

A DELICIOUS EXPERIENCE

NO. 2090

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in
My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest.”
Hebrews 4:3.*

LAST Sabbath we meditated upon the fact that those who came out of Egypt did not enter into the rest of God. “They could not enter in because of unbelief.” Today I shall not seek so much to warn as to encourage, while we look at the way by which we can enter into the true rest. The faithful minister of God should be like the parent birds, who, when their young are old enough for flight, sometimes drive them from the nest to make them fly. And, at other times, go before them, twittering and stretching out their wings, to tempt their callow offspring to try the air.

Thus, at times, we endeavor to *drive* you to and at others we try to *draw* you to the flight of faith. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade—knowing the joys of true religion, we entreat. By all means we would induce men to quit the nest of their old trust and fly to Christ by faith. If God will bless the Word, so that you put your trust in Christ, we shall be content. No, more—our cup will run over with gratitude for your salvation.

In the text, we have a declaration of experience, “We which have believed do enter into rest,” to which is very singularly added, “As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.” The happy declaration is supported by the tremendous oath of judgment, which shut out the unbelieving race. There is usually a promise embedded in a threat, like gold in quartz—just as there is generally a threat as the reverse of the golden coin of promise. When we read, in the opening chapters of the Bible, “In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die,” it was implied, was it not, that if they did not eat they should live?

Though that promise was not stated in words, it was implied in the threat. So here, when we read, “I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into My rest,” while we are taught that some could not enter in because of unbelief, it is implied in it that Believers would enter in. Those who have faith in the Divine promise shall enter in. If unbelief shuts men out, then faith is the door of entrance to those who have it. I beg you to grasp the kernel of promise which lies whole and safe within the shell of the threat.

God swore of those unbelieving Jews that they should not enter in but He had declared that some should enter in. Therefore a promise is left which will be fulfilled in those who have faith and so are the true seed of faithful Abraham. These shall enter in. And certain of them in the text declare that they have done so—“We which have believed do enter into rest.” I venture to say that the threat in this case even gives a touch of rose color to the promise, for it runs thus, “If they shall enter into My rest.” Whereas the declaration only says, “rest”—“we which have believed do enter into rest,” the word, “My” is added. That little word is like a bright gleam amidst the blackness of the tempest. Oh, the glory of that which God calls “My rest”!

There is such a thing as the rest of God and there is such a thing as our entering into it. I call your attention to the fact that the two typical rests of the Old Testament were rests of God. And yet they were rests into which God's people were to enter. The first rest was the rest of creation. When God had finished all His work upon this habitable globe He rested. But what follows? “He rested on the seventh day and hallowed it.” To what end? That we might rest also. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work—but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.”

And therefore, because it is His Sabbath, He would have us share in it. “In it you shall not do any work.” It was a day sacred to holy rest. God will not rest alone. He will have His people in fellowship with Him. “There remains a rest to the people of God”—because God has His Sabbath. The other rest was the promised land, of which Mount Zion was chosen to be the center. We read in Psalm 132, “For the Lord has chosen Zion. He has desired it for His habitation. This is

My rest forever: here will I dwell. For I have desired it.” Where the Lord rested, there He gave His people rest. For He adds, “I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.”

Thus God and His Church are associated in happy fellowship. Neither the day nor the land is used as a type of rest with reference to God alone. He will have His people enter into His rest.

The true rest of God lies higher than times and places. The Lord God rests in the Person of Jesus—in Him He is well pleased. The Lord speaks of Him as, “My Elect, in whom My soul delights.” In the Person of His Son, the heart of the Father finds perpetual joy—“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” But we also behold His Glory—“The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” By faith we see that in Him which gives rest to our heart. Therefore was Jesus given—“This man shall be the peace.” The Lord Jesus is our true Noah, in whom we find safety and rest. He was both given in birth and given up in death to be the rest of weary souls.

Beloved, this morning I earnestly pray that you may be able to join in the declaration of the Apostle Paul in the words before us. Though nearly nineteen hundred years have passed away, it is still true of those who believe, that they enter into rest. Some of us are now resting where the Lord rests and our rest is daily deepening, so that before long it will only need a moment’s change and we shall rest with God in Glory.

May the Holy Spirit direct us, while we shall, first, notice the people to whom this experience is confined—“They which have believed do enter into rest.” Secondly, the experience itself—“We do enter into rest.” And thirdly, the personal assertion of this experience—we declare, without hesitation, that having believed we do enter into rest!

I. Follow me in meditation and may the Spirit of God bless it to our souls, while we consider **THE PEOPLE TO WHOM THIS EXPERIENCE IS CONFINED.** They rest and no one else—they rest, because they have believed. As surely as unbelief shuts out, so surely does faith shut in.

What is to believe? To believe is, first of all, to accept as true, the Revelation of God. To give unfeigned assent and consent to all that God has made known in His Word and especially to believe that He was, “in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” We cannot take the further step of trust unless, first, we give credence to the testimony of God. In reference to the work of our Lord Jesus, we must, first, accept the facts concerning Him and the witness of God about Him or we cannot go further. What God says is true and to us it is true because God says it. We set to our seal that God Himself is true. We bow our judgments, our questionings, our consciences, our faith, before the Throne of the Lord God of Truth. This is an essential groundwork for saving faith.

The operative point of faith is the next one—we trust ourselves with Him who is revealed—thus we carry our belief of Truth of God to its practical conclusion. We come—just as we are—to the Savior who bids us come. We rely for our salvation and acceptance with God upon the Lord Jesus Christ as the Father reveals Him. We see in Him God’s appointed Messenger of Divine Grace. We perceive Him to be our Covenant Head and representative and we rejoice to stand or fall with Him. Chiefly do we receive Him as our Substitute and, in consequence, our Sacrifice. We believe in Him as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree—as made sin for us, though He knew no sin—that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

It is of the essence of faith that we trust ourselves with the Lord Jesus, because of His finished work on our behalf. We trust Jesus in the faithfulness of God to the promises made to us in Christ Jesus. We lean upon the sure Word of God and work of Jesus. He has not the faith which will bring him to Heaven who does not wholly trust himself with God in Christ Jesus. Out of this trust must come action agreeable thereunto. He that trusts Christ appropriates to himself the blessings contained in Him and henceforth they become his heart’s treasure. And this changes the whole tone of his life.

He that trusts in Christ becomes obedient to his Savior’s Word—just as the sailor who trusts his pilot yields to him the steering of the ship. He that has real faith in the unseen is willing to forego the pleasure and the profit of that which is seen and temporal, so far as it comes in conflict with that kingdom of God. He sees all that he needs in Jesus and sets great store by Him. For he believes that, “it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. And of His fullness have all we received and grace for grace.” Faith is an eye to see with and a hand to grasp with.

Faith joyfully accepts all that Jesus brings her and for His sake she quits all other confidences. To be married to Christ, she forsakes all other trusts and delights. This leads the Believer to flee from sin—he sees that no good can come thereby but only deadly evil. Moved by gratitude, he reckons himself dead to the world, because Jesus died—and alive unto God, because the life of Christ has quickened him. This leads to a daily rejoicing in Christ. For in proportion as we

trust the Lord and are governed by that trust, we become happy in the Lord. When we can say, “He is all my salvation and all my desire,” we shall not be afraid even on our death bed. So far as I am trusting, I am resting.

According to the statement of the writer of this Epistle, faith, wherever it exists, brings with it rest. Let me sketch three or four cases in proof, such as I have seen myself. Yonder is a man who has come to a right idea of his guilt before God. He went on merrily enough for years, till the Holy Spirit shone into his soul and caused him to see the evil of his life. He began to think. Looking back upon his past conduct, he became uneasy. He felt that he had lived without God and therefore he had lived an unprofitable life towards his best Friend. He became greatly disturbed in spirit, not only by day but even by night—his dreams were tinged with fear. He felt that he was all wrong and he feared he could never be set right.

In such a condition rest is out of the question! What is to be done? In eager desire he goes from one place of worship to another and he reads the Scriptures and godly books. But he finds no rest and he will find none until he begins to see Jesus. How often have I seen the enlightenment which comes of faith, when a man sees that God is full of love towards him, that He is willing to receive him guilty as he is and to blot out all his sin for Jesus’ sake. When a convicted sinner realizes that Christ on the tree bore the penalty of his transgressions—then, I say, an enlightenment comes over his soul!

I have seen the countenance transfigured as the Divine witness has shone into the mind. It has been to the man as when the sun arises and the shadows flee. When his heart has said, “Christ for me,” then has He led His captivity captive. An overpowering delight has filled the soul, has flashed from the eyes, shone forth in every feature and overflowed at the lips. Oh, the joy of knowing by faith that Christ has saved me, that in him I am reconciled to God! Nothing else will give us this rest but confidence in God in Christ Jesus.

Observe another case. This person was once a Christian professor, leading the way in public service. But he declined gradually and at last he fell into grievous open sin. He has been cut off from the visible Church. And necessarily so, for he has wandered into sinful habits and mixed with evil associates. He is ill at ease. Like an unquiet spirit, he is seeking rest and finding none. If there had been nothing of Divine Grace in his heart, he might have been satisfied with the husks of the world. But he has enough Grace remaining in him to make him miserable.

His foot finds no resting place. He is not willing, as yet, to go back to the Church. And yet he cannot be content away from the fold. He is as a bird which has wandered from its nest, or a dog which has lost its master. It is only as that man beholds again the vision of the Crucified Lover of his soul that he will see a hope of rest. He must again see his God, clothed in human flesh, bleeding and dying for him. In that sight, alone, will he find a window opened in Heaven through which a backslider’s prayer may enter. It is the eye of Jesus which makes Peter repent and the voice of Jesus which makes Peter confess his love.

I invite any who are in a backsliding condition to come with weeping to the pardoning Savior. Do not distrust Him because of your sin but trust Him because of His merit. Come back, come back to your first Husband. For it was better with you then than now! Say, “Return unto your rest, O my Soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.” Turn to the way of faith, for this is the homeward path.

I have seen the like result of faith in another case, which is very different from the last. A Christian man endowed with large power of thought, in an evil hour, quitted his moorings and drifted out into the deep. He saw others sailing on the great and wide sea and he thought it a brave thing to imitate them. Today he has lost his compass and does not believe in his chart. He neither knows what he *does* believe, nor what he *should* believe—his intellect is like a carousel—his belief twists about like a weathercock. All around him is a haze and all beneath him is quicksand. He fears that before long there will remain in his mind no capacity to separate fact from fiction. He fears that there is no truth. All doctrine has become to him as the baseless fabric of a vision. Only one thing he knows—he is not happy and he views with regret the restfulness of former days. My distracted Brother, your only hope of intellectual rest lies in believing your God. Oh, that you would subject your intellect to the Holy Spirit! Come, cast away your pride and sit at the feet of Jesus. Become a little child, that you may enter the kingdom.

Have you not had enough of this plague of the period—the thing which betrays its character by calling itself “honest doubt”? While you are your own guide, you will go astray. But when you will place your hand in that Hand which bears the nail print, you shall be safe and happy. Then will you sing, “He leads me beside the still waters.” There is sound intellectual rest to be had by him who will submit himself to the infallible teaching of God and will wait from day to day

upon the Holy Spirit for light upon his path. “We which have believed do enter into rest,” and the rest is not that of ignorance and agnosticism but of clear knowledge, for we know and have believed the love which God has towards us.

Our standing is on the rock of a revelation which has been made over again in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. While those who rely on their culture are as boats driven upon the rocks, we stand on safe ground and are not shaken.

Let me give you one more picture. Tread softly, for the shadow of death is over yonder bed! Weakness will scarce bear the sound of your footfall. His pulse is faint and few, the man is dying! Look at how his tender wife wipes the death sweat from his brow! Come here, you philosophers and cheer his last hours with the joys of evolution! Come, you advocates of a new theology and cheer him with your criticisms! Poor Heart, he sees no consolation in all that you can set before him. He turns himself to the Lord Jesus and cries—“Hold Your Cross before my closing eyes. Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. Heavens’ morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee—in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.”

If he can but see “the sacred Head once wounded,” he will have rest. How sweet! How deep! How perfect that rest will be! Men die not when they breathe their last with the living Savior near them. In unruffled calm the spirit takes its flight from earth and that Word is fulfilled, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors.” Behold, how they bathe their souls in seas of heavenly rest. They have obtained joy and gladness—and sorrow and sighing have fled away. In ten thousand thousand instances they that have believed have, even in their mortal agony, entered into rest. Blessed be the Lord for this!

Thus have I set before you who these people are. They are not those who merely *talk* of religion but they have true faith in God. They do not hesitate and delay but they have once and for all believed and are now walking by faith. They are not questioners—they believe God with a simple, child-like confidence. These are they that enter into rest and nobody else will ever do so. I wish some of you would take this decisive step and end this wretched pretense of wisdom, this self-conceited trust in “culture”—for it will be your greatest gain in life to trust your God and enter into rest.

II. Our second point is THE EXPERIENCE ITSELF—“We which have believed do enter into rest.” I shall now speak of what I know of a surety and of what many of you know, also. We will propound no theory and indulge no imagination but keep to matters of fact.

Wherein do we rest? Brethren, we rest where God rests—that is in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a wondrous Personality we see in Him! As God, He is the infinite delight of the Father. As personified Wisdom, our Lord Jesus says, “I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” We cannot tell how much the Father loves Him and how perfectly He rests in Him. When God looked upon fallen man He could not rest in *him*, for it repented Him that He had made man upon the face of the earth. There was one Man, only, upon whom the Father’s eye rested with pleasure. And even in the foresight of His birth and death He took pleasure in Him.

When Noah presented the sacrifice which symbolized the atonement, we read that the Lord smelled a sweet savor of rest. The Father takes an intense delight in the glorious Person of the Lord Jesus. He cannot rest in the creation which is made subject to vanity. He cannot rest in fallen man but He rests in One that is near akin to Him and at the same time near akin to us. Jesus counts it not robbery to be equal with God and yet counts it not beneath Him to be made like ourselves. To the Father and to us He is the place of our common rest. How happy are we to find rest in a Person! This is warm and substantial comfort. You cannot rest in the words of a doctrine as you can in the bosom of a person.

Take a poor child that is lost in the street. Talk to it upon cheering themes. These ought to comfort it. But the little one goes on crying. Sing to it and reason with it. It is all in vain. Run, fetch its mother! See how it smiles! It nestles in her bosom and is at rest. A person yields to heart comfort. So it is with our Lord Jesus Christ. In life, in death—it is a delightful thought that our salvation rests in the hands of a living, loving Personality. We depend upon a Divine and human Person, an accessible Helper, to whom we may come at all times. Oh, yes, “we which have believed do enter into rest” in the Person of the Well-beloved!

Next, we rest in His work. That work I can only roughly outline to you. It was a life of perfect obedience, completed by a death of shame and agony. The life and the death were all for us—in our place He obeyed and suffered. “It pleased the Father to bruise Him. He has put Him to grief.” And because of that bruising and grief, it is written, “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake. He will magnify the Law and make it honorable.” Sinners are reconciled to God

and all offense is removed. Such rest does the Father find in the life and death of His well-beloved Son that He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. God rests in the work of Christ. And so do we.

Beloved, when you get a faith's view of the work of the Redeemer, do you not feel that all your fears and forebodings are sweetly laid to rest? The full Atonement, the perfect Righteousness, the glorious Victory, are not these quiet resting places? The Covenant of Grace and all the blessings it contains—are not these a joy forever? Can you not say of the Word of the Lord—

*“My faith can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die”?*

I scarcely need to mention, as a separate item, the perpetual *life* of Christ. We have not a dead Savior. I heard one speaking about the blood of Christ as a dead thing. But indeed that in which we trust has a living efficacy. Beloved, the blood of Christ is the blood of a *living* Christ. He died but not as a bullock dies at the altar. For He died to live again, which the bullock could not do. We trust in Him who lives and was dead and is alive forevermore. Because He lives we shall live, also. Lift up your eyes and see your Lord upon the Throne! Behold Him risen from the dead and know that He is coming soon, in all His Glory, to receive you unto Himself. I ask you if you cannot find perfect rest in the thought that He ever lives and is therefore able to save to the uttermost?

Yes, preach Christ to the soul—He is true balm for its wounds. The love of Jesus is a pillow for every aching head. Let our Lord be near and, like John, we find rest upon His bosom. Do you ask me what is comprehended in this rest? I answer—all things. Here we lay every burden down. Personally I do at this moment rest in Jesus as to all the past. Whatever there has been of sin to grieve over, whatever of mistakes, folly, or wrong—all this is no more my load, for it was laid on Jesus as my Scapegoat and He carried it away into the wilderness of forgetfulness. He has finished transgression and made an end of sin.

I also rest in Him in reference to the present. Whatever there may be of evil currently, or of need pressing, or of danger secret, or of slander foul, I leave all with Him in whom my soul reposes, who says to me, “Let not your heart be troubled.” They say there is a skeleton in every closet. I know of none in mine—yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil. We are set free from present fret and worry by that dear hand which rules all things and causes all things to work together for good. Concerning today we enter into rest.

But there is the future. We foolishly try to look through the veil which hides the morrow from our view. But it is all in vain. Why should we wish to know what God conceals? It is known to our Father in Heaven. And that is enough for our faith. We can leave the future where we leave the past. He that believes thus enters into rest as to the past, the present and the future. We cast all our care on our Lord, for He cares for us. The poor commits himself unto God. And when he has so done, he is quiet and his soul is even as a weaned child. I see no cloud in my sky—Jesus fills it all. How can the children of the bride-chamber mourn while the Bridegroom is with them? Let us rest and rejoice.

What are the excellencies of this rest which comes by believing? I answer, they are very many. It brings us honor. “Unto you that believe, He is an honor.” It is a glorious thing to rest where God rests. Many people would give their eyes to be invited to stay with the Queen. But, oh, to dwell where God dwells, and to rejoice where God rejoices! Every Believer has this dignity.

This rest is also a wonderful source of strength. When the tree strikes deep root it gets vigor for fruitage. No man has any great power to work successfully while he is worried. The fulcrum must rest, or the lever will not work. Fret creates a great leakage in a man and his force runs away uselessly. But when care is ended and he enters into rest with Christ, then all the force and energy of his being turns to holy service for God and man. Rest in Christ Jesus also gives an incentive to diligence. For we feel that since we have such sweet rest ourselves, we would wish others to have it. We tell the news which gladdens us. We cannot hide from the multitudes around us the glad tidings which have charmed away our griefs.

This rest also brightens life. When you enter into rest, life is not a dull and dreary round, such as the blind horse finds at the mill. Life is not a chain, which we must drag behind us—but wings on which we soar into the joyous blue and hold converse with the choristers of Heaven. I know not how to express my thankfulness that ever I had a being, seeing it is crowned with well-being in Christ Jesus. I could not say, “It is something better not to be.” No, No, life is a favor now that I know my Lord. This rest in Christ is a fair foretaste of Heaven. We eat from the tables of celestials. “Men

did eat angels' food" in the wilderness. And so do we today. We drink from the chalices of the glorified. When you rest in Christ you know what Heaven's repose must be like and your heart is glad.

What are the limits of this rest? We may place them where we will—"According to your faith, so be it unto you." "We which have believed do enter into rest." It is an entrance and no more as yet. But when an Israelite had an entrance into Canaan, it was his own fault if he did not penetrate the interior and traverse the land from Dan to Beersheba. "Ask, and you shall receive." "All things are possible to him that believes." If you are not perfectly restful, it is not the fault of the rest. If you are not as restful in heart as saints in Heaven, you have only yourself to blame.

You have the same ground for rest as they have and the same Lord by His Presence and power to work repose in your spirit—

*"How sweetly rest Your saints above,
Which in Your bosom lie!
The Church below does rest in hope
Of that felicity."*

There is not a joy in the Covenant of Grace but what you may have, if you have faith enough to lay hold upon it. There is an unlimited range of bliss before you—arise and take possession in the name of God. For it is all yours.

But still, for the most part here below all that we can get is an *entrance*—and we are happy if it is administered to us abundantly. We cross the threshold of our Father's house and take the first chair in the first room we come to—this is a great privilege. But let us go further in and press into His Presence-chamber. Anyhow, let us say, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

III. Under the third head I must draw your attention to THE PERSONAL ASSERTION OF THIS EXPERIENCE—"We which have believed do enter into rest." I like the plain and positive speech of the Apostle for himself and his friends. If the Apostle had belonged to the same school as some of our good but weak Brethren, he would have said, "We that have believed hope that we may some day know a little of what the rest of faith means. We sometimes hope but more often fear. We are afraid to believe too certainly, lest it should be presumption. We sometimes indulge a faint hope that ultimately we may find rest."

This is very weak milk-and-water, and no one will ever get much joy out of it. Let us attain to something better than this. Paul did not talk so. He said, "We which have believed do enter into rest"—and he said no more than is true. Some dog barks at me. I know what its bark means. My opponent cries, "You are too dogmatic and too positive." To which I reply, "I cannot help being dogmatic when I say that I see what I know I have seen, and I declare that I feel what I know I am feeling." Would you have me doubt my own consciousness? I know whether I am at rest or not.

I do not invite any of you to say that faith gives you peace unless it does so. It must be a matter of fact. We want no empty profession. I remember hearing of a pious minister who was asked to speak one day upon the subject of joy in God. He stood up and said, "I am sorry that I have been requested to speak upon this topic. For the fact is, I am not walking in the light but I am crying, 'Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation.' I have grieved my heavenly Father and I am in the dark." He sat down and sobbed. And so did all his Brethren.

This honest confession did far more good than if he had patched up a tale and told of some stale experience years before. If you have not entered into rest, do not say that you have. Fictitious experience is dangerous to the forger of it. Experience borrowed from other people is like the borrowed axe, sure to fall into the ditch and make its user cry, "Alas,"

"Well," cries one, "we do not rest, we are hard at work for our Lord." And so am I. But this is rest to me, now that I am at peace with God. The labor of love for Christ is only another word for rest. He says, "Take My yoke upon you: and you shall find rest unto your souls." Carry Christ's burden and your shoulders shall have rest. We do not mean sleep or idleness when we speak of rest—that is not rest but *rust*. Our rest is found in the *service* of God.

"Oh," says one, "I have such a world of trouble!" Do you think you are the only one? Some time ago I met with a certain younger brother who has been made to suffer through taking the right side in the Down-Grade controversy. He wrote to me of his sore trials. I sympathized with him. But I reminded him that he was not alone in them. When Montezuma was being roasted alive by the Spaniards, one of his nobles, who was being tortured with him, cried out in his agonies. The king bade him be quiet, adding, "Do you think that I am on a bed of roses?" No, my Friend, you are by no means alone.

Tribulation is no strange thing to the favorites of Heaven. Is it, therefore, impossible to rest? By no means. Does not our Lord say, "In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." The holy children enjoy their greatest peace in the seven-times heated furnace. Our greatest joys swim on the crests of the huge billows of trouble. Through much tribulation we come to the kingdom and even in the midst of that tribulation, we glory, since we enter into rest.

"Oh," says one, "I find a conflict going on within me." Do you? So do I. Who does not feel a struggle while pressing forward towards perfection? Can there be rest where there is conflict? I answer, Assuredly. He that is at rest in his heart is the man to fight. While he cries, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" he is able at once to add, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed." Our confidence in Christ is not shaken, though all confidence in ourselves is gone. The more we see of our wretchedness and vileness by nature, the more we rest in Jesus.

"Oh," cries one, "sometimes my rest is broken." So it may be and yet you may have it still. Put the pieces together again and have them well riveted. Every now and then a child of God may fail as to the *strength* of his faith and then he loses rest for a while. But as the *Object* of his faith does not fail—since Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever—his rest soon comes back. Take down your harp. Your peace is like a river and it flows with fresh waters. We have peace and we must bear witness to it. For it is with many of us a matter of fact that by believing we enter into rest.

This declaration, that we have rest, should always be made with a holy purpose. We must not go about boasting of our peace. That is what little children do who know no better—they say, "Look at my new shoes." There are many silly children nowadays who cry, "Look, how perfect I am!" Dear Child, it will be better for you to be seen and not heard. When you bear witness to your own enjoyment of the rest of faith, let it be your purpose, first, to glorify God who has given you this rest. And next, that you may convince others that such a rest is possible. How can we hope to convince others that there is the rest of faith, unless we enjoy it ourselves?

Not long ago, one of our ministers was preaching upon salvation and the work of the Spirit in the heart, when one of the congregation rose and asked him respectfully, "Sir, do you know all this by the report of others, or has this taken place in your own experience?" The preacher was by no means put about by the question but rather rejoiced in it. For he could honestly reply, "I have trusted Christ. I am saved and I know and feel the peace which results therefrom." If he could not have made that solemn statement, he would have had no influence over the person who had put the question.

If we show by our daily lives that we rest in Christ, we shall be more likely to draw troubled ones to Jesus. The man who was born blind, when his eyes were opened, did not hesitate to say, "One thing I know: whereas I was blind, now I see." This was a powerful argument to prove the power and Godhead of Him who had opened his eyes.

Brethren, if you can say as much as this—"By believing I have entered into rest," be thankful. For this privilege is a *gift of love*. It is a wonderful instance of Sovereign Grace that such unworthy ones as we are should enter into God's rest. But if you cannot say it, do not despair. Make it a point of question with yourself, "Why cannot I thus speak? Why have I not entered into rest? Is it because I have not believed?" Perhaps some fault of character may prevent your enjoying perfect rest. See where that flaw is. Are you living in any sin? If so, the sun may have risen, but if there is a bandage over your eyes, you will still be in the dark. Get rid of that which blinds the eye.

Or, are you trusting *yourself* as well as trusting in Christ? Are you relying on your *experience*? Then I do not wonder if you miss the rest of faith. Get rid of all that spoils the simplicity of your faith. Come to the Lord anew this morning. Possibly you are sickly in body and this may cause you discomfort for which you cannot otherwise account. Never mind, you may come just as you are, with all your sickness, weakness, or family trouble, and you may now rest in the Lord. Tell your grief to Jesus and He will breathe on you and say, "Peace be unto you."

We ought to be at rest—we err when we are not. A child of God should not leave his bedroom in the morning without being on good terms with his God. We should not dare to go into the world and feel, "I am out of harmony with my Lord. All is not right between God and my soul." A husband, if perhaps he has had a difference with his wife, will not feel happy in going to business while that little cloud remains. In domestic life we are wise if we square all such matters before we separate. Let us part with a kiss.

This method of unbroken fellowship should be carefully maintained towards God. Be at perfect rest with Him. "Acquaint yourself with Him and be at peace, for thereby good shall come unto you." Set all straight today so that you can

say, “We which have believed do enter into rest.” And when that is done, if anything should again happen to break the golden chain, renew it by faith. For by faith alone we stand. Destroy, by the power of God’s Spirit, everything which weakens faith. For this will disturb your rest in God.

Oh, that all the way between here and Heaven we may journey on with restful hearts, led beside the still waters! I have seen, in an old book, a portrait of Mr. Sibbs, the famous Puritan, and it says at the bottom of the likeness, “Heaven was in him before he was in Heaven.” Now, that must be so with us—for nobody gets into Heaven who does not get Heaven into himself first. Oh, to get Heaven into us this morning and keep it there forever!

“Alas,” cries one, “I wish I had the rest you speak of but I cannot find it, though I study much and work hard.” Harken to a parable—A little bird of the air found itself in a Church. It was anxious to find its way into the open air and so it flew aloft among the great timbers of the roof, where it was half buried and almost blinded, by the dust which lay thick upon the beams. There were no seeds, nor fruits, nor waters in that dry and thirsty height. It then made a dash at a window, glorious with many colors. But it found no way of escape. It tried again and again and at last dropped stunned upon the pavement of the aisle.

When it recovered itself a little, it did not again fly aloft. But seeing the door open upon the level of the floor, it joyfully flew through it into the open country. You are that bird. Your pride makes you deal with high things up there in the roof. You are blinding yourself among the lofty mysteries—there is no escape for you there, nor rest, nor even life. You seek a way through the glory of your own painted righteousness. But this will be death to you, if you persevere.

Drop down upon the floor of honest confession and lowly penitence. Come to the ground by self-humiliation. When you get lower ideas of yourself you will see before you the open door—Christ Jesus. As soon as you see Him, use the wings of a simple faith and you are at liberty and no more a captive doomed to die. May God bring you down, that He may exalt you in due time, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

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