

SEEING JESUS

NO. 771

A SERMON

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

“We see Jesus.”

Hebrews 2:9

THE apostle, in this place, does not claim to have seen the Lord in the flesh, although he boasts in another passage that he has done so, and asserts it as one of the proofs of his apostleship. He is not, indeed, in this text referring to any seeing of the Lord by mortal eyes at all. He is speaking of faith—he means a spiritual sight of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The point to which I shall have to draw your attention this evening is that sight is very frequently used in Scripture as a metaphor, an illustration, a symbol, to set forth what faith is. Faith is the eye of the soul. It is the act of looking unto Jesus. In that act, by which we are saved, we look unto Him and are saved from the very ends of the earth. We look to Him and we find salvation.

So far as seeing with these natural eyes of ours is concerned, it is the very opposite of faith. We have heard people speak as though they wished they had lived in the Savior’s day and could have seen Him. It must have been a great privilege to those who were spiritually-minded, but it was no privilege (as they know now, alas! to their cost), to those who were spiritually blind.

For many of those who saw our Lord, and heard Him preach, rose up in wrath to thrust Him out of the synagogue, and cast Him down the brow of the hill. Instead of being overawed by His sweet majesty or won by that love which sat upon His brow, they scoffed at Him, said He was a Samaritan, and had a devil, and was mad.

Even the sight of Jesus Christ upon the cross did not convert the men that stood there, but they thrust out the tongue, and called Him by ignominious titles, and increased the sorrows of His death by their scornful expressions. To see Jesus Christ with the natural eye is nothing, my brethren, for this shall be the lot of all men, and they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and shall weep and wail because of Him.

The sight of Him, when He shall come in the latter days to judge the earth in righteousness, will be the source of terror to the wicked, so that there can be no kind of benefit, certainly no saving blessing, from such a sight of Jesus Christ with the eyes as will be afforded even to lost spirits.

The apostle is speaking of the spiritual eye here. He is speaking of that mental vision which God affords to those who have had their eyes anointed with heavenly eye-salve by the Holy Spirit, that they may see, and our business tonight is, first of all, to show *why faith is so frequently compared to the sense of sight*.

I. Let us, in the first place, give our attention for a few minutes to THE REASON WHY FAITH IS COMPARED TO SIGHT.

Is not sight, in many respects, the noblest of all the senses? To be deprived of any of our senses is a great loss, but perhaps the greatest deprivation of all is the loss of sight. Certainly, whatever may be the degree of pain that may follow the loss of any other sense, they who lose their sight, lose the noblest of human faculties.

For observe, in the first place, that *sight is marvelously quick*. How wondrously fast and far it travels! It does not take you an hour to make a journey from one part of the country to another by your eye. You are on a mountain, and you can see fifty or a hundred miles, as the case may be, and you see it by the simple opening of the eye. It is all there.

Your thought is flashed far away in an instant, in the twinkling of your eye. Standing on some of the Alpine summits, you look far and wide, and see lakes spread at a distance beneath your feet, and far away, there is a range of black mountains or of hills clothed with snow. You know they are perhaps two hundred miles distant, but in a moment you are there.

So quick does the sense of sight travel, that we go to the moon or to the sun without knowing that any space of time is taken up by our eyes traveling there. And those remote stars which the astronomers tell us are so distant that they can scarcely compute how far off they are, yet mine eye travels to them in a second of time, when I gaze upon the starry firmament—so quickly does sight travel—and equally rapid is the action of faith.

Brethren, we know not where heaven may be—where the state, the place called “heaven” is, but faith takes us there in contemplation in a single moment. We cannot tell when the Lord may come. It may not be for centuries yet, but faith steps over the distance in a moment, and sees Him coming in the clouds of heaven and hears the trump of resurrection.

It would be very difficult, indeed it would be impossible for us to travel backward in any other chariot than that of faith, for it is faith which helps us to see the creation of the world, when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.

Faith enables us to walk in the garden with our first parents, and to witness the scene when God promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. Faith makes us familiar with patriarchs, and gives us to see the troubles and trials of kings. Faith takes us to Calvary’s summit, and we stand and see our Savior as plainly as did His mother when she stood sorrowfully at the foot of the cross.

We this day can fly back to the solemn day of Pentecost, and feel as if we could hear the mighty rushing wind, and see the cloven tongues sitting upon the chosen company, so swiftly does faith travel. And best of all, in one moment faith can take a sinner out of a state of death into a state of life, can lift him from damnation into salvation, can remove him from the land of the shadow of death, where he sat in affliction and irons, and give him the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

O sinner, you can get at Christ in a moment of time. No sooner has your heart trusted Jesus, than you are with Him, united to Him. You need not say, “Where is He? I would fly to heaven if I could but find Him or dive under hell’s profoundest wave if I could but embrace Him.” He is nigh to you, so nigh that the act of faith conveys you at once into His bosom, plunges you into His blood, clothes you with His righteousness, adopts you into the family of God, and makes you co-heir with Jesus Christ, joint-heir with Him in all things.

See, then, why faith is like sight, because of the rapidity of its operations, requiring no time. So that a dying sinner, believing in Jesus, is saved at the eleventh hour, needing not to go roundabout to do penances, and pass through probationary periods, and I know not what besides. He may come to Jesus, weary, and worn, and sad. And the road to Jesus, though it seems long to some, is so short that one step takes you there. You have but to leave self behind, and trust in Him, and you are with Him. “We see Jesus” then. Faith is like sight for its quickness.

Is not faith like sight too, in the second place, *for its largeness*? It is a wonderful faculty, that of sight. Your eyes and mine, take in at once the whole of this building with all the assembled company. This eye will next, if they are placed at a point of vantage, take in the entire city of London with the whole of its populous streets. Give the eye but the opportunity, let the sun go down, and they will take in all the thousands of worlds that stud the brow of night.

What is there which the eye cannot grasp, and mark you, not the eye of the great and mighty only, but of the poorest also? Yea, the little insignificant eye of the lark can take in as much, no doubt, as the big eye of the bullock. And the smallest eyes that God creates, He enables to compass greatest things. A marvelous thing is that eye, darting its shafts everywhere, sending its rays around and embracing all things.

Now, just such a power is faith. What a faculty faith has for grasping everything, for it lays hold upon the past, the present, and the future. It pierces through most intricate things, and sees God producing good out of all the tortuous circumstances of providence. And what is more, faith does what the eye cannot do—it sees the infinite. It beholds the invisible. It looks upon that which eye has not seen, which ear has not heard.

It sees beneath the veil that parts us from the land of terror, and moved with fear, it makes us fly to the Savior. Faith sees through the pearly gate, and beholding the glory of the better land, it makes us fly to Jesus, who bears the keys of paradise at His girdle. Faith sees—I know not how to describe fully what faith sees.

What is there she does not behold? She sees even God Himself. For though in my finite conception I cannot grasp God, and my understanding can only perceive, as it were, His train and skirts, yet my faith, with awful comprehension, can take in the whole of God, and believe what she does not know and accept what she cannot comprehend.

Oh! wondrous faculty of faith! God give it to you, my dear hearer. God give you more and more of it, that so it may be to you the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, and that all-comprehending faculty shall enable you to say—

*“All things are mine, the gift of God,
The purchase of a Saviour’s blood;
This world is mine, and worlds to come;
Earth is my lodge, and heaven my home.”*

Again, sight is a most remarkable faculty, *because in the judgment of most men, it is very sure.* We believe that we are often deceived by hearing. We are inclined often, when we hear a story to say, “I could believe that if I saw it, but I could not else. I have been so often deceived by hearing tales, that I cannot always credit what my ears tell me.”

We know how by feeling we are readily enough deceived, like Isaac, who would not have given his blessing to Jacob had not his eye waxed dim, but his touch deceived him. But “seeing is believing,” according to the world’s proverb. When a man sees a thing, then he says he knows it. Though, indeed, of late years especially, we have learned that even sight itself is not always to be trusted, for the most extraordinary illusions have been practiced upon persons for amusement, and have become a part of the apparatus of pleasure and philosophy.

You cannot believe your own eyes nowadays. You see a great many things, or think you see them, which are not there, and things which you could declare to be in such and such a position turn out not to be there at all. It is merely some reflection, or some delusion, simple enough when explained, but most puzzling until it is opened up to you.

However, sight is generally regarded by men to be the most sure of all our faculties. If we see a thing, there it is, there is no questioning it. Now, faith has this certifying power in a much higher degree, for the faith which is of the operation of God and which distinguishes His own elect, is infallible. The faith of God’s people will not believe a lie. It is written that, “If it were possible,” such and such “would deceive the very elect,” but it is not possible.

Where faith takes the Word of God as her basis, and rests upon it, she becomes an infallible faculty, and we may depend upon that which she reveals to us. It is a glorious thing to know certainties, such as the existence of God, and the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Such blessed certainties as the effectual atonement which has put away the sin of the Lord’s people. And such certainties as the enjoyment of the presence of the Holy Spirit in His indwelling power within our soul. May we have much of this faith which is like sight for its certifying power.

Once more, is not faith wondrously like sight, *from its power to affect the mind and enable a man to realize a thing?* What I mean is this. That eminent preacher in America, Mr. Beecher, frequently used to

address his audience upon negro slavery, and his touching eloquence never failed to move his people to an abhorrence of the thing, and to a sympathy with those who smarted under its power.

But on one occasion, as I have been told, he wished to produce an extraordinary feeling in order to raise a large sum of money for a certain purpose. He therefore expatiated upon the sorrows of a beautiful girl, almost white, but still with sufficient African blood in her veins for her master to claim her for his slave, and she was about to be sold far south for the worst of purposes.

Mr. Beecher wanted to touch the hearts of his people to purchase her liberty, that she, their sister, might be free. He had spoken earnestly, but to produce the required effect, he called her from her seat, and bade her stand up in the midst, and you may guess that that morning there was no difficulty in collecting all the needed funds to set her free. The sight of the slave-girl had moved their hearts as the preacher's words could not do.

Now, it is usually so. We talk about poverty, but when do you feel your hands go into your pockets so freely as when you have been visiting a poor family where the little ones are crying for bread and where the parents have no means for providing for them? You feel for orphans. Many of us do very sincerely, but we never felt for them so thoroughly as when we began to deal with them, and to see them and their widowed mothers.

In our newly-founded Orphanage—for which I would bespeak your help continually—we have already had to deal with many fatherless ones, and we have come more than ever into contact with them, and we begin to feel that the fatherless are indeed objects of pity, for the sight of them, and of the widows has put the thing forcibly before us.

We have heard of one who, being cold in the streets, and seeing a poor shivering family, thought that winter was very hard, and that when he got home he would take care to put by some money to buy blankets for them. But when he had sat down by the fire, and thoroughly warmed himself, and partaken of his cheerful meal, he thought the weather would change, and that it was not so bad a thing, after all, to have a little winter. And so the blankets were never bought and the poor were never cared for.

There is nothing like sight, my brethren, to convince, notwithstanding the moment when sight is over, feeling may depart. Now, faith has also this mighty reasoning power in even a higher degree. If it is real faith, it makes the Christian man in dealing with God feel towards God as though he saw Him. It gives him the same awe, and yet the same joyous confidence which he would have if he were capable of actually beholding the Lord.

Faith, when it takes a stand at the foot of the cross, makes us hate sin and love the Savior just as much as though we had seen our sins placed to Christ's account, and had seen the nails driven through His hands and feet, and seen the bloody scourges as they made the sacred drops of blood to fall.

*“We were not with the faithful few
Who stood Thy bitter cross around;
Nor heard Thy prayer for those who slew,
Nor felt that earthquake rock the ground;
We saw no spear-wound pierce Thy side:
Yet we can feel that Thou hast died.”*

Faith realizes the thing, and thus becomes “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hence the glory and the beauty of faith.

Now, many of you have heard about the wrath of God, but it has all been forgotten. You have heard about the judgment and the wrath of God to come afterwards. You have heard of the atonement and the power of Jesus to put away sin, but you have had no effect produced upon your minds, because as the apostle puts it, “It was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

But if you had had faith in that which was proclaimed, and had come savingly to trust in the truth which was presented as the ground of your salvation, you would have been moved, and stirred, and

excited, and led to hate sin and to fly to Jesus. God grant to us, then, that we may have more and more faith.

I have thus, I trust, at sufficient length shown the parallel between faith and sight.

II. And now we shall spend a minute or two upon another thought, namely, that FAITH, THE SIGHT OF THE SOUL, IS HERE SPOKEN OF AS A CONTINUOUS THING.

“We see Jesus.” It does not say, “We can see Jesus”—that is true enough—the spiritual eye can see the Savior. Nor does it say, “We have seen him.” That also, glory be to God, is a delightful fact, we have seen the Lord, and we have rejoiced in seeing Him. Nor does the text say, “We shall see him,” though this is our pride and our hope, that “When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

But the text says, “We see Jesus.” We *do* see Him now and continually. This is the common habit of the Christian. It is the element of his spiritual life. It is his most delightful occupation. It is his constant practice. “We see Jesus.”

Dear brethren and sisters, I am afraid some of us forget this. For instance, *we see Jesus Christ as our Savior, we being sinners still.* And is it not a delightful thing always to feel one’s self a sinner, and always to stand looking to Christ as one’s Savior, thus beholding Him evermore? “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, even so walk ye in him”—not merely sometimes coming to Him as you came at first, but evermore abiding in Him. “To whom coming”—always coming, constantly coming—“as unto a living stone.”

I was present at a meeting of believers a short time ago, when a conversation of this kind occurred. A brother in the Lord, one of the most fervent men I know, said that sometimes when his piety flagged, and his heart grew cold, he found it a very blessed thing to go, and visit the sick and the dying. And he found this to be such a sweet restoration to his faith that he recommended us all, as often as we could, to frequent dying beds.

Now, another brother who was present, who preaches the Gospel, but who at the same time is a butcher, said he thanked God he did not need to go to a dying bed to see Jesus, and to get his heart set right. That he had had as sweet fellowship with God in Camden Town Market, as he ever had in the house of prayer, and that he found it best always to live, as his brother wished to live sometimes, namely, always conscious of sin and always looking to the Sin-Offering.

Come to Jesus, then, as you came at first. Fly to the fountain always as needing constant cleansing—not as though you had not been washed, but still abiding, continuing in blessed recognition of your present cleansing that flows from the fountain filled with blood.

It is very sweet to remember that the fountain we sing about as being opened in Jerusalem, is opened “for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem”—not so much for sinners, though it is opened for them, as for saints—“for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Let us always be coming to it. And each morning and each night, let this be the cry of our spirit, “Still guilty, still vile, still polluted, we see Jesus, and seeing Him, we know that we are saved.”

Should not this, also, be the mode of our life in another respect? *We are now disciples.* Being saved from our former conversation, we have now become the disciples of the Lord Jesus. And ought we not, as disciples, to be constantly with our Master? Ought not this to be the motto of our life, “We see Jesus”?

We should not regard the commands of Jesus Christ as being a law left to us by a departed Master whom we cannot see, and to whom we cannot fly. Is it not better to believe that Christ is a living Christ, that He is in the midst of His church still, observing our order, noting our obedience or our disobedience, a Master absent in one sense, but still in another point of view ever present, according to His promise—“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”?

We should—

“Stay with Him near the tree,

*Stay with Him near the tomb;
Stay till the risen Lord we see,
Stay watching 'till He come."*

My brethren, should we be so frequently cold and careless if we could always see Jesus? Would our hearts be so hard towards perishing sinners if we always saw that face which was bedewed with tears for them? Do you think we could sit still, or grow worldly, or spend all our energies upon ourselves, if we could see the Crucified, who though "He saved others, himself he could not save"?

I wish I could always come here to preach Jesus "seeing" Him by my side, and feeling in my heart that I was preaching in my Master's presence. I would that you could always come into this place, both at prayer meetings and at all other times, feeling, "The Master is there. Let us bow as in His sight. Let our worship be given—not to one who is blind, and who will not see us, but to one who beholds us all, and sees our inmost thoughts."

As disciples we should be more punctual in our obedience, more consistent in our imitation of Jesus, if we had Him always before us. The Romanist puts up the crucifix idol before their eyes. Well, let us put up Christ in our spirits. He wears the cross on his bosom—let us carry Christ in our heart, still thinking of Jesus, seeing Him at all times.

Would it not also, dear friends, be very much for our comfort if *we were to see Jesus always as our Friend in our sojourn here?* "Henceforth," says He, "I call you not servants, but I have called you friends." You are very poor, my dear brother. Do you see Jesus? He was poorer than you. You have somewhere to go to sleep tonight, but He could say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

Are you racked with pain tonight? Let it help you to see Jesus. You are not "exceeding sorrowful even unto death," nor are your griefs to be compared with His. Have you been deserted and betrayed? See Jesus kissed by Judas. Have you been denied by some friend who promised to be faithful? Look into the face of Jesus as He turns to Peter! Does death itself stare you in the face? Remember Him who, "being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We would never be alone if we could see Jesus or at least, if we were, it would be a blessed solitude. We should never feel deserted if we could see Jesus. We should have the best of helpers. I know not if we should feel weak if we always saw Him, for He would be our strength and our song, He would become our salvation.

The bitter waters of Marah, the afflictions and troubles of the day, would all be sweet if this tree were cast into the flood for us, and if Jesus were brought, in solemn meditation, into contact with our spirits.

Oh! to see Jesus. You have seen Him as your Savior—you desire to see Him as your Master. Oh! to see Him as your Friend, upon whose bosom you can still lean your aching head, into whose ear you can always pour out your tale of sorrow. Through the wilderness you may continually come up leaning on your Beloved, and with Him you may have perpetually such sweet enjoyments, that earth, desert as it is, shall seem to blossom like a garden of roses and your spirit shall enjoy heaven below.

Again, would it not be much better for us, dear friends, if we were to see Jesus *as our Forerunner?* I do not know whether it is so with the most of you, but while some of us rejoice in the prospect of heaven, yet the thought of death is sometimes surrounded with much gloom. It cannot be an easy thing to go down amidst the chill darkness of the river, and there to be separated, the soul from the body, and to leave this earthly tabernacle behind an inheritance to worms.

It has a hideous appearance to us sometimes. Even the apostle himself shuddered a little at it when he said, "Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon." Death seems a bitter pill to us all. And unless it is swallowed up in victory, and the victory takes away the sting of death, the hour of dissolution will be bitter.

But do you not think that our thoughts of gloom about death sometimes arise from a forgetfulness that Jesus will be with us? If our faith could see Jesus as making our bed in our sickness, and then standing by our side in the last solemn article, to conduct us safely through the iron gates, should we not then look upon death in a very different light?

You know how Watts's hymn puts it—

*“Oh! if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul should stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she pass'd.*

*“Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.”*

My dear brethren and sisters, gathering up all I should like to have said, but cannot say, into one, it is this—if we see Jesus as being always with us, from morn till eve, in life and in death, *what noble Christians it will make us!* Now we shall not get angry with each other so quickly. We shall see Jesus and we cannot be angry when that dear loving face is in view.

And when we have been offended, we shall be very ready to forgive when we see Jesus. Who can hate his brother when he sees that face, that tender face, more marred than that of any man? When we see Jesus, do you think we shall get worldly? “We see Jesus.” Would you have spoken as you did across the counter today, brother, had you seen Jesus?

My dear friend, would you have been as you have been to your work-fellow? Would you have spoken as you did to your servants? Would you have acted as you did to your master had you seen Jesus? They say, “A master's eye doeth much.” Certainly the presence of Jesus would do much. “The master's eye doeth more than both his hands,” they say. Oh! for that consciousness of the eye of Jesus, which shall be like the hand of Jesus molding us according to His will. “We see Jesus.”

Now, I hope you see Jesus as you sit in the pews there. Sometimes on Sabbath days, when the Lord helps the preacher and Christ is evidently set forth amongst you, you have seen Jesus. But will you see Him after you have gone down those steps? Will you see Him when you get home to your houses? Will you see Him the next morning in the workroom, or at the business, or in the market?

This is not quite so easy, and yet I hold that, if we had more grace, we should see Christ just as well in the market, among the baskets of fruit, as we can at the Tabernacle sitting in our pews. We should see Him quite as well if we were driving a horse, or walking along Cheapside, as when we are in our closets, bowing the knee.

For that is true grace which is with us always, and that is the presence of Jesus which abides with us forever, and that is true piety which shines the fairest in the midst of worldly cares. May we each one of us have this, and may it be the expression of our life—“We see Jesus.” And then we shall be able to go farther and say, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

III. I shall detain you just a minute or two longer, for a third point about our sight of Jesus, namely, we have said that faith is like sight, and that our faith should be a present grace, in active operation. But there may be this reflection about our present sight of Christ, that **SOMETIMES OUR FAITH, LIKE OUR SIGHT, IS NOT QUITE CLEAR.**

You do not always see, I suppose, equally well. There are many things that affect the optic nerve, and we know that in fair weather we can see a longer distance than we can in cloudy weather. I was at Newcastle some time ago, in a friend's house, and when I went up to the top window and looked out, he said, “There is a fine view, sir, if you could but see it. We can see Durham Cathedral from here on Sunday.” “On a Sunday!” I said, “how is that?”

“Well, you see all that smoke down there, all those furnaces, and so on. They are all stopped on a Sunday, and then, when the air is clear, we can see Durham Cathedral.” In a moment I thought—ah! we can see a great deal on a Sunday, when the smoke of the world is gone for a little time. We can see all the way to heaven then. But sometimes, what with the smoke we make in business, and the smoke the devil makes, and the smoke that sin makes, we can scarcely see anything at all.

Well, since the natural sight has to undergo variations, both from itself within and from the smoke without, and from the state of the weather, we must not wonder if our faith undergoes variations too. It ought not to do so, but sometimes it does. There are seasons when we realize that Christ is ours. Glory be to His name, if all the devils in hell would speak to the contrary, yet we know that our Beloved is ours and that we are His.

We are sure of it. Though all the angels in heaven should come and deny it, we would face them out, and say, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

But there are other times when the same believer sings Newton’s hymn, but whenever he does, he ought to sing it alone, for fear anybody should catch the contagion of it—

*“Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I His or am I not?”*

There are hours when some of us would be glad to creep into a mouse-hole or hide ourselves in a nutshell. We feel so little, so insignificant. Our faith is at so miserable an ebb, that we know not what to do. Well, let us not be astonished, as though we were not the children of God, because of this. Everything that has life has variations.

A block of wood is not affected by the weather, but a living man is. You may drive a stake into the ground, and it will feel no influence of spring, summer, autumn, or winter. But if the stake be alive, and you drive it into the soil where there is moisture, it will soon begin to sprout, and you will be able to tell when spring and winter are coming by the changes that take place in the living tree. Life is full of these changes. Do not wonder, then, if you experience them.

Again, faith, like sight, is not only subject to variations, but *it has great growth*. Our children, in a certain sense, see as truly when they are a day old as when they are grown up to be twenty years old, but we must not suppose that they see as accurately, for they do not.

I think observations would teach us that little children see all things as on a level surface, and that distant objects seem to them to be near, for they have not yet received experience enough to judge of the relative position of things. That is an acquired knowledge, and no doubt very early acquired, but still it is learned as a matter of mental experience.

And let me say, though you may not have noticed it, all our measures of distance by the eye are matters which have to be gained by habit and observation. When I first went to Switzerland, with a friend from Lucerne, we saw a mountain in the distance which we were going to climb. I pointed out a place where we should stop half-way up, and I said, “We shall be there in about four and a half hours.”

“Four hours and a half!” my friend said, “I’d undertake to walk it in ten minutes.” “No, not you.” “Well, but half an hour!” He looked again, and said, “Anybody could get there in half an hour!” It seemed no distance at all. And yet when we came to toil up, the four and a half hours turned into five or six before we reached the place.

Our eyes were not accustomed to mountains, and we were not able to measure them. And it is only by considerable experience that you get to understand what a mountain is and how a long distance appears. You are altogether deceived and do not know the position of things till you become wiser.

And it is just so with faith. Faith in the Christian, when he first gets it, is true and saving, but it is not in proportion. The man believes one doctrine, perhaps, and that is so delightful that it swallows up every

other. Then he gets hold of another, and he swings that way like a pendulum. No doctrine can be true but that one.

Perhaps in a little time he swings back like a pendulum the other way. He is unsteady because, while his faith perceives the truth, it does not perceive the harmonies of truth—his faith, for instance, may perceive the Lord Jesus Christ, but as yet it has not learned the position which Christ occupies in the great economy of grace.

He is half-blind and cannot see very far. He has sight, but it is not the sight which he will yet receive. Like the blind man who, when our Lord healed him, saw men at first as trees walking. He came in due time to see clearly, for grace always goes on in its work—it will never halt half-way. But at first all was obscure and confused.

Just as when you pass from darkness into light, you are unable to bear it, you are dazzled, and need a short time to accustom the eye to the brilliance. But in due time the eye is strengthened, and you can bear more and more light, till we again see with comfort. Let us ask, then, of the Lord, that He will increase our faith till the mental eye shall become clear and bright, and we shall be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, to be with Christ, and to see Him as He is.

If you have but little faith, remember that that will save you. The little diamond is as much a diamond as the Koh-i-noor. So little faith is as truly the faith of God's elect as the greatest faith. If you but see Jesus, though it be but by the corner of your eye, yet if you see Him, you shall be saved. And though you may not see as much of Christ as advanced saints do, yet if you see enough of Him to trust Him, to rely on Him entirely, your sins which are many are forgiven, and you shall yet receive grace for grace until you shall see Him in His glory. However, always be praying, "Lord, increase our faith."

The last thing I have to notice about this true faith in Christ as sight, is, *that it is at all times a very simple thing to look*. Look! No one needs go to a grammar school or to a university to look. Look! The smallest child, as we have said, can look. The most illiterate and untaught can look. If there be life in a look, glory be to God for such a provision, because it is available for each one of us!

Sinner, if you would be saved, there is nothing for you to think upon but Christ. Do your sins trouble you? Go to Him, and trust in Him, and the moment you look to Him you are saved. "Oh," says one, "but I cannot do that. My faith is so weak." Well, when I walk about and see a beautiful sight, very seldom do I think about my own sight. My mind is occupied with the sight, and so let it be with you.

Never mind that eye—think more about the vision to be seen. Think of Christ. It would be a pitiful thing if, when there were some great procession in the streets, all you thought about was your own eye. You would see but very little. Think less about your faith, and more about Jesus.

*"Weary sinner! keep thine eyes
On the atoning sacrifice;
View Him bleeding on the tree,
Pouring out His life for thee.*

*"Cast thy guilty soul on Him,
Find Him mighty to redeem;
At His feet thy burden lay;
Look thy doubts and fears away."*

Turn over and over in your mind the great transaction on the cross. I have sometimes said to young seekers, Go home and spend an hour deliberately in reading about the death of Christ, and then in picturing it in your mind's eye, for it is in that way that faith comes. Through the Holy Spirit's power, we come to believe that story by thinking upon it, seeing Jesus in it, and then following on, and giving it the full credence of our spirit. Go to the cross for faith if you cannot go with faith, and the Lord grant that you may find in Jesus—

*“True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,”*

so that you, too, may say with us, “We see Jesus.”

What is there in this world which is worth looking at in comparison with Him? All else is like the mirage of the desert, which appears but to fade away, deluding the weary traveler with hopes of rest and refreshment, and leaving him sick at heart, because all has passed as the baseless fabric of a dream, leaving not a wreck behind.

Can you gain ought by watching the bubbles on the stream of time? Will they shake your death-thirst and cool your brow in the article of death? Is there aught of healing in the uplifted images of earthly gold, and honor, wisdom, and power? You have tried them—well, how do they answer?

I know of one who, traveling over a pass in Italy, one evening, secured a light to help him over a dangerous and difficult part of the way further on. It was not needed till the narrow steep descent was reached, in fact, it was in the way till then, and just as the traveler came to the very spot where it was required, it went out and left him in utter darkness.

So it is full often in the sinner’s experience, who travels in the dark, his lights go out when most needed. Oh! far better then to walk in daylight, using the eye of faith, in the clear sunshine of Gospel light from the Sun of Righteousness. Walk in the light. Come to the light and live seeing Jesus.

*“‘We would see Jesus,’ for the shadows lengthen
Across this little landscape of our life;
‘We would see Jesus,’ our weak faith to strengthen,
For the last weariness, the final strife.*

*“‘We would see Jesus,’ the great rock foundation,
Whereon our feet were set by sovereign grace;
Nor life nor death, with all their agitation,
Can thence remove us if we see His face.*

*“‘We would see Jesus’—sense is all too blinding,
And heaven appears too dim, too far away;
We would see Thee, to gain a sweet reminding
That Thou hast promised our great debt to pay.*

*“‘We would see Jesus’—this is all we’re needing—
Strength, joy, and willingness, come with the sight;
‘We would see Jesus’. dying, risen, pleading;
Then welcome day, and farewell mortal night!”*

The Lord send you away with His blessing, for Jesus’ sake.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—HEBREWS 2

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.