

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL NO. 184

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MARCH 21, 1858,
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“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”
1 Timothy 1:15.

I SUPPOSE that the message delivered by God’s servants to the people must always be called “the burden of the Lord.” When the old Prophets came forth from their Master they had such dooms, threats, lamentations and woe to preach that their countenances were sorrowful and their hearts heavy within them. They usually commenced their discourses by announcing, “The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord!” But now, our message is no heavy one. No threat and no thunders compose the theme of the Gospel minister. All is mercy! Love is the sum and substance of our Gospel—love undeserved—love to the very chief of sinners! But it is still a burden to us. So far as the matter of our preaching is concerned, it is our joy and our delight to preach it. But if others feel as I feel now, they will all acknowledge it to be a hard matter to preach the Gospel. For now I am sorely vexed and my heart is troubled, not concerning what I have to preach, but how I shall preach it. What if so good a message should fail because of so ill an ambassador? What if my hearers should reject this saying which is worthy of all acceptance because I may announce it with lack of earnestness? Surely—surely such a supposition is enough to draw the tears to the eyes of any man! But may God in His mercy prevent a consummation so fearfully to be dreaded. And however I may now preach, may this Word of God commend itself to every man’s conscience. And may many of you now gathered together who have never as yet found Jesus for refuge, by the simple preaching of the Word now be persuaded to come in, that you may taste and see that the Lord is good!

Our text is one that pride would never prompt a man to select. It is quite impossible to flourish about it, it is so simple. Human nature is apt to cry, “Well, I cannot preach upon that text—it is too plain. There is no mystery in it. I cannot show my learning—it is just a plain, common-sense announcement—I scarcely would wish to take it, for it lowers the man, however much it may exalt the Master.” So, expect nothing but the text from me this morning and the simplest possible explanation of it!

We shall have two heads—first, there is *the text*. Then, there is a *double commendation* appended to the text—“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.”

I. First, there is THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TEXT—“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” In that there are three things very prominent. There is *the Savior*, there is *the sinner* and there is *the salvation*.

1. There is first of all, *the Savior*. And in explaining the Christian religion, this is where we must begin. The Person of the Savior is the foundation-stone of our hope. Upon that Person depends the usefulness of our Gospel! Should someone arise and preach a Savior who was man, he would be unworthy of our hopes and the salvation preached would be inadequate to what we need. Should another preach salvation by an angel, our sins are so heavy that an angelic atonement would have been insufficient. And therefore his Gospel totters to the ground. I repeat it—upon the Person of the Savior rests the whole of the salvation! If He is not able; if He is not commissioned to perform the work, then the work itself is worthless to us and falls short of its design! But, Brothers and Sisters, when we preach the Gospel, we need not stop and stammer! We have to show you this day such a Savior that earth and Heaven could not show its fellow. He is one so loving, so great, so mighty and so well adapted to all our needs that it is evident enough that He was prepared of old to meet our deepest needs! We know that Jesus Christ who came into the world to save sinners was God. And that long before His descent to this lower world, He

was adored by angels as the Son of the Highest. When we preach the Savior to you, we tell you that although Jesus Christ was the Son of Man, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, yet was He eternally the Son of God and has in Himself all the attributes which constitute perfect Godhead! What more of a Savior can any man need than God? Is not He who made the heavens able to purge the soul? If He of old stretched the curtains of the skies and made the earth that man should dwell upon it, is He not able to rescue a sinner from the destruction that is to come? When we tell you He is God, we have at once declared His Omnipotence and His Infinity. And when these two things work together, what can be impossible? Let God undertake a work; it cannot meet with failure! Let Him enter into an enterprise and it is sure of its accomplishment! Because Christ Jesus the Man was also Christ Jesus the God, in announcing the Savior we have the fullest confidence that we are offering you something that is worthy of all acceptance!

The name given to Christ suggests something concerning His Person. He is called in our text, “Christ Jesus.” The two words mean, the “Anointed Savior.” The Anointed Savior “came into the world to save sinners.”

Pause here, my Soul and read this over again—He is the anointed Savior. God the Father from before all worlds anointed Christ to the office of a Savior of men. And, therefore, when I behold my Redeemer coming from Heaven to redeem man from sin, I note that He does not come unsent, or not commissioned! He has His Father’s authority to back Him in His work! Hence, there are two immutable things whereon our soul may rest—there is the Person of Christ, Divine in itself. There is the anointing from on high, giving to Him the stamp of a commission received from Jehovah, His Father. O Sinner, what greater Savior do you need than He whom God anointed? What more can you require than the eternal Son of God to be your Ransom and the anointing of the Father to be the ratification of the treaty?

Yet we have not fully described the Person of the Redeemer until we have noted that He was Man. We read that He came into the world—by which coming into the world we do not understand His usual coming for He often came into the world before. We read in Scripture, “I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which has come unto Me. And if not, I will know.” In fact, He is always here! The goings of God are to be seen in the sanctuary—both in Providence and in Nature they are to be seen most visibly. Does not God visit the earth when He makes the tempest His chariot and rides upon the wings of the wind? But this visitation was different from all these. Christ came into the world in the sense of the fullest and most complete union with human nature. Oh, Sinner, when we preach a Divine Savior, perhaps the name of God is so terrible to you that you can scarcely think the Savior is adapted to you. But hear you again the old story! Although Christ was the Son of God, He left His highest Throne in Glory and stooped to the manger. There He is, an Infant of a span long. Look, He grows from boyhood up to manhood and He comes forth into the world to preach and suffer! Look at Him as He groans under the yoke of oppression! He is mocked and despised. His visage is more marred than that of any other man and His form more than the sons of men! See Him in the garden as He sweats drops of blood! See Him in Pilate’s chamber in which He is scourged and His shoulders run with gore!

Behold Him on the bloody tree! See Him dying with agony too exquisite to be imagined, much less to be described! Behold Him in the silent tomb! See Him at last bursting the bonds of death and rising the third day and afterwards ascending up on high, “leading captivity captive!” Sinner, you have now the Savior before you plainly manifested. He who was called Jesus of Nazareth, who died upon the Cross, who had His superscription written, “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews”—this Man was the Son of God, the brightness of His Father’s Glory and the express Image of His Father, “begotten by His Father before all worlds, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father.” He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a Servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.” Oh, could I bring Him before you—could I now bring Him here to show you His hands and His side! If you could now, like Thomas, put your fingers in the holes of the nails and thrust your hand into His side, I think you would not be faithless, but believing!

This much I know, if there is anything that can make men believe under the hand of God's most Holy Spirit, it is a true picture of the Person of Christ. Seeing is believing in His case! A true view of Christ, a right-looking at Him will most assuredly beget faith in the soul. Oh, I doubt not if you knew our Master; some of you who are now doubting and fearing and trembling, would say, "Oh, I can trust Him. A Person so Divine and yet so human, ordained and anointed of God must be worthy of my faith. I can trust Him! No, more—if I had a hundred souls, I could trust Him with them all! Or if I stood accountable for all the sins of all mankind and were myself the very reservoir and sink of this world's infamy, I could trust Him even then—for such a Savior must be able to save to the uttermost them who come unto God by Him." This, then, is the Person of the Savior.

2. Now, the second point is *the sinner*. If we had never heard this passage before, or any of similar import, I can suppose that the most breathless silence would reign over this place, if, for the first time, I should commence to read them in your hearing, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save_____." I know how you would thrust forward your heads. I know how you would put your hand against your ear and look as if you would hear with the eyes as well as with the ears to know for whom the Savior died. Every heart would say, "Whom did He come to save?" And if we had never heard the message before, how would our hearts palpitate with fear lest the character described should be one unto which it would be impossible for us to attain! Oh, how pleasant it is to hear again that one word which describes the character of those Christ came to save—"He came into the world to save *sinner*s." Monarch, there is here no distinction! Princes, He has not singled you out to be the objects of His love—but beggars and the poor shall taste His Grace! You learned men, you masters of Israel, Christ does not say He came especially to save you—the unlearned and illiterate peasant is equally welcome to His Grace! Jew, with all your pedigree of honor, you are not justified more than the Gentile! Men of Britain, with all your civilization and your freedom, Christ does not say He came to save you—He names not you as the distinguishing class who are the objects of His love—no, and you who have good works and reckon yourselves saints among men, He does not distinguish you, either!

The one simple title, large and broad as humanity itself, is simply this—"Jesus Christ came into the world to save *SINNERS*." Now, mark, we are to understand this in a general sense when we read it—that all whom Jesus came to save are *sinner*s. But if any man asks, "May I infer from this that I am saved"—we must then put another question to him. To begin then, with the general sense—"Jesus Christ came into the world to save *sinner*s." The men whom Christ came to save were by *nature*, *sinner*s, nothing less and nothing more than *sinner*s. I have often said that Christ came into the world to save awakened *sinner*s. It is quite true—so He did. But those *sinner*s were *not awakened sinner*s when He came to save them—they were nothing but "sinner's dead in trespasses and sins" when He came to them! It is a common notion that we are to preach that Christ died to save what are called *sensible sinner*s. Now that is true—but they were not *sensible sinner*s when Christ died to save them! He makes them *sensible* or *feeling sinner*s as the *effect* of His death. Those He died for are described without any adjective to diminish the breadth of it—as being *sinner*s and simply *sinner*s—without any badge of merit or mark of goodness which could distinguish them above their fellows. *SINNERS*!

Now, the term includes some of all kinds of *sinner*s. There are some men whose sins appear but little. Trained up religiously and educated in a moral way, they do not dash into the deeps of sin. They are content to coast along the shores of vice—they do not launch out into the depths. Christ has died for such as these, for many of these have been brought to know and love Him. Let no man think because he is a less *sinner* than others, that therefore there is less hope for him. Strange it is that some have often thought that! "If I had been a blasphemer," says one, "or injurious, I could have had more hope. Though I know I have sinned greatly in my own eyes, yet so little have I erred in the eyes of the world that I can scarcely think myself included." Oh, say not so! It says, "*Sinner*s." If you can put yourself in that catalog, whether it is at the top or at the bottom, you are still within it! And the truth still holds good that those Jesus came to save were originally *sinner*s and you being such, you have no reason to believe that you are shut out! Again—Christ died to save *sinner*s of an opposite sort. We have some men whom we dare not describe. It would be a shame to speak of the things which are done by them in private. There

have been men who have invented vices of which the devil himself was ignorant until they invented them! There have been men so bestial that the very dog was a more honorable creature than they. We have heard of beings whose crimes have been more diabolical, more detestable than any action ascribed even to the devil himself. Yet my text does not shut out these! Have we not met with blasphemers so profane that they could not speak without an oath? Blasphemy, which at first was something terrible to them, has now become so common that they would curse themselves before they said their prayers and swear when they were singing God's praises. It has come to be part of their meat and drink, a thing so natural to them that the very sinfulness of it does not shock them, they so continually do it. As for God's Laws, they delight to know them for the mere sake of breaking them! Tell them of a new vice and you will please them. They have become like that Roman emperor whose parasites could never please him better than by inventing some new crime! They are men who have gone head over heels in the infernal gulf of hellish sin—men who not content with fouling their feet while walking through the mire, have lifted up the trap door with which we seal down depravity and have dived into the very kennel—rebelling in the very filth of human iniquity! But there is nothing in my text which can exclude even these—many of these shall yet be washed in the Savior's blood and be made partakers of the Savior's love!

Nor does this text make a distinction as to the age of sinners. I see many among you here whose hair, if they were the color of your character, would be the very reverse of what they are! You have become white on the outside, but you are blackened all within with sin. You have added layer to layer of crime. And now, if one were to dig down through the various deposits of numerous years, he would discover stony relics of youthful sins hidden down in the depths of your rocky hearts! Where once all was tender, everything has become dry and hardened. You have gone far into sin. If you were to be converted now, would it not, indeed, be a wonder of Divine Grace? For the old oak to be bent, oh, how difficult! Now that it has grown so rugged and tough, can it be bent? Can the Great Husbandman train it? Can He graft on so old and so rough a stem something that shall bring forth heavenly fruit? Ah, He can, for age is not mentioned in the text and many of the most ancient of men have proved the love of Jesus in their latest years. "But," says one, "my sin has had peculiar aggravations connected with it. I have sinned against the Light of God and against knowledge. I have trampled on a mother's prayers. I have despised a father's tears. Warnings given to me have been neglected. On my sick bed, God Himself has rebuked me! My resolves have been frequent and as frequently forgotten. As for my guilt, it is not to be measured by any ordinary standard. My little crimes are greater than other men's deepest iniquities, for I have sinned against the Light of God, against the pricks of conscience and against everything that should have taught me better." Well, my Friend, I do not see that you are shut out! My text makes no distinction but just this—"SINNERS"! And as far as my text is concerned there is no limit whatever—I must deal with the text as it stands. Even for you I cannot consent to limit it. It says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." There have been men of your sort saved—why then, should you not be? There have been the grossest blackguards and the vilest thieves and the most debauched harlots saved. Then, why not you, even if you are such as they? Sinners a hundred years old have been saved! We have instance on record of such cases—then why not you? If from one of God's instances we may generally infer a rule and, moreover, we have His own Word to back us—where lives the man who is so wickedly arrogant as to shut himself out—and close the door of mercy in his own face? No, Beloved, the text says, "SINNERS." And why should it not include you and me within its list? "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

But I said and I must return to it—if anyone wishes to make a particular application of the text to his own case—it is necessary he should read this text in another way. Every man in this place must not infer that Christ came to save *him*. Those whom Christ came to save were sinners. But Christ will not save all sinners. There are some sinners who undoubtedly will be lost because they reject Christ. They despise Him. They will not repent. They choose their own self-righteousness. They do not turn to Christ—they will have none of His ways and none of His love—for such sinners, there is no promise of mercy, for there remains no other way of salvation. Despise Christ and you despise your own mercy! Turn away from Him and you have proved that in His blood there is no efficacy for you! Despise Him and die do-

ing so—die without giving your soul into His hands—and you have given a most awful proof that though the blood of Christ was mighty, yet never was it applied to you; never was it sprinkled on your heart to the taking away of your sins. If, then, I want to know did Christ so die for me that I may now believe in Him and feel myself to be a saved man, I must answer this question—do I *feel* today that I am a sinner? Not, do I *say* so, as a compliment, but do I feel it? In my inmost soul is that a Truth of God printed in great capitals of burning fire—I AM A SINNER? Then, if it is so, Christ died for me. I am included in His special purpose. The Covenant of Grace includes my name in the ancient roll of Eternal Election! There my person is recorded and I shall, without a doubt, be saved if now, feeling myself to be a sinner, I cast myself upon that simple Truth of God, believing it and trusting in it to be my sheet anchor in every time of trouble. Come, Brother and Sister, are you not prepared to trust in Him? Are not many of you able to say that you feel yourself sinners? Oh, I beseech you, whoever you are, believe this great Truth of God which is worthy of all acceptance—Christ Jesus came to save you! I know your doubts. I know your fears—for I have suffered them myself. And the only way whereby I can keep my hopes alive is just this—I am brought every day to the Cross! I believe that to my dying hour I shall never have any hope but this—

*“Nothing in my hands I bring;
Simply to Your Cross I cling.”*

And my only reason at this hour for believing Jesus Christ is my Redeemer is just this—I know that I am a *sinner*. This I feel and over this I mourn. And though I mourn it much; when Satan tells me that I cannot be the Lord’s, I draw from my very mourning the comfortable inference that inasmuch as He has made me feel I am lost, He would not have done this if He had not intended to save me! And inasmuch as He has given me to see that I belong to that great class of characters whom He came to save, I infer from that, beyond a doubt, that He will save me! Oh, can you do the same, you sin-stricken, weary, sad and disappointed souls to whom the world has become an empty thing? You weary spirits who have gone your round of pleasure and are now exhausted with satiety, or even with disease—and are longing to be rid of it! Oh, you spirits who are looking for something better than this mad world can ever give you here, I preach to you the blessed Gospel of the blessed God—Jesus Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried and raised again the third day to save you—even you, for He came into the world to save sinners!

3. And, now, very briefly, the third point—what is meant by *saving* sinners? “Christ came to save sinners.” Brothers and Sisters, if you need a picture to show you what is meant by being saved, let me give it to you here. There is a poor wretch who has lived many a year in the grossest sin—so indifferent to sin has he become that the Ethiopian might sooner change his skin than he could learn to do good! Drunkenness and vice and folly have cast their iron net about him and he has become loathsome and unable to escape from his loathsomeness. Do you see him? He is tottering onwards to his ruin. From childhood to youth, from youth to manhood he has sinned right on and now he is going towards his last days. The pit of Hell is flaring across his path, flinging its frightful rays immediately before his face and yet he sees it not! He still goes on in his wickedness, despising God and hating his own salvation. Leave him there. A few years have gone by and now hear another story. Do you see that spirit yonder—foremost among the ranks most sweetly singing the praises of God? Do you mark it robed in white, an emblem of its purity? Do you see it as it casts its crown before the feet of Jesus and acknowledges Him the Lord of All? Listen! Do you hear it as it sings the sweetest song that ever charmed Paradise? Listen to it, its song is this—

*“I, the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.*

Unto Him who loved me and washed me from my sins in His blood, unto Him be glory and honor and majesty and power and dominion, world without end!” And who is that whose song thus emulates the seraph’s strains? The same person who a little while ago was so frightfully depraved, the same man! He has been *washed*; he has been *sanctified*; he has been *justified*. If you ask me, then, what is meant by salvation, I tell you that it reaches all the way from that poor, desperately fallen piece of humanity, to that high-soaring spirit up yonder praising God! That is what it is to be saved—to have our old thoughts

made into new ones; to have our old habits broken off and to have new habits given; to have our old sins pardoned and to have righteousness imputed! To be saved is to have peace in the conscience, peace to man and peace with God—to have the spotless robe of imputed righteousness cast about our loins and ourselves healed and cleansed! To be saved is to be rescued from the gulf of perdition; to be raised to the Throne of Heaven; to be delivered from the wrath and curse and the thunders of an angry God and brought to feel and taste the love, the approval and applause of Jehovah, our Father and our Friend! And all this Christ gives to sinners! When I preach this simple Gospel, I have nothing to do with those who will not call themselves sinners. If you must be canonized, if you claim a saintly perfection of your own, I have nothing to do with you! My Gospel is to sinners and sinners alone! And the whole of this salvation, so broad and brilliant and unspeakably precious and everlastingly secure, is addressed this day to the outcast, to the offscouring—in one word, it is addressed to *sinners!*

Now, I think I have announced the Truth of the text. Certainly, no man can misunderstand me unless he does so intentionally—“Christ Jesus came to save sinners.”

II. And now, I have but little to do, but yet I have the hardest work—THE DOUBLE COMMENDATION of the text. First, “it is a faithful saying”—that is a commendation to the *doubter*. Secondly, “it is worthy of all acceptance”—that is a commendation to the *careless*—and to the *anxious*, too!

1. First, “it is a faithful saying.” That is a commendation to the *doubter*. Oh, the devil, as soon as he finds men under the sound of the Word of God, slips along through the crowd and he whispers in one heart, “Don’t believe it!” And in another, “Laugh at it!” And in another, “Away with it!” And when he finds a person for whom the message was intended—one who feels himself a sinner, he is generally doubly in earnest that he may not believe it at all. I know what Satan said to you, poor Friend, over there. He said, “Don’t believe it—it’s too good to be true.” Let me answer the devil by God’s own words—“This is a faithful saying.” It is good and it is as true as it is good! *It is* too good to be true if God had not Himself said it, but inasmuch as He said it, it is *not* too good to be true! I will tell you why you think it to be too good to be true—it is because you measure God’s corn by your own bushel! Please remember that His ways are not as your ways, nor His thoughts as your thoughts, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so are His ways high above your ways and His thoughts above your thoughts! Why, you think that if any man had offended you, you could not have forgiven him. Yes, but God is not a man—He can forgive where you cannot! And where you would take your brother by the throat, God would forgive him 70 times seven! You do not know Jesus, or else you would believe Him. We think that we are honoring God when we think great thoughts of our sin. Let us remember that while we ought to think very greatly of our own sin, we *dishonor* God if we think our sin greater than His Grace! God’s Grace is infinitely greater than the greatest of our crimes! There is but one exception that He has ever made and a penitent cannot be included in that. I beseech you, therefore, get better thoughts of Him! Think how good He is and how great He is. And when you know this to be a true saying, I hope you will thrust Satan away from you and not think it too good to be true!

I know what Satan will say to you next—“Well, if *it is* true, it is not true of *you*—it is true to all the world, but not to you! Christ died to save sinners. It is true you are a sinner, but you are not included in it.” Tell the devil to his face he is a liar! There is no way of answering him except by straight-forward language. We do not believe in the individuality of the existence of the devil, as Martin Luther did. When the devil came to him, he answered him as he did other impostors—he turned him out of doors with a good hard saying. Tell him on the authority of Christ, Himself, that he is a liar! Christ says He came to save sinners. The devil says He did not. He says, virtually, He did not, for he declares that He did not come to save *you* and you feel that you are a sinner. Tell him he is a liar and send him about his business. At any rate, never put Satan’s testimony in comparison with that of Christ. Christ looks today on you from Calvary’s Cross with those same dear tearful eyes that once wept over Jerusalem. He looks on you, my Brother, my Sister, and says through these lips of mine, “I came into the world to save sinners.” Sinner, will you not believe on Him and trust your soul in His hands? Will you not say—“Sweet Lord Jesus, henceforth You shall be our confidence! For You all other hopes I resign, You are, You always shall be mine.” Come, poor timid one, I must endeavor to reassure you by repeating again this text—“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” It is a true saying! I cannot have you reject it.

You say you cannot believe it? Let me ask you, “Do you not believe the Bible?” “Yes,” you say, “every word of it.” Then, this is one word of it—“Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” I charge you by your honesty—as you say, “I believe the Bible,” believe this! There it stands. Do you believe Jesus Christ? Come, answer me! Do you think He lies? Would a God of Truth stoop to deceit? “No,” you say, “whatever God says, I believe.” It is God that says it to you, then, in His own Book. He died to save sinners. Come, once again—do you not believe facts? Did not Jesus Christ rise from the dead? Does not that prove His Gospel to be authentic? If, then, the Gospel is authentic, the whole of what Christ declares to be the Gospel must be true! I charge you, as you believe His Resurrection, believe that He died for sinners and cast yourself upon this Truth! Once again—will you deny the testimony of all the saints in Heaven and of all the saints on earth? Ask everyone of them and they will tell you this is true—He died to save *sinners*.

I, as one of the least of His servants, must bear my testimony. When Jesus came to save me, I tell you He found nothing good in me. I know of a surety that there was nothing in me to recommend me to Christ. And if He loved me, He loved me because He would do so, for there was nothing loveable, nothing that He could desire in me. What I am, I am by His Grace. He made me what I am. But a sinner He found me at first and His own Sovereign Love was the only reason for His choice. Ask all the people of God and they will all say the same!

But you say you are too great a sinner. Why, you are not greater than some already in Heaven! You say that you are the greatest sinner that ever lived. I say you are mistaken! The greatest sinner died some years ago and went to Heaven. My text says so—“Of whom I am chief.” So, you see, the chief one has been saved before you. And if the chief one has been saved, why should you not be? There are the sinners standing in a line and I see one starting out from the ranks and he says, “Make way, make way! I stand at the head of you—I am the chief of sinners. Give me the lowest place. Let me take the lowest room.” “No,” cries another, “not you. I am a greater sinner than you!” Then the Apostle Paul comes and says—“I challenge you all, Manasseh and Magdalene, I challenge you! I will have the lowest place. I was a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, but I have obtained mercy, that in me, first, God might show His long-suffering.” Now, if Christ has saved the greatest sinner that ever lived, oh, Sinner, great as you may be, you cannot be greater than the greatest and so Christ is able to save you! Oh, I beseech you by the myriads of witnesses around the Throne of God and by the thousands of witnesses on earth, by Jesus Christ, the Witness on Calvary, by the blood of sprinkling that is a witness even now—by God Himself—and by His Word which is faithful, I beseech you, believe this faithful saying that “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

2. And now, to close. The second commendation of the text is to the *careless* and to the *anxious*, too. To the careless one this text is worthy of all acceptance. Oh, Man, you scorn it. I saw you curl your lips in derision. The story was badly told and therefore you did scorn it. You said in your heart, “What is that to me? If this is what the man preaches, I care not to hear it—if this is the Gospel, it is nothing.” Ah, Sir, it *is* something, though you know it not! It is worthy of your acceptance—the thing I have preached, however poor the way in which it is preached—is well worthy of your attention. I care not what orator may lecture to you—he can never have a subject greater than mine. Demosthenes himself might stand here, or Cicero—they could never have a weightier subject! Though a child should tell you of it, the subject might well excuse him, for it is so important. Man, it is not your *house* that is in danger—it is not your body, only—it is your *soul*. I beseech you by eternity, by its dreadful terrors, by the horrors of Hell, by that fearful word, “Eternity!” I beseech you as a man, your brother, one who loves you and who desires to snatch you from the burning—I beseech you do not despise your own mercies! This is worthy of you, Man, worthy of all your attention and worthy of your heartiest acceptance! Are you wise? This is more worthy than your wisdom! Are you rich? This is more worthy than all your wealth! Are you famous? This is more worthy than all your honor! Are you princely? This is more worthy than your ancestry, or than all your goodly heritage! The thing I preach is the most worthy thing under Heaven because it will last when all other things fade away. It will stand by you when you have to stand alone. In the hour of death it will plead for you when you have to answer the summons of justice at God’s bar. And it shall be your eternal consolation through never-ending ages. It is worthy of your acceptance!

And, now, do you feel anxious? Is your heart sad? Do you say, “I desire to be saved. Can I trust this Gospel? Is it strong enough to bear me? I am an elephantine sinner—will not its pillars crumble like leaves beneath my weight of sin? I am the chief of sinners. Will its portals be wide enough to receive me? My spirit is diseased with sin—can this medicine cure it?” Yes, it is worthy of you—it is equal to your disease, it is equal to your needs, it is all-sufficient for your demands! If I had a half-Gospel to preach, or a defective one, I would not preach it earnestly. But I have one that is worthy of all acceptance! “But Sir, I have been a thief, a whoremonger, a drunkard.” It is worthy of you, for He came to save sinners and you are one. “But, Sir, I have been a blasphemer.” It does not exclude even you. It is worthy of your acceptance! And mark, it is worthy of all the acceptance you can give it! You may not only accept it in your head, but in your heart! You may press it to your soul and call it all in all. You may feed on it and live on it. And if you live for it and suffer for it and die for it, it is worthy of all!

I must let you go now. But my spirit feels as if it would linger here. Strange it should be that many men should not care for their own souls, when your minister this day cares for you! What matters it to me whether men are lost or saved? Shall I be any the better for your salvation? Assuredly there is little gain there. And yet I feel more for you, many of you, than you feel for yourselves! Oh, strange hardening of the heart, that a man should not care for his own salvation—that he should, without a thought—reject this most precious Truth of God! Stop, Sinner, stop—before you turn from your own mercy, stop once more—perhaps this shall be your last warning, or worse, it may be the last warning you shall ever feel. You feel it now. Oh, I beseech you quench not the Spirit! Go not forth from this place to talk with idle gossip on your way home. Go not forth to forget what manner of man you are. But hasten to your home—seek your chamber—shut the door! Fall on your face by your bedside—confess your sin! Cry unto Jesus! Tell Him you are a wretch undone without His Sovereign Grace—tell Him you have heard this morning that He came to save sinners and that the thought of such a love as that has made you lay down the weapons of your rebellion! Tell Him that you are desirous to be His. There—on your face—plead with Him and say unto Him, “Lord save me, or I perish.”

The Lord bless you all for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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