then said that to obtain abiding peace she must understand something of those words, and I sought to explain what they teach us. We prayed together; and before parting, she joyfully exclaimed that she had found

THE REST FOR HER SOUL

which for years she had desired to possess.

Let me tell *you* what was told her. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, became a Man, and passed through this world the only perfect One ever in it. How was it, then, that *God* should forsake Him who was perfectly righteous and holy? The Unitarian would tell us that Jesus died a *martyr's* death only. True it is that He *was* martyred by this wicked world for His righteousness, suffering from men on account of His perfect and holy ways, which did but condemn His enemies. But

GOD DOES NOT FORSAKE MARTYRS.

In those bygone years, when Rome wickedly tortured and burned godly Christians at the stake, think you that God forsook His beloved witnesses? No, no! What sustained their hearts in the "fiery trial" was the divinely-given sense of His changeless love and the blessedness of His presence with them. But on the cross God forsook His Son! There must be something here far beyond mere martyrdom. Jesus had undertaken to meet God's righteous claims against sin; to stand for sinners before God; to take His people's guilt upon Himself, with all the consequences; to bear the judgment of sin; to pass beneath the wrath of God; to

travel into the unmeasured distance in which we lay from Him ; to meet

THE FLOOD-TIDE OF DIVINE JUDGMENT ;

in a word, to feel in His own soul what separation from God was on account of our sin.

Yes, in deepest grace, the blessed Son has "*suffered* for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."¹ "Suffered!" Yes, suffered under the just judgment of God—Jesus made the sin-bearer—forsaken, deserted by God Himself, who is of "purer eyes than to behold evil."² Well may the heart exclaim:

"HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOUR!"

And remember, that it was in His love for this guilty world that God "gave His only begotten Son." Judge sin God *must*—such is *His* holiness. Love to the sinner of necessity He has—for God is love. Thus His love furnished what His holiness required :

LOVE HAS GIVEN, AND HOLINESS HAS JUDGED.

The Victim, given in love, was judged in holiness, Both love and holiness were displayed in the Cross.

True love always expresses itself. I heard of a charity meeting, where the case of a man, hard up, was brought forward. After several present had expressed their pity in words, another arose and said, "Well, gentlemen, I pity him \$25," and he placed the money on the table. This was a practical demonstration of his compassion, worth more than a lot of soft speeches. What has God said?

¹1 Pet. 3: 18.

Hab. 1: 13.

He "so loved the world!" And does He stop there? Oh, no! "He gave His only begotten Son!" Here is the glorious expression of His mighty love: "He loved," "He gave."

And note this, that God well knew that His giving His Son would mean His bearing *judgment* for us. A gentleman might send his son on an errand of mercy to a poor and sick man's home with something to meet his need, and that youth might be insulted and ill-treated by some of the sick man's boys. On his return, the gentleman would say, in the fulness of a father's heart, "My son, if I had known how you were going to be treated, I would not have sent you." But *God*—He well knew how ill-treated His Son would be when on His errand of mercy in this dark world—scuffed at, mocked, derided, spat upon, buffeted, thorn-crowned, and crucified.¹ Yes, He

KNEW IT ALL BEFOREHAND,

and yet He did not withhold Him, but "delivered Him up for us all."² Aye, and God knew how that His beloved Son would have to bear sin's just judgment; how that all Jehovah's waves and billows would roll over Him;³ how that the cup of wrath must be taken and drained by Jesus to enable us, poor, guilty sinners, to be in yon bright glory-home. Oh, what love is God's; how wonderfully expressed! Well may we sing:

Jesus bruised and put to shame,
Tells the glories of God's name;

¹Matt 26: 67, 68; 27: 26-31. ²Rom. 8: 32. ³Ps. 42: 7.

Holy judgment there I found,
Grace did there o'er sin abound.

God is love I surely know,
In the Saviour's depth of woe,
In the Sinless, in God's sight,
Sin is justly brought to light.

In His spotless soul's distress,
I have learnt my guiltiness;
Oh, how vile my low estate,
Since my ransom was so great!

God in His boundless love has given His only Son, the object of His heart's affections, for the dark sinner whose heart is at enmity towards Him!

One of the old Welsh preachers used to picture the world as a vast cemetery, with rusted iron gates, closed and barred, and guarded by the angel Justice. One day Mercy descended from heaven to enter that cemetery. About to unbar the gates, Justice with naked flaming sword thundered, "Forbear! My claims are unmet, and my demands must first be satisfied before you enter there!" Mercy then flew back to heaven. But the Son of God came forward, saying, "Mercy *must* enter yon graveyard; I will meet the claims of Justice." He came, as He had said. Justice's sword was plunged in His side; His blood flowed, and He died, saying, "It is finished!" The cemetery gates then were flung open, and troops of heavenly heralds went in amongst the tombs ringing out the good news, "Life for the dead! Life for the dead!"

My hearers, the blessed Son of God came from His palace of eternal glory down to Calvary, where

He sustained the full weight of God's judgment against sin;¹ He met every claim of God's holiness, He has satisfied every demand of Justice, He has "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,"² and in answer to His atoning work, not only is the gospel heralded forth in this world-cemetery, but

THE GLORY GATES ARE FLUNG OPEN

and God can righteously welcome there the repentant sinner that comes to Him through Jesus.

Fellow-believers, lift up your hearts in praise to your Saviour-God, as you recall that Jesus has been in the darkness that you might be in the light. He has been in death, that you might have eternal life; He was forsaken, in order that the sunshine of God's eternal favor might rest upon you for ever.

And where, let me ask you, is Jesus now? He sits upon the eternal throne.³ The storm of Calvary is over, and the Victor

SITS AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND

in glory. We learn from this that God has been perfectly vindicated and eternally glorified with what Christ has done. God Himself raised Jesus from among the dead and set Him at His own right hand.⁴ I don't think the devil likes to hear us speak about the resurrection and glorification of Christ, for these are the proofs of the completeness of our Lord's victory and of Satan's defeat.

Faith looks up and sees the Saviour in glory, and the glory of God in His face.⁵ It does my soul

¹2 Cor. 5: 21. ²Heb. 9: 26. ³Heb. 8: 1.

⁴Rom. 4: 24, 25. ⁵2 Cor. 4: 6.

good to look up there, and to say, "Lord, let my heart be ever open to catch the bright rays of glory from Thy face, which tell me, Lord, that Thou hast by Thy Cross removed all my sins from God's sight and set me free for ever to praise and adore Thee."

O you who are in the serfdom of the devil, slaves to your own passions and lusts, as you have listened to this wonderful story of grace, say, will you not have the pardon and the deliverance which God bestows on all who come to Him? Oh, come to Him now; come in His own appointed way; come in the name of His Son, and these blessings shall be yours.

Turn now to John 5 : 24—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."

"SHALL NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT."

This is the result of the work of Christ for the believer.

There is a well-known story of an Englishman in Cuba, who was found guilty of crime by the Spanish Government, and was sentenced to be shot. Both the English and American Consuls were assured of his innocence, but they could not succeed in obtaining a remission of the death sentence. On the day set for his execution, the two consuls, with the flags of their respective nations, came out, and throwing the flags over the prisoner, they shouted, "Fire, if you dare!" Not a rifle was raised. To

fire would have drawn down upon Spain the anger of both Britain and the United States for insult to their flags; and the man was afterwards liberated.

Show me a sinner under cover of the blood of the Lamb, and we will say he is protected by the righteousness and glory of God. So the apostle says, "Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."¹ So that we can say to Satan, the accuser, triumphantly:

"FIRE, IF YOU DARE!"

Oh, blessed refuge for every believer in Jesus. Christ having died for their sins, it is plain that they go free; He having borne the judgment that was their due, they escape it. How great and noble this divine provision! And why should you not thankfully receive it *now*?

In the time of the great Napoleon, a man who did not want to go to war procured a substitute, who eventually was killed in a battle. When more soldiers were needed, this man was called again; he refused to go. "I have died," he said. They laughed and said, "Where did you die?" "At such a battle," he answered, and asked them to search the records. They found the case to be as the man said—his name entered, and struck out as "killed." They then said, "*You* didn't die; it must have been a *substitute*." "Yes," said he, "it was my substitute, but

HIS DEATH IS MY DEATH,
and you cannot claim me." The case was taken

¹Rom. 8: 34.

before Napoleon, who decided in the man's favor, and he was free. Oh, sinner, receive this wonderful provision which God has made for us, as a little child receives from its parents. Instead of reasoning and questioning, receive God's grace as a little child. If you want to reason out the matter, let me show you heaven's way of argument. Here it is: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."¹ Gracious and lovely argument, is it not?

MAGNIFICENT AND DIVINE LOGIC!

I infinitely prefer listening to that than to any University logic or scholastic philosophy.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Now to our last text, 2 Cor. 5 : 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad."

It is plain, from the language of this verse, that both saved and unsaved must appear before the judgment seat of Christ; and it is just as evident from other scriptures that it will not be at the same time, nor both together. For the *unbeliever*, this judgment seat will be at the Great White Throne of Rev. chap. 20, on which I have already spoken, which will be at least 1000 years after the

¹Isa. 1: 18.

believer has appeared before the judgment seat of Christ. It is of the

BELIEVER'S MANIFESTATION

before it that I wish to speak.

Now, fellow-believer, rest assured of this, that your *person* is never coming into judgment; for already you have been judged in the person of another, even Jesus. Be clear about this—*you* will never come into judgment—as our Lord declared in John 5: 24. Your own precious Saviour will be the Judge, and He will never judge you for what He has borne for you, for “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.”¹ To do so, would be to call in question the value of His redemption work. Do not think, either, that at the judgment seat it will be determined whether or not you are to be in heaven or hell. Dismiss from your minds such thoughts, and delight your soul in the truth that the atoning sacrifice of Christ has eternally secured to you a place with Him in glory.

Paul and Peter have both been with the Lord more than 1800 years, and are they to be placed before the judgment seat in order to decide whether they shall be justified or condemned? How absurd is such a thought!

Then for what reason are Christians to be manifested there? Now, let me say, that I have not the slightest doubt that

OUR WHOLE HISTORY ON EARTH

will be manifested there—not only *since* conversion, but our whole history. The apostle Paul writes,

¹1 Pet. 2: 24.

“So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”¹ This should be conclusive upon the point. But some may enquire, “Does that agree with what you have already told us, “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more?”² Certainly; all is in accord, for

SCRIPTURE NEVER CONTRADICTS ITSELF.

Thank God, my sins and iniquities will be remembered no more in the way of *judgment*! They were remembered and placed to the Saviour’s account at Calvary; and in justice to the sacrifice whereby they were put away, they can never be recalled for my condemnation. But they will be *reviewed*, with the rest of my life, before the judgment seat of Christ. What do we Christians here know of the extent of our guilt? What know we of our sins, the multitude of our transgressions? What know we of ourselves? Why it seems to me that in these mortal bodies we could not fully know our badness. We could not bear it. We have, blessed be God, in some measure learnt in the death of Jesus what sin is and what we are. But up there, in the light of the glory, we shall read over with the Saviour the two books of our life—one a record of what we had done as sinners, the other as saints.

Methinks we shall there say, “We never thought our guilt was so enormous!” And oh, what a burst of praise shall ascend to Him whose precious blood has put it all away for ever! And then our works since we have known the Lord will be reviewed; and such as have been for the glory of Christ shall

¹Rom. 14: 12.

²Heb. 10: 17.

appear to His praise as the fruit of His own precious grace working in us, and the rest will be

BURNT UP AS WORTHLESS.¹

The Lord Jesus will reward us for what has been *for Him* in our Christian career here; and we shall find our joy in casting the crowns He may give us before the Throne, and in saying, "Thou only art worthy, O Lord." Nothing that has been to His glory in our pathway here will be forgotten by Him—*He* will reward, and He will *love* to do it. And when we retrace in that day with Him our pilgrimage journey, shall we not wonder at the love which bore with such a failing people, and at the patience and gentleness of our Lord with each one of us? How all this will still call forth from the ransomed hosts the hallelujahs of praise to Him!

Such shall be the judgment seat of Christ for believers. They will stand there in

GLORIFIED BODIES,²

like Christ's, and conformed to His image—not for judgment, but for *reward*.

Now, as I close, let me once more appeal to every unconverted person here. Do not hesitate, my friend, any longer; procrastinate no more, but flee, oh, flee at once to Jesus, and find in Him an eternal shelter from the storm of judgment that shall soon sweep over lifeless Christendom.

THE STORM IS COMING.

The gathering clouds will burst in judgment over

¹ 1 Cor. 3: 13-15.

² Phil. 3: 20, 21.

this guilty world. The coming of the Lord draws nigh. He is coming to call away His ransomed people, and will take them home to His Father's house. The moment He comes, the door of salvation will be closed. Are you ready? Think how God would welcome you; how the blessed Spirit strives with you; how we Christians are praying for you. Delay not, but come at once,

AND HE WILL RECEIVE YOU.

Let me borrow a Welsh parable, and adapt it to your case. You live in a pleasant residence on the outskirts of the city. As I pass by your home one day, I see a person standing on your door-step; his hand is on the knocker. He knocks, and waits. I watch him for a moment, and pass on. Returning soon, I notice he is still there—knocking, knocking. I address him, “Good sir, knock *louder*; I am sure they are at home. What a shame to keep you waiting so long—knock louder!” The next day, in passing, I am grieved to see him there still, patiently waiting. Indignantly I cry, “Do not trouble with them any longer; they are not worth it, sir.” He looks at me, and gently replies, “I *so* want them to know me;” and as I meet His gaze I notice His hands and His side are pierced, and I exclaim in wonder, “*It is the Lord!*”

Sinner, He stands before thee to-night; wilt thou receive or refuse Him? May God give you to receive Him now. AMEN.

THE BLOOD

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt” (Exod. 12: 12, 13).

MY subject to-night is “The precious blood of Christ.” Sweet and sacred theme; is it not?

I suppose that almost every one in this hall is acquainted with the narrative in these early chapters in Exodus concerning the children of Israel, their dwelling in the Egyptians' land, and their oppression by the proud Pharaoh. We read that “there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph,”¹ and that under his direction “the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor,” until, at last, the Israelites “sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God.” And then we read, “God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, and God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.”²

Now I want to use the oppressed Israelite as a true picture of every sinner still under Satan's thralldom, still under the sway and tyranny of the Pharaoh of this present world, even him who is its

¹Exod. 1: 8.

²Exod. 2: 23-25.

God and prince—the devil;¹ and I desire that you may in the history of the bondage-ridden Israelite learn your own.

Oh, unsaved one, you are, whether you believe it or not, a poor slave of the devil, and without power or ability to emancipate yourself from his serfdom. Satan is the

GREAT SLAVE-OWNER

in this world. It has cost precious lives and millions of dollars to procure the emancipation of slaves in bygone years; but neither all the wealth of the world, nor all the united efforts and energies of the human race, could accomplish the liberation of one individual under the devil's bondage.

The good news which, thank God, I have for you to-night is, that what men could *not* do, Jesus, the blessed Son of God, *has done*, and that by His glorious work upon the cross—yea, at the cost of His precious blood—deliverance has been purchased, and is now, through the gospel, presented to the slaves of Satan.

Now let me ask you, Do you believe that *you are* under the devil's power and thralldom? We read and speak of men and women who are slaves to certain sins and lusts; but, my hearers, "The whole world lieth in the wicked one."² Every unconverted person here to-night, whether moral or immoral, professor or scoffer, is under the *régime*, the sway, the control of Satan. This is a solemn reality, and I hope you may see it, and own it to God Himself.

¹2 Cor. 4: 4; John 14: 30. ²1 John 5: 19 (R. V).

Listen to that sigh, that groan, which arose from those Israelites, and which reached the ear of the living God. Has He ever heard such from *you*? He delights to hear the sigh of a broken-hearted sinner.

This is a great day for music; and I have sometimes feared lest the beautiful music of these days should be one of the

DEVIL'S LULLABIES TO PUT PEOPLE TO SLEEP.

Mind you, I say not that there is *harm* in music itself, but in people using it to make themselves happy *away* from God. It was so in Cain's city, where they had the harp and the organ;¹ and so, alas, it is to-day. Yes, the world has its music—its splendid oratorios, its sacred concerts—but I am persuaded that heaven is not charmed by it, as it comes from unsanctified hearts. But, thank God, there *is* a note that can be sounded forth by men which thrills heaven itself—it is the groan of a convicted sinner—the cry of one who has discovered his lost condition, his sinfulness, and his slavery to Satan—

A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART!

This suits the great Searcher of hearts. Has He heard it from you, sinner? Oh, think of His condescending grace, as He bends to hearken to the cry of distress by reason of thy sins and of thy bondage. Hast thou disappointed Him, or has He heard from thee the sweet notes of a contrite heart?

In Luke, 15th chap., we read, "There is joy in

¹Gen. 4: 21.

the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Think of that! God finding His joy when one sinner repenteth! Let Him have that joy from thee to-night. Come to Him just as thou art; tell Him all the truth. Say that thou art under the devil's power, wholly unable to emancipate thyself, and God's deliverance shall be thy portion. Yes, deliverance from thy sins, and deliverance from Satan's power.

How did He answer the cry of the Israelites? He says,

"HE REMEMBERED HIS COVENANT."

And if any sinner will now come to God in true repentance, God will remember "the blood of the everlasting covenant." Yes, He remembers the atoning sufferings, the dying agonies, the expiatory work of His beloved Son. These are as fresh in His sight as though they were the event of this very moment, and all their virtue and efficacy in the sight of the living God will be applied by Him to any soul that will approach Him through Jesus.

Now I want to get on to chap. 12, to the verses we read; but let me say here that we get two things brought out up to chap. 15. First, there is *shelter* from God's judgment by the blood of the paschal lamb; then *deliverance*, by means of the Red Sea, from Pharaoh and from Egypt, the very scene of judgment. Both of these blessings belong to the Christian; he is under the shelter of the blood; and in the death of Christ, of which the Red Sea is a type, he has been delivered from Satan's

power, and "from this present evil world."¹

I must, however, now confine myself to the wonderful truth of

SHELTER BY BLOOD.

In chap. 11 we find that God is about to bring one more plague upon Pharaoh—the slaying of the first-born. Death, as God's judgment, is about to pass through the proud monarch's land. Plague after plague had already visited it from God, but Pharaoh's heart was hardened.

Now notice this, that before it is said that God hardened his heart, we find that the king himself had rejected God, arrogantly saying, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."² In fact, Pharaoh hardened his own heart against God before God gave him up to his impiety. And is it not so to-day? Men go on rejecting the gospel, steeling and hardening their hearts against Christ until they go too far; then God steps in and hardens the heart. Oh, solemn thought, to be under judicial blindness at the hand of God, because of terribly wilful and continual rejection of the glorious gospel of Christ! Fearful thing, when God shall say, "Let him alone!"³

My hearers, do not for a moment gather from this that God has elected any to be damned. This is not so, for He desires "all men to be saved;"⁴ but we can say, in the words of the poet—

"There is a time—we know not when,
A point—we know not where,

¹Gal. 1: 4. ²Exod. 5: 2. ³Hosea 4: 17. ⁴1 Tim. 2: 4.

That marks the destiny of men
To glory or despair.

There is a line, by us unseen,
That crosses every path,
That marks the boundary between
God's mercy and God's wrath."

Sinners, trifle not then, with either God's mercy or God's wrath.

Now I want you to see this point, that if God intervenes in Egypt in judgment, it must fall on Israelite and Egyptian alike, unless God Himself should "put a difference."¹ They were alike as to their sinful state before God. In the New Testament language we can say, "There is no difference." Both were sinners, and had come short of the glory of God.² But God was going to put a difference; it consisted in the sprinkled blood.

Now remember, that if God saves a man, He must do it in a righteous way; He cannot surrender His character, His holiness, His truth, in order to bless a sinner. *These* must be vindicated ere a sinner can be saved. Yet, mark you, He delights in blessing men, but He must do it consistently with His own Being. This is why we have the blood brought in. It speaks of "the precious blood of Christ."³ The paschal lamb typifies "the Lamb of God." The precious gospel I have to preach to you is that God's own love has provided the Lamb, and that God in holiness has judged the Lamb that His love furnished; that the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the fullest proof of this; and that

¹Exod. 11: 7. ²Rom. 3: 22. ³1 Pet. 1: 19.

JESUS SEATED AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND

is the expression of God's satisfaction with the atoning work of the Cross—of His being glorified by it in all that He is. Yes, the Victim of Calvary has so completely glorified God, that He has been set upon the Throne the glory-gates have been flung wide open by God Himself, who now can righteously come forth to welcome, shelter and bless the sinner that comes to Him on the ground of the death of Jesus.

In our chapter you find specific instruction as to the lamb and its slaying. Notice—if “the household be too *little* for the lamb.”¹ Mark, it does not say too *big*. No, no! And, thank God, there is no family circle on earth too large for God's grace to reach and for Christ's blood to shelter.

I repeat it—

NO HOUSEHOLD TOO LARGE.

Oh, Christian man, head of a house, ponder this in thy soul: “Thou and thy house!”² was the word to the sinner of Philippi, and it is a sweet word for thee. Rest not until thou knowest that each member of thy family circle is safe beneath the shelter of the blood.

Let us pass in our thoughts into Egypt on that passover night. Here is the dwelling of an Israelite; one named Reuben occupies it with his family. We introduce ourselves to them; we notice the firstborn, a bright-eyed youth, the pride of his father and the darling of his mother. “Reuben,” we say, “you don't love that boy.” “Ah, don't I?

¹Exod. 12: 4. ²Acts 16: 31.

Come hither, my son," and the father puts his arm around him, and kisses him. But we repeat, "Reuben, 'tis false, you love him not; for is not this the passover night; and is not your son's life in danger?—no blood is sprinkled on your door." The boy exclaims, "Father, is this true? Is my life in danger? The father is silent; and addressing ourselves to the boy, we say, "Yes, boy; if your father *truly* loves you, he would sprinkle the lintel and door-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb, and save you from the destroyer this night." "Father," the boy cries, "oh, father, do sprinkle the blood, and tarry not!" The father, moved by the appeal, proceeds at once to apply the blood to the lintel and door-posts,

ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD.

Now, my hearer, in this picture learn thine own disregard for thy soul. Thou lovest it not, for thou hast not yet sought the shelter of the blood, and thou art exposed to the coming judgment. I plead with thee for thy soul. Oh, see to its eternal safety. There is no time to be lost. Judgment is at the door. Flee, oh flee, to the shelter of the blood!

Let me use my picture in another way. Just as an Israelite father would place his first-born under shelter of the blood, so God the Father comes to you, saying, "I want to place you beneath the shelter of My Son's precious blood." Yes, He would fain stoop down to you on that seat, put His everlasting arms around you, and delight Himself in placing you under the atoning blood of His beloved Son. Will you not let Him do this for you

now—and then thank Him for it? Oh for a thousand hearts and a thousand tongues to thank and praise Him for saving my soul like that!

Let us now visit another dwelling. Simeon and his family reside in it. We venture the remark that it is passover night, but meet with a somewhat brusque reply, "Tell me something I don't know." Gently we add, "Pray, don't take offence, but *this* is the passover night!" "Yes, I know that as well as you," is his rejoinder. Again we repeat, "But *this is* the passover night!" He appears annoyed; but firmly and earnestly, with stress laid upon each word, we say once more, "Friend,

THIS IS THE PASSOVER NIGHT!"

Struck by our tone, he begins to think there is *something* in our speech. We continue, "Where is your firstborn son?" The lad is forthcoming, when at once we ask; "Why don't you put him under the shelter of the blood?" He replies, rather in a huff, "I am not going to argue with you." "Argue!" we say; "who dreams of arguing? We simply desire the safety of your boy."

My friends, I fear there is a Simeon in this hall; beyond doubt, there are many such in this world. We speak to them of their state as sinners, of the necessity of conversion, of salvation through Christ, of coming judgment, and they say quite pettishly, "Tell us something we don't know." Then they fly off at a tangent, and accuse us of meddling in what is *their* business, when, in love to them, we have ventured to remark that only the precious blood of Christ can avail them.

Let us return to friend Simeon. "Sir," we continue, "do not be offended, we do but desire the blessing of you and yours—where is your lamb, pray?" He replies, "Oh, I have it all right, and quite ready when I need it." "But, sir, why don't you kill it?" we enquire. Surlily he answers, "Mind your own business." We are almost disposed to go on our way, but, remembering the patience of our Master, we still linger, and once more address Simeon thus: "Sir, will the *live* lamb suffice to ward off the coming judgment?" He replies, "No; it must be slain. 'Tis only the blood that will avail!" "Then," we continue, "why not slay it at once? There's no time to lose. A few more moments and

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR WILL BE UPON US!

Sir, hasten to have your firstborn beyond reach of danger. Kill the lamb, and sprinkle the door-posts and lintel with its blood."

Finally, yielding to our appeal, he slays the lamb and applies the blood just before the midnight hour, and we exclaim, "Thank God, the boy is safe!"

Ah, friends, Simeon is but

A REPRESENTATIVE OF MANY OTHERS.

They tell us to "mind our own business," when we speak to them of their souls' danger. Is someone here to-night saying that? Friend, *my* business is the *King's* business, in looking after you.¹ You have been so indifferent yourself, so callous about your

¹Luke 14: 21-23.

eternal destiny, so regardless of the coming wrath, that my Master is concerned about you, and pleads with you ; He seeks you ; with loving heart and outstretched arms He bids you come to Him.

Now, as to the *live* lamb—of what avail could it be to Simeon's firstborn when the destroyer passed through the land? Of none, clearly, since it was *the blood* over and around the door that the midnight destroyer must behold to pass over. Yet thousands of people in Christendom to-day teach and believe that it is the holy life of Jesus that will save us. But this will not do. The holy, perfect life of Jesus here on earth marked Him out indeed as the spotless Lamb of God. From the manger to Calvary, His perfect life ever ascended up to God as a sweet savor,¹ but it did not expiate our guilt. If the blessed Saviour had passed from Gethsemane's garden up into heaven without going to the cross, you and I would die in our sins. All His holy life, *up to* the cross, would not avail to put our sins away. It is His blood—

HIS LIFE GIVEN IN ATONEMENT FOR SIN—

that avails before God. Yet people now-a-days are fond of talking about *their* good works as meriting God's favor ! If Christ's blessed life on earth could not give us a title to glory, think you that *your* works and *my* works, stained with sin as they are, can obtain for us a place in heaven? Ah, the less we speak of *our* works the better. Rather let us magnify what the Saviour did in those hours of suffering and darkness on the cross.

¹Matt. 3:17.

I have said that Simeon applied the blood to his house just before the midnight hour. A little more delay, and he would have been too late.

HOW FATAL IS PROCRASTINATION!

Sinner, it will steal a march upon you one of these days, and that terrible "not yet," which your heart has so often said, will prove fatal to your soul. Judgment is near; escape is provided; flee for thy life! Yon scoffer smiles, and says, "Judgment—where is it? Why, 'all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation!'"¹

You remind me of the inhabitants of a Swiss village which lay on the slope of a mountain. For some time past there had been warnings that a mass of rock was becoming loosened. An able engineer inspected it, and reported that the village was in danger; the rocky mass might fall any day, and overwhelm the inhabitants. Some feared; others laughed, saying, "Why, our forefathers dwelt beneath its shadow in perfect safety." A few years passed, when, one day the rocky avalanche

SWEPT THE VILLAGE AWAY

with thunderous roar—not one soul escaped. O ye men, learn a lesson from this! Whilst you scoff at the coming judgment, remember that God has said, "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."²

¹2 Pet. 3: 4. ²1 Thess. 5: 3.

Now let us visit another Israelite's house. It is Benjamin's. On approaching, we notice the blood-sprinkled lintel and side-posts, and on entering we find him and his family sitting in peace feeding upon the slain and roasted lamb. Enquiring as to the peace they seem to enjoy on such a night, of judgment, and the *ground* of that peace, Benjamin willingly enlightens us. Our conversation takes the form of question on our part, and answer on his:—

Q.—Do you not fear for your firstborn?

A.—Oh, no.

Q.—Why not?

A.—He is sheltered by the blood of the lamb.

Q.—What is there in the blood to screen your boy?

A.—It is God's provision for his safety. The lamb's life has gone for our son's life.

Q.—Is it true that the slain lamb foreshadows the death of the Lamb of God—of His own Son?

A.—Yes, and I look forward in faith to it.

Q.—What does the blood do?

A.—It satisfies God, and shelters our firstborn.

Q.—Is that the sole ground of the boy's safety?

A.—Yes; it is the blood—the blood alone.

Q.—But have *you* valued it sufficiently?

A.—We value it indeed, but it is *God* who estimates its full value; as He said: "*When I see the blood I will pass over you.*"

Q.—What then have *you* done?

A.—We simply appropriate it in faith. Those who trust in it, sprinkle it over their door, as God commanded.

Q.—Have you any fears as to your boy's safety ?

A.—No, none.

Q.—Indeed; on what do you base this assurance?

A.—On what God has said, "I will pass over you."

Q.—Is it not rather presumptuous on your part to speak so confidently ?

A.—It indeed would be if God had not pledged His word for it.

Q.—Then are we to understand that the blood of the lamb makes HIM safe, and the word of Jehovah makes you sure ?

A.—Precisely so.

Q.—As you are at such rest about it all, will you join with us in singing ?—

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus!
 Shed on Calvary—
 Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,
 Shed for me.

"Though my sins be red like crimson,
 Deep in scarlet glow,
 Jesus' precious blood hath made them
 White as snow."

He and his family join in the hymn, and we afterwards pass on, delighted with our interview.

Now, my friends, through our imagined conversation with this Israelite, we gather something for your soul's blessing to-night. The death of Jesus on yon cross has satisfied every claim of God's righteousness as to our guilt, and secures the believer's favor before the Throne. O precious blood!

It absolutely silences Satan's accusations, and perfectly shelters the believer.

I know there are many people who believe they can be safe to-day and lost to-morrow. What miserable uncertainty—not knowing whether any day they may cease to be sheltered by the blood! But this is not the gospel of God; for our Saviour has said of His sheep, “They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them Me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”¹

Oh for a heart and tongue to testify worthily as to the precious blood of Christ! It is ever before God, who alone can appreciate the full value of the obedience and sacrifice of His beloved Son. Because of Him, God's lovely attitude towards the sinner is, so to speak, of an outstretched hand over the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat; and appealing to the sinner, He says, “Come, take My hand, and be reconciled to Me.”

I remember a lady who attended some gospel meetings we were holding in a village. I mentioned how God's hand was outstretched toward the sinner over the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, and that any one could take it that night and be reconciled to Him. The next day, as I was visiting in the village, this woman came in, and with tears falling down her face, she began, “I saw you coming up the road, and I have come to tell you that I took *His* hand last night!” “But have you not been religious all your life?” I asked. She replied,

¹John 10: 28, 29.

“Ah, but it was religion, not Christ!” Unsaved hearer, will you not take God’s hand to-night, and be reconciled to Him? ¹

Again, God has found such value in the blood of Christ that He has crowned Him with glory and honor; and He is going to bring in the same heavenly glory all His blood-bought ones, as companions of Jesus for ever! ² Is it not gloriously grand! By virtue of the Saviour’s work the penitent thief went to paradise that day, as the Lord said unto him, “Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” ³

Now what is it that gives us assurance of safety by the blood? It is *the written word* of God. Not our *feelings*, but the word of God. He has said, “When I see the blood I will pass over you.” Take Him at His word, ye doubters. Believe what He says, because HE says it—

BELIEVE IT, AND DOUBT NO MORE.

If you have been living in “Doubting Castle,” leave it at once, and honor God by believing what He has said. God’s word will stand when you heavens shall be dissolved and this earth is burnt up, for “the word of the Lord endureth for ever.” ⁴

A traveler, anxious to know if the train would stop at a certain station, asked information from a fellow-passenger. He replied, “I *think* it does.” Not quite satisfied, he appealed to another, who answered, “It used to do, but I am not quite certain about it now.” At last the conductor appears, and to the same inquiry he replies decisively, “Yes,

¹2 Cor. 5: 20. ²Heb. 2: 9, 10. ³Luke 23: 43. ⁴1 Pet. 1: 25.

sir;" and the traveler's mind at once is at rest. Now get your assurance from the right authority. Whose shall it be? Not what your preacher or what any man says, but what the living *God* has said. You may have it

ON DIVINE AUTHORITY.

If, as a poor, guilty sinner, you believe from your heart on the Lord Jesus, then God says, "Thou shalt be saved." Let Benjamin's faith be yours. Do not say you cannot be *sure* until you are in the world to come. That would be to walk by sight. Walk now by *faith*. Believe *God*.

All in Egypt who were beneath the sprinkled blood that night were safe. All who were unsheltered by that blood were to be smitten with God's judgment. From the palace of Pharaoh to the prisoner in the dungeon, the firstborn in each abode not blood-sprinkled, was slain, and there was "a great cry in Egypt."¹ What I might call the "*upper ten*," the "*middle class*," and the "*submerged tenth*" of society are here represented. Wherever blood was absent from the lintel and door-posts, *there* the Destroyer entered.

Unsaved men and women, take warning from this! For everyone, it must be either the *blood* of the Lamb or the *wrath* of the Lamb. Remember, too, that judgment is eternal upon all who pass into eternity without Christ.

That every unsaved one here may come to the Saviour *now* is my prayer. AMEN.

¹Exod. 12: 29, 30.

THE FATHER'S HEART

“And He said, A certain man had two sons : and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

“And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land ; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him.

“And when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger ! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants.

“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. 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, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it ; and let us eat, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

“Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry and would not go in.

"Then came his father out and entreated him. But he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee; neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

"And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (Luke 15: 11-32).

THE closing sentence of the previous chapter is, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." I trust that every person present has got ears that will hearken to the voice of the Lord.

A crowd had gathered round the Saviour when He spake these words; it was composed of publicans and sinners—motley enough, as we would say—tax-gatherers (despised and hated by both Jews and Romans) and others designated as sinners. On the outskirts we see the proud and religious Pharisees and scribes—men of sanctimonious appearance, temple-worshippers, great observers of rites, and regular synagogue-goers; men who made long prayers for appearance sake, well versed in the *letter* of the Scripture, but ignorant of its *spirit*, "like whited sepulchres, that appear beautiful outwardly but within full of dead bones, and of all uncleanness."¹ They could not for a moment mix with such an audience as came to hear the Lord's preaching; yet, either out of curiosity, or with a view to criticize the Preacher, or to entangle Him in His speech, they cannot be absent.

¹Matt. 23: 27.

Are any such now here? How unfortunate, is it not, that your seat is next to that of some poor profligate! An old-fashioned high-walled church pew would suit you better. But I sincerely hope that, ere this meeting closes, you may both be converted to God, and confess it to one another.

These Pharisees and scribes of proud countenance despisingly say: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."¹ They spoke it with

THE SARCASM OF HATRED,

but to the heart and ears of those who know the grace of God revealed in Jesus, these words are exquisitely sweet and lovely: "This man receiveth sinners!" Oh, welcome words! Let me borrow them even from Pharisees; and, from Christian and loving lips, let their sweet evangel-music ring in your hearts, He "receiveth sinners!" Yes, He would throw His everlasting arms around them, and carry them to the glory-home, trophies of His grace, fruit of His redemption victory, and conquests of His mighty love. Rich or poor, sinners ye are all; and *such* the blessed Saviour receiveth, and with such He eateth—

GRACIOUS RECEPTION! SACRED COMMUNION!

The Pharisees "murmured." The natural man dislikes free, unmerited *grace*. The reason is, that grace makes everything of God, and nothing of man; therefore the natural man hates it. But will men's murmurings stay the activities of God's grace? No! I find in this chapter that the more

¹Luke 15: 2.

men murmured, the more God's grace shone forth; and the more grace displayed itself, the more murmurings were heard.

Men murmur, and we are at once told of the Shepherd seeking and finding the lost sheep. They still murmur, and immediately the Lord pictures the woman seeking and finding the lost coin. Still they cavil, and then Jesus portrays for us the father and the prodigal. Aye, if there be cavillers and murmurers here to-night, it will not prevent the blessed God from saving the poor and needy soul sitting by their side. God *will* accomplish His purposes, spite of the murmurings of men; and sinners shall be saved, until the Church is complete. Then, at the call of the Lord, she shall pass into yon bright glory-land!

The verses I have read contain what has been called the parable of "The Prodigal Son." This title has for some time past been to my mind rather a *misnomer*—I mean, it is a poor name to give it. Is not a more appropriate one—

THE PARABLE OF THE FATHER'S HEART?

Now, who is the "elder" son? 'Tis the respectable and religious citizen who thinks he is good enough for God, and that he can enter heaven in virtue of his own merits. 'Tis the man who brings *self* in, and leaves *Christ* out—truly a Pharisee to the backbone. Who is the "younger" son? 'Tis that worldling before me, who has never made any profession, and who tries to make himself happy in this world, *without* God.

Now, what think you is the difference in the

sight of God between the respectable church-going Pharisee, and the pleasure-seeking, sin-loving worldling? "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,"¹ saith the Scripture. One is, morally,

AS FAR FROM GOD AS THE OTHER.

As far as the heights of God's Throne is from the earth and hell beneath, so is the distance between God and the unsaved—whether he be an empty professor or irreligious. Solemn truth this, my hearers. But, thank God, the same saving grace that presents itself to the one, shines forth for the other. For both "elder" and "younger" son grace flows like a river.

Now what are you "younger" sons doing at this moment? Endeavoring to find your joy and happiness in this world, whilst away from God. You have your fun and frolic, your music and dancing, your races and cards, your theatres and novels; and you say, All is well. Stay, my hearers, if there were nothing beyond *this* life, it might perhaps be well. Aye, *if* nothing beyond, then I might be disposed to adjourn this gospel meeting *sine die*. You might have this hall as a ball-room, call in a string-band, and dance to the merry music.

Yes, IF this life were all; but it is NOT all. Eternity stands out before our souls in its infinite greatness and its solemn import.

"Eternity! where? Eternity! where?
 With Christ in the glory, or
 With the lost in despair?
 Eternity! where? Eternity! where?"

¹Rom. 3: 22, 23.

What folly, then, it is to close one's eyes to the eternal issues that God has set before us, and to open them only to present things of time! Men live for the *present*, and despise the *future*. The latter they sacrifice for the former.

What is time? Aboard an ocean steamer we take a thimble, attach a thread to it, drop it over the vessel's side and bring up a thimble-full of salt water taken out of the ocean. This may represent time, taken out of the ocean of eternity. Men, you are living in the thimble,

WITH THE OCEAN BEFORE YOU.

When you are launched upon *that*, will it be to be carried by power divine into the glory of God, or to be swept by righteous judgment into everlasting woe?—Which? How short a man's life is! How quickly the years pass by after the age of forty! How rapidly they flee past! And then to face God's "*Forever!*" Oh, to have Christ *now*—and *then!*

Like the young man in the parable, turning his back on his father, so you, unsaved one, have got your back toward God. You may not have descended to the depths of degradation which he reached; but your face is like his—hell-ward, not God-ward. And mark this, he had turned his back to his father as really when he crossed the threshold of his home on his downward course as when living with harlots in the far country. And so it is with you, whether your life is openly gross, or less sinful; as to both your position and condition, you are *away from God*. With your back toward Him, you are marching right down the broad road which

leadeth to destruction.¹ Hence the need of conversion. Mark this, the converted man's face is *toward* God, and he is marching to glory.

"Spent all;" "A mighty famine;" "Began to be in want;" "No man gave unto him." The young fellow had spent all his money, and being in want, has sought help from the world, which refuses to assist him. How like the world! Its principle is, *nothing* for nothing. What a contrast to God's grace, which gives

EVERYTHING FOR NOTHING.²

The world will soon cast a man off when he no longer can contribute to its happiness and pleasures. It quickly turns its back on the fellow who is no longer of use to it. Its principle is that, for such, kicks are better than kisses. But many a man, lying on the world's dustbin, has been picked up by the grace of God. Dustbin sinners saved by mighty grace!

A man who had been converted said, "I have made a wonderful discovery. I have found out that God, instead of *asking* from a sinner, is a *giving* God to a sinner." This, truly, is the gospel—God gives and the sinner receives. Come, then, and be a recipient of God's bountiful grace.

But I notice this, that *beginning* to be in want did not turn the boy homeward. He had to go deeper down, until he cries,

"I PERISH WITH HUNGER."

We have known men of the world, and women of

¹Matt. 7: 13. ²1 Cor. 3: 21-23.

fashion, who have become thoroughly sick of pleasure and gaiety. They had felt a want which the world failed to supply. What did they do? They turned to religion, became good church-goers, yet did not turn to God. Turning religious is not turning to God. They did not discover they were *perishing*. It has been said that man's extremity is God's opportunity. This is perfectly true. It is there that God meets him. When the prodigal reached that point, he said, "I will arise." When his mind reverted to his father's goodness—for even the servants at home had bread enough and to spare—he said,

"I WILL GO TO MY FATHER."

He had a right sense of his own *need*, and though not yet knowing the depths of his father's love, he thought of his father's *goodness*.

There was a young fellow, James —, brought up by affluent parents in ease and comfort, who had early learned to love the pleasures of sin. Enticed by the world, he sank deeper into vice, and at last determined to leave home and have his fling in the world. He joined a company of minstrels, styled the "Ethiopian Serenaders." With blackened faces and hands, and in grotesque dress, they made a tour through the country. One day, at a coast town, they took their stand before a book-store, in the front of which some Bibles were placed for sale. After they had sung several comic songs, James stepped into the store, with his tambourine as a collection box. The tradesman took down a Bible and said to him, "See here, I will give you a quar-

ter and this book if you will read a portion of it outside among your mates in the hearing of the bystanders." "Here's

A QUARTER FOR AN EASY JOB,"

he said to his party; "I'm going to give a public reading."

Opening at Luke 15, and pointing to verse 11, the tradesman requested him to begin. "Now, Jim, speak up," said one of the troupe, "and earn your quarter like a man."

James began, and read verses 11, 12, 13, when a comrade ejaculated, "That's you, Jim; it's just what you told us about yourself and your father." Controlling his feelings, he read on: "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want."

"Why, that's you again, Jim," said the voice. Jim read verses 15 and 16. "That's like us all," said the voice again; "we're all stony broke. Go on; let's hear what came of it."

James, scarcely able to restrain his emotion, with trembling accents, continued: "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." . . .

He could read no more; he was quite overcome; the sinful past rose up before him, his parents, the comforts of home, the servants there, and then his present condition, his companions, his habits—all came rushing into his mind; and the prodigal's resolve became also his own.

Shortly after, he went, and what a welcome he got from a father's heart, filled with joy as that boy confessed, "I have sinned!" And, blessed be God, it did not stop there, for Jim rested not until he knew that God, too, found His joy in receiving and forgiving him.

IS THERE A "JIM" HERE TO-NIGHT?

Let him arise and go to the Father, with the contrite sinner's confession, "I have sinned!" This is conversion. See my hand: its *back* is toward the wall. Now I turn it, and the palm *faces* the wall; that is what conversion means for the soul.

Now, young man, turn you to the God of all grace, who waits to be gracious unto you.

Observe the father's attitude: "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

Compassion! Oh, what wonderful compassion is God's! He *runs* to meet the returning wanderer. He hastens to throw His everlasting arms around him, and to kiss him. Where, think you, was the meeting-place? I have seen a picture, in which the artist has portrayed a stately home, with gardens and terraces and, at the bottom of the latter, an old man with a youth upon his neck; it is styled, "The Prodigal's Return." But this is not like Luke 15. The young man was yet "a great way off" when his father met him. The words, "a great way off," correspond to "the far country" of verse 13. They met in the scene of his misery and degradation. *This* is where God meets the sinner—in this

world—the very place where the sinner has dishonored God and lived in sin; it is here that God in His love meets and blesses him. How this cuts under the ground of those who assert that you cannot know you are saved until you have passed out of this world. 'Twas in the far country, the figure of this world, that the father met his son.

What, think you, brought the boy to the father? It was his *need*. What brought the father to the boy? It was the father's *love*. So it is with God and the sinner. Need brings the sinner to Him; but *love* takes Him to the sinner. Love outstrips need, so that they do not meet even *half-way*. Oh, no; love *runs*, whilst need *falters*. Oh, the blessed activity of grace—it is love working in the midst of sin.

Truly, divine grace is

LOVE IN ACTION.

Love, too, does not bless the sinner merely according to his need, but according to its own delight in blessing. In a word, the blessing is not measured by the need, but by the love that confers it.

“He fell on his neck and kissed him.” What should *we* have said to this young man, had we been present? Probably we should have reproached and severely upbraided him. But what did the father do? “He fell on his neck and kissed him.” Lovely reception! I used to sing a hymn, “I'd like to be an angel bright,” but for some time past have omitted it from my songs. Why? Well, ask the angels if they have ever been kissed like that? My friends, this wonderful gospel, coming down from

the glory to you, is not preached to angels. We read, "Which things the angels desire to look into."¹ I would not, then, change places with angels, for I have had God's kiss. The word literally is, "Covered him with kisses." It was a garland of kisses. Oh, think of God's

KISSES OF RECONCILIATION.

Sinners, *you* need reconciling to God! He needs not to be reconciled to you. He *never* was your enemy, but you have been His foe. Sinner, it is yourself who needs to be reconciled. How blessed to be "reconciled to God by the death of His Son!"² Yea, forgiven by God and set before Him in favor,—in perfect peace of conscience and rest of soul. Truly, 'tis blessed! And, remember, the ground of it all is the atoning death of Jesus.

The returning prodigal begins his confession with "I have sinned!" Mark this, he does not utter all he meant to say when he set out. He omits, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." Why? Ah, those sweet, sacred kisses had so spoken to his soul of the father's heart, that he now felt his father would never be satisfied with giving him a hired servant's place. Before he was received, he had, like many others, doubted his welcome, and questioned whether he would meet with a gracious reception. He had thought of *servicing*; whereas the father was now about to bring him into the home as a *son*. This is God's way. Before calling us into His service, He wants us to realize that He gives us the place of *sons*.

¹ 1 Pet. 1: 12.² Rom. 5: 10.

SONSHIP BEFORE SERVICE

is a divine principle. I have heard people talk about getting into heaven by a *back* door; but there are no back doors to heaven. You will go in by the front door, or not at all. I assure you of this, that on account of the glorious redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ, there is only the glory of God for the believer—it is our appointed place by God Himself.

“The father said, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.” What kind of a robe have *you* got on to-night? Is it the best robe of God’s providing, or some threadbare garment of your own manufacture? Are you clad with righteousness divine, or with the filthy rags of your own righteousness?¹ The former will fit you for the glory, whilst the latter will be of no avail.

In my old lawyer days I visited an ancient manor house, where the owner had recently died. I had to search through various rooms for title deeds and other valuables. Coming to a room, I found it locked. The middle-aged housekeeper informed me that it had been locked for over twenty years, ever since her late mistress’ sister died in it, and had been left exactly in the state it was at her death. Not finding a key, we were compelled to force open the door. I entered. All was dark. Passing to a faintly-discerned window, my hand touched the shade; it fell into dust, and, for the first time for nigh a quarter of a century, the light of day entered that chamber. What a sight was presented! Dust—such dust! lay on the floor and

¹Isa. 64: 6.

tables. Everything had a strange and sad appearance—the light told the tale.

Now your robe of self-righteousness is like that window-shade. When you stand before the Judgment Throne, the garment of your supposed fitness will fall into dust, and the glory-light, shining upon you, will discover, to your utter confusion, your nakedness as a wretched sinner before God. Yet the best robe was provided in the gospel. And it would fit every sinner here—whether it be a low-down sinner or of the “upper ten.”

Let me repeat, it is God's own providing. No human hand has woven it; it is wholly *divine*; is a *gift* from God; it is “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”¹ and it fits one for the glory in which Christ has entered.

THINK OF THAT, AS OUR HOME !

We shall be companions of Christ, for ever in the same glory which He, as the risen, glorified Man, now occupies. His atoning death is the righteous ground for God to do this. Is it not wonderful ?

“Put a ring on his hand.” What does the ring signify ? It is the pledge of love. Yes, the pledge of the Father's love ; as a ring which has no beginning or ending, so is the Father's love. He says, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love.”² As water always ascends to its own level, so with the love of God ; it springs from His own bosom, and flowing down into this dark world, it embraces the repentant sinner, to carry him right up into the glory with Himself—

¹Rom. 3: 24.

²Jer. 31: 3.

“Oh, wonderful love!
Mighty, fathomless, full and free.
Oh, wonderful love!”

“Put shoes on his feet.” These were a sign of sonship; they meant going in the home as a *son*. Think of it, ye Christians! Ye are sons of God; ye are also His children! The former is your position of dignity before Him,¹ the latter, the family relationship to Him in which you are placed.² I think, too, that the shoes are fitted to tread the narrow path to glory, as well as the golden street.

Now let me rehearse the blessings of this wonderful verse. Robed with divine righteousness; ringed with divine love; sandalled with divine shoes. What a contrast to the demands of the law!

The *LAW* said:

Produce righteousness *for* God—Micah 6 : 8.

Love Him with all *your* heart—Mark 12 : 30.

Take *off* your shoes in His presence—Ex. 3 : 5.

GRACE declares:

Righteousness as a gift *from* God—Rom. 5 : 17.

God loving with all *His* heart—John 3 : 16.

The shoes *put on*—Luke 15 : 22.

I like to think of *Christianity* as

THE HEART OF GOD TOLD OUT.

Now I want you to see that all these blessings were freely bestowed by grace upon the returning wanderer *before* he entered the house. It is on *earth* that God receives the repenting sinner and

¹Gal. 4: 6. ²Gal. 3: 26.

fits him for the home of glory in fashion such as we have seen.

Then we find that the son is taken *inside* the home. We Christians will fully understand what this is when we are actually in heaven in bodies like unto the Lord's;¹ but, thank God, it is perfectly true of us *now* that we have been brought to God—right into His presence, to be at home there even *now*. See Heb. 10: 19 and Eph. 2, 13, 19.

Fellow-believer, are you in your soul at home with God now? Have you, in faith, received the precious truth that, through the work of the Cross, you are brought to God? Can you joyfully say, "His presence is my home?" Ask that school-boy where his home is. He replies: "Not in this school, but some distance out from here." Enquire of him what sort of home it is, and he will tell you about it; of its surroundings, its gardens, its orchards, its meadows. Then ask: "And why do you call it *home*, boy?" He would reply, "Because my father and mother live there." Ah, that is it; not on account of its gardens or the picturesque country, but because a father's heart and a mother's affection are there. Christians, why do we call heaven our *home*? It is because Jesus and the Father are there. To us it is the glory-home—the dwelling of the Father, of the Son, and the Spirit, and where we shall be in the circle of God's family through His eternal day.

Then we read of "the fatted calf" being slain, and the father saying, "Let us eat and be merry;" and "they began to be merry." All this speaks of

¹Phil. 3; 21.

the sweet and holy joys of heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

IT IS THE JOY OF GOD HIMSELF

over the returning sinner ; all heaven echoes it, and the believer's heart also sings as he contemplates God's own delight in blessing.

Have you, Christian, yet discovered that God has found His own deep joy in saving your soul? We often speak of the joy *we* had the day we were converted, and truly it *was* joy; but I love to think of the joy in God's heart on a sinner's return, and of the joy He has now in every one of His own, whom He has clothed with the beauty of His own beloved Son.

"They began to be merry." The beginning is here. The fulness is there, and knows no ending. Oh, ineffable delight of God Himself in blessing us "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."¹ How many of you can join with me in praising Him for this wondrous grace? *This* is the choir I believe in, who can chant the praises of the Lamb that was slain; its choristers are sinners saved by grace, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and surpliced in His moral beauty, worth, and perfection. Do you ask how you can join it? *Come as you are* to the Father, through the Son. Charlotte Elliott expressed it for us in these words:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

¹Rom. 3: 24.

“Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

and God will receive and welcome you. Then *you*, too, shall “begin to be merry.”

Let me speak, as I close, upon another “beginning.” If we could address the lost souls to-night, and enquire as to their employ, would they not answer, “We are beginning our weeping?”—for it is eternal sorrow there. Oh, my hearers, it must be one or the other. Yes, ’twill be either everlasting song or everlasting sorrow. Which, for you?

And what of the “elder son?” He refused grace; he declined to go into the feast when the father entreated him to do so. Thus it is with the self-righteous, who prefer law to grace. Like the elder son, they speak of keeping “the commandments,” and at the same time slight the sweet grace of God, by which they might be saved.

In Luke 16 we find the rich man in torment. It almost seems as if he were the veritable elder son, who refused the father’s entreaties. Oh, ye self-righteous, self-satisfied ones, beware lest ye, too, find yourselves shut out from the glory-home, whilst publicans and sinners have entered in.

JUSTIFICATION

“How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man which is a worm” (Job 25 : 4-6).

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3 : 16).

“Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5 : 9).

THE question that Bildad the Shuhite asked has often been asked since his day. There may be some here that “are pure in their own eyes,” answering to the generation described in Proverbs: “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes.” They forget, however, that God has added, “is not washed from their filthiness.”¹ They are certainly not pure in the sight of the living God. Of course, if we have to measure ourselves by one another, *you* may stand a better chance than *I*; but God’s standard is not comparing a sinful man with other sinful men, but His own glory. Our Lord Himself has said, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”²

¹Prov. 13: 12.

²Matt. 5: 20.

There are people who talk about their doings, as if that could fit them for God's glory. There are others who tell us that every man has a germ of good in him, which only needs to be developed to fit him for the hereafter. To all such, we answer with the Lord's words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God."¹ No human effort will avail before God to justify a sinner in His sight. It is, no doubt, possible to turn drunkards and profligates into respectable members of society, but when it comes to the question of fitness for God's presence,

CHRIST ALONE AVAILS.

A lady once said she desired to get peace with God, but could not; that she attended evangelistic meetings, but all to no purpose. The question was asked her, "Madam, have you ever said, *I abhor myself?*" She replied, "No, I am not as bad as that." On being told that she was nothing but a sinful creature in God's sight, she went off, like Naaman, in a rage.² Loaded with such good thoughts of herself, how could she get the relief she professed to want? What God does is to bring the sinner to the confession of his true state before Him; and then to answer the needs of conscience by proclaiming the peace that Christ has made by the Cross.³ This answer of God is indeed *peace*.

"I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty Sacrifice,
And I have peace with God."

¹John 3: 3.²2 Kings 5: 12.³Col. 1: 20.

One man says he quarrels not with his neighbor. Well, this is peace with his neighbor; others are on good terms with *themselves*. This is peace with self—and I pray God to disturb this peace; others have been justified by God on the principle of faith, and they have the real peace.

THIS IS PEACE WITH GOD.¹

Have *you* got it?

I want to prove from Scripture the utter ruin of man—his state of guilt before God—and to this end to examine a few Old and New Testament witnesses upon the point. We will obtain their truthful evidence, which, I am sure, will be overwhelmingly conclusive. Let us call Job up for examination. We ask him—

Q.—You are Job, of the land of Uz?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were you an upright man?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it true that you “delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him;” also that “you caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy;” also, that “you were eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and a father to the poor?”²

A.—Yes, all these things were true of me.

Q.—Did you one day realize the presence of the living God?

A.—Yes, I found myself in His presence, and I said, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore *I*

¹Rom. 5: 1. ²Job 29: 12-16.

abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”¹

Q.—Did you also say, “I am vile?”²

A.—Yes, truly; in that Presence I am vile.

Let us make a careful note of this last bit of evidence :

“I AM VILE !”

Now let us enquire of Isaiah the prophet :

Q.—Isaiah, is it true that “in the year that King Uzziah died” you saw “the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,” and that you heard the seraphim cry, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory?”³

A.—Yes, it is positively true.

Q.—What effect had this vision upon you?

A.—I felt my own unfitness for the Divine presence, and I exclaimed, “Woe is me, for I am undone!”⁴

Let us put down this last statement,

“I AM UNDONE !”

Call Jeremiah next :

Q.—Jeremiah, weeping prophet of Israel, is it true that when you meditated upon the terrible backslidings of Israel, and the nation’s sin against Jehovah, you identified yourself therewith, and said, “I am black?”⁵

A.—Yes, ’tis true; and with brokenness of spirit I said,

“I AM BLACK !”

Now for New Testament evidence. Let us call Peter, the great apostle of the circumcision, and Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles:

¹Job 42: 6. ²Job 40: 4. ³Isa. 6: 1-3.

⁴Isa. 6: 5. ⁵Jer. 8: 21.

Q.—Peter, at the miraculous draft of fish from the lake, did you fall down at Jesus' knees, and say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord?"¹

A.—Yes, I did, for I felt my own unfitness for the holy company of the Son of God—

I AM SINFUL !

Q.—But you, Paul, was not your character according to the Jews' religion blameless?² And after Jesus in glory appeared to you, did you say that you were chief of sinners?

A.—Yes, by the Holy Spirit I wrote these words: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners : of whom I am chief."³

Listen to these last three words :

"I AM CHIEF !"

Let me recapitulate this chain of confessions :

| | | |
|------------------|---------|----------------|
| <i>Job,</i> | | "I am vile!" |
| <i>Isaiah,</i> | | "I am undone!" |
| <i>Jeremiah,</i> | | "I am black!" |
| <i>Peter,</i> | | "I am sinful!" |
| <i>Paul,</i> | | "I am chief!" |

Now let me ask you, O unsaved man, what have *you* to say about yourself? In view of such incontrovertible evidence as we have produced, do you dare say to God that you are not so bad? or that there is some good in you? or that you are doing your best? I trust not; but that, rather, you will own to Him that you are nothing but a *guilty sinner*. It is the sure way to God's blessing.

¹Luke 5: 8. ²Phil. 3: 6. ³1 Tim. 1: 15.

Oh, that repentance may be wrought in your soul to-night. God calls you to receive His testimony as to your ruined spiritual condition. Own it to Him that you are *lost* and *guilty*. Justify God in His judgment of you, that you are black in His sight—yea, black with guilt and dark with sin—utterly unfit for His presence.

Oh, you say, "I'm not a murderer, or a profligate, or a spendthrift!" I am not accusing you of these; but though you may be the most moral and respectable person in the city, yet, if not born again, you are but a lost sinner in God's sight. "In your sins," is your state before God. Awake, then, unsaved moralist; awake, Christless, though respectable church-goer—awake and turn to the Saviour-God!

Let us now consider three points as to justification—

1. THE SOURCE OF IT.
2. THE GROUND OF IT.
3. THE CHARACTER OF IT.

(1) *The Source of Justification.*—A lady once said to me that she looked upon the Son of God, her Saviour, as a Friend, but that she had stood for years in great fear of God the Father. She came to the gospel services, and learned—what we all need to learn—that God Himself is the source of blessing. Look at that river; how wide it is at its outflow into the ocean; pass up its banks until you reach the hill district whence it comes, and there you find, springing out from the mountains, the clear, sparkling waters—it is the fountain-head,

the source of that noble river. So with the mighty river of God's blessing; it springs from the bosom, from the heart, of God Himself. "*God is Love!*" We see it in that lovely verse, John 3 : 16—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Blessed discovery to make, that God so loved us that He gave His Son for us! John 3 : 16 has been well called

"THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL."

O man, think of God's mighty love for such a sinner as yourself! Methinks you saw in those witnesses, who have just given us their evidence, a true picture of your own dark state; but now I want your to see that God's own heart was set upon us, sinners. He has told out His love by giving His only begotten Son for our redemption. What wonderful news it is! Do you believe it?

I have read of a young woman, the only child of her widowed mother, who got the strange notion into her head that her mother had no love for her. It was a sad delusion, for the mother loved her child as only a mother can. At last, the mania so possessed the girl, that she would no longer live at home; so she left, and took apartments in another house in the town. Some months afterwards, the mother was passing up the street, when she heard the cry of "Fire!" She saw the people rushing in the direction of the street where her child lived, and she followed the crowd. On nearing the place she saw the smoke and flame from a burning house; it was the one where her daughter resided. The

fire engines came dashing up ; the police were keeping the surging crowd at a safe distance. But nothing can keep back *love* ! The mother rushed through, right into the house, and up-stairs into her daughter's room, found her in a faint, threw her arms about her, and carried her down the stairs into the street. Then the mother swooned away, overcome with her tremendous exertion.

The girl, recovered from her faint, and looked at her mother lying prostrate. The mother's heart fluttered feebly, then ceased to beat—she was dead ! Looking upon her dead mother's face, the poor girl's voice broke forth in a piercing cry, " Mother, O mother !—then you did love me, and I did not believe it ! "

In that dead form, the daughter at last read the love of a mother who had

LOST HER LIFE TO SAVE HER'S

And you, my hearers, learn in the dying Saviour, crucified on Calvary, oh learn the wondrous love of God to you. As you look upon the blessed Son of God upon the tree, can you doubt the heart of God—the love that gave Him for you ? Aye, and be assured of this, that not only has God given His blessed Son for you, but that He finds His delight in your salvation, in making you truly happy, in bringing you to Himself to share the joys of the glory-home for ever. God's own heart is the source of the sinner's blessing.

(2) *The Ground of Justification.*—Why should God have given His Son for us ? For two reasons—to give us a perfect expression of His love for us,

and to meet the just judgment of sin. It is plain, therefore, that if God is holy He *must* judge sin. Suppose that a prisoner has been convicted of wilful murder, but instead of passing the death sentence upon the criminal, the judge says to him, "Notwithstanding the true verdict of the jury, the court does not sentence you—you are discharged." What, think you, would the on-lookers say? What would the whole people say? The judge would probably be dismissed from the Bench as unworthy and incompetent to act in a judicial capacity. And is God less than man? Methinks some people would fain make Him so, judging by what they say. They tell us that God is too merciful to judge sin. My friends, let me bring this truth home to you—that whilst there is now mercy for sinners, there never was, and never shall be, mercy for *sin*. God can have

NO MERCY UPON SIN.

He is just and holy, and must judge it. Was there mercy for Christ in those hours of darkness at Calvary? None. What meaneth His soul-agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He was there made the sin-bearer, and God can have no fellowship with sin; therefore His countenance was turned away from Him who, in wondrous grace, was there the sin-bearer. There was no mercy even for Jesus when He was under God's judgment for our sin.

Let me remark, too, that God's judgment upon sin is *eternal*. Those who deny it are ignorant both of God's holiness and of the true character of

sin in His sight. We read in God's word of "eternal judgment."¹ Only the Son of God could meet and sustain that judgment; and in love for men God gave Him to do this. In view of this our Lord Jesus exclaimed, "Father, save Me from this hour!" and at once He adds, "but for this cause came I unto this hour."² If God had judged my sin on *me*, I must have been *eternally lost!* What sinful man is there who could face the full force of divine judgment against sin and not be crushed beneath it? There is none. The eternal Son, who became man, *He only* could and did. He, in the glory of His person, has on the cross met the full tide of divine judgment against sin. David, by the Spirit, speaks of it thus: "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."³ Truly,

WHAT A STORM WAS THAT AT CALVARY!

Never one like it before or since — when the heavens refused to shine, and the earth was mantled in darkness,⁴ and Jesus took that terrible cup of judgment from the Father's hand, and drained it, O fellow-believer, to the last dark drop for you and me.

The work of the Cross is the ground of our justification; as we read, "Justified by His blood."⁵ God has been so perfectly glorified by the death of Jesus; His truth has been so vindicated; His holiness so maintained, that the way is opened in righteousness to bestow His choicest blessings upon us who come to Him in the name of Jesus.

¹Heb. 6: 2. ²John 12: 27. ³Ps. 42: 7.

⁴Matt. 27: 45. ⁵Rom. 5: 9.

A literary lady once said to me, after a gospel preaching she had attended: "I am surprised, Mr. Edwards, that you should talk so much about such a common thing as *blood*." Poor soul! she evidently thought it vulgar. I could only reply: "Miss —, what you call common, God calls *precious*; and it is my boast. I glory in the blood of Jesus!" Thank God that, through grace, I rest upon it. The atoning death of Jesus has glorified God and met my need. It has opened the way for the believer

TO THE GLORY OF GOD.¹

God must be consistent with Himself; how, then, can He be righteous and bless a sinner? The Cross answers the question. He has judged sin on Jesus, and God is free in righteousness to bless. We can sing with the poet—

"On Jesus' cross this record's graved;
Let sin be judged, but sinners saved."

At the moment of the Saviour's death God rent the veil of the temple from *top to bottom*, thus showing that He was free to come out to man to bless; and that, as blest, man could go in to Him. The "top" signifies heaven; the "bottom," the place where we are. He comes down to the bottom, where we are, and takes us up

TO WHERE HE IS.

What good news—and all through the blood of Jesus! Have you yet met with God in this blessed way? It is a blood-sprinkled place, where a righteous God and a ruined sinner can meet. And, when

¹Heb. 10: 19-22.

they meet, the righteous God can righteously pour into the ruined sinner's ear the sweet story that all his guilt has been put away by the blood of His Son, and that He lives now in the glory as our representative there.

This then is the gospel He has entrusted to His servants, "To declare at this time His (God's) righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."¹ God is just, and the justifier.

An aged, bed-ridden woman, once said to a visitor, in reply to an enquiry as to her hope for eternity: "I am resting in the justice of God." The visitor was astonished, and ventured to suggest that the woman should say "the mercy of God," instead of His justice. "Well," said the aged saint, "'tis the justice of God I rest on; for has He not said He is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus?" Oh, that all who have already believed in the Lord may thus

REST IN THE JUSTICE OF GOD!

Should some not understand it, let me try to explain. Where is the Saviour to-night? He is at God's right hand. Who set Him there? God has, in answer to the Saviour's redemption work. God, who bruised Him for us on the cross, has raised Him from among the dead, and seated Him upon the throne. Was it righteous on God's part to raise and enthrone Jesus? Yes, a thousand times, yes; it was perfectly just for God to do so. I go further, and say, It would have been *unrighteous* not to

¹ Rom. 3: 26.

have raised and glorified Him who had so perfectly glorified God about sin. The self-same Hand of Justice that wounded Him for us on the cross, was the very hand that set Him on the throne and crowned Him with glory.

Now mark what I am going to say: it is just as righteous for God, on the ground of the atonement, to justify the man that believes in Jesus, as it was righteous for Him to place our blessed Saviour in glory. Oh, magnificent, soul-emancipating truth!

Let me ask another question: Would God be just in consigning the rejector of His Son to an eternal hell? Yes, He would. Now, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," it is just as righteous for God to place the man that believes in His Son in heavenly glory for ever, as it would be for Him to shut up the rejector of His grace in hell for ever. "God is just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

(3) *The Character of Justification.*—In the Book of Acts we read: "By Him (Jesus) all that believe are justified from all things."¹ And in the epistle to the Romans, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."² We see from these verses that the believer is *now* exonerated from all charge of guilt. What a relief to the conscience to be able to say, My sins are gone for ever. Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."³ Well may the heart exclaim:

"WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!"

¹Acts 13: 39.

²Rom. 5: 1.

³Rom. 4: 25.

I have often tried to get an illustration of justification, but have failed. I'll give one by way of contrast. Suppose a man is arrested for a criminal offence. At his trial, evidence is called on his side which indisputably establishes his *innocence*. At the conclusion of the case, the judge addresses him thus: "You are proved innocent, and you leave the court without a stain upon your character." Thus he is justified—but as an *innocent* man, for he never was *guilty*. But God's justification is not of the *innocent*, but of the *guilty*—which we are. But bear in mind that it is *by the precious blood of Christ*.

We read in the epistle to the Romans that "a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."¹ This means that *faith* is the principle on which God justifies.

Some people have a great difficulty in what they call "reconciling" this verse in Romans with James 2: 24, where we read: "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," but

THEY NEED NO RECONCILIATION,

for the simple reason they have never conflicted.

If you will read James 2 carefully, you will see that the Holy Spirit speaks there of justification *before men*, not before God; this is where the believer's works come in—as a proof of the genuineness of his faith. *Faith* can only be seen by *God*. The fruit of it, good works, can be seen by our fellows; and this is what the epistle of James means, when it says, "Show me thy faith *without*

¹Rom. 3: 28.

thy works; and I will show thee my faith *by my works.*" Paul treats of justification *before God*, not before men; and he brings in *faith*—not works.

Both Paul and James take up the case of Abraham. Paul says Abraham was justified *by faith*; James tells us he was justified *by works*. The former was *before God*, and the latter *before men*. I may remark that Abraham's works, of which the epistle of James speaks, took place several years *after* he had been justified by faith, as recorded in Genesis 15 and Romans 4.

In closing, let me once more appeal to the unsaved. My friends, do come to God *now*. Come, pleading the death of Jesus for you—He will receive you—He will find His joy in it. Will *you* receive Christ? On His part, He has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."¹ It was said of Him, "This Man receiveth sinners!"² and 'tis true of Him to-day.

Does that drunkard enquire if the Lord will receive him? The Saviour answers:

"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Does that pleasure-seeking worldling enquire? Jesus saith,

"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Does that religious but unconverted man enquire? The Lord answers,

"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."

My friends, the Lord turns away *none* who come to Him. Come, then; come *now*, and you shall be

¹John 6 : 37.

²Luke 15 : 2.

forgiven, justified, and saved for ever, then you also shall be able to sing:

“On the Lamb my soul is resting ;
What His love no tongue can say :
All my sins, so great, so many,
In His blood are washed away.

Sweetest rest and peace have filled me,
Sweeter praise than tongue can tell ;
God is satisfied with Jesus,
I am satisfied as well.”

