

PREDESTINATION AND CALLING

NO. 241

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BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,
 AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

“Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called.”
Romans 8:30.

THE GREAT BOOK OF GOD’S DECREES is fast closed against the curiosity of man. Vain man would be wise; he would break the seven seals thereof and read the mysteries of eternity. But this cannot be! The time has not yet come when the book shall be opened and even then the seals shall not be broken by mortal hand, but it shall be said, “The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed to open the book and break the seven seals thereof.”—

*Eternal Father, who shall look
 Into Your secret will?
 None but the Lamb shall take the book
 And open every seal!*

None but He shall ever unroll that sacred record and read it to the assembled world. How, then, am I to know whether I am predestinated by God unto eternal life or not? It is a question in which my eternal interests are involved—am I among that unhappy number who shall be left to live in sin and reap the due reward of their iniquity? Or do I belong to that goodly company who, albeit that they have sinned, shall nevertheless be washed in the blood of Christ and shall in white robes walk the golden streets of Heaven? Until this question is answered, my heart cannot rest, for I am intensely anxious about it. My eternal destiny infinitely more concerns me than all the affairs of time! Tell me, oh tell me, if you know, Seers and Prophets—is my name recorded in that Book of Life? Am I one of those who are ordained unto eternal life, or am I to be left to follow my own lusts and passions and to destroy my own soul? Oh, my Hearer, there is an answer to your inquiry! The book cannot be opened, but God Himself has published many a page thereof. He has not published the page whereon the actual names of the redeemed are written, but that page of the sacred decree whereon their *character* is recorded is published in His Word and shall be proclaimed to you this day! The sacred record of God’s hand is this day published everywhere under Heaven and he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to him! O my Hearer, by your name I know you not and by your name God’s Word does not declare you, but by your *character* you may read your name! And if you have been a partaker of the calling which is mentioned in the text, then may you conclude beyond a doubt that you are among the predestinated—“For whom He did predestinate, them He also called.” And if you are called, it follows as a natural inference you are predestinated!

Now, in considering this solemn subject, let me remark that there are two kinds of callings mentioned in the Word of God. The first is the *general* or *universal call*, which in the Gospel is sincerely given to everyone who hears the Word. The duty of the minister is to call souls to Christ; he is to make no distinction whatever—“Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” The trumpet of the Gospel sounds aloud to every man in our congregations—“Ho, everyone who thirsts, come you to the waters and he that has no money, come you, buy and eat. Yes, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.” “Unto you, O men, I call. And My voice is to the sons of man” (Prov 8:4). This call is sincere on God’s part. But man by nature is so opposed to God that this call is never *effectual*, for man disregards it; turns his back upon it and goes his way caring for none of these things. But mark, although this call is rejected, man is without excuse in the rejection! The universal call has in it such authority that the man who will not obey it shall be without excuse in the Day of Judgment. When you are commanded to believe and repent—when you are exhorted to flee from the wrath to come—the sin lies on your own head if you despise the exhortation and reject the commandment! And this solemn text drops an awful warning—“How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation?” But I repeat it—this universal call is rejected by man! It is a call, but it is not attended with the Divine force and energy of the Holy Spirit in such a degree as to make it an unconquerable call. Consequently, men perish even though they have the universal call

of the Gospel ringing in their ears! The bell of God's House rings every day. Sinners hear it, but they put their fingers in their ears and go their way—some to his farm and another to his merchandise. Though they are bid and are called to the wedding (Luke 14:16, 17, 18), yet they will not come; and by not coming they incur God's wrath and He declares of such—"None of those men which were bid shall taste of My supper" (Luke 14:24). The call of our text is of a different kind. It is not a *universal* call, it is a special, particular, personal, discriminating, efficacious, call! This call is sent to the predestinated and only to them. They by Divine Grace hear the call, obey it and receive it! These are they who can now say, "Draw us and we will run after You."

In preaching of this call this morning, I shall divide my sermon into three brief parts. First, I shall give *illustrations of the call*. Second, we shall come to *examine whether we have been called*. And then third, *what delightful consequences flow from there*. Illustration, examination, consolation.

I. First, then, for ILLUSTRATION. In illustrating the effectual call of Grace which is given to the predestinated ones, I must first use the picture of Lazarus. See that stone rolled at the mouth of the sepulcher? Much need is there for the stone that it should be well secured, for within the sepulcher there is a putrid corpse. The sister of that corrupt body stands at the side of the tomb and she says, "Lord, by this time he stinks, for he has been dead four days." This is the voice of reason and of nature. Martha is correct. But by Martha's side there stands a Man who, despite all His lowliness, is very God of very God! "Roll away the stone," He said. And it was done. And now, listen to Him! He cries, "Lazarus, come forth!" That cry is directed to a mass of putridity; to a body that has been dead four days and in which the worms have already held carnival. But, strange to say, from that tomb there comes a living man! That mass of corruption has been quickened into life and out he comes, wrapped about with grave clothes and having a napkin about his head. "Loose him and let him go," said the Redeemer. And then Lazarus walks in all the liberty of life!

The *effectual* call of Grace is precisely similar. The sinner is dead in sin. He is not only in sin but *dead* in sin, without any power whatever to give to himself the life of Grace. No, he is not only dead, but he is corrupt! His lusts, like the worms, have crept into him. A foul stench rises up into the nostrils of Justice, God abhors him and Justice cries, "Bury the dead out of my sight, cast it into the fire; let it be consumed." Sovereign Mercy comes and there lies this unconscious, lifeless mass of sin. Sovereign Grace cries, either by the minister, or else directly without any agency, by the Spirit of God, "come forth!" and that man lives! Does he contribute anything to his new life? Not he—his life is given solely by God! He was dead, absolutely dead—rotten in his sin. The life is given when the call comes and, in obedience to the call, the sinner comes forth from the grave of his lust and begins to live a new life—even the life eternal which Christ gives to His sheep.

"Well," cries one, "but what are the words which Christ uses when He calls a sinner from death?" Why the Lord may use *any* words! It was not long ago there came into this hall a man who was without God and without Christ and the simple reading of the hymn—

"Jesus lover of my soul,"

was the means of his quickening! He said within himself, "Does Jesus love *me*? Then I must love Him," and he was quickened in that same hour! The words which Jesus uses are various in different cases. I trust that even while I am speaking this morning, Christ may speak within me and some word that may fall from my lips, unpremeditated and almost without design, shall be sent of God as a message of life unto some dead and corrupt heart! May, by His Grace, some man or woman who has lived in sin up to now, shall now live to righteousness and live to Christ! That is the first illustration I will give you of what is meant by effectual calling. It finds the sinner dead; it gives him life and he obeys the call of life and lives.

But let us consider a second phase of it. You will remember while the sinner is dead in sin, he is alive enough as far as any opposition to God may be concerned. He is powerless to *obey*, but he is mighty enough to *resist* the call of Divine Grace! I may illustrate it in the case of Saul of Tarsus—this proud Pharisee abhors the Lord Jesus Christ—he has seized upon every follower of Jesus who comes within his grasp! With the avidity of a miser who hunts after gold he has hauled men and women to prison! He has hunted after the precious life of Christ's disciple and having exhausted his prey in Jerusalem, he seeks letters and goes off to Damascus upon the same bloody errand. Speak to him on the road; send out the Apostle Peter to him; let Peter say, "Saul, why do you oppose Christ? The time shall come when you shall yet be His disciple." Paul would turn round and laugh him to scorn—Get out of here, fisherman! Get out of here —*I*, a disciple of

that imposter Jesus of Nazareth? Look here, this is my confession of faith—here will I haul your brothers and your sisters to prison and beat them in the synagogue and compel them to blaspheme and even hunt them to death; for my breath is threatening and my heart is as fire against Christ.” Such a scene did not occur, but had there been any remonstrance given by men, you may easily conceive that such would have been Saul’s answer. But Christ determined that He *would* call the man before the foundation of the world! Oh, what an enterprise! Stop HIM? Why he is going fast onward in his mad career! But lo, a light shines round about him and he falls to the ground and he hears a voice crying, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.” Saul’s eyes are filled with tears and then again with scales of darkness and he cries, “Who are You?” And a voice calls, “I am Jesus, whom you persecute.” It is not many minutes before he begins to feel his sin in having persecuted Jesus, nor many hours before he receives the assurance of his pardon and not many days before he who persecuted Christ stands up to preach with vehemence and eloquence unparalleled, the very cause which he once trod beneath his feet!

See what effectual calling can do? If God should choose this morning to call the hardest-hearted wretch within hearing of the Gospel, he would obey! Let God call—a man may resist, but he cannot resist effectually! Down you shall come, Sinner, if God cries *down!* There is no standing when He would have you fall. And mark, every man who is saved, is always saved by an overcoming call which he cannot withstand. He may resist it for a time, but he cannot resist so as to overcome it—he must give way—he must yield when God speaks! If He says, “Let there be light,” the impenetrable darkness gives way to light! If He says, “Let there be Grace,” unutterable sin gives way and the hardest-hearted sinner melts before the fire of *effectual calling!*

I have thus illustrated the call in two ways—by the state of the sinner in his sin and by the Omnipotence which overwhelms the resistance which he offers! And now another case. The effectual call may be illustrated in its Sovereignty by the case of Zaccheus. Christ is entering into Jericho to preach. There is a publican living in it who is a hard, griping, grasping, miserly extortioner. Jesus Christ is coming in to call someone, for it is written He *must* abide in some man’s house. Would you believe it, that the man whom Christ intends to call is the worst man in Jericho—the extortioner? He is a little short fellow and he cannot see Christ, though he has a great curiosity to look at Him. So he runs before the crowd and climbs up a sycamore tree and thinking himself quite safe amid the thick foliage, he waits with eager expectation to see this wonderful Man who had turned the world upside down. Little did he think that Christ was to turn him, also! The Savior walks along preaching and talking with the people until He comes under the sycamore tree. Then lifting up His eyes, He cries—“Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide in your house.” The shot took effect, the bird fell—down came Zaccheus, invited the Savior to his house and proved that he was really called—not merely by the Voice but by Grace, itself, for he said, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore unto him fourfold.” And Jesus said, “This day is salvation come unto your house.” Now why call Zaccheus? There were many better men in the city than he! Why call him? Simply because the call of God comes to unworthy sinners! There is nothing in man that can deserve this call—nothing in the best of men that can invite it! God quickens whom He will and when He sends that call, though it comes to the vilest of the vile, down they come speedily and swiftly! They come down from the tree of their sin and fall prostrate in penitence at the feet of Jesus Christ!

But now to illustrate this call in its effects, we remind you that Abraham is another remarkable instance of effectual calling. “Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, get you out of your country and from your kindred and from your father’s house, unto a land that I will show you” and, “by faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed. And he went out, not knowing where he went.” Ah, poor Abraham! As the world would have had it, what a trial his call cost him! He was happy enough in the bosom of his father’s household, but idolatry crept into it and when God called Abraham, he called him *alone* and blessed him out of Ur of the Chaldees and said to him, “Go forth, Abraham!” And he went forth, not knowing where he went. Now, when effectual calling comes into a house and singles out a man, that man will be compelled to go forth outside the camp, bearing Christ’s reproach. He must come out from his very dearest friends; from all his old acquaintances; from those friends with whom he used to drink and swear and take pleasure! He must go straight away from them all to follow the Lamb where ever He goes. What a trial to Abraham’s faith when he had to leave all that was so dear to him and go he knew not where! And yet God had a goodly land for him and intended to bless him greatly. Man! If you are called; if you are truly called, there

will be a going out and a going out alone! Perhaps some of God's professed people will leave you. You will have to go without a solitary friend—maybe you will even be deserted by Sarah, herself, and you may be a stranger in a strange land—a solitary wanderer as all your fathers were! Ah, but if it is an *effectual* call and if salvation shall be the result thereof—what matters it though you go to Heaven alone? Better to be a solitary pilgrim to bliss, than one of the thousands who throng the road to Hell!

I will have one more illustration. When effectual calling comes to a man, at first he may not know that it is effectual calling. You remember the case of Samuel. The Lord called Samuel and he arose and went to Eli and he said, "Here am I, for you called me." Eli said, "I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down." The second time the Lord called him and said, "Samuel, Samuel," and he arose again and went to Eli and said, "Here am I, for you did call me." And then it was that Eli, not Samuel, first of all perceived that the Lord had called the child! And when Samuel knew it was the Lord, he said, "Speak, for Your servant hears." When the work of Grace begins in the heart, the man is not always clear that it is God's work. He is impressed under the minister and, perhaps, he is rather more occupied with the impression than with the agent of the impression! He says, "I know not how it is, but I have been called. Eli, the minister, has called me." And perhaps he goes to Eli to ask what he wants with him. "Surely," he said, "the minister knew me and spoke something personally to me because he knew my case." And he goes to Eli and it is not till afterwards, perhaps, that he finds that Eli had nothing to do with the impression, but that the Lord had called him. I know this—I believe God was at work with my heart for years before I knew anything about Him. I knew there was a work. I knew I prayed and cried and groaned for mercy, but I did not know that was the Lord's work! I half thought it was my own. I did not know till afterwards, when I was led to know Christ as all my salvation and all my desire, that the Lord had called the child, for this could not have been the result of Nature—it must have been the effect of Grace.

I think I may say to those who are the beginners in the Divine Life, as long as your call is real, rest assured it is Divine! If it is a call that will suit the remarks which I am about to give you in the second part of the discourse, even though you may have thought that God's hand is not in it, rest assured that it is, for Nature could never produce effectual calling! If the call is effectual and you are brought out and brought in—brought out of sin and brought to Christ; brought out of death into life and out of slavery into liberty; then though you cannot see God's hand in it, yet, by God's Grace it is there!

II. I have thus illustrated effectual calling. And now as a matter of EXAMINATION, let each man judge himself by certain characteristics of heavenly calling which I am about to mention. If in your Bible you turn to 2 Timothy 1:9, you will read these words—"Who has saved us and called us with an holy calling." Now here is the first touchstone by which we may try our calling—many are called but few are chosen because there are many kinds of calls. But the true call and that, only, answers to the description of the text. It is "an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This calling forbids all trust in our own doings and conducts us to Christ alone for salvation! And it afterwards purges us from dead works to serve the living and true God! If you are now living in sin, you are not called. If you can still continue as you were before your pretended conversion, then it is no conversion at all! That man who is called in his drunkenness, will forsake his drunkenness! Men may be called in the midst of sin, but they will not continue in it any longer. Saul was anointed to be king when he was seeking his father's donkeys—and many a man has been called when he has been seeking his own lust—but he will leave the animals and leave the lust when once he is called effectually!

Now, by this shall you know whether you are called of God or not. If you continue in sin; if you walk according to the course of this world; according to the spirit that works in the children of disobedience—then are you still dead in your trespasses and your sins. As He who has called you is holy, so must you be holy. Can you say, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I desire to keep all Your commandments and to walk blamelessly in Your sight. I know that my obedience cannot save me, but I long to obey. There is nothing that pains me so much as sin. I desire to be quit and rid of it. Lord help me to be holy"? Is that the panting of your heart? Is that the tenor of your life towards God and towards His Law? Then, Beloved, I have reason to hope that you have been called of God, for it is a *holy* calling with which God calls His people!

Another text. In Philippians 3:13 and 14 you find these words. "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ

Jesus.” Is then your calling a *high* calling? Has it lifted up your heart and set it upon heavenly things? Has it lifted up your hopes to hope no longer for things that are on earth, but for things that are above? Has it lifted up your tastes so that they are no longer groveling, but you choose the things that are of God? Has it lifted up the constant tenor of your life so that you spend your life with God in prayer, in praise and in thanksgiving and can no longer be satisfied with the low and mean pursuits which you followed in the days of your ignorance? Remember if you are truly called, it is a *high* calling, a calling from on High and a calling that lifts up your heart and raises it to the high things of God, eternity, Heaven and holiness!

In Hebrews 3:1, you find this sentence. “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.” Here is another test. Heavenly calling means a call from Heaven. Have you been called not of man, but of God? Can you now detect in your calling the hand of God and the voice of God? If man alone calls you, you are uncalled. Is your calling of God? And is it a call *to* Heaven as well as *from* Heaven? Can you heartily say that you can never rest satisfied till you—

*“Behold His face
And never, never sin.
But from the rivers of His Grace,
Drink endless pleasures in”?*

Man, unless you are a stranger here and Heaven is your home, you have not been called with a heavenly calling, for those who have been so called declare that they look for a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God and they themselves are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth!

There is another test. Let me remind you that there is a passage in Scripture which may tend very much to your edification and help you in your examination. Those who are called are men who *before* the calling, groaned in sin. What says Christ?—“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Now, if I cannot say the first things because of shyness, though they are true, can I yet say this—that I feel myself to be a sinner; that I loathe my sinnership; that I detest my iniquity; that I feel I deserve the wrath of God on account of my transgressions? If so, then I have a hope that I may be among the called host whom God has predestinated! He has called not the righteous but *sinners* to repentance. Self-righteous Man, I can tell you in the tick of a clock, whether you have any evidence of election. I tell you—No! Christ never called the righteous! And if He has not called you and if He never does call you, you are not elect and you and your self-righteousness must be subject to the wrath of God and cast away eternally! Only the sinner, the awakened sinner, can be at all assured that he has been called. And even he, as he gets older in Grace, must look for those higher marks of the high heavenly and holy calling in Christ Jesus.

As a further test—keeping close to Scripture this morning, for when we are dealing with our own state before God there is nothing like giving the very Words of Scripture—we are told in the first Epistle of Peter, the 2nd Chapter and the 9th verse, that God has called us out of darkness into marvelous light. Is that your call? Were you once in darkness in regard to Christ? And has marvelous light manifested to you a marvelous Redeemer, marvelously strong to save? Say Soul, can you honestly declare that your past life was darkness and that your present state is Light in the Lord? “For you were sometime darkness, but now are you light in the Lord; walk as children of the light.” That man is not called who cannot look back upon darkness, ignorance and sin and who cannot now say that he knows more than he did know and enjoys at times the Light of knowledge and the comfortable Light of God’s Countenance.

Yet again—another test of calling is to be found in Galatians, the 5th Chapter and the 15th verse. “Brethren, you have been called into liberty.” Let me ask myself again this question, “Have the fetters of my sin been broken off and am I God’s free man? Have the manacles of justice been snapped and am I delivered—set free by Him who is the great Ransom of spirits?” The slave is not called. It is the free man who has been brought out of Egypt, who proves that he has been called of God and is precious to the heart of the Most High.

And yet once more, another precious means of test is in the First of Corinthians, the 1st Chapter and the 9th verse. “He is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” Do I have fellowship with Christ? Do I converse with Him; commune with Him? Do I suffer *with* Him—suffer *for* Him? Do I sympathize with Him in His objectives and aims? Do I love what He loves? Do I hate what He hates? Can I bear His reproach? Can I carry His Cross? Do I tread in His steps? Do I serve His cause and is it my grandest hope that I shall see His Kingdom come; that I shall sit upon His Throne and reign with Him? If so, then I am called with the effectual calling which is the work of God’s Grace and is the sure sign of my predestination!

Let me say, now, before I turn from this point, that it is possible for a man to know whether God has called him or not and he may know it, too, beyond a doubt. He may know it as surely as if he read it with his own eyes—no, he may know it *more surely* than that—for if I read a thing with my eyes, even my eyes may deceive me. The testimony of sense may be false, but the testimony of the Spirit must be true! We have the witness of the Spirit within, bearing witness with our spirits that we are born of God. There is such a thing on earth as an *Infallible assurance* of our election! Let a man once get that and it will anoint his head with fresh oil; it will clothe him with the white garment of praise and put the song of the angel into his mouth! Happy, happy man who is fully assured of his interest in the Covenant of Grace, in the blood of Atonement and in the glories of Heaven! Such men there are here this very day. Let them “rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.”

What would some of you give if you could arrive at this assurance? Mark, if you anxiously desire to know, you may know! If your heart pants to read its title clear, it shall do so before long. No man ever desired Christ in his heart with a living and longing desire who did not find Him sooner or later! If you have a desire, *God has given it to you!* If you pant and cry and groan after Christ, even this is His gift—bless Him for it! Thank Him for little Grace and ask Him for great Grace. He has given you hope; ask for faith! And when He gives you faith, ask for assurance. And when you get assurance, ask for *full* assurance. And when you have obtained full assurance, ask for enjoyment. And when you have enjoyment, ask for Glory itself—and He shall surely give it to you in His own appointed season!

III. I now come to finish up with CONSOLATION. Is there anything here that can console me? Oh, yes, rivers of consolation flow from my calling! For first, if I am called, then I am predestinated, there is no doubt about it. The great scheme of salvation is like those chains which we sometimes see at horse ferries. There is a chain on this side of the river fixed into a staple and the same chain is fixed into a staple at the other side, but the greater part of the chain is for the most part under water and you cannot see it. You only see it as the boat moves on and as the chain is drawn out of the water by the force that propels the boat. If today I am enabled to say I am called, then my boat is like the ferry in the middle of the stream—I can see that part of the chain which is named, “calling,” but blessed be God, that is joined to the side that is called, “election,” and I may also be quite clear that it is joined on to the other side, the glorious end of “glorification.” If I am called, I must have been elected and I need not doubt that. God never tantalized a man by calling him by effectual Grace unless He had written that man’s name in the Lamb’s Book of Life! Oh, what a glorious Doctrine is that of Election, when a man can see himself to be elect! One of the reasons why many men kick against it is this—they are afraid it hurts them. I never yet knew a man who had a reason to believe that he was chosen of God, who hated the Doctrine of Election! Men hate Election just as thieves hate Chubb’s patent locks! Because they cannot get at the treasure, themselves, they therefore hate the guard which protects it. Now election shuts up the precious treasury of God’s Covenant blessings for His children only—for penitents, for seeking sinners. There are men who will not repent, will not believe—they will not go God’s way—and then they grumble and growl and fret and fume because God has locked the treasure up against them. Let a man once believe that all the treasure within is his and then the stouter the bolt and the surer the lock, the better for him! Oh, how sweet it is to believe our names were on Jehovah’s heart and engraved on Jesus’ hands before the universe had a being! May not this electrify a man of joy and make him dance for very mirth!—

Chosen of God before time began!

Come on, slanderers! Rail on as you please! Come on you world in arms! Cataracts of trouble descend if you will and you, you floods of affliction, roll if so it is ordained, for God has written my name in the Book of Life! Firm as this rock I stand though nature reels and all things pass away! What consolation, then, to be called—for if I am called, then I am predestinated! Come, let us rejoice at the Sovereignty which has called us and let us remember the words of the Apostle, “For you see your calling, Brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty. And the base things of the world and things which are despised has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are—that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

A second consolation is drawn from the grand Truth of God that if a man is called he will certainly be saved at last. To prove that, however, I will refer you to the express words of Scripture—Romans 11:29—“The gifts and calling of

God are without repentance.” He never repents of what He gives, nor of whom He calls! And indeed this is proved by the very Chapter out of which we have taken our text. “Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified. And whom He justified, them He also glorified,” every one of them! Now, Believer, you may be very poor and very sick and very much unknown and despised, but sit down and review your calling this morning and the consequences that flow from it! As surely as you are God’s called child today, your poverty shall soon be at an end and you shall be rich to all the intents of bliss! Wait awhile. That weary head shall soon be girt with a crown! Stay awhile. Those calloused hands of labor shall soon grasp the palm branch! Wipe away those tears! God shall soon wipe away your tears forever! Take away that sigh—why sigh when the everlasting song is almost on your lips? The portals of Heaven stand wide open for you. A few winged hours must fly. A few more billows must roll over you and you will be safely landed on the golden shore! Do not say, “I shall be lost. I shall be cast away.” Impossible—

*“Whom once He loves, He never leaves,
But loves them to the end.”*

If He has called you, nothing can divide you from His love! The wolf of famine cannot gnaw the bond. The fire of persecution cannot burn the link; the hammer of Hell cannot break the chain! Old Time cannot devour it with rust, nor Eternity dissolve it with all its ages. Oh, believe that you are secure! That voice which called you shall call you yet again from earth to Heaven; from death’s dark gloom to immortality’s unuttered splendors! Rest assured the heart that called you beats with Infinite Love towards you—a love undying that many waters cannot quench and that floods cannot drown. Sit down. Rest in peace! Lift up your eyes of hope and sing your song with fond anticipation. You shall soon be with the glorified, where your portion is. You are only waiting here to be made ready for the inheritance and that done, the wings of angels shall waft you far away to the mount of peace and joy and blessedness, where—

*“Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in,”*

you shall rest forever and ever! Examine yourselves, then, whether you have been called. And may the love of Jesus be with you. Amen.

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