

## THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

### NO. 470

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 7, 1862,  
 BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,  
 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“The Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight.”*  
*Malachi 3:1.*

THE LORD’S people delight in the Everlasting Covenant itself. It is an unfailing source of consolation to them so often as the Holy Spirit leads them to its green pastures, and makes them to lie down beside its still waters. They can sweetly sing of it from youth even to gray hairs, from childhood even to the tomb, for this theme is inexhaustible—

*“Your Covenant the last accent claims  
 Of this poor faltering tongue;  
 And that shall the first notes employ  
 Of my celestial song.”*

They delight to contemplate *the antiquity* of that Covenant, remembering that before the daystar knew its place, or planets ran their round, the interests of the saints were made secure in Christ Jesus. It is peculiarly pleasing to them to remember *the sureness* of the Covenant. They love to meditate upon “the sure mercies of David.” They delight to celebrate the Covenant in their songs of praise, as “signed and sealed, and ratified, in all things ordered well.” It often makes their hearts dilate with joy to think of its *immutability*, as a Covenant which neither time nor eternity, life nor death, things present, nor things to come, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, shall ever be able to violate—a Covenant as old as eternity, and as everlasting as the Rock of Ages! They rejoice also to feast upon *the fullness* of this Covenant, for they see in it all things provided for them—God is their portion, Christ their companion, the Spirit their Comforter, earth their lodge, and Heaven their home! They see in it not only some things, but all things; not only a help to obtain some desirable possessions, but an inheritance reserved and entailed to every soul that has an interest in this ancient and eternal deed of gift. Their eyes sparkled when they saw it as a treasure-trove in the Bible; but O how their souls were gladdened when they saw in the last will and testament of their Divine Kinsman that it was bequeathed to them! More especially it is the pleasure of God’s people to contemplate *the graciousness* of this Covenant. They see that the Law was made void because it was a Covenant of Works and depended upon merit, but this they perceive to be enduring because Divine Grace is the basis, Divine Grace the condition, Divine Grace the strain, Divine Grace the bulwark, Divine Grace the foundation, Divine Grace the top stone! From the beginning even to the end, it is all of Grace! They see that the Covenant runs on this wise, not, “I will if you will,” but “I will and you shall.” Not, “I will reward if you deserve,” but “I will forgive even if you sin.” Not, “I will cleanse if you are clean,” but, “I will cleanse if you are filthy.” Not, “I will keep if you assist,” but, “I will bring you back even if you are lost, I will surely save you and preserve you even to the end.”

I know some Christians—bleary-eyed, like Leah—who cannot see afar off, and hence the councils of eternity they cannot behold; I know some Believers of weak knees, and feeble joints who are afraid of that strong word, “Covenant.” But they who are men in Christ Jesus, who by reason of years have had their senses exercised, know that the Covenant is a treasury of wealth, a granary of food, a fountain of life, a storehouse of salvation, a charter of peace, and a haven of joy! The Everlasting Covenant! Let my soul but anchor here, then howl, winds and roar, hurricanes! I will not fear. The Everlasting Covenant! Let my soul but cast its anchor here, and come life with all its tribulations, and death with all its pains and terrors, my soul laughs them all to scorn—

*“The Gospel bears my spirit up;  
 A faithful and unchanging God  
 Lays the foundation for my hope,  
 In oaths and promises and blood.”*

We advance a step further towards our text, and remark that the “Messenger of the Covenant” is a welcome ambassador to those who are interested in those exceedingly great and precious promises which pertain to life and godliness.

But, waiving further preface, let us notice, first, *that we delight in the office of Christ as the Messenger of the Covenant.* Next, *that we delight in the way in which He fulfils that office.* And then, we shall conclude by noticing *some ways in which we show our delight.*

**I. First, then, WE DELIGHT IN CHRIST IN HIS OFFICE OF MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.**

What is that office? I shall need two or three words to explain it. When we read of Christ as Messenger of the Covenant, I think we may understand Him to be a *Covenanted Messenger.* Now, God has sent many messengers, whose words, when they have been spoken in His name, He has not allowed to fall to the ground. So far they were covenanted messengers; but these persons sometimes spoke of themselves, and then God had not bound Himself by promise to keep their words. Sometimes, even like the Apostle Paul, they would have to pause and say, “I think I have the Spirit of God,” but they might not be certain. But Christ is a Covenanted Messenger. God has sworn to Him to do for us whatever He may promise to us, so that if we believe in God, we may believe also in Him, since He speaks for God, and His every Word is settled in Heaven —

*“Arrayed in mortal flesh  
He like an angel stands,  
And holds the promises  
And pardons in His hands—  
Commissioned from His Father’s Throne  
To make His Grace to mortals known.”*

Again, He is the Covenanted Messenger—on our behalf Christ swore to God to carry out that part of the Covenant which was left for man, and so He stood as a Covenanted Messenger between God and man. The word “plenipotentiary” just hits my thought. You know kings sometimes send out ambassadors to try and negotiate peace, but they have limited powers. On other occasions ambassadors are sent with unlimited, unrestricted power, to make peace or not, and to make it just as they will. Now Christ comes as the Covenanted Ambassador of God, as the Plenipotentiary of Heaven! Let Him do what He will, God is with Him! Let Him promise what He may, God ratifies it! Let Him speak what He will to our souls, His Word shall certainly be fulfilled! Now do you not rejoice in Christ in this office? He has said to us, “Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Rest,” says the eternal Father, as He confirms Jesus’ Word. “Go in peace, your sins which are many are forgiven you.” “They *are* forgiven you,” says the court of Heaven, “go in peace!” “He who believes on Me is not condemned,” says Christ. And the Father says Himself, “He is not condemned.” There is not a Word of the Gospel which the Father has left unsanctioned! You need not, therefore, when you venture upon Christ’s Word and Christ’s merit, think you are resting on something which God will not accept. He is God’s Covenanted Messenger. He is sworn to accept whom Christ accepts, and since Christ saves all that trust in Him, the Father accepts them likewise! He will certainly save all whom Christ has declared shall be saved.

This, however, does not exhaust the meaning. Christ is the Messenger of the Covenant, in the next place, *as the messenger of the Father to us.* Moses was messenger of the Covenant of Works, and his face shone, for the ministration of death was glorious. But Christ is the Messenger of the Covenant of Grace. O let His face shine in your esteem, you saints of the Lord, for the ministration of life must be more glorious, far! Christ comes to us to tell us all that God will tell. The Revelation of God *is* Christ! If you would know God, he who has seen Christ has seen the Father. God’s *Word* is Jesus, He speaks fully by Him! Would you know the Father’s decree? “I will declare the decree,” says Christ. Would you know His Character? See every attribute of God in the Man, Christ. Would you know His designs? See the designs of God effected in the works of Jesus. Would you know in fact all that is knowable of God? Understand that you can see it, not in Nature, nor in Providence, but in Jesus—

*“God in the Person of His Son,  
Has all His mightiest works outdone.”*

And will you not delight in Him as such—as God’s Messenger to you? If the very ministers of Christ are delightful to you, if their feet are beautiful upon the tops of the mountains when they bring glad tidings, how much more beautiful is He who comes from God to man, with messages of peace, declaring to us that God is reconciled to us, and accepts us in the Beloved? Sing His praises, O you who have heard His voice! Glory in His holy name, O you who have received His report, unto whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed, for as God’s Messenger to you, you should delight in Him!

But then, He is, as the Messenger of the Covenant, *our Messenger and Mediator with the Father*. You need to tell your Father something—Jesus stands to carry the message for you! George Herbert, in one of his poems, pictures Christ as using the hole in His side as a bag to carry our letters to Glory—

*“If you have anything to send or write,  
(I have no bag but here is room)  
Unto My Father’s hands and sight  
(Believe Me) it shall safely come.  
That I shall mind, what you impart;  
Look, you may put it very near My heart.”*

In the wounds of Christ we put our messages to God, and they go up to Heaven with something more added to them. The blots and blurs of our petition Christ wipes out, and then He savors our prayers, and incenses them by putting with them the costly mixture of His own precious righteousness. Look! In His golden censer yonder, smokes the incense of your prayers, accepted for the sake of the incense, and for the sake of Him who swings it to and fro as it smokes before the Most High! “The Messenger of the Covenant”—this name is peculiar to our Lord. Let not any man arrogate this office to himself, for it is Christ’s, alone! God never did hear a message from man that He accepted, except through this Messenger! I cannot get to God directly, I must have a Mediator. Well said Luther, “I will have nothing to do with an absolute God; for our God is a consuming fire.” No sigh ever reached the Most High, except through Christ—I mean so as to move His heart to pour out His Grace. Prayers, groans, tears—all these are like arrows without a bow—till Christ comes and fits them to the string, and shoots them home for you and me! All our prayers are like a victim, with the wood and altar—Christ must bring the fire, and then the sacrifice smokes to Heaven. He is the Messenger! Oh Christian, do you not rejoice in Him then as the Messenger of the Covenant? He is doing your errands before the Throne tonight, pleading for me, pleading for you. “I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not.” You came to this house tonight, you offered prayer—Christ is offering it now, as an offering most Divinely sweet! As you are sitting here, you are breathing a vow, or a desire to Heaven. Christ presents it, for He stands at the golden altar, having a censer full of the prayers and vows of saints. Give Him an errand now. Try Him at this moment; entreat Him to plead on your behalf. Thus view Him; thus exercise your faith upon Him as the Plenipotentiary from God to man, as the Revealer of God to man, and as Spokesman from man to God—

*“Look up, my Soul, with cheerful eyes,  
See where the great Redeemer stands—  
The glorious Advocate on high,  
With precious incense in His hands!  
He sweetens every humble groan,  
He recommends each broken prayer;  
Recline your hope on Him alone,  
Whose power and love forbid despair.”*

**II.** But briefly on the second point. WE DELIGHT IN THE WAY IN WHICH CHRIST HAS CARRIED OUT THIS OFFICE AS MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.

And here let us dwell on that part of the office which relates to *the Revelation of God to man*. Oh, what a full Messenger He has been! He has not dropped half the message; He has not told us a *part* of God, but all that His heavenly Father bade Him declare, He has revealed to us as we could bear it. And He has given us this day the Holy Spirit who leads us into all the Truths of God, who shall take of the things of Christ which the Father gave Him, and reveal them unto us. What a full Messenger and how faithful! Surely the Master could say, “I have kept back nothing that is profitable for you.” With greater emphasis than ever Paul could say it, He might have declared, “I am clear from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” We poor messengers mar the Master’s message in the telling of it, but “Never man spoke like this Man.” So full and faithful is He who speaks with Jehovah’s bidding to His chosen people, that He can say, “All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.”

Then, *how willingly He does it!* “I delight to do Your will, O God.” How sweet it seemed to Him to show God to us! Even His tears, though bitterly they flowed, were cheerfully bestowed; and His very death, though it was an awful Baptism, yet was one for which He longed! How was He straitened until it was accomplished! I hate a man to be a messenger

who goes unwillingly, and who mumbles out the message as if he had no interest in it. But oh, our sweet Lord Jesus tells God's message to us as though He were more interested in it than we were! He tells it so lovingly, so affectionately, so tenderly, with all His heart, turning His soul out that we may see it, writing His very Nature out in streams of blood, that we might see in crimson lines what otherwise we might not have been able to perceive. Oh, how much better than ministers, better than Prophets, better than Apostles, better than angels, Christ has performed the office of Messenger from God! Solomon's Proverb is all outdone in our Redeemer's case. "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them who send him: for he refreshes the soul of his masters."

Beloved, let us delight equally as much in *the way in which He has performed our message from ourselves to God*. Ah, I have been to my Advocate a thousand times, but I never found Him a weary Messenger! You have a servant, and you give him many things to do. But towards nightfall it may be that you give him one thing too many, and the poor man's weary feet and languid looks chide you when you give him the errand. But I have been to my Master, and so have you, in the dead of night and I never found Him asleep! I have been to Him in the heat of summer, but I never found Him point to His bloody sweat and say He could not go. I have been to Him a thousand times, and yet I have never, never heard Him say, "I have served you enough, I will not be your Messenger again." But cheerfully, willingly, has He taken our request to God, again, and again, and again, and presented it there. And how full of sweet powers of memory and generous recollections He has been! We have often failed to tell Him the message aright, and sometimes there was a part of it that we could not tell Him—groaning that could not be uttered—but He read the message, and then told it perfectly out in the other place, within the veil, never forgetting one desire nor one faint wish; sometimes erasing one that was evil, and putting in another that was right—but He has never forgotten us! The blessed Master has a thousand souls to plead for—no, what if I say millions? But never has He forgotten one. The meanest lamb in His flock He has tended; the poorest subject in His dominions has been the object of His advocacy. And then, Brothers and Sisters, with what passionate love has He pleaded for us in Heaven! Oh, you cannot conceive Him, for He is high above us, but if we could see Him tonight, standing before the Throne, we would say, "I never thought I had such an Advocate as this!" Not with sighs and tears, for they are over now, but with authority He pleads, points to His wounded hands, and to His side, and urges the case of His people as though it were His own case, and so indeed, it is, for He may well say—

*"I feel at My heart all your sighs and your groans,  
For you are most near Me—My flesh and My bones."*

Never such an Advocate as this! Fathers might plead for sons, and a wife might throw herself on the ground to plead with a judge for her husband, but never such a Pleader as this! You Messenger of the Covenant, none can plead as You do!

And then, dear Friends, I think we ought to delight in Him, when we think how unflinchingly He perseveres in His intercession, though we are continually forgetful and ungrateful for His kindness. I am sure if we had a friend's cause to plead, and he were as unworthy and forgetful as we are, we would tell him to suit himself, and find some other advocate. But He, for Zion's sake, does not hold His peace, for Jerusalem's sake He does not rest. Going to and fro from Heaven to earth, from earth to Heaven, He speaks messages of love from God to our souls, bearing messages of pleading and of intercession from our souls to God. Take, Beloved, a sweet delight in Jesus, for He does His errand well! He is a choice Messenger, one among a thousand, yes, the chief among ten thousand!

**III.** But time flies, and therefore we hurry onward to carry out our third proposal. **HOW ARE WE TO SHOW THAT WE DO REALLY DELIGHT IN CHRIST?** Well, there is one way of doing it, and that is by again *employing Him tonight*. You have been upon my errands so many times, my sweet Lord, that You shall even go again. I ask you, Brothers and Sisters, to let me speak to you a moment. I know you have some very heavy matters on your mind tonight, some very heavy trial awaits you tomorrow, and you have been troubled about it all the week. Do you delight in the Messenger of the Covenant? Ah, then send your Jesus with it as a message to the Throne of God tonight. Say to Jesus, "I pray You tell the Father that one of His adopted who can say, 'Abba,' is in deep and sore trouble. Send You from Heaven and deliver me, and pluck me out of the deep waters." You will show your delight in Him by trusting Him in your great matters. Oh, but you mean to do it yourself? You have all your wits about you, and mean to get through it yourself, do you? You shall flounder in the mire! But give the matter up to *Him*, and let Him take it to your God, and see whether prayer does not more often prevail in trial than all the energies and wits of man! And Sister over yonder, you have a secret, one you would not tell to me, no, nor to your dearest friend, but it rankles and it makes your heart bleed in secret till some-

times you are weary of your life! Do you love the Messenger of the Covenant? Whisper into His ear what you can tell to none beside, and ask Him to speak for you to the King, to the Captain of the Host. Say unto Him, “Jesus, lover of my soul, I’ll trust You with this most secret grief. That which no creature can meddle with, You shall know. Behold I bare the wound before Your tender eyes. Go, tell the Father that a child of His is weeping in secret, walking in darkness, and seeing no light.” You will show your delight in Him by trusting Him now!

Minister, send a messenger by Him tonight for your flock! Sunday school teacher, give Him a missive from your heart for your class! Mother, the Messenger waits for you, ask Him to plead for your sons and daughters! Father, the Messenger is ready to bear your wish to Heaven! Tell Him you would have no greater joy than this, to see your children walk in the Truth of God! Jesus, say to Your Father that *my* prayer tonight is that I would have this congregation saved. Oh speak, my Master! Bear the ponderous message! Ask that not one within these walls may perish! Lift up Your hands and plead for every man, woman, and child beneath this tabernacle’s dome tonight, and ask that everyone may be a partaker of the Divine Grace that saves! I know that You will prevail if You will ask, for if You should ask *anything* of Your Father, He will do it for You. You have but to will it, and it is done! Behold, by faith I would lay hold upon the hem of Your garment, You great High Priest, the sweetly sounding bells of Your ephod I hear tonight; upon Your glittering breast-plate the eyes of my faith are fixed. Take my request, and plead it solemnly before the awful Throne of Heaven, and let the answer come to all this multitude—an answer of Grace and peace! Thus, my Beloved, we must show our delight in Him—by bidding Him plead for us!

Leaving for a moment the thought of messenger, I want to add some other things, not quite, perhaps, in keeping with our text, but quite in harmony with our delight in Jesus. You are coming round the Table, Brothers and Sisters, and you delight in Christ. Shall I tell you how it is that we show that we delight in Him?

One way is by *waiting* for Him. There is the wife at evening. It is past the proper hour for her husband to return. She goes to the window and looks out into the cold dark night, and then she goes back to the chair, and to the little one, and takes her needle and whiles away the time. But soon she is up again looking out of the window once more, and listening to every footstep in the street, or looking out from the open door. Why is not her spouse at home? How is it that he is away? She sits down again; she tries to ease her mind with household business, but every ticking of the clock, and every striking of the hour suggests to her, “Why is he so long in coming?” Look, she is again drawing back the curtains and looking out into the black night for the hundredth time, longing for her husband, and why? Because she takes delight in him, and needs to see his face. So when Christians look out into the dark world and say, “When will He come?” And when they go to their labor, and say, “Why are His chariot wheels so long in coming?” And when they can cry with John, “Come quickly, even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus,” and are waiting for, and hasting unto the coming of the Son of Man, then they prove that they have intense delight in Him! Do you show this, Christian? Are you waiting for Him? Are you getting ready for the time when the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the trump of the archangel, and the voice of God?—

*“Come, my Beloved, haste away,  
Cut short the hours of Your delay—  
Fly like a youthful hart or roe,  
Over the hills where spices grow.”*

We prove our delight in Him in another way, by working for Him. There is a woman there; she is working hard at her embroidery needle; she is making a little coat; it is a linen ephod. I wonder why that woman smiles so, while she works with her needle? There, she must put it away, for there is other work to do. I wonder why the next day she goes to the drawer, so pleased to get that work out and continue it? I will tell you her name. Her name is Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, and she is making a little coat for her son, Samuel, whom she has left with Eli at the Tabernacle. Now you perceive why she is so pleased in making this ephod? Because she delights in Samuel! So I see the Sunday school teacher pleased to meet his children; I see the minister go to the pulpit with beaming eyes, and I see the Missionary leaving house and home, kindred and cherished associations, joyfully giving up everything for Christ, and I ask, why? Because he delights in Christ, and therefore he can work for Him! Is it so with you, Friends? Are you working for Christ? Yes, I think you are, or else I fear you are not delighting in Him!

And then another thing. I have seen the boy at school—I knew such a boy myself—and one day that child was at play, and merry was he at his games, but some lad ran across the ground and said, “Your father’s come to see you,” and

he laid aside his playthings, and his games, and ran at once into his father's arms because he delighted in his parent! And I have seen the Christian when he is delighting in his God, when lecture, or Prayer Meeting night came, say, "Well, I will gladly lose a little of my business, that I may run into my Father's arms in the hour of worship." There has been a saint to be visited, or a sinner to be warned, and I have seen the lovers of Jesus leave their nets, that they may follow Christ, and forsake the world, that they might serve Him! Beloved, if He were to come tonight and bid us choose whether we would be in Heaven or here, I think we would not long delay, but say to Him, "You leave me no choice; to be with You is so much better than anything beside, that I embrace You now. Oh take me up to You!"

Further, we may show our delight in Christ by *searching after Him when we lose His Presence*. There is the spouse in the Canticles. She is going about in the city in the dark night—"Have you seen Him whom my soul loves?" The watchmen meet her, and rudely pluck away her veil, and they smite her. Why is not that delicate woman at home at rest? See, she wanders on, cold and weary, with tears rolling down her cheeks, and hanging like pearls from her eyes. Why is this woman weeping and searching like that? The answer is—"Tell me, O You whom my soul loves, where do You feed?" She has such a delight in Him, that she will search a thousand nights! Yes, a believing soul would search Hell through to find Christ, if He were to be found nowhere else! And I know what Rutherford said was no great exaggeration, when he said, "If there were 50 Hells between my soul and Christ, and He bade me wade through them, and He would come and meet me, I would gladly dash through them all to reach His fond embrace." Jesus, our thirst for You is insatiable! We must have You, and thus we prove our delight in You.

Lastly, we may prove our delight in Christ by *being very happy, ourselves, and trying to make others partakers of our joy*. Do not go to the Lord's Table tonight, if you can help it, burdened with your groans and moans. If you cannot come without bringing them, then come, come anyhow; but I would have you tonight, if you could, delight yourselves in the Lord! You are very poor. Ah, but you are very rich in Him! You are sick, you say. Yes, but remember what He suffered for you! Oh, but you are a sinner. Yes, but remember His precious blood! Fix your eyes on Him tonight, and on nothing else, and oh, be glad! Come to His Table with delight! I often say I know the people who come here—our regular people who come here—because they have a way of walking, and a look on the Sunday that is different from most people that go to other places of worship. Other folks are so solemn, as if they were going to an execution! They look so grave, as if it were an awful work to serve God, as bad as going to prison, to attend a service, and as disagreeable as the pillory to stand up and praise the Lord! But I notice that you come here with joy, looking upon the Sunday as a joyous day, not a time to pull the blinds down, and shut out the light, but a day to feast yourselves in God! Now I think ordinance days are especially times of rejoicing. You and I have been all the week up to our elbows in work. By-and-by we shall have to go back to that dingy workroom among those persecuting worldlings. Never mind—Lord make this as a sanctuary to us tonight! Shut us in, and shut the world out, and let us rejoice ourselves in our God—

*"As myrrh new bleeding from the tree,  
Such is dying a Christ to me!  
And while He makes my soul His guest,  
Your bosom, Lord, shall be my rest!  
No beams of cedar, or of fir,  
Can with Your courts on earth compare;  
And here we wait, until Your love  
Raise us to nobler seats above."*

Beloved Brothers and Sisters, if you have this delight *tell it to others!* Do not be tongue-tied, and dumb, any of you. Speak out what God has done for you. Tell! Tell!—

*"Tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Savior you have found!"*

If you should have any enjoyment tonight, let others partake of the honey which you have discovered. God help you thus to live to His praise!

I am about to retire a few moments, while our friends get to their seats for the Communion. Before I retire, I have a message to tell from the Messenger of the Covenant. He is willing to take a message from any poor, troubled, sin-burdened, conscience-stricken sinner in this Tabernacle. Has any one of you a message for Him? The Lord Jesus Christ is willing to receive and stamp with His own blood-marked hands any earnest, heart-written message you are willing to

send to God tonight! Is there anyone who has this to send—"God be merciful to me a sinner"? What? Not one of you? Is there not a heart here that would say, "Lord save or I perish"? Surely there are some! Breathe your desire out now silently. Jesus hears it—trust Him to carry it to God! Believe that His blood can cleanse you. Trust Him, trust His merits to clothe you. Trust especially His intercession to prevail for you as the Messenger of the Covenant! Do it, Soul! "Oh but," you say, "my hands are black with sin." Never mind, He will touch them and make them clean! "Oh but I cannot pray." He can pray for you! "Oh but I cannot plead." He can plead in your place! Tell Him your needs! As Rowland Hill once did, so would I do with you. It is said that Rowland once had to put up in a village where there was no other house to put up at but a tavern. And having a pair of horses to feed, and going into the best room of the inn, he was considered to be a valuable guest for the night. So the host came in, and he said, "Glad to see you Mr. Hill." "I am going," was the reply, "to stay with you tonight. Will you let me have family prayer tonight in this house?" "I never had such a thing as family prayer here," said the landlord, "and I don't want to have it now." "Very well, then, just fetch my horses out. I can't stop in a house where they won't pray to God. Take the horses out." Now being too good a guest to lose, the man thinks better of it, and promises to have family prayer. "Ah but," said Hill, "I'm not in the habit of conducting prayer in other people's houses; you must conduct it yourself." The man said he could not pray. "But you must," said Rowland Hill. "Oh but I never did pray," the man said. "Then, my dear man, you will begin tonight," was the answer!

The time came and the family were on their knees, "Now," said Rowland Hill, "every man prays in his own house. You must offer prayer tonight." "I can't pray, I *can't*," said the landlord. "What? Man, you have had all these mercies today, and are you so ungrateful that you cannot thank God for them? Besides, what a wicked sinner you have been. Can't you tell God what a sinner you've been and ask for pardon?" The man began to cry, "I can't pray, Mr. Hill, I can't, indeed I can't!" "Then tell the Lord, Man, you can tell Him you can't pray," said Mr. Hill, "and ask Him to help you." Down went the poor landlord on his knees. "O Lord, I can't pray. I wish I could." "Ah, you have begun to pray," said Rowland Hill, "you have begun to pray, and you will never leave off. As soon as God has once set you to pray, faint though it is, you will never leave off! Now I'll pray for you." And so he did, and it was not long before the Lord was pleased, through that strange instrumentality, to break the landlord's hard heart and to bring him to Christ!

Now I say, if any of you can't pray, tell the Lord you can't. Ask Him to help you to pray. Ask Him to show you your need to be saved. And if you can't pray, ask Him to give you everything that you need. Christ will *make* as well as *take* the message! He will put His own blood upon your prayer, and the Father will send down the Holy Spirit to you to give you more faith and more trust in Christ!

May the Lord send you away with His blessing tonight. Amen.

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