

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

TRUST.

A Sermon

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“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.”—Ephesians i. 12, 13.

IT appears from the preceding verse that the predestinating purpose of God deals not only with salvation as a whole, but with the details of it: it includes faith as well as salvation, which comes of faith. “Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.” The trust is appointed as well as the justification: the means as well as the end. We are not ordained to be saved apart from faith, but those who are predestinated to eternal life are ordained to receive it through faith in Christ Jesus. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Beloved friends, I would have you notice in this verse the remarkable object which is set before us as the grand design of predestinating grace. Observe the singular expression of the apostle—“That we should *be* to the praise of his glory.” Observe that he does not say, that we should *sing* to the praise of our glorious God, though we will do that; nor that we should *suffer* to his praise, though we would not refuse to do that; nor that we should *work* to his praise, though by grace we will do that; but “that we should *be* to the praise of his glory.” The very being of a believer is to the praise and glory of God. It is written, “Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God;” but this is still more comprehensive, you are to *be* to his glory, your very existence is to *praise* him. Your being, which is now turned into well-being, is to glorify the God of grace. When in the quiet of the garden I have looked upon the lilies standing erect in their marvellous beauty, and I have realized our Master's words, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these, then I have said to myself, “What do these to the glory of God?” Quickly my heart has answered, “They exist to show forth the glory of their Creator:” by merely standing where they are, they yield praise to the Lord: their very being is worship. Even those flowers which are born to blush unseen of men do not bloom in vain, they do not

waste their sweetness, though they pour it on the desert air, for God is in the lone places, and beholds with joy his own handiwork. God is glorified by the being of that which he makes, and especially by the being of that which he has a second time created by the power of his grace, according to his purpose through faith. Is it not enough result of being if we are to his praise ?

Beloved, see the importance of that trust which is so constant an item in the purpose of God when he causes us to be to the praise of his glory. Unless we have trusted in Christ we are not living to the praise of God ; but when we have come by faith into the place wherein we ought to stand, then is our very being unto the praise of his glory. In Christ our very existence glorifies God, and it is faith which consciously places us in Christ. Concerning that trust, or if you will—for the original bears that translation—that hope, which is so essential to the fulfilment of the purpose of God—concerning that trust I am about to speak this morning. May the praise of his glory be promoted by what I am enabled to say !

I. Our first point will be that TRUST IN CHRIST IS THE CONSTANT MARK OF THE SAVED. “That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ, in whom ye also trusted.” I care not whether you read it “trusted” or “hoped,” the idea will still be the same. Trust in Christ, or hope in Christ, is the distinguishing token of God’s people.

It was the mark of the apostles. It was necessary to an apostle that he should have seen the Lord, for he was to bear personal witness to that which he had seen with his eyes, and looked upon and handled ; but this alone was not sufficient, for many saw the Lord and remained in unbelief, enemies of the cross of Christ. These could not have been apostles, since they did not trust in Jesus. The apostles were those who, with an inner as well as an outer eye, had seen the Lord, and had trusted themselves wholly to him as their Leader, Master, Teacher, and Saviour. There were no apostles worthy to be called apostles who did not trust in Christ. Truly Judas bore the name, but his Lord said of him, “One of you is a devil.” He who is sent of Christ as his witness first trusts in Christ.

This was also the mark of the first converts, *the chosen from among the Jews.* These had the honour to be the elder born—these who first trusted in Christ. Some of them had the advantage of having trusted in him before his actual advent, for they were looking for the hope of Israel, and earnestly expecting the coming of the Messiah. Before our Lord appeared at the waters of Jordan, and was pointed out by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,” there were hearts that believed in him, and eyes that looked for him. Still, whether they were Jewish believers, looking for his advent, or not, this was the mark of their being truly saved—that they trusted in Jesus, when he was revealed as the Anointed of the Lord. The best instructed Jew could not find eternal salvation apart from his putting his trust in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Now, dear friends, *this was the mark of those who were first saved by the great Redeemer,* and I want you to notice how the Holy Spirit sets them in a class by themselves. He makes a distinction between those who first trusted and those who trusted afterwards, because it is a

noteworthy honour to have been among the first that trust Christ. It is a privilege to be led by Jesus, to trust him first in order of time by beginning in your earliest youth. Happy are those who enter the Lord's vineyard amid the dews of the morning, for these redeem years of time from the bitter servitude of sin, and turn them to blessed account in the delightful service of the Lord Jesus. Such are usually distinguished in the church: early piety makes eminent piety, early consecration often leads to abounding usefulness. The Lord evidently delights to be found in a high degree of those who seek him early. They come to him first, and he remembers the kindness of their youth, and the promptitude with which they obeyed his call. It is also a great privilege to be called first out of a family or a neighbourhood. Peradventure some of you live where there are none who believe in Christ; may the Lord grant you this high favour to be the leader of your household and your district as a believer! May the shower of grace fall first on you, and then bless all those who are round about you! Possibly in your family you do not know of one who has passed from death to life—may you be the firstfruits out of spiritual death! I have often observed that where God begins with a family he goes on with a family. He makes one or two to be the firstfruits, and then he considers the lump as also holy, and goes on to bless the rest of the household. Even in nations I scarcely remember a nation or people that has ever received Christ which has been quite left without his blessing throughout after centuries: the fire which the first live coals had kindled has never absolutely been quenched. Therefore, I admire the grey fathers of the past, the pioneers of the army of the Lord. Paul mentions with respect those who were in Christ before him, and so should we honour those who led the way for us by first trusting in Christ. I greatly esteem in my own mind those first believers who were not borne in by the throng of others, but went forward alone. I compare them to the first navigators upon an untried sea; the men who first sailed out of sight of shore, greatly venturing. To be first in perceiving that Jesus of Nazareth was the Anointed of the Lord was no mean thing, for none of the princes of this world had any idea of that great fact. These were in truth the "men of light and leading," the foremost minds of their age, peasants and fishermen though they were. These were the first swallows heralding a glorious summer-tide. These were the first song-birds waking the morning to behold the newly-risen sun. It is a patent of nobility to be numbered with these. I would put a holy ambition into the hearts of those who are young, and others who belong to ungodly families, suggesting to them that they should be among their households those "who first trust in Christ." In the history of your tribe you will have an honoured place as the first who brought salvation to your house. But, whether you are first or last, if you are saved at all it will be through trust in Christ. Come young, come old, you will still be saved alone by trust in Christ. Come as the leader of your family, or come as the last left out in the cold, you will still have to come by a simple trust and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the one sole way of salvation.

Now, as this was the mark of the elder born, the text goes on to tell us that *it was the mark of the younger born*: in "whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

The Ephesians did not see the Christ, they never listened to the melodious tones of his voice, nor looked into his beloved countenance; but they were converted by hearing the report of him. They were brought into salvation afterwards; but still it came to the same thing: they received like precious faith with those who in former days had obtained eternal life. Those to whom I now speak trusted in Christ after they had heard the word of truth. Note the expression. It is the word of *the* truth—the most important and vital of all truths. Nothing but truth can truly renew the heart. Falsehood works to evil: only truth works towards righteousness. We heard the word of the God of truth, and it came to us as the word of God: it came with the force of truth, carrying conviction with it, and it came as the word of God, exercising a divine power over our nature, and hence it was that we came to trust in Christ. My unconverted hearer, if you desire to have faith in Christ, listen to the truth, and to the truth only. Shut your ears to error, and hold yourselves only ready to hear the glorious gospel of the blessed God. “Faith cometh by hearing,” but that hearing must be the hearing of the word of God. It is by the hearing of the word of truth that men come to trust in Christ, but trust in Christ they must, or they will perish. He is the sole Rock on which we must rest: the one Foundation laid for us to build upon.

The apostle also says to these Ephesians, “Ye heard the gospel of your salvation.” O delightful word! The gospel, the glad tidings! The glad tidings of salvation! Yea, more, the glad tidings of *your* salvation! The gospel brings to us a personal deliverance. We heard Christ preached, and we saw that he had salvation for us. Another man’s Saviour brings us little joy, but salvation for ourselves is good news indeed. Joyful was the day when my heart said, “Blessed be God, I need salvation, and it is joyful tidings to me that there is an atoning sacrifice by which my sin is put away! I can be reconciled to God through the death of his Son, and in Christ Jesus I can be accepted and beloved of the Lord.” By such reflections we were led to a simple and hearty trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. That trust is the broad arrow of the King, set upon all his royal possessions. Where that trust is found, that soul is God’s possession; where it is wanting, that soul still lies in the arms of the wicked one. This trust, of which some make so little, is, nevertheless, the distinguishing and the discriminating mark by which we must discern between him that feareth God and him that feareth him not.

Note, before I leave this portion of the subject, that *trust in Christ is of the same nature in all believers*. It is not the same in degree, nor in constancy, nor in energy; but yet it is the same faith. “Ye received like precious faith,” said Peter. Paul’s faith and your faith are the same faith if your faith be true faith. The faith of Abraham and the faith of a little child who has newly believed in Jesus are the same faith. A diamond is a diamond whatever its size may be, and so little faith and great faith are of the same essence. Whether it be a grain of mustard-seed or a mountain-moving faith, it is still faith of the operation of God, faith in the same object, and faith working to the same end. Hence John, speaking to his converts, prays, “That you may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son

Jesus Christ." If thou art a believer, thou hast a right to the same fellowship with God as the apostle had, thou hast the same perfect cleansing by the precious blood, thou hast the same adoption, the same regeneration, thou standest in the same place of love and acceptance, thou shalt be blessed with the same blessings on earth, and thou shalt enter into the same joy at the right hand of God. See, then, dear friends, that trust in Christ is the invariable and the infallible mark of the saved ones.

II. Secondly, THIS TRUST IS NO EMPTY NOTION. The trust in Christ which saves the soul is no idle sentiment, but a strong, vital, active principle, having a living and conquering power within it. It is of the operation of the Spirit of God, and hence it is a living and incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth for ever.

True trust in Christ is an entire reliance upon him. This day, if you trust Christ, you rest the whole weight and stress of your soul's affairs upon him. Looking at your sin and your sinfulness, looking at the past, the present, and the future, looking at death and at judgment, you deliberately believe that Christ is equal to every emergency, and you just cast yourself entirely and without reserve upon him to save you, and to keep you saved for ever. No other trust is worth a pin except this. It must be an absolute severance from all reliance upon your past merit, or upon your present resolutions, or upon your future expectations of what you shall be or shall do. You must have done with all other trust if Christ is your confidence. Your motto must be, "Jesus only." In this life-boat you must swim to glory, but all other you must cast away. Another reliance would be as a weight about your loins to sink you in the sea of despair. O my hearer, hast thou such a simple, unadulterated trust as this?

A saving trust leads us to accept Christ in all his offices. He is to us not only Priest to put away our sin, but Prophet to remove our ignorance, and King to subdue our rebellions. If as Priest he purges the conscience, as Prophet he must direct the intellect, and as King he must rule the life. We must yield our will to Christ's will, that henceforth every thought may be brought into captivity to his holy sway. There is no whole-hearted trust in Christ unless Christ is taken as a whole. You cannot have half a Christ and be saved, for half Christ is no Christ. You must take him as he is revealed in Scripture, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour of men, very God of very God, the faithful and true Witness, your Guide, your Lord, your Husband, your everything. Do you trust him so? If not, you have not trusted him at all. This is the trust which brings salvation with it—an entire reliance upon an entire Saviour so far as you know him.

This trust includes obedience to him: we have not trusted him at all unless we are prepared to accept his commands as the rule of our lives. The ship is on fire; the bales of cotton are pouring forth a black, horrible smoke; passengers and crew are in extreme danger, but a capable captain is in command, and he says to those around him, "If you will behave yourselves, I think I shall be able to effect the escape of you all." Now, if they trust in the captain they will do precisely as he orders. No sailor or engineer will refuse to work the pumps, or to prepare the boats, neither will any passenger disobey rule. In proportion

to their confidence in their leader will be the alacrity with which they obey him at once. They believe his orders to be wise, and so they keep to them. Neither their fear, nor their rashness, will lead them to rush to and fro contrary to his bidding if they have a firm trust in him. When the boats are lowered, and are bought one by one to the ship's side, those who are to fill them wait till their turns come, in firm reliance upon the captain's impartiality and prudence. They will get into the boats or they will wait on board, for they consider that his orders are dictated by a better judgment than their own. So far as each man and each woman firmly believes in the superior officer, discipline will be maintained. Do you not see this?

Obedience is the necessary outcome of true and real faith, and there is no trust where there is no obedience. Some of you fancy that you are to trust Christ, and then do what you like. You believe a lie, for such is not the teaching of God's word. The faith which saves is a faith which obeys. Learn this from the sermon of last Sabbath morning. Jesus becomes the Physician of the blind man, and puts clay upon his eyes; and then he bids him go and wash in the pool of Siloam, and he shall see. If he had refused to go and wash, he would not have received sight. Do not tell me you have trusted for sight; you cannot have done so, unless you go and wash in the appointed pool. We must follow Christ's directions, if we would receive Christ's promises. Trust in Christ implies a yielding up of all that we have and all that we are into Christ's hands. We must be to him as the wax to the seal, or the clay to the potter. There must be an unreserved submission to his supremacy. O thou seeking sinner, wilt thou submit to this? Art thou full of self-will and pride? Then these must be taken from thee. If thou dost heartily accept the Lord Jesus as thy Lord and King, thou hast the faith which saves; but if not, what faith hast thou that is worth the having?

Trust in Christ leads to an open following of him. Trust is not lame, but it walks in the footsteps of him it relies upon. If the Lord's way be the way of the cross, thou wilt nevertheless follow it, because thou wilt know it to be the right way, since he leads therein. He that is ashamed to confess Christ has good reason to fear that he is not trusting him. How can I be trusting him of whom I am ashamed? If I am not on his side in the great battle of life, how can I say that he is my confidence? He declares that he that is not with him is against him. How can I trust him, and yet be against him? If I refuse to have my name recorded on the muster-roll of his army below, how dare I hope that it is written in the Lamb's book of life above? If I refuse to accept Jesus as my Captain, how can I claim him as my Saviour? A hearty trust in Christ involves an honest confession of him. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "He that with his heart believeth, and with his mouth maketh confession of him, shall be saved." Thus the matter is put in Scripture. Wilt thou come out, then? Wilt thou come out on his side? If thou wilt, then thou hast saving trust. If thou wilt truly, and fully, and wholly decide for Christ, and live for Christ, then thou hast the trust which is the mark of his elect.

This trust will lead a man to labour or to suffer for Christ as need

occurs. The true truster considers it to be real gain to lose for Jesus. He reckons that toil unrewarded of men is the best rewarded form of labour when it is accepted of the Lord. It is enough wage to be permitted to serve the Lord Christ. This is faith: this which counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, this which hath respect unto a future recompense when the Lord shall come in his kingdom, but looks not for honour among men or any other form of reward here below. True trust cleaves to Christ when the many turn aside, for it knows that he has the living word, and none upon earth beside. My hearer, if thou hast a real trust in Christ, thou wilt follow his teachings though all the world should run madly after new opinions; thou wilt stand by his truth though thou be called a fool for thy steadfastness; and thou wilt not be ashamed though no one should keep thee in countenance. If thou be trusting in Christ, thou wilt spend thy life for him, and reckon it to be the best way of using thine existence. God grant us to have more and more of this trust!

That trust which lives on men's lips and never affects their hearts is a deadly delusion. He that saith, "I believe," and then never lives according to that belief, is a deceiver, and will find himself deceived if he looks for salvation in such a faith. That presumptuous trust which indulges in sin and boasts of forgiveness in Christ, is in itself an aggravation of a sinful life, and will involve its possessor in increased condemnation. Hang up on the gibbet of infamy that evil confidence which is in league with unholiness. The conceit of safety while we love sin is a mockery of God's salvation, the base counterfeit of the coin of heaven. God alone gives the faith which works by love and purifies the soul, all other faith is spurious and ruinous.

True trust rejoices in the hope which Christ inspires. It looks for his coming and his glory, his reign and his heaven. It is full of hope; that living, lively, life-giving hope which sustains the heart. This trust hath a window of hope through which light comes into the heart in the darkest hours. It lives and triumphs in the future through trusting the promise of Christ Jesus.

If we have such trust as this we shall constantly meet with something whereon to exercise it. God never leaves true trust without work to do. It is not a presentation sword to be worn only on high days and holidays, neither is it like the old armour in the Tower of London, hung up to be looked at; no, true trust is for every-day wear and use, and between here and heaven it will be tested in every conceivable way. That sword will snap if it be not a true Jerusalem blade, and that armour will be pierced if it be not of proof, able to endure the battle-axe of fierce temptation. In a thousand fields our trust will be tried ere we shall be able to sheathe the sword and enjoy the triumph. It is in this way that trust in Christ is made by our God to work to the praise of the glory of his grace. Trust in Christ brings to God greater glory than anything else we can produce. "What shall we do," said one, "that we may work the work of God?" meaning thereby a god-like work, a work so great as to bear a heavenly name. Jesus answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Dear friend over yonder, you cannot build a row of almshouses to the glory of God; but you can trust Christ with all your heart to the

glory of God. You cannot stand up and deliver an eloquent oration to God's praise, but you can by divine grace pursue a life of faith, and thus praise him. You cannot be a hero in fight, and turn to flight the armies of the alien, but by trust in Jesus, exercised in prevailing prayer, you can win great victories to the praise of his glory. Walk humbly with your God, in patience possess your souls, and with an unstaggering faith embrace the promises, and you shall be found in that cloud of witnesses who are ennobled of God Most High. The Lord grant us, then, to have this trust, which is more than mere notion or sentiment—a divine principle created by the Holy Spirit.

III. Thirdly, THIS TRUST IN CHRIST IS HIS DUE. There came to me the other day a young man who wished to speak with me about his soul troubles, and he began thus, "Dear sir, I cannot trust Christ." To which I answered, "Have you found out something fresh in his character? Has he ceased to be trustworthy? Pray let me know all about it, for it is a serious matter to me; I have trusted him with everything I have for time and for eternity, and if he is not fit to be trusted I am in a terrible case." He looked at me, and he said, "I will not say that again, sir, I see I have made a mistake. Truly the Lord Jesus is in every way trustworthy." "Well, then," I said, "Why cannot you trust him?" I left him with that unanswerable question. A man is certainly able to trust one whom he regards as trustworthy. My young friend saw that at once, and asked me further: "But may I trust Christ to save me? Am I permitted to trust my soul with him?" I said to him, "Is not this the command of the gospel: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved? And are you not warned that if you do not believe in him you will be damned? How can we doubt that we are permitted to do that which is commanded us of the Lord? I am to preach the gospel to every creature, and this is the gospel:—'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!'" He said, "So, then, if I trust Christ he will save me?" and I replied, "Certainly he will; he is the Saviour of all them that put their trust in him. He says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' It is written, 'He that believeth on him hath everlasting life: he that trusts in Jesus is saved.'" He thanked me, and saying that he had found out the secret, he went on his way rejoicing. I told him the gospel; he received it; and he entered into rest. I hope I may be equally successful with my hearers at this time. May the Holy Spirit work with me in this case also! I have been talking about faith, and I trust I have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. It is simplicity itself, but we are exceedingly apt to becloud it. To trust Christ is to find salvation. He that sincerely relies upon Jesus is saved. Now, concerning this trust, I say that this is our Lord's due.

Observe, first, that we are bound to trust him from *his very name*. His name is "Christ," that is, the "Anointed." God has sent him, God has commissioned him, God has equipped him, he is the anointed of God: dare I distrust him? An ambassador from heaven, with the divine warrant at his back, known to speak in the name of the Lord God, how dare I say I have no confidence in him? By the glorious name of Christ I claim for him that you who seek salvation should trust him implicitly, and trust him at once.

Remember, next, *his glorious person*. He who is set forth as the object of saving trust is none other than the Son of God. In his Godhead and in his humanity, yea, in his undivided person, he claims your trust. Canst thou not trust him that made heaven and earth, without whom was not anything made that was made? Can his power fail thee? Can his wisdom mislead thee? Can his mind change toward thee? Can he be unfaithful? The Son of the Highest, canst thou not trust him? Away with the impertinence of mistrust! Canst thou doubt the Holy and the True? Darest thou doubt the Lamb of God? Be not so foolhardy as thus to defy the incarnate Son of God, and treat him as though he could deceive thee.

Next, trust him, because of *his matchless character*. Hast thou ever heard of such another as the Christ of God? Among the sons, no one is like to him.

“All hail, Emmanuel, all divine,
In thee thy Father's glories shine
Thou brightest, sweetest, fairest one
That eyes have seen or angels known.”

He is all goodness, the fulness of love, and the pattern of tenderness. He is always true, and always faithful. By that blessed character which he bears, which I am sure you would not for a moment question—a character which even infidels have been forced to admire—I pray you trust him! Let it not be a question with you: “How can I trust him?” Say rather: “How can I distrust him?” What reason can you have for doubt? What excuse for mistrust?

Remember next, *his work, and especially his death*. Here is immovable ground for my claim that you should trust him. Jesus loved men so as to die for them, how can we doubt his love? I do not know how it is with you, but I lose the power to doubt when I realize Christ crucified. That crown of thorns hedges my mind around, and shuts out mistrust. His five wounds kill my suspicions and my fears. A crucified Saviour is the life of faith, and the death of unbelief. Canst thou stand and view the flowing of the Saviour's precious blood upon the tree of doom, and not trust Him? What more can he do to prove his sincerity than to die for us? His life is the mirror of love, but in his death the sun shineth on it with a blaze of glory so that we cannot steadily look into its brightness. Behold how he loved us! Oh, believe thou in the crucified Christ, for this is no more than his right and due!

Besides, *he lives, and he has gone up into the glory with the same purpose of grace upon his heart*. When men change their places, they often change their minds; but he that loved us when he was despised and rejected, loves us now that he is highly exalted. He is not like the chief butler, who forgot in the palace the promise which he made in the prison. The love of Calvary is with the Lamb in the midst of the throne. On earth he bleeds, in heaven he pleads. Ye sinners, come and trust the ever-living Christ, for he makes intercession for transgressors! I stand here this morning, and I say to all of you in this house that I claim your confidence in the Lord Jesus. I do not humbly ask for it as a beggar asks an alms: I demand for the Christ of God that you put your trust in him. God has set him forth to be a propitiation for sin,

that through faith in his blood every one that believeth in him should be saved. I demand your trust in the name of God. Christ deserves it at your hands, and you cannot refuse it without doing him a gross injustice. I beseech you do not make God a liar; yet, according to the apostle John, "He that believeth not hath made him a liar, because he believeth not in the Son of God." If Christ were here this morning, standing on this platform, and you saw his pierced hands, and the wound in his side, you would be ready to fall down and worship him: you can worship him better still by trusting him in his absence. "Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed." Trust is among the sublimest forms of adoration. A childlike, tearful, broken-hearted, sincere trust in Christ is a hallelujah unto his name. If thou wouldst crown him, thou needst not go far for a coronet: thy trust is the best diadem thou canst bring him. Trust thou him, then, at this moment, and thus bow at his feet with cherubim and seraphim. But again I say, do not insult him by saying that thou canst not trust him. I should think it hard if any one of my acquaintance said to me, "Sir, I cannot trust you." It would be a cruel cut. I should enquire of him, "What have I done to merit this? When have I been untrue?" It would be too unkind a stab if it came from one whom I had aimed to benefit. Do not crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

O my hearers, I have chosen an old theme this morning, and I have been studiously simple in my style, for my heart longs to bring you to trust in Jesus! I have no desire to be thought a fine preacher. I want to save your souls. This trust is the vital point; do not slight it. Oh that you would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! If you believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. This is the way of salvation, and it is very plain. God help you to run in it! Lay aside pride and self-confidence, and trust wholly in Jesus; and this will be better than all tears, and despairs, and resolves, and efforts. Fall back into the arms of redeeming love. Lean your whole weight on Jesus. Take your soul to Christ as you take your money to your banker, and leave it in his hands. He will keep it until that day when, at his appearing, you shall appear with him in glory.

IV. I close by noticing, in the fourth place, what I have already insisted upon, that THIS TRUST IS IN EVERY CASE THE INSTRUMENT OF SALVATION.

Trust is selected by God as the instrument of salvation, and it is not selected arbitrarily, but with great wisdom and prudence. When a man trusts Christ, *by his trust he is brought into mental and spiritual contact with Christ*; and there is a more hopeful influence about that contact than in anything which a man will resolve to do or even perform in his own strength. It is a grand thing for a man to be elevated above self-confidence, and brought to rely upon such an one as the Son of God. Thus he is made to feel that he must look to some one greater and better than himself; and he is brought to own that he is a feeble and dependent creature. I think I see in this consideration an adaptation in faith to be the means chosen of God in the matter of salvation.

Moreover, faith is no doubt selected by God to be the means of salvation, because *it never robs God of his glory*. If you and I are to

be saved, we shall be saved by God and by his grace alone. Now if the appointed way of salvation leaves something for us to do in order that we may be saved by God, we shall in all probability attribute our salvation to that something, and forget the Lord. If we are bidden to trust, there will be no temptation in that direction; for we cannot rely upon our trust, since its very essence lies in depending upon Christ alone. Trust ascribes salvation to him who saves. Faith never seeks honour for herself: she is a self-denying grace. Christ saith, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace;" and by this saying he crowns faith, and he does so because faith crowns him.

Trust, again, is selected as the instrument of salvation because *it has wonderful power over the heart of God*. Marvellous is the influence of trust. I have aforetime illustrated this to you by the power which faith has over us, mortal men. I will venture to tell you an old story, which you have heard from me before. I cannot recollect anything better, and you must bear with a repetition. I once lived where my neighbour's garden was only divided from me by a very imperfect hedge. He kept a dog, and his dog was a shockingly bad gardener, and did not improve my beds. So one evening, while I walked alone, I saw this dog doing mischief, and being a long way off I threw a stick at him, with some earnest advice as to his going home. This dog, instead of going home, picked up my stick and came to me with it in his mouth, wagging his tail. He dropped the stick at my feet, and looked up to me most kindly. What could I do but pat him and call him a good dog, and regret that I had ever spoken roughly to him? Why, it brings tears into my eyes as I talk about it! The dog mastered me by his trust in me. The illustration is to the point. If thou wilt trust God as that dog trusted me, thou wilt overcome. God will be held by thy trust in such a way that he could not smite thee, but must accept thee for Jesus' sake. If thou dost trust him, thou hast the key of his heart, the key of his house, the key of his heaven. If thou canst trust thy God in Jesus Christ, thou hast become a son of God. I see a philosophy in the choice of faith: do not you?

But then faith operates also to salvation by *the effect it has on the character*. When I doubt God, then I follow my own judgment and do what I please; but when I trust him wholly, and know him to be my Father and my Friend, then I yield my will to him naturally, not as a matter of constraint, but with great joy. And is it not a wonderful thing, that this simple trust turns the whole current of our life, and changes the entire colour and complexion of our thought? Wisely is it ordained to be the instrument of salvation, since it touches the main-spring of our being, and makes that which was erratic and rebellious become orderly and obedient?

Moreover, brethren, trust saves us, because *it grasps the promises of God, and pleads them*. It says to God, "Thou hast promised this; therefore I pray thee do as thou hast said." The God of truth cannot lie; and, therefore, he must keep his word. Trust pleads the sacrifice of Jesus, and says—"Lord, the blood of thy Son was shed for the remission of sins, therefore, I pray thee let my sins be remitted. Thou hast said that thou hast laid on him the iniquity of us all, I pray thee let me be unburdened of my load, because thou hast laid it on him." Trust

must save, for it has all the promises of the covenant at its back, and the Christ of the covenant at its side, exhibiting his own precious blood. How can trust but save the soul when God declares it shall do so ?

In our most honest hours we are driven to faith for our comfort. If in our prosperity our eyes wander to other confidences, in our distress they come back to Christ and his cross. When the head is aching, and the heart is throbbing, and the death-sweat lies on the brow, none of us dare look to works, or feelings, or sacraments ; but we cry—

“Hold thou thy cross before my failing eyes.”

The wounds of Jesus are the ultimate hope of the forlorn. When the soul is about to quit the body, the most eminent preacher, the most earnest worker, the most devout thinker, asks that he may see Jesus, and be washed in his blood and covered with his righteousness. I dare not trust all the heaped-up merits of all the saints, but I dare trust the Lord Jesus Christ. Sinner as I am, I am assured of salvation through the sinner's saviour. If I had as many souls in this one body as there are souls in this house of prayer I dare trust them all with Christ. If all the sins ever committed by all the men that ever lived since time began were all heaped upon my one guilty head I dare trust Jesus Christ to cleanse me from them all. O come, dear hearts, and trust my Lord ! He cannot fail you. According to your faith be it unto you. You shall be able to live graciously, and to die calmly, if your trust settles itself upon Jesus, the Christ, the anointed of the Lord. Ere yet the harvest is past and the summer is ended trust Christ, and live. O Holy Spirit, by thy secret workings upon the heart, lead all these thousands to trust in the Lord Jesus ! Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

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