

REGENERATION

NO. 130

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MAY 3, 1857,
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 AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
John 3:3.

IN daily life our thoughts are most occupied with things that are most necessary for our existence. No one murmured that the subject of the price of bread was frequently on the lips of men at a time of scarcity, because they felt that the subject was one of vital importance to the mass of the population and therefore, they murmured not though they listened to continual declamatory speeches and read perpetual articles in the newspapers concerning it.

I must offer the same excuse, then, for bringing before you this morning the subject of regeneration. It is one of absolute and vital importance. It is the hinge of the Gospel. It is the point upon which most Christians are agreed, yea, all who are Christians in sincerity and truth. It is a subject which lies at the very basis of salvation. It is the very groundwork of our hopes for heaven and as we ought to be very careful of the basement of our structure, so should we be very diligent to take heed that we are really born again and that we have made sure work of it for eternity.

There are many who fancy they are born again who are not. It well becomes us, then, to frequently examine ourselves. And it is the minister's duty to bring forward those subjects which lead to self-examination and have a tendency to search the heart and try the reins of the children of men.

To proceed at once, I shall first make some remarks upon *the new birth*. Secondly, I shall note *what is meant by not being able to see the kingdom of God if we are not born again*. Then, I shall go further on to note *why it is that “Except we are born again we cannot see the kingdom of God,”* and then expostulate with men as God's ambassador before I close.

I. First, then, THE MATTER OF REGENERATION.

In endeavoring to explain it, I must have you notice, first of all, *the figure that is employed*. It is said a man must be born again. I cannot illustrate this better than by supposing a case.

Suppose that in England there should be a law passed that admission to royal courts, preference in office, and any privileges that might belong to the nation could, only be given to persons who were born in England—suppose that birth in this land was made a *sine qua non* and it was definitely declared that whatever men might do or be, unless they were native born subjects of England, they could not enter into her Majesty's presence. Nor could they enjoy any of the emoluments or offices of the state, nor any of the privileges of citizens. I think if you suppose such a case, I shall be able to illustrate the difference between any changes and reforms that men make in themselves and the real work of being born again.

We will suppose, then, that some man—an American Indian, for instance—should come to this country and should endeavor to obtain the privileges of citizenship, well-knowing that the rule is absolute, and cannot be altered that a man must be a born subject or else he cannot enjoy them. Suppose he says, *“I will change my name, I will take up the name of an Englishman. I have been called by my high sounding title among the Sioux. I have been called the son of the Great West Wind, or some such name, but I will take an English name. I will be called a Christian man, an English subject.”*

Will that admit him? You see him coming to the palace gates and asking for admission. He says, *“I have taken an English name.”* *“But are you an Englishman born and bred?”* *“I am not,”* says he. *“Then the gates must be shut against you, for the law is absolute. And though you may have the name of even the royal family itself upon you, because you have not been born here, you must be shut out.”*

That illustration will apply to all of us who are here present. At least, nearly the whole of us bear the professing Christian name. Living in England you would think it a disgrace to you if you were not called Christian. You are not heathen, you are not infidel. You are neither Muslim nor Jew. You think that the name, Christian, is a creditable one to you and you have taken it.

Be you quite assured that the name of a Christian is not the nature of a Christian, and that your being born in a Christian land and being recognized as professing the Christian religion is of no use whatever, unless there is something more added to it—the being born again as a subject of Jesus Christ.

“But” says this American Indian, “I am prepared *to renounce my dress* and to become an Englishman in fashion. In fact, I will go to the very top of the fashion. You shall not see me in anything differing from the accepted style of the present day. May I not, when I am arrayed in court dress and have decorated myself as etiquette demands, come in before her Majesty? See, I’ll take off this plume, I will not shake this tomahawk, I renounce these garments. The moccasin I cast away forever. I am an Englishman in dress, as well as name.”

He comes to the gate, dressed out like one of our own countrymen, but the gates are still shut in his face, because the law requires that he must be born in this country, and without that, whatever his dress might be, he could not enter the palace. How many are there of you who barely take the Christian name upon you, but have adopted Christian manners? You go to your churches and your chapels, you attend the house of God, you take care that there is some form of religion observed in your family—your children are not left without hearing the name of Jesus!

So far, so good. God forbid that I should say a word against it! But remember, it is bad because you do not go further. All this is of no use whatever for admitting you into the kingdom of heaven, unless this is also complied with—the being born again. Oh! dress yourselves ever so grandly with the clothes of godliness. Put the wreath of benevolence upon your brow and gird your loins with integrity. Put on your feet the shoes of perseverance and walk through the earth an honest and upright man. Yet remember, unless you are born again, “that which is of the flesh is flesh,” and you, not having the operations of the Spirit in you, still have heaven’s gates shut against you, because you are not born again.

“Well,” but says this Indian, “I will not only adopt the dress, but I will *learn the language*. I will put away my brogue and my language that I once spoke in the wild prairie or in the woods, far away from my lips. I shall not talk of the Shu-Shuh-gah and of the strange names wherewith I have called my wild fowl and my deer, but I will speak as you speak and act as you act. I will not only have your dress, but precisely your manners. I will talk in just the same fashion. I will adopt your brogue. I will take care that it shall be grammatically correct. Will you not then admit me? I have become thoroughly Anglicized. May I not then be received?”

“No,” says the keeper of the door, “there is no admittance, for except a man is born in this country, he cannot be admitted.” So with some of you, you talk just like Christians. Perhaps you have a little too much cant about you. You have begun so strictly to imitate what you think to be a godly man that you go a little beyond the mark, and you gloss it so much that we are able to detect the counterfeit. Still you pass current amongst most men as being a right down sort of Christian. You have studied biographies and sometimes you tell long tales about divine experience. You have borrowed them from the biographies of good men. You have been with Christians and know how to talk as they do. You have even caught a puritanical twang, perhaps. You go through the world just like professors do. And if you were to be observed, no one would detect you.

You are a member of the church. You have been baptized. You take the Lord’s supper. Perhaps you are a deacon or an elder. You pass the sacramental cup round. You are all that a Christian can be, except that you are without a Christian heart. You are whitewashed sepulchers, still full of rottenness within, though fairly garnished on the outside. Well, take heed, take heed! It is an astonishing thing, how near the painter can go to the expression of life, and yet the canvas is dead and motionless. And it is equally astonishing how near a man may go to a Christian and yet, through not being born again, the absolute

rule shuts him out of heaven, and with all his profession, with all the trappings of his professed godliness, and with all the gorgeous plumes of experience, yet must he be borne away from heaven's gates.

"You are uncharitable, Mr. Spurgeon." I do not care what you say about that, I never wish to be more charitable than Christ. I did not say this, Christ said it. If you have any quarrel with Him, settle it there. I am not the maker of this truth, but simply the speaker of it. I find it written, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

If your footman should go to the door and deliver your message correctly, the man at the door might abuse him ever so much, but the footman would say, "Sir, do not abuse me, I cannot help it. I can only tell you what my Master told me. I am not the originator of it." So if you think me uncharitable, remember you do not accuse me, you accuse Christ. You are not finding fault with the messenger, you are finding fault with the message. Christ has said it, "Except a man be born again." I cannot dispute with you and shall not try. That is simply God's Word. Reject it at your peril. Believe it and receive it, I entreat you, because it comes from the lips of the Most High.

But now, note *the manner in which this regeneration is obtained*. I think I have none here so profoundly stupid as to be Puseyites. I can scarcely believe that I have been the means of attracting one person here, so utterly devoid of every remnant of brain, as to believe the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Yet I must just hint at it.

There be some who teach that by a few drops of water sprinkled on an infant's brow, the infant becomes regenerate. Well, granted. And now I will find out your regenerate ones twenty years afterwards. The champion of the prize ring is a regenerated man. Oh! yes, he was regenerated, because in infancy he was baptized and therefore, if all infants in baptism are regenerated, the prize fighter is a regenerate man. Take hold of him and receive him as your brother in the Lord.

Do you hear that man swearing and blaspheming God? He is regenerate, believe me, he is regenerate. The priest put a few drops of water on his brow and he is a regenerated man. Do you see the drunkard reeling down the street, the pest of the neighborhood, fighting everybody and beating his wife, worse than a brute? Well, he is regenerate, he is one of those Puseyite regenerates—oh, goodly regenerate!

Mark you the crowd assembled in the streets? The gallows is erected. Palmer is about to be executed, the man whose name should be cursed through all eternity for his villainy! He is one of those Puseyite regenerates. Yes, he is regenerate, because he was baptized in infancy. Regenerate while he mixes his strychnine. Regenerate while he administers his poison slowly, that he may cause death, and infinite pain, all the while he is causing it. Regenerate, indeed!

If that be regeneration, such regeneration is not worth having. If that be the thing that makes us part of the kingdom of heaven, verily, the Gospel is indeed a licentious Gospel. We can say nothing about it. If that is the Gospel that all such men are regenerate and will be saved, we can only say that it would be the duty of every man in the world to ignore that Gospel right away, because it is so inconsistent with the most common principles of morality that it could not possibly be of God, but of the devil.

But some say all are regenerate when they are baptized. Well, if you think so, stick to your own thoughts. I cannot help it. Simon Magus was certainly one exception, he was baptized on a profession of his faith, but so far from being regenerated by his baptism, we find Paul saying, "I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." And yet he was one of those regenerates, because he had been baptized. Ah! that doctrine only needs to be stated to sensible men and they will at once reject it.

Gentlemen that are fond of a filigree religion and like ornament and show, gentlemen of the high Beau Brummel school, will very likely prefer this religion, because they have cultivated their taste at the expense of their brain, and have forgotten that what is inconsistent with the sound judgment of a man cannot be consistent with the Word of God. So much for the first point.

Neither is a man regenerated, we say, in the next place, *by his own exertions*.

A man may reform himself very much and that is well and good. Let all do that. A man may cast away many vices and forsake many lusts in which he indulged, and conquer evil habits. But no man in the world can make himself to be born of God. Though he should struggle ever so much, he could never accomplish what is beyond his power. And mark you, if he could make himself to be born again, still he would not enter heaven, because there is another point in the condition which he would have violated, "Except a man be born of the *Spirit*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." So that the best exertions of the flesh do not reach this high point, the being born again of the Spirit of God.

And now we must say that regeneration consists in this, God the Holy Spirit, in a supernatural manner—mark, by the word supernatural, I mean just what it strictly means, supernatural, more than natural—works upon the hearts of men and they, by the operations of the divine Spirit, become regenerate men. But without the Spirit, they never can be regenerated. And unless God the Holy Spirit, who, "works in us to will and to do," should operate upon the will and the conscience, regeneration is an absolute impossibility, and therefore, so is salvation.

"What!" says one, "Do you mean to say that God absolutely interposes in the salvation of every man to make him regenerate?" I do indeed. In the salvation of every person, there is an actual putting forth of divine power, whereby the dead sinner is quickened, the unwilling sinner is made willing, and the desperately hard sinner has his conscience made tender. And he who rejected God and despised Christ is brought to cast himself down at the feet of Jesus.

This is called fanatical doctrine perhaps, that we cannot help, it is a scriptural doctrine, that is enough for us. "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If you like it not, quarrel with my Master, not with me. I do but simply declare His own revelation, that there must be in your heart something more than you can ever work there. There must be a divine operation. Call it a miraculous operation if you please. There must be a divine interposition, a divine working, a divine influence, or else, do what you may, without that you perish and are undone, "For except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The change is radical. It gives us new natures, makes us love what we hated and hate what we loved, sets us on a new road, makes our habits different, our thoughts different, makes us different in private and different in public. So that being in Christ, it is fulfilled, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new."

II. And now, I must come to the second point. I trust I have explained regeneration so that all may see what it is. Now WHAT DOES THE EXPRESSION, "SEEING THE KINGDOM OF GOD," MEAN?

It means two things. To see the kingdom of God on earth is to be a member of the mystical church—it is to enjoy the privileges and liberty of the child of God. To see the kingdom of heaven means to have power in prayer, to have communion with Christ, to have fellowship with the Holy Ghost, and to bring forth and produce all those joyous and blessed fruits which are the effect of regeneration. In a higher sense, "to see the kingdom of God," means to be admitted into heaven. "Except a man be born again," he cannot know about heavenly things on earth and he cannot enjoy heavenly blessings forever, "he cannot see the kingdom of God."

III. I think I may just pass over the second point without remark and proceed to notice in the third place, WHY IT IS THAT, "UNLESS A MAN BE BORN-AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD"? And I will confine my remarks to the kingdom of God in the world to come.

Why, he cannot see the kingdom of God *because he would be out of place in heaven*. A man that is not born again could not enjoy heaven. There is an actual impossibility in his nature, which prevents him from enjoying any of the bliss of paradise. You think, perhaps, that heaven consists in those walls of jewels, in those pearly gates, and streets of gold? Not so. That is the habitation of heaven. Heaven dwells there, but that is not heaven. Heaven is a state that is made here, that is made in the heart, made by

God's Spirit within us, and unless God the Spirit has renewed us and caused us to be born again, we cannot enjoy the things of heaven.

Why, it is a physical impossibility that ever a swine should deliver a lecture on astronomy. Every man will clearly perceive that it must be impossible that a snail should build a city. And there is just as much impossibility that a sinner unmended should enjoy heaven. Why, there would be nothing there for him to enjoy. If he could be put into the place where heaven is, he would be miserable. He would cry, "Let me away, let me away. Let me out of this miserable place!"

I appeal to yourselves. A sermon is too long for you very often. The singing of God's praises is dull dry work. You think that going up to God's house is very tedious. What will you do where they praise God day and night? If just a short discourse here is very wearying, what will you think of the eternal talkings of the redeemed through all ages of the wonders of redeeming love? If the company of the righteous is very irksome to you, what will be their company throughout eternity?

I think many of you are free to confess that psalm singing is not a bit to your taste, that you care nought about any spiritual things. Give you your bottle of wine and set you down at your ease, that is heaven for you! Well, there is no such a heaven yet made and therefore, there is no heaven for you. The only heaven there is, is the heaven of spiritual men, the heaven of praise, the heaven of delight in God, the heaven of acceptance in the Beloved, the heaven of communion with Christ.

Now, you do not understand anything about this. You could not enjoy it if you were to have it. You have not the capabilities for doing so. You, yourselves, from the very fact of your not being born again, are your own barrier to heaven, and if God were to open the gate wide and say, "Come in," you could not enjoy heaven if you were admitted, for unless a man be born again, there is an impossibility, a moral impossibility, of his seeing the kingdom of God.

Suppose there are some persons here who are entirely deaf, who have never heard sounds. Well, I say they cannot hear singing. Do I, when I say it, say a cruel thing? It is their own disability that prevents them. So when God says you cannot see the kingdom of heaven, He means it is your own disability for the enjoyment of heaven that will prevent you ever entering there.

But there are some other reasons. There are reasons why,

***"Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame."***

There are reasons, besides those in yourself, why you cannot see the kingdom of God, unless you are born again. *Ask you spirits* before the throne, "Angels, principalities, and powers, would you be willing that men who love not God, who believe not in Christ, who have not been born again, should dwell here?" I see them, as they look down upon us, and hear them answering, "No! Once we fought the dragon and expelled him, because he tempted us to sin! We must not, and we will not, have the wicked here. These alabaster walls must not be soiled with black and lustful fingers. The white pavement of heaven must not be stained and rendered filthy by the unholy feet of ungodly men. No!"

I see a thousand spears bristling and the fiery faces of a myriad seraphs thrust over the walls of paradise. "No, while these arms have strength and these wings have power, no sin shall ever enter here." I address myself moreover to the saints in heaven redeemed by sovereign grace, "Children of God, are you willing that the wicked should enter heaven as they are, without being born again? You love men, say, say, are you willing that they should be admitted as they are?"

I see Lot rise up and he cries, "Admit them into heaven! No! What! Must I be vexed by the conversation of Sodomites again, as once I was!" I see Abraham and he comes forward and he says, "No! I cannot have them here. I had enough of them while I was with them on earth—their jests and jeers, their silly talk, their vain conversation vexed and grieved us. We don't want them here." And heavenly though they are, and loving as their spirits are, yet there is not a saint in heaven who would not

resent, with the utmost indignation, the approach of anyone of you to the gates of paradise if you are still unholy and have not been born again.

But all that were nothing. We might, perhaps, scale the ramparts of heaven, if they were only protected by angels, and burst the gates of paradise open, if only the saints defended them. But there is another reason than that—*God has said it Himself*—“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

What, sinner! Will you scale the battlements of paradise when God is ready to thrust you down to hell? Will you with impudent face brazen Him out? God has said it. God has said it, with a voice of thunder, “You shall not see the kingdom of heaven.” Can you wrestle with the Almighty? Can you overthrow Omnipotence? Can you grapple with the Most High? Worm of the dust! Can you overcome your Maker? Trembling insect of an hour, shaken by the lightning when far overhead they flash far across the sky, will you dare the hand of God? Will you venture to defy Him to His face? Ah! He would laugh at you.

As the snow melts before the sun, as wax runs at the fierceness of the fire, so would you if His fury should once lay hold of you. Think not that you can overcome Him. He has sealed the gates of paradise against you and there is no entrance. The God of justice says, “I will not reward the wicked with the righteous. I will not suffer my goodly, godly paradise to be stained by wicked ungodly men. If they turn, I will have mercy upon them, but if they turn not, as I live, I will rend them in pieces and there shall be none to deliver.”

Now, sinner, can you brazen it out against Him? Will you rush upon the thick points of JEHOVAH’s bucklers? Will you try to scale His heaven when His arrow is stringed upon the bow to reach your heart? What! When the glittering sword is at your neck and ready to slay you? Will you endeavor to strive against your Maker? No, potsherd, no, contend with your fellow potsherd. Go, crawling grasshopper. Go, fight with your brothers. Strive with them, but come not against the Almighty. He has said it and you never shall, you never shall enter heaven unless you are born again.

Again, I say quarrel not with me. I have but delivered my Master’s message. Take it, disbelieve it if you dare. But if you believe it, rail not at me, for it is God’s message and I speak it in love to your soul, lest, lacking it, you should perish in the dark and walk blindfolded to your everlasting punishment.

IV. Now, my friends, A LITTLE EXPOSTULATION WITH YOU and then farewell.

I hear one man say, “Well, well, well, I see it. *I will hope that I shall be born again after I am dead.*” Oh, sir, believe me, you will be a miserable fool for your pains. When men die their state is fixed.

*“Fixed is their everlasting state,
Could they repent, ’tis now too late.”*

Our life is like that wax melting in the flame. Death puts its stamp on it, and then it cools and the impress never can be changed. You today are like the burning metal running forth from the cauldron into the mold. Death cools you in your mold and you are cast in that shape throughout eternity. The voice of doom cries over the dead, “He that is holy, let him be holy still. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.”

The damned are lost forever. They cannot be born again. They go on cursing, ever being cursed, ever fighting against God, and ever being trampled beneath His feet. They go on ever mocking, ever being laughed at for their mockery, ever rebelling, and ever being tortured with the whips of conscience, because they are ever sinning. They cannot be regenerated because they are dead.

“Well,” says another, “*I will take care that I am regenerated just before I die.*” Sir, I repeat again, you are a fool in talking thus. How do you know that you shall live? Have you taken a lease of your life, as you have of your house? Can you ensure the breath within your nostrils? Can you say in certainty that another ray of light shall ever reach your eye? Can you be sure that as your heart is beating a funeral march to the grave, you will not soon beat the last note, and so you shall die where you stand or now sit?

Oh, man! if your bones were iron and your sinews brass and your lungs steel, then you might say, "I shall live." But you are made of dust. You are like the flower of the field, you may die right now. Lo! I see death standing yonder, moving to and fro. The stone of time upon his scythe, to sharpen it. Today, today, for some of you, he "grasps the scythe" and away, away, he mows the fields, and you fall one by one. You must not and you cannot live.

God carries us away as a flood, like a ship in a whirlpool, like a log in a current dashed onward to the cataract. There is no stopping any one of us, we are all dying now! And yet you say you will be regenerated ere you die! Ay, sirs, but are you regenerated now? For if not, it may be too late to hope for tomorrow. Tomorrow you may be in hell, sealed up forever by adamant destiny, which never can be moved.

"Well," cries another, "*I do not care much about it*, for I see very little in being shut out of paradise." Ah, sir, it is because you do not understand it. You smile at it now, but there will be a day when your conscience will be tender, when your memory will be strong, when your judgment will be enlightened and when you will think very differently from what you do now. Sinners in hell are not the fools they were on earth. In hell they do not laugh at everlasting burnings. In the pit they do not despise the words, "eternal fire." The worm that never dies, when it is gnawing, gnaws out all jokes and laughter. You may despise God now, and despise me now for what I say, but death will change your note.

Oh! my hearers, if that were all, I would be willing. You may despise me, yes, you may, but oh! I beseech you, do not despise yourselves. Oh! be not so foolhardy as to go whistling to hell and laughing to the pit. For when you are there, sirs, you will find it a different thing from what you dream it to be now. When you see the gates of paradise shut against you, you will find it to be a more important matter than you judge of now.

You came to hear me preach today, as you would have gone to the opera or playhouse. You thought I would amuse you. Ah, that is not my aim. God is my witness, I came here solemnly in earnest to wash my hands of your blood. If you are damned, any one of you, it shall not be because I did not warn you. Men and women, if you perish, my hands are washed in innocence. I have told you of your doom. I again cry, repent, repent, repent for, "unless you repent you shall all likewise perish." I came here determined this morning, if I must use rough words to use them, to speak right out against men and for men too, for the things we say against you now are really for your good. We do but warn you, lest you perish.

But ah! I hear one of you saying, "I do not understand this mystery, pray explain it to me." Fool, fool that you are. Do you see that fire? We are startled up from our beds, the light is at the window. We rush downstairs. People are hurrying to and fro. The street is trampled thick with crowds, they are rushing towards the house, which is in a burst of flame. The firemen are at their work. A stream of water is pouring upon the house.

But hark you! Hark you! There is a man upstairs, there is a man in the top room. There is just time for him to escape, but barely. A shout is raised, "Aho! Fire! Fire! Fire! Aho!" but the man does not make his appearance at the window. See, the ladder is placed against the walls. It is up to the window sill—a strong hand dashes in the easement! What is the man after, all the while? What! Is he tied down in his bed? Is he a cripple? Has some fiend got hold of him and nailed him to the floor? No, no, no, he feels the boards getting hot beneath his feet, the smoke is stifling him, the flame is burning all around, he knows there is but one way of escape, by that ladder!

What is he doing? He is sitting down—no, you cannot believe me—he is sitting down and saying, "The origin of this fire is very mysterious. I wonder how it is to be discovered? How shall we understand it?" Why, you laugh at him! You are laughing at yourselves. You are seeking to have this question and that question answered, when your soul is in peril of eternal fire! Oh! when you are saved, it will be time then to ask questions. But while you are now in the burning house and in danger of destruction, it is not your time to be puzzling yourselves about free will, fixed fate, predestination absolute. All these questions are good and well enough afterwards, for those who are saved. Let the man

on shore try to find out the cause of the storm. Your only business now is to ask, “What must I do to be saved? And how can I escape from the great damnation that awaits me?”

But ah! my friends, I cannot speak as I wish. I think I feel, this morning, something like Dante, when he wrote his *“Il inferno.”* Men said of him that he had been in hell. He looked like it. He had thought of it so long that they said, “He has been in hell.” He spoke with such an awful earnestness. Ah! if I could, I would speak like that too. It is only a few days more and I shall meet you face to face. I can look over the lapse of a few years, when you and I shall stand face to face before God’s bar. “Watchman, watchman,” asks a voice, “did you warn them? Did you warn them?” Will any of you then say I did not? No, even the most abandoned of you will, at that day, say, “We laughed, we scoffed at it, we cared not for it, but O Lord, we are obliged to speak the truth. The man was in earnest about it. He told us of our doom and he is clear.” Will you say so? I know you will.

But yet this one more remark—to be cast out of heaven is an awful thing. Some of you have parents there. You have dear friends there. They grasped your hands in death and said, “Farewell, until we meet you.” But if you never see the kingdom of God, you can never see them again.

“My mother,” says one, “sleeps in the graveyard. I often go to the tomb and put some flowers upon it, in remembrance of her who nursed me. But must I never see her again?” No, never again. No, never, unless you are born again. Mothers, you have had infants that have gone to heaven. You would like to see your family all around the throne, but you will never see your children more, unless you are born again.

Will you bid adieu this day to the immortal? Will you say farewell this hour to your glorified friends in paradise? You must say so, or else be converted. You must fly to Christ and trust in Him, and His Spirit must renew you, or else you must look up to heaven and say, “Choir of the blest! I shall never hear you sing. Parents of my youth, guardians of my infancy, I love you, but between you and myself there is a great gulf fixed. I am cast away and you are saved.”

Oh! I beseech you, think on these matters. And when you go away, let it not be to forget what I have said. If you are at all impressed this morning, put not away the impression. It may be your last warning. It will be a sorrowful thing to be lost with the notes of the Gospel in your ears and to perish under the ministry of truth.

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