

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

FULL ASSURANCE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 28TH, 1861, BY THE

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.”—Psalm xxxv. 3.

THE Psalmist, when he wrote these words, was surrounded by many and furious enemies. He pleads with God to take hold on shield and buckler, and to come forth for his defence. Yet he feels that there is only one thing which God hath need to do in order to remove his fears, and make him strong in the day of conflict, “‘Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation,’ and I will defy them all. In the name of God I will set up my banner; and though weak in myself, yet shall I be able to overcome them readily, and tread them as straw is trodden from the dunghill, when the joy of the Lord shall be my strength, because thou hast said unto me, ‘I am thy salvation.’” Brethren, there is nothing that can make you strong to labour for God, bold to fight against your enemies, and mighty to resist your temptations, like a full assurance that God is your God, and your sure salvation. Your doubts and fears weaken you. While they nourish your despair, and diminish your joy, they do at the same time cut the sinews of your valour, and blunt the edge of your sword. A fully-assured Christian is a very giant in our Israel; for happiness and beauty he standeth like Saul, head and shoulders taller than the rest; while for strength and courage he can match with David, and is like the angel of the Lord.

It is upon the subject of full assurance that I shall address you this morning, without further preface I shall first bid you *hear objectors*, who oppose themselves to full assurance; secondly, I shall beg you to *hear the text*; and then I shall request you to *hear the preacher*.

I. First of all, let us HEAR OBJECTORS.

There are some who say, it is better that a man should stand in jeopardy of his soul every hour—better for him to be exercised with doubts and fears, than that he should grow confident, and have the joy of knowing assuredly that he is a saved man, is in the favour of God, and shall never be condemned. We will hear these objectors for a moment, and answer them speedily.

One of them advances, and he says, “First, I object to your preaching this morning, the doctrine of full assurance, *because I believe it to be impossible. I cannot conceive that any man can know in this life, whether he shall be saved in the life to come. Perhaps I may grant you that, in the dying hour, some men may get a little confidence; but, with the exception of a few of the eminently holy, and the profoundly spiritual, it cannot be possible that Christians should attain to a full confidence, and an infallible assurance of being saved.*” To this, sir, I reply thus. You say it is impossible: I say it is not only possible, but has been certainly enjoyed by the people of God. Doth the Spirit of God teach men to pray

for impossibilities? Yet David prays for it here: "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." The thing is possible, then, or else David would not have asked for it; it *can* be granted by God; it *can* be received by the Christian, else this prayer had never been put in inspired record. Besides, do you think that the Holy Ghost would exhort us to do an impossibility? And yet, does he not speak by the mouth of Paul, and say, "Give diligence to make your calling and election *sure*?" Does he not bid us be assured that we are called by grace, and that we are chosen of God? I say, that which *may* be a matter of prayer, and which is a subject of precept, cannot be an impossible thing. Besides, it has been enjoyed by tens of thousands of even ordinary every-day Christians. We could read you their biographies, and find expressions like this: "I have no more doubt of my interest in Christ than I have of my existence." "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." And there be many in this house to-day, who, if this were the time for them to give their personal testimony, could say, "I *know* that I have been born again; I *am sure* that my sins are all forgiven; I am neither afraid to die, nor do I fear to live; for, living, Christ is with me, and dying, I shall be with Christ; being justified, I have peace with God through Jesus Christ my Lord." Brethren, it is *not* impossible; it is attainable by the man who hath faith, if he know how to use the proper means.

But shall I tell you who the gentlemen are who generally raise objections to the glorious privilege of assurance? There are, first of all, the adherents of the Pope of Rome. Of course, the Papist does not like full assurance. And why? The Pope and his priest would have a lean larder if full assurance were well preached. Only conceive, my brethren, if the Roman Catholic could get the full assurance of salvation, surely the Cardinals would hardly find money enough to buy their red hats. For where were purgatory then? Purgatory is an impossibility, if full assurance be possible. If a man knows himself to be saved, then he is not to be troubled with a silly fear about waiting in the intermediate state, to be purified with fire, before he can enter into heaven. Purgatory is only acceptable to those poor trembling souls who know of no sure salvation here, and are glad of this deceptive hope of a salvation to be wrought in the world to come. Purgatory being thus builded upon a lying imposition—on the fears of ignorant consciences, becomes what brave old Hugh Latimer used to call it, "Purgatory Pick-purse," to the poor sinner, and Purgatory Fill-purse to the vagabond priest. Once let full assurance be given to all Christian men—first make the Romanist a Christian, and then let him be fully assured of his interest in Christ, and away goes purgatory, and there will never be a soul found to tremble at it any more.

The other persons who object to this doctrine, are generally people who have no religion, and who want, therefore, to make themselves a little easy by the notion that nobody has any more than they have. Your easy church-goers and chapel-goers; your ladies and gentlemen who think that religion consists in buying a Prayer Book, who imagine that to have a book of Psalms and Hymns, constitutes godliness; your fine folks to whom religion is as much a matter of fashion as some new colour, or some new form of dress;—these people, having no vitality in their godliness, never having a religion which could either make them cry or sing, never having godliness enough either to make them miserable, or make them blessed—these think there is nothing more in godliness than they get themselves. They say, "I never knew *my* sins were forgiven," and judging all others by themselves, they think that no one else can know it. And I am sorry to say, grieved at heart to say it, not seldom I have known professed ministers of the gospel, who have even rebuked those who have reached to the high attainment of assurance. I was waited upon, not very long since, by a lady of considerable standing, who had long been seeking rest, and nothing would satisfy her, unless she knew her sins were forgiven. She had called upon a clergyman, of some standing too, and he had assured her that the thing was utterly impossible; and she was ready to go mad with the idea that she must all her life go mourning on somewhere between hope and fear, in the balances between despair and hope. When I told her that it was not only the privilege of the Christian, but his duty, to *know* himself to be saved, and that no man ought to rest till he was infallibly assured by the Holy Ghost that he was in a gracious state and delivered from fear of hell, the joy that flushed her face was something worth beholding, and she went on her way to seek, and I trust to find, the grace which is in Christ Jesus. I would have each of you put aside those carnal quibbles which are raised by Romanists and

Romanizers, against the idea that we *can* know that we are saved, for not only can we know it, but we ought never to be satisfied till we do know it. And this, mark you, is not *my* statement; it is the manifest testimony of the Book of God, and was plainly held by all the fathers of the Church, Augustine, Chrysostom, and the like; it is the testimony of all the Reformers—of all the giant divines of the Puritanic times; it is the testimony of all truly evangelical Christians, that every Christian has a right to have a full assurance of his salvation, and should never be content until he attains thereunto.

But another objector rises, and faintly says, "*But I am afraid, sir; I am afraid of your preaching full assurance, because so many persons have boasted of it, and they have been vile pretenders, and have perished after all.*" Friend, it is to be admitted that there have been many who have mistaken presumption for assurance. They have thought that the arrogant impertinence of a proud unhumiliated spirit was the same thing as the simple child-like confidence of a renewed, regenerated heart. But mark, assurance is not possible to you, till you are born again; you have no business to dream of it, till you have a new heart and a right spirit. It would indeed be a fearful piece of blasphemy for you to think that God is your Father when your Father he is not, or to dream that your sins are forgiven when your hands are scarlet with them, and your soul is black with your crimes. But because some make the counterfeit, am I to throw away the genuine? Because, forsooth, there be some tin shillings, will you all cast away the silver? Because some pass upon you the base forged bank-note, will you therefore burn those which really come from the bank? I trow not. And, my dear brethren, if thousands presumed, that would not be an argument why one true Christian should not be fully assured of his interest in Christ.

"*Yes, but,*" says another, "*I am afraid, if men get fully assured, they will grow careless.*" This is the old objection that was brought against faith in Luther's time. "If men believe that they will be justified by faith," said the Romanist, "they will never do any good works;" whereas the fact is, men never do any good works till they *are* justified by faith. Those who cry down good works as the ground of hope, are the very men who work with all their might in the service of Christ; and as assurance is but faith come to perfection, the assured man will always be the most industrious man. Why, when I know that I am saved,

"Then for the love I bear his name,
What was my gain I count my loss;
I pour contempt on all my shame,
And nail my glory to his cross."

A well-grounded assurance is the most active worker in the field, the most valiant warrior in the battle, and the most patient sufferer in the furnace. There are none so active as the assured. Let a tree be planted in this soil, and watered with this river, and its boughs will bend with fruit. Confidence of success stimulates exertion, joy in faith removes sorrows, and realizing assurance overcomes all difficulties. Like the sword of Goliath we may say of assurance, "There is none like it; give it me." Who cares for deaths, or devils, when he can read his title clear? What matters the tempest without when there is calm within? Assurance puts the heart in heaven, and moves the feet to heaven. Its children are all fair, like the holy children in Babylon, and no race can compare for a moment with these "hinds let loose," these "lion-like men," these children of the sun. There never were men so self-sacrificing, so daring, so zealous, so enthusiastic in the cause of Christ, as the men who know that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and therefore out of gratitude serve their God. Why, I put it to the sinner here, who never thought of this matter before. Poor man! if your sins could be all forgiven this morning, and you could know it—if God should say to your soul, "I am thy salvation," and if you could go out of this house knowing that you were a child of God, do you think it would make you unholy? Do you think it would make you negligent? No, I think I see the tear in your eye, as you reply, "I would do anything for *Him*; I would *live* for him; I would *die* for him, to show how I love him who loved me." Ah! poor soul, if thou believest in Christ *now*, that will be true. If thou wilt cast thyself on Jesus now, thou shalt be forgiven; there shall be no sin left in God's book against thee; thou shalt be absolved, acquitted, delivered, cleansed and washed; and then thou shalt prove

in thy experience that assurance does not make men sin, but that assurance of pardon is the very best means of making men holy, and keeping them in the fear of God.

I have one class of objectors to answer, and I have done. There is a certain breed of Calvinists, whom I do not envy, who are always jeering and sneering as much as ever they can at the full assurance of faith. I have seen their long faces; I have heard their whining periods, and read their dismal sentences, in which they say something to this effect—"Groan in the Lord alway, and again I say, groan! He that mourneth and weepeth, he that doubteth and feareth, he that distrusteth and dishonoureth his God, shall be saved." That seems to be the sin and substance of their very un-gospel-like gospel. But why is it that they do this? I speak now honestly and fearlessly. It is because there is a pride within them—a conceit which is fed on rottenness, and sucks marrow and fatness out of putrid carcasses. And what, say you, is the object of their pride? Why, the pride of being able to boast of a deep experience,—the pride of being a blacker, grosser, and more detestable backslider than other people. "Whose glory is in their shame," may well apply to them. A more dangerous, because a more deceitful pride than this is not to be found. It has all the elements of self-righteousness in it. I would sooner a man boast in his good works than boast in his good feelings, because you can deal with the man who boasts in his good works, you have plain texts of Scripture, and you convict him of being a legalist; but this other man boasts that he is no legalist; he can speak very sharply against legality; he knows the truth, and yet the truth is not in him, in its spirit, because still he is looking to his feelings, and not looking to the finished work of Christ. Of all the Diabolians that ever stole into the city of Mansoul, Mr. Live-by-feeling was one of the worst of villains, though he had the fairest face. Brethren, you had better live by works than live by feelings; both are damning forms of trust, but the one is more deceptive and more delusive than the other by far. You are justified by faith, not by feelings; you are saved by what Christ felt for you, not by what you feel; and the root and basis of salvation is the cross, and "other foundation shall no man lay than that which is laid;" even though he place his experience there, he builds "wood, hay, and stubble," and not the corner stone, which is Christ Jesus the Lord.

I have thus tried to meet my objectors: I shall now turn to the second part of the discourse briefly.

II. Let us HEAR THE TEXT. "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."

The first thing the text seems to say is, *David had his doubts, then; for why would he pray, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," if he were not sometimes exercised with doubts and fears? Cheer up, Christian brother! If David doubted, thou must not say, "I am no Christian, because I have doubts." The best of believers sometimes are troubled with fears and anxieties. Abraham had the greatest faith, but he had some unbelief. I envy the brother who can say that his faith never wavered. He can say more than David did, for David had cause to cry, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."*

But, next, the text says that *David was not content while he had doubts and fears, but he repaired at once to the mercy-seat to pray for assurance; for he valued it as much fine gold. "O Lord!" David seems to say, "I have lost my confidence; my foot slippeth; my feet are almost gone; my doubts and fears prevail; but I cannot bear it. I am wretched, I am unhappy. 'Say—say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.'*

And then the text tells you yet a third thing,—that *David knew where to obtain full assurance. He goes at once to God in prayer. He knows that knee-work is that by which faith is increased; and there, in his closet, he crieth out to the Most High, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." O my brethren, we must be much alone with God, if we would have a clear sense of his love! Let your cries cease, and your eyes will grow dim. Much in prayer, much in heaven; slow in prayer, slow in progress.*

Now pull the text into pieces, and let us look at the words. And notice, that David would not be satisfied unless his assurance had a *divine source*. "Say unto my soul." Great God! if the priest should say it, it is nothing; if my minister should say it, if the deacons, the Church officers, and all the members of the Church should say it, it is nothing. Lord, do *thou* say it! Nothing short of a divine testimony in the soul will ever content the true Christian. The Spirit of God must

himself, after a supernatural sort, speak to our conscience and to our heart, or else peaceful and quiet our spirit can never be. Gracious God! let me not take my hopes at hap-hazard; let not my confidence be ill-founded and built upon the sand. Speak thyself, with thy word of truth and wisdom, and say to me, even to me, "I am thy salvation!"

Note, next, David cannot be content unless his assurance has a *vivid personality* about it. "Say unto *my* soul, I am *thy* salvation." If thou shouldst say this to all the saints, it were nothing, unless thou shouldst say it to me. Lord, I have sinned; I deserve it not; I am sinful; I scarcely dare to ask it; but oh! say it to *my* soul, even to *my* soul, "I am *thy* salvation." Let me have a pointed, personal, infallible, indisputable sense that I am thine, and that thou art mine.

See, next, David must have it come deep into *his inner being*. "Say unto *my* soul. Speak it not merely to my ears; say it to my soul. Great God! let me not fancy that I heard it in the air; let me not dream that I listened to it in my sleep; but speak it right into the ears of my spirit, and let the inner man hear the echoes of thy peace-speaking voice,—'Say unto *my* soul, I am *thy* salvation.'" Brethren, it is no skimming the surface which will do for us; we must have quiet in the deeps. That blessing "of the depth which lieth under" we need and must have. It will not content us to have a fair skin, scarce concealing with its deceitful gaze the foul and deadly leprosy. Our soul must be sound and healthy to the very core. Lord, say to *my* soul, in my bowels' inner depths, "I am *thy* salvation." Put it beyond doubt; put it beyond all chance, dispute, or hazard, "I *am* thy salvation."

Note again, David wants *present assurance*. He does not say, "Say unto my soul, I *will* be thy salvation," but, "I *am*." And yet that "am," as you will see if you look at the text, is not in the original; it is in italics; it has been supplied by our translators. That word "am" is man's word, not God's; therefore I will say but little of it. It may be, "I *will* be thy salvation," or "I *have been* thy salvation," or "I *am*;" and very rightly there is no word there at all. You can learn as much from God's silence as you can from his speech, and I think this silence means just this. There is no word put there at all, because full assurance enables the Christian to say of God, "He *was* my salvation before the worlds began, he *is* my salvation now, he *will* be when the world shall pass away." So that you may put up the prayer in any tense you prefer. "Say unto my soul, I—thy salvation." The two terms shall be alike. "God—thy salvation,"—"I," the great personal self-existent Deity, "thy salvation." The two shall stand and fall together; they shall both of them be sure, both eternal in the ancient ages, both everlasting in the ages to come. "Say unto my soul, I, thy salvation."

I think we have thus heard what the text has to say to us. You will remark, when you look it all the way through, that the only question which we need put is this: How can God say to us, "I am thy salvation?" You do not expect to hear it as you walk along the streets; you do not imagine that you will see it written on the skies? No, God speaketh to his people thus: by his Word, by his ministers, and by his Holy Spirit silently and mysteriously imprinting upon the heart the fact, that that heart is washed in the Redeemer's blood. Dr. Cæsar Malan, of Geneva, has put in a very plain light the way in which God in his Word says to us, "I am thy salvation." You are to suppose the minister is talking to a friend; this friend is anxious and doubting, and wants to know how the Bible can say to any man, that that man is saved. The conversation runs thus:—

"*Pastor*. 'He who believes in Jesus Christ, has eternal life', John iii. 36: do you know this declaration of the word of God? Very well, but you appear to think it obscure or equivocal. *John*. Never, I am sure it is true. Yet all those who *say*—I believe in Jesus Christ, are not the elected of God, bought of the Lord, or saved by grace. All these are not chosen, for there are many hypocrites who dare say that they believe in the Son of God. *Pastor*. You observe, that the word does not say, that those who *say* they believe, or *pretend* to believe, in Jesus Christ, or who imagine falsely that they believe, have eternal life; but this infallible word says, that those who believe in effect and really, have this life; so, then, the multitude in Christian nations who profess to believe in Jesus Christ, is not proof that they believe in effect; but if this multitude believe in effect on the Saviour, certainly they will have eternal life. *John*. Thus, then, sir, whoever is able to assure himself that he believes on the Saviour, then he will be certain that he has actually the life eternal, and that he is also elected.—(*The minister took a little bit of paper and wrote upon it these words.*) 'Whoever receives from my hand this paper, and this

declaration, I hold him for my friend: (*he put his name to these words, and presenting it to John, he said to him.*) Receive this from my hand, and believe my testimony, for I am a creditable person:—(*John took the paper and read what the minister had written.*) *Pastor.* How am I to regard you, John, after this testimony that I have given you? *John.* I have the minister for a friend. *Pastor.* Is it from you to me that this friendship flows, or is it from me to you? *John.* It is from you to me. *Pastor.* Do you hesitate to say that I am your friend, and that you have become mine? *John.* If I said I did not believe you, I should make you a liar. *Pastor.* Do you, then, look with affection towards me, or is it I with affection towards you? for you are assured that I am your friend, and that I regard you as mine. *John.* You, dear sir, love me, and care for me. *Pastor.* And how are you assured that this good-will is addressed to you? *John.* Because you have been pleased to say it, and I do not doubt your veracity. *Pastor.* I am sure that I have not written your name, as my friend; why then do you know that I have mentioned you in particular? *John.* You have written with your own hand, that whoever receiveth this paper, you shall have him for a friend; and because I have received this paper, and because I know that you are of good authority, I have no doubt at all upon the subject. *Pastor.* That is, then, because you have been certain on the one hand of having received this paper from my hand, and on the other hand, that I am of good authority, that you are certain of possessing, at the present, my affection. *John.* I do not think that I am able to speak with doubt upon this point, without insulting your veracity."

The substance of which is just this, that when you can take the Word, and find that you *are* the character there spoken of, it is as good as if out of heaven an angel should fly down to you, sitting in your pew now, and should say in your ear, in the presence of this congregation, "God is thy salvation." Now, brethren, I know this day I have no other trust but in the cross of Christ; therefore I *am* saved; and you can say the same, each one of you, if you are resting in Christ alone. There is not an "if" or a "but" about it; you are saved. Oh! do enjoy that thought, and go home and live upon it; it shall be marrow and fatness to your spirit.

But, then, God often speaks by his minister, as well as by his Word. But that is very much in the same way. While the minister is preaching concerning those who *are* saved, you listen, and you say, "Ah, he speaks to me!" He describes your character, and though you are standing far away in the gallery, you say, "Ah, that is *my* character!" He speaks of the weary and heavy laden sinner, and he bids him come, and you say, "Ah, I am weary and heavy laden, and I will come;" and when you have come, Christ has given you rest. You need have no doubt about it; if you can fairly take hold on the promise which is offered to certain characters and states, why, then you can go your way saying, "God hath said to me by his servant, 'I *am* thy salvation.'"

Besides this, God has a way of speaking, without the Word and without the ministers, to our hearts. His Spirit can drop like the rain, and distil like the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb. We know not how it is, but sometimes there is a deep sweet calm. Our conscience says, "I have been washed in the blood of Christ," and the Spirit of God saith, "Ay, 'tis true, 'tis true." In such times we are so happy—so happy that we want to tell our joys—so blessed, that if we could but borrow angels' wings and fly away, we would scarce know the change when we passed through the pearly gates, for we have had heaven below, and there has been but little difference between that and heaven above. Oh, I wish my whole congregation, without exception, consisted of men and women who had heard the Spirit say, "I *am* thy salvation." What happy hymns! What happy prayers! You might go home to some poor single room; you might go to a scantily furnished house, and to a table that has barely bread upon it; but happy men! happy men! Better would be your dinner of herbs, than a stalled ox without confidence in Christ; better your rich poverty, than the poverty of the rich who have no faith in Jesus; better all the griefs you have to endure, when sanctified by assurance, than all the joys the worldling has, when unblessed by faith, and unhallowed by love to God. I can say now,—

"Grant me the visits of thy face,
And I desire no more."

I shall now pass to my third and last point—a little while only, but earnestly, I trust.

III. Will you patiently HEAR THE PREACHER, in what he has to say?

I know that in this large assembly, I am addressing very many who never knew that they were saved. I must put you all into one class, though, indeed, you are not in the same state; for there are some who never *knew* that they were saved, who *are* saved. They do believe in Jesus; but *their* faith is so little, that they never know that they are forgiven. I have to put *you* in the class, because you do belong to it for the time being. But there are many of you who never knew that you were saved, because you never cared to know. It has been a matter of concern with you to find out your pedigree; but you never asked, "Is God my Father?" You have made quite sure of the title deeds of your estate; but you never took the trouble to ask whether heaven was yours or no. And possibly, some of you have imbibed a notion that it is a very easy thing to be saved—that there is no need to trouble your heads about it much—that so long as you do your duty, attend your church or frequent your chapel, it is well and good, and there is no use making this fuss about being born again, and having a new heart, and a right spirit. I may never have your ear again, but mark this at the day of judgment, I will be quit of your blood, if you perish in your delusion. This is *the* delusion of England. We have not half so much to dread Popery as we have that nominal Christianity, fostered by a national Church—that nominal Christianity which has no root nor soul within it. Oh! there are millions of Englishmen who think they are Christians, because they were sprinkled in infancy with holy drops, and because they have come to the Lord's Table; whereas, little do they know that every time they have come there, they did eat and drink damnation to themselves, because they did not discern the Lord's body. This is the curse and plague of England, that we have so much profession and so little possession—such multitudes of you who are content to sit under a sleepy ministry where ministers will not tell you the truth for fear of hurting your feelings; where they will preach the truth generally, as if a man should waive a sword; but do not come home personally, as if a man should drive it through your very heart. What we want is more home dealing, more plain speaking, more thrusting of the hand inside your soul, to make you tremble, and ask yourselves the question whether you be right before God or no.

I speak then, to the whole of you who never knew that you were saved; and first I say to you, *how foolish you are!* O sirs! you are to die soon, and you are to go to heaven or to hell,—to splendours and glories, or to glooms and horrors; and yet you do not know which is to be your portion. O fools! miserable fools! If some of you should say "I do not know whether I have a cancer or no," I should say, seek the physician, and enquire if there be a fear; but to say, "I do not know whether I am in the bonds of iniquity and the gall of bitterness or no," is awful indeed. Why, you make your estates as tight as law can tie them; all the skill of legal language is employed to make the deed secure; and yet you are content to have heaven as a thing of *if*, and *but*, and *perhaps*. Oh! fools indeed! How can ye be so mad? Sure to die, and yet not sure whether you are saved! Sure to appear before the bar of God, and yet not know whether you shall be acquitted or condemned! Oh! if there be wisdom left within you, if your brain be not turned to perfect madness, I conjure you by the living God to make sure work of it, and never be content till you *know* that you are saved.

But again: I must not only call you foolish, but miserable. Miserable, I say. Do you look at me and say, "We are comfortable, we are easy; we are content?" Ay, sirs, so madmen talk. If I saw a man lying down upon the brink of the crater of a volcano, and I knew that very soon the lava would come streaming up, and then rolling down, I could not call him happy, though he were toying with Nature's fairest flowers, or sucking her most delicious sweets. And you—you are in such a state as this! Upon a puff of wind, a bubble, hangs your eternal state. If life depended on a hair, it were indeed precarious; but here is your soul depending on your life, which depends on something frailer than a dream. O sirs! you may drop dead in this house. Such things are not extraordinary. Men have come into the house of God bodies, and they have gone out corpses. And while I think that any one of you may die, and you are uncertain whether you shall be lost or saved, I could sooner call you kings than call you happy; and the rightest title I can give to you is, O miserable men! miserable men! uncertain as to your future state.

Once more, and let this last thought ring in your ears. Ah! you may go away, perhaps to your gay parties, to your rounds of merriment, to your midnight balls,

to your varnished harlotries, mayhap, but let this ring in your ears, "Oh! the danger—the danger of not knowing whether you shall be saved or lost!" You will die! I suppose you will not dispute with me about that. You do not claim to be immortal; you expect to die. You die; and what, sirs;—what, madam;—what if your fears should be true? Your companions are gay no longer; they are the damned spirits of hell; your occupations are frivolous no more; they are solemn and serious now—as solemn as death, and as serious as eternity. Where now the music which once regaled your dainty ears? Your only symphonies are sighs, dirges, and howlings. Where now the soft couch on which you took your rest and pleasure? You have made your bed in hell; and what a change for some of you—from the scarlet of Dives to the flames of hell—from the feasts so sumptuous to the fiends so terrible! Where are ye now, ye church-goers, ye chapel-goers? You have no profession of religion here, no hymn-books here; no minister of mercy; no voice of holy song; no ring of Sabbath bells; no tearful eye; no tender heart; no lip which trembles while it speaks to you, and only speaks of terror because it loves you, and would save you if it could. O my hearers, if you are not sure of being saved, what if you are sure of being damned! And you are either—mark this—not to your own apprehension perhaps, but in fact; you are sure of one or the other. Which is it? Which must it be? I know, when I preach these terrible things, men will not listen to me; but God is my witness, I would not speak about them if I *dare* be silent about them. But if you perish, sirs, it shall not be for want of pleading with, or praying for, or weeping over. Sinner! I beseech thee turn! By him that died, and lives, and hath sent me to plead with thee, I beseech thee, seek, if thou hast never sought, and if thou hast sought, seek again; and if thou hast found, find yet more fully, till thou canst say, "He is mine, and I am his." Put your downy pillow under your head to-night, ye sluggards: but sleep not, for ye may never wake in this world. Sit to your luxurious meal to-morrow: let the dainties be sweet, leave them untasted, for you may one day be denied a drop of water. O sirs! be not happy till you have made your happiness sure. Oh! have no peace, till your peace is everlasting, substantial peace. Talk not of being blessed, till God has blessed you. Think not that you can be blessed, while "God is angry with the wicked every day," and hath said, "Cursed is he that is under the law."

But do you wish to be saved? Does the Spirit of God whisper to you, "Escape! escape?" There is forgiveness still; there is forgiveness *now*; there is forgiveness for *thee*. Trust Christ, sinner, and you shall be saved—saved this moment. Believe in him now with all your guilt and sin about you. May the Holy Ghost now lead you to trust my Lord and Master; and you may go home assured that *he* hath for ever put away your sin, and you are accepted and blessed in him. May God bless you, each one of you, now and ever. Amen.

"Surrounded by a host of foes,
Storm'd by a host of foes within,
Nor swift to flee, nor strong to oppose,
Single against hell, earth, and sin;
Single, yet undismay'd, I am;
I dare believe in Jesu's name.

What though a thousand hosts engage,
A thousand worlds my soul to shake?
I have a shield shall quell their rage,
And drive the alien armies back;
Portray'd it bears a bleeding Lamb;
I dare believe in Jesu's name."