

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY

NO. 1047

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, APRIL 21, 1872,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord:
and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before You.”
Psalm 22:27.*

SOME have thought that this psalm was used as a soliloquy by our Lord when He was expiring upon the cross. It may be so. Fitter words could scarcely have been conceived, even by our Lord Himself. We must not, however, strain a point to establish a conjecture, nor attempt to prove that which is not revealed to us. We have no sort of hesitation, however, in asserting that this psalm describes both the outward sufferings and the inward emotions of our expiring Lord, and in that light it becomes a very wonderful psalm indeed. Its clear prophetic description is an evidence of our Lord's Messiahship, and indeed it is so full and plain that it is a key to His sufferings. Here the prophet explains the evangelist, just as in ordinary cases the evangelist is the expositor of the prophet. Towards the close of this psalm its tone is singularly altered, mournfulness departs and joy occupies its place; the mighty hero sees the conflict ended, anticipates the victory, and begins to chant the conquerors paean. We have selected our text out of that part of the psalm which overflows with the joy of anticipated triumph, and we trust that this morning the joy of the Lord may be our strength, so that we may be moved to prayer and nerved for action. As this is the annual Missionary Sabbath, I feel bound to preach upon the subject; yet, while I do so, I shall at the same time desire to speak personally to the souls of all present; for remembering that we are in a dying world; I, a dying preacher to dying hearers, would not deliver even a single discourse without appealing to the consciences and aiming at the hearts of those who are present. Because we are thinking of heathens or of the coming triumphs of Christ in the latter days, we must not forget those who are perishing before our eyes. Excuse me, therefore, no, *commend* me, if every now and then I drive right away from the subject to assail men's hearts.

I. Our first point this morning is, I think, pretty clear in the text, namely, that THE CONVERSION OF THE NATIONS TO GOD MAY BE EXPECTED. “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before You.” We are all agreed that such a thing is to be desired; it is, indeed, a “Consummation devoutly to be wished,” since this is the true and only remedy for the ills of human society; nothing else will ever cure earth's woes but the bringing of her back again to her God from whom she has wandered. We are equally well agreed, I think, in the sorrowful conclusion that such a consummation does not appear at all likely to the eye of observation, and the judgment of reason; how little progress has the kingdom of God made in the world in these latter days! In the heroic age of Christianity, the cross was borne as a conquering symbol from land to land in a short space of time! The apostles were clothed with extraordinary power, and their immediate successors, retaining much of their spirit, went from strength to strength till the nations heard the testimony of Christ and myriads submitted to it. A long pause has intervened, with only occasional breaks, such as the Reformation, the times of refreshing under the Methodists, and the partial revival of our own times; despite these hopeful outbreaks of life, the progress of Christianity has been very slight, indeed, compared with what might have been expected from its rapid strides at the commencement, and compared with what might have been expected from the force of its essential truth, and from the fact that its message commends itself to the best sympathies of the human heart. Alas, alas! The battle is long and weary, and the end is not yet; so far from going on to victory, we so decline that men taunt us with the decadence of our holy faith, and foretell that we are nearing the period of decay when something better will supplant

the gospel! We do not believe the insinuation; we reject it as blasphemy, and yet we should not wonder if our lethargy and failure have been the soil in which this noxious thought has grown; it is unquestionable that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, except to those who regard it with very optimistic eyes, has not progressed of late as we could have desired; it would be fair to conclude, judging of things to come by the things that appear, and setting aside the hopes of faith, and the teachings of revelation, that it is not probable that so spiritual a faith as that of Christ should ever subdue the nations. Men need a coarser system of religion; their minds are groveling, they desire a creed which will tolerate their lusts; they crave a religion which will afford scope for their pride and their self-will. The doctrines of the gospel kindle men's hostility when they are fairly and honestly preached—there would be more opposition to it if it were not so frequently diluted, and even falsified by its professed teachers. True Christianity causes warfare and a division, and has to force its way against inveterate hatred; only the grace of God can make it spread. Yet, for all that, brothers and sisters, we judge not after the sight of the eyes, neither do we look into the future through the glass of human calculation—we believe in God, and viewing the future with the eyes of faith, we expect a complete triumph! As in the past, so in the future, the church walks by faith; we are to believe, and we shall be established; the sooner we have done with reasoning and conclusions drawn from things that can be seen, the better! After all, our only reason, as far as I can see, for the firm conviction that the gospel will yet subdue the nations lies in this—that God will have it so; He has promised it, and He will complete His own purposes.

Certain persons in these days tell us that we must not expect to see the nations converted to Christ, nor hope for any general spread of the gospel. I have heard it said that we are to look upon the world as a great wreck, going to pieces out on the yonder surf where a thousand breakers loosen every timber, and quicksand is hungry to engulf the whole; and all we can hope to do with a life boat is to pluck here and there, a soul out of the general catastrophe. God's elect will be rescued, but the nations will perish, and the mass of mankind will be castaways. According to this theory, we are not to hope for a glorious future upon earth in the last days—at least not one brought about by the conversion of men under the preaching of the gospel; they give us another picture which I need not paint this morning, but the universal spread of the gospel in the world is thought by them to be unscriptural! I cannot agree with them. I think them in error, and I have these reasons for it.

Our new-born nature craves for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, and prays for it instinctively. Nor is the instinct wrong, for the Lord, when He was asked by His disciples to teach them to pray, said, "After this manner pray you," and He gave them as part of the manner of their prayer the right to express the desire, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." Do not your souls long for the conversion of your families? Does not the same desire make you pant for the salvation of the people among whom you dwell—your townfolk and your countrymen? And when you are nearest to God and most spiritual, have you not still larger aspirations? Do you not pray for the conversion of all mankind? Yes, have you not found yourselves breaking out with a cry like that of dying David, "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory"? Do you think the Lord has taught His spiritual people to desire this, not in moments of excitement, but in times of sober fellowship with Himself, and will He not grant it? Surely God the Holy Spirit knows what the mind of God is! Does He not make intercession in the saints according to the will of God? He has taught us to desire, and long for, and pray for this because He intends to give it! The prayers of the saints are the shadows of coming blessings; as you may prognosticate the storm by the motion of the mercury in the barometer, so may you much more infallibly foretell the future from the emotions, the longings, and the agonies of the saints of God! Therefore I feel that the whole earth must be filled with the Lord's glory, because the souls of His saints pine for it.

Does it not, again, seem a very unlikely thing to you that on this earth, where God has stood, as it were, foot to foot in the person of His dear Son with evil, that evil, after all, should vanquish Him and win the day? Eden has been blasted; Calvary has been stained with blood—this is defeat so far—at least Satan thinks it so! Will it ever end in triumph? Shall it always be that the deliverer's heel shall be bruised, and is the time never coming when the same wounded heel shall break the serpent's head? Is half the prophecy uttered at the gates of Eden to be fulfilled, and the other half to be null and void? Up

to this moment we see the church persecuted, the truth of God despised, God dishonored, Christ rejected, idols set up, doctrines of devils taught, and the whole world lying in the wicked one! Is Satan forever to have his own way? Shall the King of kings never win this world unto Himself? Has He not died for the whole world? Is it not so said? We who hold the doctrine of a special redemption of the elect, and hold it firmly, yet never quarrel with those texts which speak of the redemption of the race, because we look for it, and believe that it will yet come. We trust the time shall hasten on when as the morning chases away the darkness, so the truth, and the right, and the Christ of God shall, from among the sons of men, destroy sin, error, and rebellion! In his den has the old lion been bearded, and in his own forest shall he be slain? Even here, where Satan has held high carnival and been Lord of Misrule; even here shall he be defeated, and his power abolished! The strong man in his own house shall be bound by a stronger than he, and Christ shall be victor where the foe of God and man once reigned supreme; for this purpose He came into the world, that He might destroy the works of the devil, and I see not how this could well be if there is not to be a wider spread of the gospel than we have seen as yet.

And again, brothers and sisters, we look for the extension of the Redeemer's reign in the world on account of the promises of reward for His redemption—"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Do you think that He is satisfied yet; satisfied with a mere handful, for, certainly, not enough are saved as yet out of the world's vast population. Is Christ, the great King, satisfied to settle down in a corner of the world as ruler over one scanty province? Think you that He does not expect to divide the spoil with the strong when the nations shall flock to Him, and their kings shall bow down before Him? Brothers and sisters, the present state of affairs does not satisfy *us*, and since our Lord's heart is larger than ours, it surely does not satisfy Him! What Christian minister is satisfied with the progress of the gospel? What lover of the souls of men is fully at ease under present conditions? I shall never be at peace while so many of my hearers are unsaved! Yet, none of us bore the pangs which He endured, and cannot; therefore, measure the vastness of the expected recompense. Surely the ascended Redeemer deserves a numerous seed, a countless progeny to be His crown of rejoicing! Shall not Jesus at last have the pre-eminence? Shall He not win more souls than Satan shall destroy? Is sin to prove itself mightier than divine love? When the tale is told, and the number is made up, shall there be more in the kingdom of Satan than in the kingdom of Christ? Shall it be so? I dare not think it! My soul revolts from the dreary supposition, and therefore I look forward to the spread of the gospel over all parts of the world and a period of the ingathering of the sons of men to Christ so large as to make up innumerable multitudes, and swell the army of the saved beyond all human computation!

But, beloved, these are only inferences and hopes, though fairly gathered from our spiritual instincts, and from divine truths; let us turn to Scripture and read a few of its utterances which appear to us full of hope for the future. David shall be our first witness. Mark you, I am not about to give all the texts on the subject, nor a 10th of them, nor even do I suppose that I have selected the best. I have merely gathered a few as I remembered them. In the second psalm God declares, concerning His dear Son, our Lord Jesus, "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree the Lord has said unto Me, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You." What is added? "Ask of Me and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession." Will the heathen never be His? Shall He never possess the far-off lands, and call them His own? Be you sure that His prayers will yet be heard! Turn next to that 72nd Psalm, of which I might read the whole, for from beginning to end it flows over with gracious promises, but as we should not have time to go through the whole, let us read from the 8th verse. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him." Turn to the 17th verse—"His name shall endure forever. His name shall be continued as long as the sun and men shall be blessed in Him. All nations shall call Him blessed." If David is questioned yet again, he will reply in something like the same manner in the 86th Psalm, at the 9th verse—"All nations whom You have made

shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name.” We see not this as yet, neither in any era of human history has it been performed; we, therefore, confidently expect it by-and-by.

That glorious evangelist of old prophecy, Isaiah, has many passages to the same effect, and we will, therefore, quote one or two of them. In his 2nd chapter, at the 2nd verse, you will find him saying, “It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come you, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Of a similar purport is the 11th chapter pretty nearly all through, where he speaks of the days of peace wherein the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and says in the 9th verse, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” The 40th chapter also is a bright window through which the future may be seen resplendent in the sunlight of God. If you turn to the 5th verse, the Lord concerning the First Advent of His Son: “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.” This is but one verse out of many similar ones in the same connection. In the 60th chapter he begins, as you know, with these words, “Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you; and the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together; they come to you: your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side. Then you shall see, and flow together, and your heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto you, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto you. The multitude of camels shall cover you, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto you.” The whole of Isaiah is full of such clear visions and plain promises.

If you will read in Daniel, you will find that the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands is to break in pieces the image of gold, and iron, and clay, and is to fill the whole earth. In one of his night visions Daniel saw four great kingdoms, typified by four beasts. All these have passed away, as we know, and another part of his dream is even now being fulfilled. But then he saw a fifth monarchy, altogether dissimilar from those which had preceded it, which is most assuredly to be of equal extent, consequence, and glory with those which preceded it—yes, it is infinitely to excel them! We do not pretend to go into the details now or at any other time, for our knowledge thereof is slender, but, at any rate, we gather from Daniel and others that a day is coming when the kingdom of Christ shall be conspicuously among men and His scepter of right and truth shall sway mankind. Time fails me, otherwise there are many passages I might mention, such as Habakkuk 2:14—“The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,” and Micah 4:1-3. Note, however, our Lord’s own parable of the mustard seed which was the least of all seeds, but it grew and became a great tree. Some may think that the mustard seed parable has been fulfilled, and to these we grant that, compared with its beginning, the gospel is a great tree—but I cannot feel that we have reached at all to the satisfactory fulfillment of the prophetic parable as yet. There are birds of the air yet to come and build their nests in the branches of it; though little at the beginning, the gospel kingdom is to be far greater than any of us have dreamed; the beloved disciple, I think, learned the future aright, when in the visions of God at Patmos, he heard a voice which said—“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.” That is yet to be, and for it we hopefully and joyfully look!

Now, brothers and sisters, I have reminded you of this doctrine, which I believe is held by most of you, not because I thought you needed confirming in the belief of it, but because the consideration of its

joyful hope is likely to fire you with holy ardor. We shall not labor well if we do not labor in hope; if we think mission work to be a forlorn enterprise, we shall go about it with faint hearts and slack hands; if we do not believe in a great success ultimately to come, we shall not use great means; we shall straiten ourselves in action if we narrow our expectations. Certainly we have not used very great means yet, for all the missionary operations now being carried on in the world are very little more than casting the crumbs from under our table to the poor heathen dogs; we have not done as much as to give the fragments of the gospel feast to the nations! A few cheese parings and candle ends Christians have given away to missions, but little more; generosity has barely yielded the tail-corn of her barn, and the dregs of her wine vat; we have not learned self-denial for Christ, and pinching ourselves for His service is a rare thing among us. The men who have gone abroad have not always been the pick of the church—honor to them that they have gone at all, but small honor to the men of greater ability who ought to have gone forth, but have laid out their talents in some poor worldly business, and occupied their time in a far less worthy cause. If the church expects small results from missions, I readily concede that she is acting consistently with her anticipations! And if she has, indeed, given up the work as a hopeless case, I think she is doing about as little as she consistently could with the bare appearance of obeying her Lord's commands to evangelize the nations; may the day come when her spirit shall revive, when she shall feel that the earth belongs to Christ, and shall hear her Master's voice pealing like thunder within her conscience, "Go you into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." May she rise to the dignity of her position, and perceive that her field is the *world*, since the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. All things are possible to him who believes—may we yet receive the faith which subdues nations! When the church is ready for great events, they shall occur to her; God has already blessed us up to the full measure of our fitness to be blessed, and perhaps a great deal beyond it; we have seen more gracious results than we could have expected from our poor efforts, but when the whole church shall become fired with the love of Christ—when every man's heart shall glow with a furnace heat of ardent desire for the glory of Jesus—then like molten lava from the red lips of a volcano, the current of church life shall burn a passage for itself! As soon as Zion shakes herself from the dust, and goes forth to war in the strength of her Lord, she shall cause her enemies to flee before her as Midian fled before the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!

II. Our text teaches us very plainly that THE CONVERSION OF THE NATIONS WILL OCCUR IN THE USUAL MANNER OF OTHER CONVERSIONS. And here it is that I need the attention of unconverted persons especially. "The nations," it says, "shall remember, and shall turn unto the Lord, and shall worship before Him." Observe the first step; they shall "remember." In this manner conversion begins in men; when he had come to himself, the prodigal said, "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare?" He remembered the house from which he came, and the nations will one day remember God. Mysterious traditions are floating among them now; in mystic verse and hoary legend memories of the Creator are still preserved; man is far off from God, but there lingers in the race some recollection of a happy past when God and man were friends. It is so with individuals after their kind. Oh, may some of you have recollections which look God-ward and remind you of what you learned at your mother's knee, of what was taught you by a father's earnest lips! May you remember from where you have fallen, and repent! Such regrets are holy and healthful; the prodigal remembered his sins, they came forcibly before him; the harlots and the wine cups were remembered with sorrow and loathing. May you, dear hearers, be moved by penitent memories of all your unhallowed past, for so shall repentance be created within you! The nations will, by-and-by, remember the wickedness they committed—their debauchery, covetousness, tyranny, cruelty, and idolatry will be seen in their true colors, and they will mourn for them with sincere hearts. Oh, when will it come—that blessed Bochim? At this moment I pray God's Spirit to make some of you remember your transgressions; may they come up in dread array before you! May you be convicted of sin, and made to tremble before God!

The nations will remember their idolatries against God, and the disappointments which have come of them; they will say, one to another, "To what purpose is it that we have worshipped these gods of stone? Have they helped us in the day of trouble? We have sacrificed unto them; have they given us rain in the

day of drought? Have they helped us in the hour of death?" And as they recollect this, they will turn to God. I would that some here might remember, and say, "What has the flesh done for us? What have the pleasures of the world ministered to us, after all? We are even now degraded and made ashamed; what fruit have we in these things?" Blessed memories will one day come over this wicked world and lead it to turn back to the Lord. It is the work of the missionary to stir the world's memory—to go and tell it over, and over, and over again about its Savior—for there is a power which God has kept alive in human consciences which will respond to the voice of the gospel! I hope that response will be found in some here today, but the day is coming when the conversion of the *nations* shall begin by their remembering their *God*, remembering their *sins*, remembering the disappointment of their idols, and remembering to *turn* to the Lord.

The next step in the conversion of the nations will be their *turning to the Lord*. Do you note that? "They shall remember, and turn unto the Lord." It is not merely they shall turn. Ah, my dear hearers, there is a vast difference between "turning," and "turning to the Lord." Some of you turn from drunkenness to total abstinence, and I am glad enough of that, but it is far short of a *saving* change! Others turn from profanity to decent speech, and we are thankful for that, but that, also, is not salvation! Genuine conversion lies in turning to the Lord. Therefore, in Hindustan, it is a very small gain that has been effected by educational institutions—the people are evidently turning, but what does it matter if they turn from a false god to no god? Is it really a turn for the better? I do not know whether we might not more hopefully contend against an idolatrous Hindustan, than with an infidel Hindustan; it is much the same devil, though he may appear in a different shape. The conversion of the heathen will not come through their being gradually civilized into Christianity; do not entertain any hope in that direction; for God will turn them to Himself and the gracious work will be done! We do not at home see sinners gradually come to God by *processes* of reformation, for generally these reformations lead to self-righteousness; but we find them coming to God first, and then reforming afterwards, and even so shall we find it with the heathen. We have first to seek their turning to God, and after that we may look for civilization, education, refinement, and so on. Man must first, in the gospel, come to his Father, and then shall he lose his rags of barbarism, and put on his robes of education, and his shoes of progress and liberty, and hear the music and the dancing of joy. First, the kingdom of God, and His righteousness must be sought, and all the rest shall follow.

Note the next point. "They shall worship before Him." Every sinner who has truly turned to God becomes a worshipper; he adores the Christ, he adores the Father, he adores the Spirit; he was a rebel before, he is now a worshipper. What a blessed sight it will be to behold an adoring world! At this day around the august throne of heaven all the stars are floating, perhaps inhabited each one by a distinct race—from every star as from a silver bell there ascends to the throne of God music most sweet and solemn. From only one star; this sin-darkened earth, discordant sounds arise. This poor earth shines not in the light of Jehovah as once it did; a demon's wing has covered it, and hidden from it the light of the central sun; today it is swathed in cloud and mist. But can't you see, it begins to shine forth! Seen from the throne of God, it is not altogether darkness; as when the new moon first shows her slender ring of light, so the earth is rimmed and edged with a divine illumination which shall increase till the whole circle of the globe shall be irradiated, and shall in full-orbed splendor, reflect the glory of God! Then, also, shall music blend with the growing brightness; light and sweetness shall be wedded again, and earth, like a lamp of God's sanctuary, and a golden bell of the high priest's garment shall shine forth and ring out the praises of her God. O blessed consummation! May the Lord send it, and send it soon! But, you can plainly see that the conversion of the nations follows the usual rule, and by no means differs from the conversion of men at home. It is a remembering, a turning to the Lord, and a worshipping of Him. They turn to Christ; they look to Him, and are enlightened, and then, straightway, they begin to adore and reverence Him who has saved them!

It is clear then, that we are to seek the salvation of the nations by using the ordinary means; if we expect to see them saved in some extraordinary way differing from what we have up to now seen, we shall be disappointed, and we shall be led into practical mistakes. We have nothing to do in Hindustan, or in

Caffraria, but just what the apostles did in Asia Minor and what we are doing here—we are to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified! I do not believe that any race of men needs a peculiar gospel, or a novel mode of administering it; there may be different styles of preaching—God will give us those—but there need be no other mode of action than the apostolic one—“They who were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.” The mode prescribed in the marching orders of our grand captain is this—“Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”—not found schools, nor debate with skeptics, nor civilize, but “preach the gospel.” “Preach the gospel.” “Preach the gospel.” Do this to every creature and the sure results will follow in one place as in another! Men shall remember, shall turn unto the Lord, and shall worship Him. Dear unconverted hearer the very best means for your conversion are being employed now, and therefore I would have you remember that if these fail, neither would you be converted though one rose from the dead! This deserves your solemn consideration, and I beseech you to lay it to heart.

III. The last point is the most important of all. **THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS RESULT ARE TO BE FOUND AT CALVARY.** Our text is in a Calvary Psalm; its connection is full of sacrificial suffering; if you desire to comprehend its real meaning, you must hear it from the dying lips of the incarnate God. It is through the cross that the nations shall fear and tremble, and turn to God.

Note then, first, that the death of Christ secures the conversion of the nations. Every conversion is the result of the death of Christ; it is the Spirit’s work to minister life and spiritual health, but Your blood, O Christ, has the glory of it! It were vain to talk of conversion if there had been no redemption, or to speak of man’s remembering and turning to God if Your cross, O Savior, had not been lifted up as the way of salvation for all who look to it! On the cross the Lord Jesus effectually redeemed all His people, and He will have them! On the cross He established the covenant of grace for all the souls for whom He died and He will lose none of them, nor allow them to miss the blessing! His blood shall not be shed in vain! The stipulations of the covenant—signed, sealed, and ratified by His own blood—must stand fast and firm! And one of those stipulations is this, “In You shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” It must, therefore, be so! I do not look for the triumph of the church to her treasures, nor to her institutions of learning, nor even to her zeal, or to the popular ability of her preachers; I look to the cross! O conquering Crucified One, You have secured the victory, for You have finished the redemption of myriads, and therefore they must be saved! Let us, when fainting in conflict, fall back into the arms of a dying Savior, and we shall find courage for our future fray.

The death of Christ is, moreover, our motive for attempting the spread of the gospel throughout the world. Because Jesus died, we feel that He must be glorified; I never feel so ardent for His cause as when I have been baptized afresh into His agonies; if we stand at His cross and view His crown of thorns, and His marred countenance, and His pierced hands, and nailed feet; and if we gaze with affection into the gash where the soldier’s spear set; if we approach His heart, we cannot but feel that we must have human hearts to worship Him. He is Lord of my soul, and I would gladly see Him equally dear to my brothers and sisters. Jesus has won many hearts in England, and in other countries, too, but oh, He must have more! He must have more! He must have all of England for His own! He must have Scotland! He must have the United States! He must possess Europe; He must govern the whole world; it is imperative that He should possess them! We feel that He must reign! If we could throw ourselves upon the spikes of His foes to win victory for Him, we would rejoice! If like the old Swiss hero we could gather up all the death-bearing lances into our own bosom, and die in opening a road to victory for our fellow soldiers, it were a destiny for which to bless God! It would be a glorious thing to die, if by our martyrdom the world might be won for Him! High thrones and bright crowns for Jesus, where shall we find them? We will snatch them from your heads, you kings, if there are no others! No, your diadems are too mean for His brow, and are only worthy to be thrown into the dust before Him; they have not luster enough for Him! We will find jewels for Him in the tears of penitents, and gold in the songs of believers! We will weave wreathes for Him out of emancipated souls and perfected spirits! He must have them! He must have them; such a one as He cannot but be great unto the ends of the earth!

And as His death is thus the security of future triumph, and is to us the impelling motive for the winning of it, so is His cross the instrument of our victory! We shall conquer the world, but it will be by the cross! The old legend of Constantine, “In hoc signo Vinces,” has truth in it for us: “By this shall we conquer”; by the cross, by the preaching of Jesus Christ, and nothing else! I charge the Church of God not to hamper herself with a mass of lumber, either of ceremonies, buildings, schools, or officers—but to go forth with the sling and the stone of David! Saul’s armor is, however, in good favor at this hour, and the church looks everywhere but to her God; it is miserably amusing to mark the way in which our so-called National Church tries to win men to God; it has recently been stated that in seven of the leading ritualistic churches in London, the subscriptions to foreign missions only reached the sum of £7 13s. 2d. for a whole year! It is fair to add that one of them contributed £5 13s. 10d. to a special fund for Honolulu, but even with this extra effort the total is not raised to £14, and the average is not £2 apiece! These seven superfine apostolic churches contributed between them £13 7s., for foreign missions, and yet the incumbent of one of them, before the Ritual Commission, stated in his evidence that the cost of his choir, alone, was “About £1,000 a year”! O model church, with what wisdom have you acted? Behold you give £2 for the salvation of the heathen, and a £1,000 for a box of whistles, and a set of singing men and singing women to make music with! Verily, this is a plain index of the whole business! Theirs is a religion of sensuous gratification, and not of soul-winning! To charm ears with music, eyes with dainty colors, and noses with incense—this is their religion! Men pay money for these delights, even as they would for the opera or any other amusement in which their tastes find pleasure, but, for the winning of souls abroad, a few halfpence may suffice to show the lack of zeal! Dear Friends, we know that souls are not to be won by music; if the world were, indeed, to be conquered by chants, to be converted by songs, regenerated by organs, and saved by little boys in surplices, then it would be time for us to cease our ministry, and give place to choir boys, opera singers, organists, and organ blowers; then might we set up a vast array of gilded pipes, lift up the crucifix, wave the censor, cry, “These are your gods, O Israel!”

But, while the Word of God remains unchanged, we shall rely upon the blood of the Lamb, and resolve to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified! Our hope of success lies, under God, in the preaching of the gospel. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Him, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.” The preaching of the cross will win the world, but all else is vanity of vanities! Therefore, brothers, let our ministry be full of Christ! Whether we preach at home or abroad, let us preach substitution, and tell of the vicarious sacrifice of Calvary! Let Jesus’ death be our first theme, and our last theme; utter all others in proportionate harmony, but let this be first and chief. Let our Lord in our ministry be “The chief among ten thousand”; let His cross be the standard to which all other truths of God shall rally. Oh, preach Christ, live Christ, catch the spirit of Christ, devote yourselves to Christ, drink of His cross, and be baptized with His baptism—and then it shall be that all the nations shall remember and shall turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the people shall worship before Him! Sinner, your hope is at the cross! Hasten there! Anxious soul, your peace is at the cross! Fly there! Despairing soul, your salvation is at the cross! Look there! One look will save you! God help you to give it now! Through those tears which dim your eyes, look now, for Jesus smiles upon you; look to Him, and you shall now have everlasting life! God bless you all, and God prosper His work in the world, for Christ’s sake. Amen.

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