

BLESSED PROMISES FOR DYING OUTCASTS

NO. 1753

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“For I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds, says the Lord; because they called you an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeks after.”
Jeremiah 30:17.

THE promises of this verse will be exceedingly sweet to those who feel their personal need of them. But those who boast that they are neither sick nor wounded will take no interest in this comfortable promise. Those who are charmed with themselves will see no charm in the beloved Physician. I have heard of certain hungry travelers, lost in the wilderness, who came upon a bag which they longingly hoped might yield them a seasonable supply of food. They were near to death's door by starvation and eagerly opened the bag, but, alas, it contained nothing but pearls—which they poured out contemptuously upon the desert sand as things of no use to them! Even so, when a man is hungry and thirsting after the things of this life and all his thoughts are taken up with carnal appetites, carnal sorrows and carnal joys, he will reject as worthless the priceless promises of God, for he considers that they are of no immediate use to him.

Let his hunger be of another sort; let his heart hanker after unsearchable riches; let his soul pine for eternal love and then his are views of things entirely changed—and to buy the pearl of great price he would gladly sell all that he has! Oh, you that are sick at heart, here is a word for you from the God of all Grace! Jehovah Rophi, Himself, says, “I will restore health unto you.” Oh, you that have felt the shafts of God pierce your inmost souls, here is a word from Him who heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds—“I will heal you of your wounds, says the Lord.” Here is music for your ears, honey for your mouth, comfort for your heart!

But if you feel you have no sickness and no wound, no weakness and no spiritual need, then the Words of sacred consolation will pass over your ears as a meaningless sound, having no voice for you. Neither shall we wonder at this, for the whole have no need of a physician! Only they that are sick! Healthy men care not to hear of medicines and remedies, for they feel no need of them. This thins my audience, but improves it, for while it drives away the conceited, it draws the needy to a more careful listening!

Our text describes a serious plight, mentions a special interference and records a singular reason for that interference. When we have spoken upon each of these, we shall close by giving you suitable advice. May the Spirit of God bless the discourse.

I. First, then, taken in connection with the verses which precede it, our text describes a class of men and women who are in A SERIOUS PLIGHT. These people suffer under two evils. First, they are sick through sin, for they need to have their health restored. And, secondly, they are wounded for their sin by the chastisements of the Lord, so that there is necessity for their wounds to be healed. They are afflicted with the distemper of evil and, also, by dismal disquietude of conscience. They have broken God's Commandments and now their own bones are broken. They have grieved their God and their God is grieving them.

Let us carefully look at the first part of their sad condition—they are sick with sin and that disease is one which, according to the 5th and 6th verses, brings great pain and trouble into men's minds when they come to their senses and know their condition before God. At first, iniquity numbs the conscience, and its tendency is to sear it as with a hot iron. It may be compared to a stroke of paralysis, which, when it falls upon a man's body, takes away from him all pain and makes him as one dead in the parts which it affects. Sin paralyzes the consciences of the ungodly. At first they do not know it to be an exceedingly great evil. They trifle with it—it is a serpent whose very *look* is poisonous and yet they sport with it as though it were a bird! It is a deadly disease, causing the soul to be full of leprosy and yet men will exhibit the marks of it as though they were the spots of God's children.

But after a while, when the conscience is awakened by judgments, or awakened by God's Word, then this disease ceases to stupefy and becomes the source of intolerable pain. Read these Words—"For thus says the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. Ask you, now, and see whether a man does travail with child? Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?" The fiercest form of bodily pain is here selected as the type of the anguish caused by strong conviction of sin. Believe me, there can be nothing in the world so terrible as to feel sin without feeling pardon—to know yourself to be guilty and not to know how to get the guilt removed!

Conviction without faith is an earthly Hell! Brothers and Sisters, you have, many of you, felt it, and you know that death itself, if there were no hereafter, would be preferable to life under the pressure of guilt. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" Sin is a disease of the spirit which embitters the central fountain and wellspring of our life till gall and wormwood flavor all things. Sin felt and known is a terrible killjoy—as the hot wind of the desert smites the caravan with death and as the sirocco withers every herb of the field, so does a sense of sin dry up peace, blast hope and utterly kill delight! If those who hear me are oppressed with the disorder of sin, they will rejoice greatly as they dwell upon the Words of our text, "I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds."

This disease, moreover, is not only exceedingly painful when the conscience is smarting, but it is altogether incurable, so far as any human ill is concerned. We are told in the 12th verse, "Thus says the Lord, Your bruise is incurable, and your wound is grievous." It would be much easier to heal a man's body of leprosy than to heal a man's soul of sin. It is a disease which takes such fast hold upon the nature and so entirely impregnates the mind with a deadly virus, that it abides in the very essence of manhood and can only be removed by a miracle. It is far more possible for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots, than for a man who is accustomed to do evil, to learn to do well—especially to *love* to do well and find pleasure in it. If this were a matter of custom, or practice, it might be fought with and overcome, but inasmuch as it is a matter of *nature* and the whole head is sick—and the whole heart faint with it—no human power can possibly effect a cure.

Some have wept over sin, but tears are a poor lotion for a disease which penetrates to the core of the heart. Others have shut themselves up alone and retired as hermits to escape from evil by solitude—but they have found no secret place which evil could not enter! Where shall we flee from the presence of *sin*? When it has once laid hold upon our nature, if we take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, our depravity will still be with us. If we cover ourselves with multiplied midnights, sin will only be the more completely in its element. Where can we fly and what can we do to escape from this terrible force, this ever-present mischief? This poison has penetrated all our nature, so that we must confess—

*"It lies not in a single part,
But throughout my frame is spread!
A burning fever in my heart,
A palsy in my head."*

Neither body, soul, nor spirit is free from its taint. At all hours it is our curse and plague. Over all places it casts its defiling influence. In all duties it injures and hinders us. To those who know this, there is a music sweeter than wedding bells in these words—"I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds." The incurable shall be cured! The insatiable malady shall be stopped!

Further on we are told that this disease is one for which there is neither surgeon nor medicine—"There is none to plead your cause, that you may be bound up: you have no healing medicines. Why do you cry for your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable for the multitude of your iniquity: because your sins were increased, I have done these things unto you." What a disease this must be for which there is no physician! The most dire forms of human disease have found, each one, its specialist who has at least *attempted* to perform a cure—but here is a sickness for which there is no physician! Bad men do not pretend to heal the disease of sin. They do not consider it to be a disease and they care not to make men holy. Good men are very far from thinking that they can conquer sin in others, for they cannot even overcome it in themselves and, therefore, they never set up to be physicians in such a case as this. No human hand can bind up this wound! No earthly skill can touch this deeply seated complaint! It is past all mortal surgery. Yes, and the Prophet adds, "There is no healing medicine"—none has ever been known!

The question is often asked, “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?” The answer to that question is, No, there is no balm in Gilead; there never was! Balms for soul-mischiefs do not grow in the fields of Gilead, no, nor on Carmel and Sharon. Physicians of sin-sick souls are not to be found beneath the skies! The other question proves it—“Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?” If there were balms and physicians for her disease, she would have been healed long ago! But neither salve nor surgeon can be found among the sons of men. Search through all the lore of the ancients and you shall discover no remedy for sin! Examine all the inventions of the moderns and you shall light upon no medicine for the love of evil!

Nothing can touch it but one thing, and that is not of earth. The Lord from Heaven, upon the Cross, bled a balm that can cure this wound and by His death He was the death of this disease! But apart from Him no one can bind up our wounds, or mollify them with ointment. He is the one and only Good Samaritan for the spiritually bruised! He, alone, has wine and oil suitable for our wounds! Are my Hearers brought to feel this? Are there any here who have not yet discovered God’s way of salvation and still are well aware that they have none of their own? I am thankful you are brought so far! May it not be long before you go much further and find the Lord Jesus able to heal you of every disease. You are forever lost unless you go to Him, for your sickness is unto death! Your wound is breeding corruption! No one can give you health for your sickness, or healing for your wound but the Lord Jesus, who is able to save unto the uttermost—

*“When wounded sore the stricken soul
Lies bleeding and unbound.
One only hand, a pierced hand,
Can salve the sinner’s wound.”*

This disease is exceedingly dangerous because it impregnates itself into the heart and takes up its abode there. If apparently it is, for a time, driven out, it returns when we least expect it. Like the tree which is cut down, it will sprout and bud, again, at the *scent* of water. It annoys us in every way—it hinders our aspirations—for how to perform that which we would, we find not. It robs us of comfort and makes us groan, being burdened. It enters into our holiest things, chills our prayers, freezes our praise and hampers our usefulness. It is evil, only evil, and that continually! How gracious is it on God’s part to pity a creature infected with this vile distemper! How good of Him to regard our iniquity rather as a sickness to be healed than as a crime to be punished!

I told you of a double mischief in this plight and the second mischief is that this person has been wounded for his sin. His wounds are of no common sort, for we are told in the 14th verse that God Himself has wounded him. The Lord says, “I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquity; because your sins were increased.” God, in infinite mercy, determines to make the sinner see and feel the evil consequences of his sin. And in doing this He makes deep wounds, such as an enemy would give who felt no pity, but only wished to cause pain. The Lord knows that in this work, pity is of no avail and, therefore, He strikes home and cuts deep. He does not play with consciences, but His chastisement is so severe that men think Him cruel.

There is such a thing as cruel kindness and the opposite to it is a loving cruelty, a gracious severity! When the Lord brings sin to remembrance and makes the soul see what an evil it has committed in transgressing against God, then the wound bleeds and the heart breaks. You could not tell the blows of our greatest Friend from those of our worst enemy if you only judged by present feeling. Under the Lord’s hands, the soul is well near driven to despair. Vain hopes are dashed in pieces like potsherds! False lights are quenched in gloom and joys are ground to powder! It is in love that the Lord thus judges us and chastens us that we should not be condemned with the world. The smart is sharp, but salutary. The Lord wounds that He may heal—He kills that He may make alive. His storms wreck us upon the Rock of Salvation and His tempests drive us into the fair havens of lowly faith.

Happy are the men who are thus made unhappy! But for the present they know this not and, therefore, they need the promise, “I will heal you of your wounds, says the Lord.” The blows are not only on the conscience, for when God is in earnest to make men flee from their sins, He will smite them anywhere and everywhere. He takes away the delight of their eyes with a stroke—the child, the husband, the wife, or the friend is laid low—for the Lord will fill our houses with mourning sooner than leave us in carnal security! He takes away the silver and the gold, for He will make us beggars sooner than leave us to worship the idols of the world. The oil vat is burst and the barn is burned, for He will not permit us to bury our souls in earthly things. He brings the body into sickness and the mind into distress. Health departs and the robust worker is stretched upon a sick bed—he groans and moans under the hand of God.

God is, in all this, smiting most cruelly according to the shortsighted judgment of men—but in very truth He is tender and gracious—and is working out the eternal good of the sufferers. Like the surgeon uses a sharp knife and cuts far down into the flesh when he would eradicate some deadly ulcer, even so does the Lord, in true severity, wound the heart until He gets at the root of our self-love. Surely, a man is in a wretched plight when he is diseased with sin and then bruised by Divine chastisement! But, it may be he adds to this, wounds inflicted by himself, for falls into sin are falls that break bones. Many a man will have to go limping to his grave because of his transgressions. Doubtless David did—he never recovered what he lost when he sinned with Bathsheba.

Much pain comes of broken bones, especially when you have broken them, yourself, through your own folly. When you cannot trace an affliction to second causes, nor look upon it as an affliction from God—when you hear Conscience whisper, “You have procured this unto yourself”—then the wormwood is mixed with gall and the suffering knows no solace. If you are poor because you have squandered your substance—if you are sick because you have indulged your appetites or passions—who can give you a word of cheer? If you have lost godly friends whom you did once despise. If you are by sickness, prevented from going up to the house of the Lord which was formerly a weariness to you, is there not a special sharpness in your grief?

Now, put these three things together—bones broken through your own sin; God dealing with you in the way of chastisement—and sin felt in the conscience like a grievous disease—and I think I did not say too much when I described the soul as in a serious plight! God help the man who is in such a case, for none else can. The comfort is that the Lord Jesus *does* help such, for so His gracious promise runs, “I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds.” May the Holy Spirit bless this first head to many of you!

II. Our second consideration fitly falls under the title of A SPECIAL INTERFERENCE. The poor creature is in desperate straits, but the God of pitying Love comes in and I beg you to notice the result. This interference is, first of all, Divine. “I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds.” Only the Infinite Jehovah can speak with that grand Ego and say, “I will,” and again, “I will.” No human physician who was worthy of the name would speak thus. He would humbly say, “I will *attempt* to give you health; I will *endeavor* to heal your wounds.” But the Lord speaks with the positiveness of Omnipotence, for He has the power to make good His Words.

All others fail, but the Lord will do it. You can not heal yourself, but the Lord will heal you. And who is this great “I” that speaks so exceedingly bold? It is none other than He that made the heavens and the earth and sustains all things by the power of His hands! It is the “I AM,” the everlasting Jehovah whose Word has boundless power in it. He appears in the moment of man’s extremity and when there is no helper—His own arm brings salvation. Blessed be the Lord who forgives all our iniquities, who heals all our diseases! Note that because this interference is Divine, it is effectual! The Lord effectually heals all those on whom He lays His hands. How could it be otherwise? What can baffle the Lord? Can anything perplex Infinite Wisdom? Is anything difficult for Almighty Power?

“If it is marvelous in your eyes, should it also be marvelous in My eyes? says the Lord of Hosts.” He speaks and it is done! He commands and it stands fast! Therefore, when God says, “I will restore health unto you,” health will visit the wretch who lies at Death’s door! When He says, “I will heal you of your wounds,” the deep cuts and gashes are closed up at once! Glory be to the name of the Beloved Physician! Poor, troubled Heart, where are you this morning? Do you say, “Nobody can cure me”? You say truly but you can make one exception and that exception is your God! I tell you He can heal you *now*, so that the bones which He has broken shall rejoice! He can take away this disease of yours and give you back wholeness as though your flesh were the flesh of a little child! And you shall be clean—only have faith in Him. He that made you can make you anew!

Do you believe this? Observe that this interposition performs a work which is most complete, for it meets the two-fold mischief. “I will restore health unto you”—that is a great matter. When a man grows healthy, he can bear a wound or two without being too much overburdened. But God does nothing by halves, for having restored health, He then adds, “I will heal you of your wounds.” He will heal both disease and wounds! There is no condition into which the heart can sink but what the Lord is equal to the raising of it from the depths. If you are on the borders of Hades, yet as long as you have not passed the iron gates of Death, your salvation is possible with God! Yes, *simple* and sure with God if you will but trust in His well-beloved Son! What a mercy it is that the Redeemer does not half save us and leave us to finish the work!

He does not commence and do a part of the cure and then say, "I must leave Nature to work out the rest." No, the cure is absolutely complete—"I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds." Oh, sick and wounded one, go just as you are and throw yourself at Jesus' feet and say to Him, "Keep Your promise, Lord! I have come with Your Word in my mouth and in my heart. Be as good as Your own declaration and restore health to me! And heal me of my wounds." Notice, too, how sovereignly free this promise is. It does not say, "I will restore health unto you if—" No, there is no, "if," and there is no mention of a fee! Here is healing for nothing! Jesus comes to give us health without money and without price, without pence or penance, without labor or merit!

I admire, for my part, the splendid, unconditional character of this promise made by Jehovah to His Covenant people. Its tenor is, "I will." There is no sort of condition or demand. "Perhaps" is banished—it is not so much as hinted at! Come, poor guilty Soul, you who have no claim on God, come and plead the Divine, "I will"! You can not have a better handhold of the Covenant Angel in wrestling with Him! God's promise is an unconquerable plea—to use it well will put you among the invincibles. Come then, I pray you, and just say, "Lord, it is so written in Your Word. Therefore, write it, I pray You, on the page of my experience." Notice that although it is thus free and unconditional, yet it is now a matter of Covenant certainty, for God has made the promise and He cannot turn from it.

To every guilty sinner conscious of his guilt, who will come and confess it before God, this promise is made today, "I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds." To you, dear fellow sinners, as much as unto Judah and Israel of old, is this promise sent—if you will bring your sorrow and your sin before the eyes of the all-merciful Father—and plead the precious blood of Christ. No sick one shall be shut out from this hospital of love. If, like Job, the sinner is covered with sores from head to foot and if he only feels at home when he sits on a dunghill and begins to scrape himself with a potsherd, yet the Lord says, "I will heal you"!

If your sins have made you loathsome to yourself till you cry out with one of old, "My wounds stink and are corrupt," still the Lord Jesus is able to save you—no, He *promises* to save you! Grasp the promise by the hand of faith and you shall be made whole! All manner of sin and of iniquity shall be forgiven unto men—yes, and all tendencies to sin and all taint of iniquity shall be removed from men if they will trust the power and promise of the faithful Lord! Sinner, His touch can make you clean at once! Trust that touch, I say, and the miracle shall be worked!

III. But now I come to a third point which is this—A SINGULAR REASON. "I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds, says the Lord; because they called you an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeks after." God never finds a reason for mercy in the sinner's supposed goodness. He looked upon this sick one and He could not find a redeeming feature of beauty by which the blessing might be won. Therefore He did not look at the sinner at all, except to pity him. Is it not a singular thing that the Lord will sooner find a reason for mercy in the lying mouths of the wicked than He will attempt to find it in the supposed righteousness of those who count themselves righteous? He says not, "Because you were holy," or, "Because you had good desires," but, "Because they called you an outcast"!

Who were *they*? Why, the jeerers, mockers and blasphemers! The Lord actually transforms the venom of asps which was under the tongues of the malicious into a reason for His mercy! This clearly shows how God hates the very *notion* of man's *merit*—but it also shows that He will find a reason for mercy *somewhere*! They called poor Zion, when God seemed to have given up on her, "an outcast." They said, "Nobody goes to Jerusalem—there was a temple there once, but it is a wretched heap! Princes once dwelt there, but now the inhabitants of Jerusalem are a set of beggars—no man cares to mix with them—they are the world's castaways."

This awakened the Lord's pity. "Oh," He said, "has it come to this? Have they dared to call My Beloved, 'an outcast,' and say that no man seeks after her? Then I will seek her, and heal her, and restore her, for I cannot endure such taunts." Now, if there is a poor sinner in the world upon whom other sinners, who are just as bad in their heart, begin to vent their scorn and say, "She is an outcast," then the God of Mercy seems to say, "Who are you that you should talk like this? You are as vile, yourselves, and yet you dare to look down upon this poor, selected one, as if she were so much worse than you? Therefore I will save that despised one and will have mercy upon the rejected." God's tastes and man's differ very much. Whom man despises, God delights in—and whom man delights in, God despises.

It often happens that when a transgressor has been put out of the synagogue, Jesus finds him directly. When certain offenders happen to transgress in a particular way, which particular way is observed and denounced by the bulk of ungodly people and when, like so many hounds, they unite to hunt the wretched being to death, the Lord Jehovah inter-

poses to save, as if He would say, “Why do you do this, you hypocrites? Why do you denounce those whose sins are no viler than your own?” I believe the Lord Jesus often stands as He did with the woman taken in adultery, and cries, “He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.” Still, He convicts men in their consciences and in sweetness of mercy turns to the poor, condemned one, and says, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”

Where are you, poor hunted Sinner? You are somewhere or other in the crowd, I know. They told you yesterday that they would never associate with you again. You do not deny your wickedness—still, it is not for your fellow sinners to be hard with you, for they are not your judges. By faith take this promise to yourself—“I will restore health unto you because they called you an outcast.” You may get a good deal out of it if you have but faith to do so! Now that the world has cast you out, the Church shall take you in! Now that the devil seems tired of you, Christ shall begin with you! Now that the door is shut against you by those who once delighted in you, Christ’s door is open to receive you! “Because they called you an outcast,” He calls you to approach Him!

But this is not the full meaning of the text. I think it means that God’s jealousy is awakened against those who despise His people and speak ill of them. Whatever Zion might be, it was still the palace of God. However guilty Jerusalem might have become, it was still the Holy City, the dwelling place of the great King. The Lord, for a while, when He was very angry with Jerusalem on account of its great iniquity, gave it over to the destroyer and it was laid waste and burned with fire. But when He heard the heathen everywhere saying, “As for those people, they are outcasts, and as for that city, no man seeks after it”—then the Lord said to Himself, “But they are My people and I will not have them called outcasts. And this is My city and I will not have it said that no man seeks after it. Her name shall be called Hephzibah and her land Beulah, for the Lord delights in her.”

His love burned like fire and kindled into a flame of jealousy. And He said, “I will restore health to her, and shut the mouths of her adversaries.” It is one thing for a father to chasten his boy, but if, when he is out in the streets, a stranger begins to kick him, his father declares that it shall not be. He awakens himself to defend his child, the same child that just now he smote so heavily! A man might complain of his wife if she has vexed him, but I suppose the quickest way to put him in good temper with her would be for somebody else to find fault with her! “What business is that of yours?” he asks. “I will not have my wife abused—no man shall speak against her in my presence.” That is a fair parallel to the case of our God. He will chasten His people in measure, but the moment that their enemies call them outcasts, He turns His anger another way and releases His people!

Oh, how blessedly does good come out of evil! How graciously He causes the wrath of man to praise Him! He restores health to Zion and heals her wounds because she is called an outcast. I always have great hope for the entire Church of Christ when the ungodly begin to rail and revile. They say, “Christianity has lost its power! The Church is an old effete institution! No people of culture and intelligence keep to the old Book and the old faith. The religion of Jesus is a by-word and a proverb among learned men.” And then I am confident that God will return to His Church and magnify His truth! As surely as He lives, He will give us bright days and glorious days because they call His true Church an outcast, whom no man seeks after. I like to read in man’s black book, for man’s reviling will lead to the speedier fulfillment of God’s glorious promises—

*“Let Zion’s foes be filled with shame—
Her sons are blessed of God!
Though scoffers now despise their name,
The Lord shall break their rod.
Oh, would our God to Zion turn,
God with salvation clad,
Then Judah’s harps should music learn,
And Israel be glad.”*

Appropriate the text personally, any of you who have been made to feel that you are outcasts. One said to me the other day, talking of her sin and of her repentance, “Yet, Sir, I am an outcast.” That word pierced my heart like a dagger. I said, “Yes, but the Church of Christ was made on purpose to be a home for outcasts—here is a new household for you, new Brothers and Sisters for you, a new future for you—for now you are one of the solitary ones whom the Lord will set in families.” Some of us were never called outcasts by other people, but we thought ourselves such. I once felt like Cain, as if God had set a mark upon me, never to bless me. I felt like an outlaw, condemned and cast away. But when I

reached that point, the Lord's mercy revealed itself to me! He seemed to say, "Because you have called yourself an outcast, therefore will I restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds."

I should like to say a word that would be comforting to poor hearts that are greatly downtrodden. I do not feel able to preach at all, for I am weak and weary. But I always find, when I am weak, the Lord says something by me which is just the thing needed by some poor devil-hunted soul that cannot find rest. I think the Lord puts the trumpet out of order on purpose to draw from it a different note from what it gives when it is in proper condition—a note that may precisely suit some weary ears that could not listen to any other sound. May the Holy Spirit cause it to be so now!

IV. I am going to finish, in the fourth place, by giving A LITTLE SUITABLE ADVICE. I will suppose that I have those before me who have felt their disease and their wound and have been healed by the God of Mercy. I would recommend them to attend to certain matters. The first thing is take care that you live very near your Physician. I notice that patients come up from the country, when they are suffering with serious complaints, and they take lodgings near a medical man who is in high esteem for such cases as theirs. They leave the comforts of home and let their business go because life is precious—and they need a helper close at hand. No one blames them for this. In fact, we count them wise. Let us learn wisdom from their example.

Now, the Lord has healed your wound and restored health to you, therefore abide in Him. Never leave Him, nor live far away from Him, for this old disease of yours may break out, all of a sudden, and it will be well to have the Healer close at hand. It will be best to constantly entertain Him beneath your roof and within your heart, for His Presence is the wellspring of health to the soul. Abide perpetually with Christ and then the sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night! Dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, there shall be no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. This disease of sin may cause eruptions when we least expect them—when we suppose that the evil leaven will work no more, it may suddenly gather force and the whole body of our nature will be in a ferment with iniquity. The danger is near. Abide, therefore, near your Security. Live with Him who renews your youth like the eagle's and restores your soul!

I recommend you often put yourself under His searching examination. Go to this great Physician and ask Him to look into your hidden parts—to search you and try you—and see what wicked way may be in you, that He may lead you in the way everlasting. A man may have a deadly disease upon him and scarcely be aware of it because no skilled person has looked upon him and observed his symptoms! And in spiritual things this is a common mischief to which multitudes fall prey! Invite, therefore, the eyes of the Lord Jesus, for in our most honest searches we miss much and we are naturally prejudiced in our own favor, so that we are pretty sure to give a verdict on our own side—and this may lead to final and fatal self-delusion! If we entrust the search to Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, we shall not be deceived! I recommend to you, from personal experience, to consult with this Doctor every day.

It is a wise thing, before you go downstairs into the world's tainted atmosphere, to take a drink of His *Elixir Vitae* in the form of renewed faith in Him. I am sure, at night, it is an admirable thing to purge the soul of all the perilous stuff which has accumulated through the day by full confession and renewed confidence. Lay bare your case before Him! Conceal nothing. Beg Him to deal with you according to His knowledge of your case. Make a clean breast that Christ may make a sure cure. Conceal no symptom, however threatening, but tell Him the truth. He cannot be deceived—do not attempt it—but tell every secret thing before His all-surveying gaze. Entreat Him to search both thoughts and affections, designs and motives. The evil may gather in secret places unless His discerning eyes shall detect the growing danger and prevent it by immediate action.

Then I very strongly recommend you always to obey the prescriptions of the great Healer. "Whatever He says unto you, do it." Do not follow a part of His orders and neglect the rest. The Lord Jesus must be received as a whole, or not at all. Say not, "This is non-essential," for such a speech is flat rebellion! I do not believe in any Words of our Lord being non-essential. They may not be essential to our *salvation*, but every Word of Christ is essential to our spiritual health! Neither can we disregard the least of His precepts without suffering loss through our disobedience. Be very careful that you follow the Lamb wherever He goes—no other kind of walking is safe in such a world as this. Do *what* He bids you, *as* He bids you and it shall be well with you.

Take care, also, to exercise great confidence in this Physician. Rely upon Him without stint or question. Your cure is working wondrously when you trust in Jesus heartily. Never doubt the Savior's power to make you perfectly whole. Our

Lord can never be baffled—though all diseases should meet in one person, He would overcome them all! Stick to this with unyielding assurance. Let not the devil force you to doubt the boundless power of your Lord. When our Lord Jesus set up to be Savior, He understood the work upon which He entered. His is no apprenticed hand. He has never had a failure! Never did a soul trust Him for salvation and remain unsaved—and you shall not be the first to defeat His skill! Trust Him with all your heart. There is no cause to doubt. *Distrust* is what you have to fear—faith is your strength.

When you are healed, as I trust you are, already, speak well of your Benefactor. Make a point of going round to your neighbors, if you find them sick, and telling them how you have been healed! Thus will you make to your Lord a name of honor and renown. Tell all men what the Lord has done for you. I know you can tell them that story though you are no orator. When you were restored from sickness the other day, you were quite able to inform your friends as to that new medicine which acted like a charm—and you found a tongue to speak well of your doctor—and I am sure you have ability enough to declare the wonderful works of the Lord in your case.

“Oh, but I could not embellish the tale!” Do not attempt to *embellish* it, for that would only spoil it! Tell the story as simply as possible. I think it is of Mr. Cecil that I have read the following incident. A friend came from some distance to inform him of a medicine which was to relieve him of his disorder. This friend told him all about it and, having done so, entered into conversation upon the current matters of the day. The result was that Mr. Cecil was greatly interested in the talk and when his friend was gone, he quite forgot every ingredient of the wonderful medicine. Beware of allowing the many things to drive the one thing necessary out of your friend’s mind! When we preach fine sermons our hearers say, “That was prettily put.” They do not so much notice *what* we taught as *how* we taught it—and this is a great evil! Even so, if you go and talk about your salvation to your neighbor and narrate it eloquently, she will say, “Mrs. So-and-So has been here and told me about her conversion in such beautiful language! I do not know that I ever heard such elegant sentences. It was most delightful to hear her.” What did she say? “I do not know what she said, but it was very beautiful.”

Thus many a sermon or Sunday school address is overlaid and buried under its own robes! Pity that those we seek to bless should be more taken up with our pretty words than with our adorable Master! I hope I have not, this morning, fallen into the evil which I lament. Lest I should have done so in any measure I would make my text, my banner, and display it again. The Lord has said, “I will restore health unto you, and heal you of your wounds.” I believed that Word of God when I was sick and wounded and, “the Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.”

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