

THE BRIDGELESS GULF

NO. 518

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 5, 1863
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“Beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed:
so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot;
neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.”*
Luke 16:26

FOR the last few months I have been led to blow the silver trumpet, sounding forth the love and mercy of our God in Christ. Many times in your hearing I have preached a full Christ for empty sinners, and have set forth the freeness and graciousness of the divine proclamation which in the Gospel is made to the chief of sinners.

I have not, concerning that point, shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God. But I feel that I must now blow a blast upon the rough ram’s horn, for sometimes our congregations need to be reminded of the law and terrors of God, and of the judgment to come. Our experience is that the preaching of judgment is greatly blessed of God.

We have remarked that a very large number of conversions have occurred under those sermons in which the declaration of God’s wrath against all iniquity has been the most plain and solemn. A thunderstorm clears the air. There are pestilences which would gather beneath the wings of calm which can only be purged away by the lightning flash.

When God sends His servant with heavy tidings, His message of alarm cleanses the spiritual atmosphere, and kills the sloth, pride, indifference, and lethargy, which otherwise might fall upon the people. As the sharp needle prepares the way for the thread, so the piercing law makes a way for the bright silver thread of divine grace. The knife is quite as necessary as the healing balm.

The law is our pedagogue to bring us to Christ—like the old Greek pedagogue who led the boy to school—so the law leads us to Christ, who teaches and instructs us, and makes us wise unto salvation. Those who preached the law, as well as the Gospel, in the Puritanic times, were the most fruitful soul-winners. We find our blessed Lord and Master, whose heart was overflowing with compassion, and whose very nature was love, often dwelling upon the wrath to come. And indeed, His utterances are more telling and terrible than the most burning threatening from the lips of thundering seers of old.

God grant that this morning, the effect which I so anxiously desire may follow from that burden of the Lord which now weighs so heavily upon me. May the Master gather out this day a seed unto Himself, who shall be saved from the wrath to come, and be to all eternity the reward of the Redeemer’s travail. Lift up your hearts to God, you that know Him and have power with Him, and ask that now the divine Spirit may work mightily, that hearts may be broken and sinners led to Jesus.

“Beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.” Human ingenuity has done very much to bridge great gulfs. Scarcely has the world afforded a river so wide that its floods could not be over-leaped, or a torrent so furious that it could not be made to pass under the yoke. High above the foam of Columbia’s glorious cataract, man has hung aloft his slender but substantial road of iron—and the shriek of the locomotive is heard above the roar of Niagara.

This very week I saw the first chains which span the deep rift through which the Bristol Avon finds its way at Clifton—man has thrown his suspension bridge across the chasm, and men will soon travel where only that which has wings could a little while ago have found a way.

There is, however, one gulf which no human skill or engineering ever shall be able to bridge. There is one chasm which no wing shall ever be able to cross. It is the gulf which divides the world of joy in

which the righteous triumph, from that land of sorrow in which the wicked feel the smart of JEHOVAH's sword. Whatever other arguments there may be why the righteous should have no communion with the wicked in a future state, beside all these other things, any one of which is enough and sufficient of itself, there is a great gulf fixed, so that there can be no passage from the one world to the other.

I. In trying to solemnly speak upon this matter, I shall commence with this—THERE IS NO PASSAGE FROM HEAVEN TO HELL.

“They which would pass from hence to you cannot.” Glorified saints cannot visit the prison-house of lost sinners. Long enough were the righteous mingled with the wicked—sufficient was the evil time in which the wheat was choked with the tares. Quite long enough was the period in which the chaff laid upon the same floor, side by side with the wheat.

Patience had its perfect work. They did both grow together until the time of the harvest. It is not necessary now that harvest has come, that they should lie together any longer. It were inconsistent with the perfect joy and the beatific state of the righteous, with its perfect calm and purity, that sin should be admitted into their midst, or that they should be permitted to find companionships in the abodes of evil.

It were not glorious to the Lord Jesus Christ that they should cease from beholding His beauties and adoring His person, in order to succor His enemies and comfort His desperate foes. Shall the courtiers of heaven become traitors to their King, that they may relieve His implacable adversaries? Shall the princes of the blood imperial, who wear eternal coronets, lay aside their robes of honor to become menial servants to the damned in hell, who would not, when Christ was preached to them, bow the knee and kiss the Son?

This must not and cannot be. Besides, the decree of God, like a great mountain of brass, has forever shut the righteous in with holiness, with happiness, with God, and they cannot, if they could, must not, cross the great gulf which divides them from the world of the wicked.

It follows that *the most earnest and assiduous preacher* must then renounce all hope of converting sinners. God has raised up some apostolic spirits, whose presence in a nation is like the rising of the sun. Darkness flies before them, and the light of salvation streams from them to tens of thousands. When they lift up their hands to preach, God gives them power to shake the gates of hell, and when they bend the knees to pray, they unlock the gates of heaven.

Men like Baxter with bursting hearts of love, or Joseph Alleine with glowing tongue, or Whitefield with seraph's fire, or Wesley with cherub's zeal—these are the men who bless their age and are most truly great. These men can go to the borders of the earth if they will. Their commission is co-extensive with the human race, “Go you into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the ends of the world.”

These men are never as happy as when they are preaching. Woe unto them if they preach not the Gospel, and when they preach it, and God helps them, they are like Elihu, refreshed by the effort. They were born to preach the Gospel and to win sinners to Christ, and they are never content except they are fulfilling their high commission.

But they must cease from their labors soon, for in heaven they are not needed, and from hell they are excluded. O sinner, even my voice, feeble though it be, may win you to Jesus now. But if you die impenitent, it can never woo you again to a Savior. *Now* is my time to preach to you and set open mercy's door before you, but *then* I can never warn you, nor invite you. Never again depict the agonies of my Lord and Master, and endeavor to attract you by the story of His love, His dying, bleeding love.

No, it will be all over then. “They rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” They must bring their sheaves with them, for they cannot return into another field to sow, nor journey into other broad acres to reap. Burning as their hearts will still be with divine love, they will have to exercise it in another way.

Their passionate longings for God's glory will find other channels in which to flow. They will bow their heads and adore Him day and night, but they can no longer serve Him in Gospel ministry. The

ambassador rolls up his commission, for God has run up the black flag of damnation, and hangs out no more signals of peace. Poor sinner, fain would I win you now, for it is now or never with you and me.

The efforts of the most importunate visitor, the most earnest friend, must cease with death. Some of you have friends who can get nearer to your heart than I can. You can afford sometimes to forget my poor words and go your way to sin again. But you have a sister, and when she pleads with you, you do feel it.

You have one loving friend, and when he speaks to you, you cannot be deaf. Your conscience has often been impressed by him, and sometimes through him the strivings of the Spirit have been very mighty with your soul. I love, my brethren and sisters, to see you earnest for the souls of others. God may give *you* some souls whom He will never give to me, and so long as they be but saved, though I have a holy covetousness and earnestly desire to bring many to Christ, yet I will as unfeignedly rejoice in their salvation by *your* instrumentality as if it had been accomplished by my own.

Go and labor with all your might. Tell what Christ has done for you. With pleading, loving accents, beseech them to be reconciled to God. But oh! remember, you can only do that in *this* life, for when the gates are shut, you are shut in for your reward, and all the world is shut out from your efforts.

O my hearer, do you hear this? Not only will there be no public congregations, no Sabbaths, no houses of prayer, but there shall be no private messengers, no earnest Christians who shall privately seek your soul's good. What say you to this? Does not this give an awful value to those tender words of importunate love? Turn at the gentle rebuke, for otherwise you shall be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy.

Those who are nearest and dearest must be divided from you, if you perish in your sins. A mother can put her arms about her child's neck and pray for it here. She may affectionately exhort her son to seek peace with God now. She may earnestly and incessantly follow him with her holy entreaties, but she can never come to him from the realms of glory if once he is lost. "They which would pass from us to you cannot."

Do you hear it, young man? Those glistening eyes of a mother's love shall never weep again for you. That touching voice which sometimes awoke the echoes of your heart shall never plead again. O ungodly woman, you shall never see your godly child. Father, is it that daughter you are thinking of who loved and feared God in childhood and was taken from you? Did she say to you when she was dying, "Follow me to heaven, my Father"?

You have heard her voice for the last time. That child will never see her father more unless he turns from his evil ways. I think if she could be in heaven what she was on earth, she would fling her arms about your neck and seek to draw you to the glorious throne of the Most High, but oh! it cannot be. A just God condemns the impenitent sinner and just men assent to the divine sentence.

See then, O you ungodly ones who are present today, you often think our company a great nuisance, and perhaps while I am preaching, my alarming words annoy you. Ah, we shall not annoy you long. Does your mother tease you when she bids you seek the Lord? She will not tease you long. When I bring home the judgment to come, is the subject obnoxious to you? I shall not ask your patience long.

We shall be separated. If you go your way, and follow after sin and wrath, there will come a dividing time, and O let me say to you—you would give worlds if you had them. You would give them if they were solid diamonds, to hear again the voice which now fatigues you, and to listen once more to those plaintive invitations which vex you and spoil your mirth.

Ah, how would you bless God if He would let you come back again, and have once more those Sabbaths which were so dull and dreary, and permit you to go up once more to the house of God which now perhaps is like a prison to your vain and frivolous spirits. O sirs, I say you may well have patience with us for a little time, and bear with our importunities, for we shall not plague you much longer.

We beseech you to come to Jesus. We would pluck you by your garments and beseech you to flee from the wrath to come. Forgive us for being thus in earnest, for even if we should fail with you, you will soon escape the importunities of our love. A few short months of mortal life, and then you will be

far away from all religious discourses and all spiritual talk of things to come. You will be in your own company, but I warn you this will yield you little enough content.

Dear friends, how earnest this ought to make the people of God to work while it is called today. If this is our only time for doing good, let us do good while we can. I hear people sometimes say, “Mr. So-and-So does too much. He works too hard.” Oh! we none of us do half enough. Do not talk about working too hard for Jesus Christ—the thing is impossible.

Are souls perishing, and shall I sleep? My idle, lazy flesh, shall you keep me still while men are dying and hell is filling? Brethren and sisters, let us be lukewarm no longer. If God makes us lights in the world, let us spend ourselves as a candle does, which consumes itself by shining. As the poor work girl, who has but one light, works with desperate pace because that will soon be burned out, so let us be instant in season and out of season—watching, praying, laboring for the souls of men.

We are not earnest enough about immortal souls. If we had but a view of the shortness of life, the fleeting character of time, and the terrors of eternal wrath, if we could but see lost souls, and understand their unutterable woe, we should shake ourselves from the dust, and go forth to work while it is called today.

II. As we cannot go from heaven to hell, so the text assures us, “NEITHER CAN THEY COME TO US THAT WOULD COME FROM THENCE.”

The lost spirits in hell are shut in forever. I see the angel standing at that iron door. I hear the awful key as it grates among the tremendous wards, and when that gate is closed, he hurls the key into the abyss of oblivion. And the captives are fast immured, bound in fetters which will never break, in chains which never rust.

The sinner cannot come to heaven for a multitude of reasons. Among the rest, these. First, *his own character* forbids it. As a man lives and dies, so will he be throughout eternity. The drunkard here will have all a drunkard’s thirst there without the means of gratifying it. The swearer here will become a yet more ripe and proficient blasphemer. Death does not change but fixes character. It petrifies it. “He that is holy let him be holy still; he who is filthy let him be filthy still.”

The lost man remains a sinner, and a growing sinner, and continues to rebel against God. Would you have such a man in heaven? Shall the thief prowl through the streets of the New Jerusalem? Shall the atmosphere of Paradise be polluted by an oath? Shall the songs of angels be disturbed by the ribaldry of licentious conversation? It cannot be.

Heaven were no heaven if the sinner could be permitted to enter it. “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” and as there is no hope of the finally lost ever being born again, that kingdom of God they cannot see. Sinner, if you are not fit for heaven now, have you any right to hope you ever will be? If you die without God, and without hope, where must your portion be?

Without a God can you dwell in heaven—God’s own dominions? Without hope, can you enter where hope is consummated in full fruition? Never. The enemies of God shall never be permitted to beard Him to His face, and vent their blasphemies in His own palace. They must be driven from His presence, and driven from that presence forever.

Moreover, not only does the man’s character shut him out, but also *the sinner’s doom*. What was it? “These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment.” If it is everlasting, how can they enter heaven? What does the Savior say, “Where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched.” If there be any truth in that metaphor, the lost are lost forever. The worm would die if they entered heaven, and the fire were quenched if they obtained celestial seats.

How does the Holy Spirit put it? Does He not describe the wrath to come as a bottomless pit? It were not such if they could get a handhold, and afterwards climb upward to the starry thrones of angels. Brethren, He that dooms men, He that has put it in the strong expression, “He that believeth not shall be damned,” will certainly and literally carry out His own words. And if it be so, it shall never be possible for them to break their prison of fire, and enter the land of joy and peace.

Moreover, sinner, you cannot go out of the prison-house because *God’s character* and God’s Word are against you. Shall God ever cease to be just? If He be just, He must never cease from punishing you

when you are finally condemned. “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,” is the never ceasing cry of cherubim, but as long as He is, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” you can never be acceptable to Him.

Shall God ever cease to be true? But remember, as long as He is true to His own threatenings, He must and will send His arrows through you, and make His fierce wrath to consume you. Then there stands His decree, “He that believeth not shall be damned.” This is the great gulf, that fixed chasm by which the impenitent sinner is fast as firmest destiny, bound like Prometheus to the rock forever, never to be loosed in time or in eternity. It must not—it shall not be—if God be God—and if His decree is not a falsehood and a vanity, you must not come out of the place of your torment.

Nay, yet more, remember sinner, there never was but one bridge between fallen man and a holy God. That bridge you reject. The person of the Mediator, His substitution, His righteousness, His painful death—these make the only road from sin to righteousness, from wrath to acceptance. But these you reject. If you should ever be lost you will have finally rejected Christ.

And inasmuch as you are not this morning saved, O my poor fellow creature, you are now rejecting Christ. You are as good as saying, “Christ died, but not for me. Christ shed His blood to save men, but I will not be saved in His way. Let Him die. I count His death a trifle and His blood a vanity. I had sooner perish than be saved by Him.”

This is what you in effect are saying. I know the words make you shudder. You would not venture to utter them, but that is your feeling. You will not have this man to reign over you. You will not bow the knee and kiss the Son. You will still be an adversary to God, and sooner be destroyed than be saved through the atonement of Christ.

Well, now, if you reject the only way, what wonder if having rejected that, there remains no hope? Besides, remember there is no other sacrifice for sin. Scripture expressly tells us that there remains no more sacrifice for sin. Do you think that Jesus will come a second time to die? Shall those divine hands be stretched again to the wood? You reject Him now. If He died again, you would reject Him. Shall the head again be pierced with thorns? Shall the side again be rent with the spear?

Why, sinner, if you refuse to have Him now you would refuse Him could He die a second time. But that cannot be. He has offered an atonement once for all, and now forever He sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. No second atonement—no second redemption shall ever be offered for the sins of men.

Besides, remember, there is no Holy Spirit in the pit. The blessed Spirit is hence today and often has He striven with some of you. Do you remember when you trembled like Felix? Do you not remember the time when, like Agrippa, you were almost persuaded? But still all this was put away—conscience was hushed. The Spirit of God was quenched.

Well, that Spirit can strive with you again, and if He comes forth in His irresistible strength, if your heart be like a flint, He can break it—and if like iron, He can melt it. But once in the pit, and the Holy Spirit never comes there. That blessed dove shuns the place of wrath, and over souls given up to destruction, never will His life-giving wings be known to brood.

If so, then you cannot be born again and cannot enter heaven. You cannot be sanctified, and unsanctified spirits cannot have a portion in the skies. So then, it is clear enough you cannot possibly pass from hell to heaven. Ah, this will be a judgment upon you, a solemn judgment upon you for many things.

You do not like the house of God. You shall be shut out of it. You do not love the Sabbath. You are shut out from the eternal Sabbath. The voice of sacred song had no charm in it for you. You shall not join it. The face of God you never loved. You shall never see it. The name of Jesus Christ was never melodious in your ears. You shall never hear it.

Jesus Christ was preached to you, but you rejected Him—His blood you trod beneath your feet. The way to heaven was freely set open before you, but you would not come to Him that you might have life. There is a road from earth to heaven—sinner, though you have gone into the depths of sin, if you have been the most infamous and most outrageous of offenders, there is a road for you to heaven yet.

The harlot, the thief, the profane, the drunkard, may yet find mercy through the grace of Jesus, but—

*“There are no acts of pardon passed
In that cold grave to which we haste;
Only darkness, death, and long despair
Reign in eternal silence there.”*

God bless the solemn remarks we make and He shall have the glory.

III. But now, once again to change the subject for a few minutes, I have to notice in the third place, that while no persons can pass that bridgeless chasm, so NO THINGS CAN.

Nothing can come from hell to heaven. Rejoice you saints in light, triumph in your God for this—no temptation of Satan can ever vex you when once you are landed on the golden strand. You are beyond bowshot of the arch-enemy. He may howl and bite his iron bands, but his howlings cannot terrify, and his bitings cannot disturb.

No longer shall you be vexed with the filthy conversation of the ungodly. Lot shall never hear another foul word. You shall not have to say, “Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.”

*“No light discourse shall reach your heart,
Nor trifles vex your ear.”*

You shall be shut out from everything that belongs to hell. And remember, you shall be in heaven, so secure, that the wrath of God which makes hell shall never light on you. Your Savior carried it, not a drop of it shall fall upon your persons. No present pains shall be in heaven, they are for the lost. No pains of body, no distractions of mind. You shall have no sin—sin cannot pass from them to you. You shall be perfect—like your Lord, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

*“Your inward foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan vex your peace again.”*

You shall have no fears for the future. You shall know that your bliss is eternal. This shall always be the honey of your honeycomb—that it lasts forever. Millions of years you shall gaze into the face of your Beloved. Throughout endless ages you shall bask in the sunlight of His smile. This is joy, I say, to the Christian, if he will but think it over, it will reconcile him to the hardest strokes of temporary tribulation, and make him rejoice in the hardest toil of this mortal struggle.

Courage, man, it is but a day or two of wrestling and then the immortal crown—an hour or two of fighting and then the everlasting rest. Methinks I see today the angels leaning from the battlements of the celestial palace, and as they mark you, like armed men cutting your way to the gates thereof, they cry to you—

*“Come in, come in,
Eternal glory you shall win.”*

Will you sheathe your swords? Will you stop the conflict? No, press on, and let your true Jerusalem blades cut through soul and spirit, and divide joint and marrow till you reach the summit, and the eternal glory shall be yours.

IV. Again, we change the strain for a fourth point and this a terrible one. As nothing can come from hell to heaven, so nothing heavenly can ever come to hell. There are rivers of life at God’s right hand—those streams can never leap in blessed cataracts to the lost. Nay, Lazarus is not permitted to dip the tip of his finger in water to administer the cooling drop to the fire-tormented tongue. Not a drop of heavenly water can ever cross that chasm.

See then, sinner, heaven is *rest*, perfect rest—but there is no rest in hell. It is labor in the fire, and no ease, no peace, no sleep, no calm, no quiet—everlasting storm—eternal hurricane—unceasing tempest.

In the worst disease, there are some respites—spasms of agony, but then pauses of repose. There is no pause in hell's torments. The dreadful music of the eternal miserere has not so much as a single stop in it. It is on, on, on, with crash of battle, and dust and blood, and fire and vapor of smoke.

Heaven, too, is a place of *joy*. There, happy fingers sweep celestial chords. There, joyous spirits sing hosannas day without night. But there is no joy in hell. For music there is the groan. For joy there is the pang. For sweet fellowship there is the binding up in bundles. For everything that is blissful there is everything that is dolorous.

No, I could not exaggerate, that were impossible. I cannot come up to the doleful facts, therefore there I leave them. Nothing of the joy of heaven can ever come to hell.

Heaven is the place of *sweet communion* with God—

*“There they behold His face,
And never, never sin;
There from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.”*

There is no communion with God in hell. There are prayers, but they are unheard. There are tears, but they are unaccepted. There are cries for pity, but they are all an abomination unto the Lord. God wills not the death of any—He had rather that he should turn unto Him and live, but if that grace be refused—

*“The Lord, in vengeance dressed,
Shall lift His hand and swear,
You that despised My promised rest
Shall have no portion there.”*

Tell me what heaven is if you will, and I must say of any description that you give of its joys, that there is none of them in Tophet, for heaven's blessings cannot cross from the celestial regions to the infernal prison-house. No, it is sorrow without relief, misery without hope, and here is the pang of it—it is death without end. There is only one thing that I know of in which heaven is like hell—it is eternal. “The wrath *to come*, the wrath *to come*, the wrath *to come*,” forever and forever spending itself, and yet never being spent.

And now, would to God, I could speak with you as my heart desires, for this is my only opportunity, since, as I have already said, I can do this no more if I be saved and if you be lost. Spare me, then, two or three minutes while I close this poor discourse of mine by trying to reason with those of you who are unconverted.

I have had little to say to God's people this morning. I may comfort them in the evening, but this morning I have to deal with you who fear not God. Many of you now present are unconverted. I will never flatter you by preaching to you as though you were all Christians. The Lord my God knows there is many a heart here that never was broken. There is many a spirit here that never trembled before the majesty of infinite justice, and never kissed the outstretched sceptre of a crucified Redeemer.

You know this, some of you. You know you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. I do not mean you alone who live in open sin, but I mean you who are amiable, excellent, admirable in your carriage and deportment—but yet the love of God is not in you. There is no fault to be found with your outward character, may be, but you have not been born again. You have never passed from death unto life.

And remember, sirs, there is the same hell for the most excellent as for the most abominable, unless you fly to Christ—“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” And if you believe not in Him, you shall die in your sins, “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Come, then, let me plead with you, and I will ask you a question—do you believe all this? Do you believe that there is a hell? Do you believe that there is a heaven to be lost? If you profess that you do not so believe, I have done with you. God bring you to a better mind. But what did you come here for? Why do you profess to be a Christian if you reject the Christian's inspired Book? Become an infidel and be honest.

For my part, modern infidelity never gives me any alarm. I had as soon see you outwardly infidels, as to hear you pretend to be Christians, and yet disbelieve what this Book teaches. I like honesty, and it seems to me that when a man honestly says, "I shall not make a profession of believing what I do not believe," that there is at least one virtue in him, and we may hope that others may find soil to grow in.

But you that profess to be religious, and attend your church or your chapel, and yet do not believe the revelation of God, what can I say to you, but that your damnation will be most just. I think I hear many of you say, "Believe it, sir, oh! we never doubted it. We learned it in our earliest childhood, we have heard it always, and we never ventured to doubt."

Ah! well then, I ask you—are you in your sober senses to believe that there is a hell and not seek to escape from it? Do you believe there is a wrath to come, and that it may fall upon you in the next minute, for you may be dead and never leave this house of prayer—and yet do you sit easy in your pews—or are you mad? Has sin so besotted you with its foul intoxication, that you cannot think? For if you can think, and there be an angry God who will punish with the awful force of His omnipotence, how is it that you can be at ease in Zion?

Let me ask you another question—if these things be so, have you used your senses in giving a preference to the pleasures of this life beyond the joys of heaven? in following the pleasures of today, when you know they will be followed with the miseries of eternity? Do not be mistaken, I do not mean to say that a Christian is without pleasures—we have the highest and purest pleasure that mortal or immortal can know. We have not the pleasures of sin, but we have higher, more delightful, and deeper pleasures.

But this is what I mean—will you spend yourselves in sinful pleasure? will you occupy your time with lust, or drunkenness, or with the frivolities of fashionable life, and do you think that these are worth the expense that they will cause? "Oh," said one to me, who holds a high position in society, as I talked with him long, after having preached earnestly the Gospel—he took me by the button and he said, "It does seem to me to be an awful thing, that I, knowing as I do what will be my lot if I live and die as I am, should still act as I do. When you are with me," said he, "and I listen to a solemn address, I think there shall come a change over me. I will serve God, but O sir, you do not know the temptations of my life. You do not know how it is when I get into the midst of pomp and vanities, and perhaps mingle with men who ridicule all thoughts of religion, it all goes, and I am such a fool that I sell my soul—sell my soul for it."

Oh! there are such fools here today—who sell their souls for a little sin—one or two whirls in the world's mad dance, and then the devil is your partner, and your mirth is over. I ask you to use your reason and judge whether it is worth your while to gain the whole world and lose your own soul.

I shall put it to you in another way. How is it that you do not lay hold of Christ, since this is the only time when there is a probability that Christ can be laid hold of? I will tell you why it is. You do not love Christ—you love sin. Or else you are too proud to come to Christ. You think yourselves good enough, and you think that Christ is not for such as you are, but only for great sinners and the lowest of the low.

O sirs, is your pride such a fine thing that you will be damned in order to maintain its dignity? Throw your pride down, come as a sinner must come, and lay hold of Jesus Christ. Or if it be your sin which hinders, may God the Holy Spirit help you to pluck out the right eye and cast off a right arm sooner than having two eyes and two arms to be cast into hell fire.

"But" says one, "how may I lay hold on Christ?" May the blessed Spirit enable you to do it. Here it is—trust Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Conscious that you deserve His wrath, trembling because of His terrible law, look to Jesus. There hangs a bleeding Savior. Methinks these eyes can see Him

bleeding there. God eternal, He by whom the heaven of heavens were made, and the earth and the fullness thereof, takes upon Himself the form of man and hangs upon the tree of the curse.

*“See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?”*

There is life in a look at that Crucified One, there is life at this moment for you. Will you glance at Him with a tearful eye? “Jesus slaughtered, martyred, murdered for my sake, I do believe in You. Here at Your feet I throw myself, all guilty, polluted, foul. Let Your blood drop on me. Turn Your eye upon me, say to me, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with the bands of My kindness have I drawn thee.’ Come and welcome, sinner—come.”

I have but preached the law to you out of love. God knows how these hard things, as I speak them, make my heart bleed blood. O that you would believe in Jesus. He is freely preached to you—accept Him. May the Spirit of God lead you now to accept Him.

These are no hard terms, no stern conditions of a blood-thirsty tyrant. He does but say, “Bow the knee and kiss the Son. Come and welcome, sinner—come.” Young Man, will you be saved or not? You, sinner yonder, with your grey head, betokening the approach of death, will you believe in Christ or not? It may be this is your last time—you shall never hear the Gospel faithfully and affectionately pressed home upon you again. Will you have Jesus to be yours? Spirit of God, lead that heart to say, “Yes, Lord, I will.” And as the acceptance is heard on earth, may it be registered in heaven—and may salvation come to that man’s heart this day.

The Lord bless you all, every one of you, and when He gathers His people together, may I and you, every one of us, be found at His right hand, to see His smiling face.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.