

THE HEAVEN OF HEAVEN

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BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“And they shall see His face.”
Revelation 22:4.*

THE Italians so much admire the city of Naples that their proverb is, “See Naples and die,” as if there remained nothing more to be seen after that fair bay and city had been gazed upon. To behold the far fairer sight mentioned in the text, men might well be content to die a thousand times! If it shall please God that we shall depart this life before the Master's appearing, we may laugh at death and count it to be *gain*, seeing that it introduces us to the place where we shall see His face. “You cannot see My face and live,” said the Lord of old. But that was true of *mortals* only, and refers not to *immortals* who have put on incorruption!

In yonder Glory they see the face of God and yet live! Yes, the sight is the essence and excellence of their life! Here, that vision might be too overpowering for the soul and body, and might painfully separate them with excess of delight and so *cause* us death. But up yonder the disembodied spirit is able to endure the blaze of splendor, and so will the body, also, when it shall have been refined and strengthened in its powers by resurrection from the dead. Then these eyes, which now would be struck with blindness should they look upon the superlative Glory, shall be strengthened to behold eternally the Lord of angels who is the brightness of His Father's Glory and the express image of His Person.

Brothers and Sisters, regard the object of our expectations! See the happiness which is promised us! Behold the Heaven which awaits us! Forget, for awhile, your present cares—let all your difficulties and your sorrows vanish for a season—and live for awhile in the future which is so certified by faithful promises that you may rejoice in it even *now*! The veil which parts us from our great reward is very thin—Hope gazes through its gauzy fabric. Faith, with eagle eyes, penetrates the mist which hides eternal delights from longing eyes.

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him; but He has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” And we, in the power of that Spirit, have known, believed and anticipated the bliss which every winged hour is bringing nearer to us. While our Lord was here below it would have been a great delight to spiritual minds to have seen His face. I can scarcely imagine, but perhaps some of you mothers can, what must have been the joy that flooded the heart of Mary, when, for the first time, she gazed upon the lovely face of the holy Child Jesus.

I suppose the infant Jesus to have possessed an extraordinary beauty. A soul, absolutely perfect as His was, must surely have been enshrined in a body perfect in its symmetry and attractive in its features. The overshadowing Spirit, by whose miraculous agency He was conceived of the Virgin, would scarcely have created an uncomely body, and much less would He have fashioned an unlovely body for so delightful a Person as the only Begotten of the Father! I think, as His virgin mother looked upon Him, and as the wise men and the shepherds gazed into that dear face, they might all have said with the spouse of old, “You are fairer than the children of men.”

That manger held an unrivalled form of beauty! Well may painters strain their art to paint the mother and her wondrous Child, for the spectacle brought shepherds from their flocks, sages from the far-off land, and angels from their thrones—Heaven and earth were alike intent to see His face! It would have been no small joy, I think, to have seen the face of Jesus of Nazareth in the years of His maturity when His Countenance beamed with joy. “At that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, Father, I thank You.”

One would like to have basked in the radiance of a *sinless* smile—it was a vision fit only for the pure in heart to have traced the fair marks of joy upon the face of Jesus—and such a joy, so spiritual, so refined, so heavenly, so Divine! “Father, I thank You,” blessing God for that eternal decree of election by which He has hidden the things of the

kingdom from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes, and saying, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.”

Equally rare must have been the vision which Peter and James, and John beheld when they looked into that Savior’s face and saw it Transfigured—beams of light flashing from its every feature—and His whole Person made to glow with a superhuman splendor! The favored spectator might well be content to die at that moment! It was enough to have lived to have beheld His Glory so Divinely revealed. Beloved, have you not sometimes felt as I have, that you could have wished to have seen the Well-Beloved’s face even in its grief and agony? It was not long before the beauty of Jesus began to be marred by His inward griefs and His daily hardships.

He appears to have looked like a man of 50 when He was scarcely thirty. The Jews said, “You are not yet 50 years old, and have You seen Abraham?” His visage was more marred, we are told, than that of any man. And His form more than the sons of men—for He took upon Himself our sickness and bore our sorrows—and all this substitutionary grief plowed deep furrows upon that blessed brow and made the cheeks to sink and the eyes to become red with much weeping. Yet gladly would I have gazed into the face of the Man of Sorrows! Gladly would I have seen those eyes which were “as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set.”

Gladly would I have seen those founts of pity, wells of love and springs of grief! Gladly would I have adoringly admired those cheeks which were as beds of spices, as sweet flowers, and those lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh! All the suffering that He suffered could not take away from that marred visage its majesty of Grace and holiness, nor withdraw from it one whit of that mental, moral and spiritual beauty which were peculiar to the perfect Man. O how terribly lovely that beloved face must have looked when it was covered with the crimson of the bloody sweat! When the radiant hues of His rosy sufferings suffused the lily of His perfection!

What a vision must that have been of the Man of Sorrows when He said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death”! What must it have been to have looked into His face when His brow was girt about with the crown of thorns! When the ruby drops followed each other adown those bruised cheeks which had been spit upon by the shameful mouths of the scornors! That must have been a spectacle of woe, indeed! But, perhaps, yet more ghastly, still, was the face of the Redeemer when He said, “I thirst!” Or when, in bitterest anguish, He shrieked, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Then, indeed, the sun of the universe suffered a horrible eclipse! Then the light of Heaven, for awhile, passed under a black tempestuous cloud! That face in such a condition we have not seen, nor shall see. But, Beloved, we shall see His face. I could have wished to have been with Mary and the holy women, and Joseph, and Nicodemus when they took His blessed body from the Cross and laid it in the tomb. O for one gaze into that poor pale dead face—to have seen how death looked when mirrored in that matchless clay! And to see how Jesus appeared when conquered and yet *conquering*—vanquished and yet the Victor—yielding up His body to the spoiler to be laid, for awhile, in the treasure house of the tomb and yet bursting all the bars of the spoiler’s den!

But, Brothers and Sisters, there was a glorious change, no doubt, in the face of our Lord when it was seen by several brethren after the resurrection. It was the same face, and they knew Him to be the same Christ. Did they not put their fingers into the nail prints and thrust their hand into His side? Did they not know Him to be veritable flesh and bone as they saw Him eat the piece of fish and honeycomb? But the face was restored to its former majesty and radiance, for I suppose it to have beamed with the dawn—flashes of that light which now flames forth from it, of which John says—“His face was as the sun shining in its strength.”

There were, we believe, some soft unveilings of that unexampled Glory which glorified saints, day without night, are perpetually beholding in Heaven. That face was for the last time seen when He ascended and the clouds concealed Him. Then, gazing downward, and scattering benedictions with both His hands, He appointed His disciples to be His witnesses and bade them go and preach His Gospel, for He would be with them always, even unto the end of the world. Such was the face of Christ on earth—and the remembrance may serve to inspire in us a holy panting after the Beatific Vision which the Lord has promised us, and of which we are now about to speak as the Holy Spirit may graciously give us utterance.

First, this morning, I purpose, Brothers and Sisters, to bring before your minds the Beatific Vision itself—“They shall see His face.” Then, secondly, we shall dwell, for a moment, upon the surpassing clearness of the vision. “They shall

see His face”—in a sense more than usually emphatic. Then thirdly, upon the privileges, choice and precious, which are involved in the vision. And lastly we shall have a word or two upon those favored ones who shall enjoy the sight—“*They*,” and none other—“*They* shall see His face.”

I. First, then, THE BEATIFIC VISION. “They shall see His face.” It is the chief blessing of Heaven, the cream of Heaven, the Heaven of Heaven, that the saints shall, there, see Jesus! There will be other things to see. Who dares despise those foundations of chrysolite and chrysoprasus and jacinth? Who shall speak lightly of streets of glassy gold and gates of pearl? We would not forget that we shall see angels, and seraphim and cherubim—nor would we fail to remember that we shall see Apostles, martyrs, and confessors—together with those whom we have walked with and communed with in our Lord while here below.

We shall assuredly behold those of our departed kindred who sleep in Jesus, dear to us here and dear to us still—“not lost, but gone before.” But still, for all this, the main thought which we now have of Heaven, and certainly the main fullness of it when we shall be there, is just this—we shall see Jesus! We shall care little for any of those imaginary occupations which have such charms for a certain class of minds that they could even find a Heaven in them. I have read fanciful periods in which the writer has found celestial joys to consist in an eternal progress in the knowledge of the laws of God’s universe. Such is not *my* Heaven!

Knowledge is not happiness, but on the contrary, is often an increase of sorrow. Knowing, of itself, does not make men happy nor holy. For mere knowing’s sake, I would as soon not know as know, if I had my choice—better to love an ounce than to know a pound! Better a little service than much knowledge. I desire to know what God pleases to teach me, but beyond that, even ignorance shall be my bliss! Some have talked of flitting from star to star, seeing the wonders of God throughout the universe—how He rules in this province of His wide domain—how He governs in that other region of His vast dominion.

It may be so, but it would be no Heaven to me! So far as I can at present judge, I would rather stay at home and sit at the feet of Christ forever than roam over the wide creation—

*“The spacious earth and spreading flood
Proclaim the wise and powerful God,
And Your rich glories from afar
Sparkle in every rolling star.
Yet in Christ’s looks a Glory stands,
The noblest wonder of God’s hands;
He, in the Person of His Son,
Has all His mightiest works outdone.”*

If Jesus were not Infinite we should not speak so, but since He is, in His Person, Divine, and as to His Manhood, so nearly allied to us that the closest possible sympathy exists between us, there will always be fresh subjects for thought, fresh sources for enjoyment for those who are taken up with Him.

Certainly, Brothers and Sisters, to no Believer would Heaven be desirable if Jesus were not there, or, if being there, they could not enjoy the nearest and dearest fellowship with Him! A sight of Him first turned our sorrow into joy! Renewed communion with Him lifts us above our present cares and strengthens us to bear our heavy burdens! What must *heavenly* communion be? When we have Christ with us we are content with a crumb, and satisfied with a cup of water! But if His face is hidden, the whole world cannot afford a solace—we are widowed of our Beloved, our sun has set—our moon is eclipsed, our candle is blown out!

Christ is All in All to us here, and therefore we pant and long for a Heaven in which He shall be All in All to us forever—and such *will* the Heaven of God be! The Paradise of God is not the Elysium of imagination, the Utopia of intellect, or the Eden of poetry—it is the Heaven of intense *spiritual* fellowship with the Lord Jesus—a place where it is promised to faithful souls that “they shall see His face.” In the Beatific vision it is Christ whom they see! And further, it is His face which they behold! They shall not see the hem of His robe as Moses saw the back parts of Jehovah. They shall not be satisfied to touch the hem of His garment, or to sit far down at His feet where they can only see His sandals—no, they “shall see His face”!

By this I understand two things. First, that they shall literally and physically, with their risen bodies, actually look into the face of Jesus. And secondly, that *spiritually* their mental faculties shall be enlarged so that they shall be enabled

to look into the very heart, and soul, and Character of Christ—so as to understand Him, His work, His love—as they never understood Him before. They shall literally, I say, see His face, for Christ is no phantom! And in Heaven, though Divine, and therefore *spiritual*, He is still a Man, and therefore *material* like ourselves. The very flesh and blood that suffered upon Calvary is in Heaven! The hand that was pierced with the nail, now, at this moment, grasps the scepter of all worlds!

That very head which was bowed down with anguish is now crowned with a royal diadem! And the face that was no marvel is the very face which beams resplendent amidst the thrones of Heaven! Into that same Countenance we shall be permitted to gaze. O what a sight! Roll by, years! Hasten on, you laggard months and days, to let us but for once behold Him—our Beloved, our hearts' care, who “redeemed us unto God by His blood.” Whose we are, and whom we love with such a passionate desire, that to be in His embrace we would be satisfied to suffer 10,000 deaths! We shall actually see Jesus!

Yet the *spiritual* sight will be sweeter, still. I think the text implies that in the next world our powers of mind will be very different from what they are now. We are, the best of us, in our infancy as yet and know but in part. But we shall be men then—we shall “put away childish things.” We shall see and know even as we are known. And among the great things that we shall know will be this greatest of all—that we shall know Christ! We shall know the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of the love of Christ that passes knowledge!

O how delightful it will be, then, to understand His everlasting love! How, without beginning, or ever the earth was, His thoughts darted forward towards His dear ones whom He had chosen in the sovereignty of His choice, that they should be His forever! What a subject for delightful meditation will the Covenant be, and Christ's surety engagements in that Covenant when He undertook to take the debts of all His people upon Himself, and to pay them all, and to stand and suffer in their place!

And what thoughts shall we have, then, of our union with Christ—our federal, vital, conjugal oneness! We only *talk* about these things now—we do not really *understand* them. We merely plow the surface and gather a topsoil harvest, but a richer subsoil lies beneath! Brothers and Sisters, in Heaven we shall dive into the deepest depths of fellowship with Jesus. “We shall see His face,” that is, we shall see clearly and plainly all that has to do with our Lord—and this shall be the topmost bliss of Heaven. In the blessed vision the saints see Jesus, and they see Him clearly.

We may also remark that they see Him always, for when the text says, “They shall see His face,” it implies that they never, at any time, are without the sight. Never for a moment do they unlock their arm from the arm of their Beloved! They are not as we are—sometimes near the Throne, and then afar off by backslidings—sometimes hot with love, and then cold with indifference. They are not as we are—sometimes bright as seraphs, and then dull as clods—but forever and ever they are in closest association with the Master, for, “they shall see His face.”

Best of all, they see His face as it is now in all its Glory. John tells us what that will be like. In his first chapter he says, “His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow,” to mark His antiquity, for He is the Ancient of Days. “And His eyes were as a flame of fire. And His Countenance was as the sun shines in his strength.” Such is the vision which the redeemed enjoy before the Throne! Their Lord is all brightness and in Him there is nothing to weep over, nothing to mar His Glory!

Doubtless there are traces, there, upon that wondrous face, of all the griefs He once endured, but these only make Him more glorious! He looks like a lamb that has been slain and wears His priesthood still—but *all* that has to do with the shame, and the spit and slaughter, has been so transformed that the sight is all blissful, all comforting, all glorious! In His face there is nothing to excite a tear or to beget a sigh. I wish my lips were unloosed and my thoughts were free, that I could tell you something more of this sight, but, indeed, it is not given unto mortal tongues to talk of these things! I suppose that if we were caught up to see His face and should come back again, yet should we have to say like Paul that we had heard and seen that which it was not lawful for us to utter.

God will not as yet reveal these things fully to us, but He reserves His best wine for the last. We can but give you a few glimpses, but O Beloved, wait a little while—it shall not be long before you shall see his face!

II. Secondly, we turn to another thought—THE SURPASSING CLEARNESS OF THAT VISION. “They shall see His face.” The word, “see,” sounds in my ears with a clear, full, melodious note. I think we see but little here. This, indeed, is not the world of sight—“we walk by faith, not by sight.” Around us all is mist and cloud. What we *do* see, we

see only as if men were trees walking. If ever we get a glimpse of the spirit-world, it is like yonder momentary lightning flash in the darkness of the tempest which opens, for an instant, the gates of Heaven, and in the twinkling of an eye they are closed again. And then the darkness is denser than before, as if it were enough for us poor mortals to know that there is a brightness denied to us as yet.

The saints see the face of Jesus in Heaven because they are purified from sin. The pure in heart are blessed—they shall see God, and none others. It is because of our impurity which still remains that we cannot as yet see His face, but *their* eyes are touched with eye salve, and therefore they see. Ah, Brothers and Sisters, how often does our Lord Jesus hide Himself behind the clouds of dust which we, ourselves, make by our unholy walking! If we become proud, or selfish, or slothful, or fall into any other of our besetting sins, then our eyes lose their capacity to behold the brightness of our Lord.

But up yonder they not only do not sin, but they *cannot* sin—they are not tempted, for there is no space for the Tempter to work upon, even could he be admitted to try them! They are without fault before the Throne of God, and, surely, this alone is a Heaven—to be rid of inbred sin and the plague of the heart—and to have ended, forever, the struggle of spiritual life—the crushing of the fleshly power of death! They may well see His face when the scales of sin have been taken from their eyes and they have become pure as God Himself is pure! They surely see His face more clearly because all the clouds of care are gone from them.

Some of you, while sitting here today, have been trying to lift up your minds to heavenly contemplation, but you cannot! The business has gone so wrong this week. The children have vexed you so much. Sickness has been in the house so sorely. You, yourself, feel in your body you are quite out of order for devotion—these enemies break your concentration. Now *they* are vexed by none of these things in Heaven, and therefore they can see their Master's face! They are not cumbered with Martha's cares—they still occupy Mary's seat at His feet. When you and I have laid aside the farm, and the merchandise, and the marrying, and the burying which come so fast upon each other's heels, we shall, then, be forever with the Lord—

*“Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in”!*

Moreover, as they have done with sins and cares, so have they done with sorrows. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.” We are none of us quite strangers to grief. And with some of us pain is an inseparable companion—we still dwell in the smoky tents of Kedar. Perhaps it is well that we should be so tried while we are here, for sanctified sorrow refines the soul! But in Glory there is no affliction, for pure gold needs not the furnace. Well may they, then, behold Christ when there are no tears to dim their eyes, no smoke of this world to rise up between them and their Beloved—they are, alike, free from sin, and care and sorrow! They see His face right gloriously in that cloudless atmosphere, and in the light which He Himself supplies!

Moreover, the glorified see His face the more clearly because there are no idols to stand between Him and them. Our idolatrous love of worldly things is a chief cause of our knowing so little of spiritual things. Because we love this and that so much we see little of Christ. You cannot fill your life cup from the pools of earth and yet have room in it for the crystal streams of Heaven. But they have no idols there—nothing to occupy the heart—no rival for the Lord Jesus. He reigns supreme within their spirits and therefore they see His face. They have no veils of ignorance or prejudice to darken their sight in Heaven.

Those of us who most candidly endeavor to learn the Truth of God are, nevertheless, in some degree, biased and warped by education. Let us struggle as we may, yet still our surroundings will not permit us to see things as they are. There is a deflection in our vision, a refraction in the air, a something everywhere which casts the beam of light out of its straight line so that we see, rather, the *appearance* than the *reality* of Truth. We see not with open sight. Our vision is marred. But up yonder, among the golden harps, they “know, even as they are known.” They have no prejudices, but a full desire to know the Truth—the bias is gone, and therefore they are able to see His face.

O blessed thought! One could almost wish to sit down and say no more but just roll that sweet morsel under one's tongue and extract the essence and sweetness of it! “They see His face.” There is no long distance for the eye to travel over, for they are near Him—they are in His bosom—they are sitting on His Throne at His right hand. No withdrawals there to mourn over—their sun shall no more go down. Here He stands behind our wall. He shows Himself through the

lattices. But He hides not Himself in Heaven! O when shall the long summer days of Glory be ours and Jesus our undying joy forever and ever?

In Heaven they never pray—

*“Oh may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide You from Your servant’s eyes,”*

but forever and forever they bask in the sunlight, or rather, like Milton’s angel, they live in the Sun itself! They come not to the sea’s brink to wade into it up to their ankles, but they swim in bliss forever! In waves of everlasting rest, in richest, closest fellowship with Jesus, they disport themselves with ineffable delight!

III. The third part of the subject which commands our attention this morning is THE MATCHLESS PRIVILEGE WHICH THIS VISION INVOLVES. We may understand the words, “they shall see His face,” to contain five things. They mean, first, certain salvation. The face of Jesus Christ acts in two ways upon the sons of men—with some it is a face of terror—“Before His face Heaven and earth fled away.” It is written concerning Him, “Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap.” A sight of Christ’s face will be, to the *ungodly*, eternal absence from the Presence of the Lord.

But if there are some men who shall see His face, who shall sit down and delight themselves in gazing upon the face of the great Judge upon the Throne, then those persons are assuredly saved! They are awaiting the day of His coming! They are dwelling with the eternal flame without being consumed! They are resting on the bosom of our God who is a consuming fire! And yet, like the burning bush of old, though glowing with the Glory, they are not consumed by the heat! O happy men who can live where others must expire—who can find their Heaven where a carnal world must eternally find its Hell! This is the first thing in the text. “They shall see His face”—then they are everlastingly safe.

The second privilege is they shall have a clear knowledge of Him. I have dwelt upon that thought before, and merely mention it to complete the summary. To look into the face of Christ signifies to be well acquainted with His Person, His office, His Character, His work. So the saints in Heaven shall have more knowledge of Christ than the most advanced below. As one has said, the babe in Christ admitted to Heaven discovers more of Christ in a single hour than is known by all the divines of the assemblies of the Church on earth. O yes, our Catechisms and our creeds, and even our Bible—all these reveal but very little of what we shall discover when we shall see His face!

Our text implies, also, conscious favor. Was not that the old benediction, “The Lord lift up His Countenance upon you”? He *has* lifted it up upon the *glorified*, and they see it world without end! Here it is our joy of joys to have the Lord smiling upon us, for if He is with us, who can be against us? If we know that He loves us, and that He delights in us, it matters not to us though earth and Hell should hate us and men cast out our names as evil! In Heaven, then, they have this to be their choice privilege. They are courtiers who stand always in the Monarch’s palace, secure of the Monarch’s smile. They are children who live unbrokenly in their Father’s love, and know it, and rejoice to know it evermore!

The fourth privilege involved in the text is that of close fellowship. They are always near to Jesus. They are never *hoping* that they are with Him and yet fearing that they are not. They have none of those inward struggles which make life so unhappy for some of us. They never say—“ ‘Tis a point I long to know.” They see His face and are in hourly communion with their Lord. Perfect spirits are always walking with the Lord, for they are always agreed with Him. In Glory they are all Enochs, walking with God! There, forever and forever they lie in the bosom of Jesus, in the nearest possible place of communion with Him who redeemed them with His blood.

And this involves a fifth privilege, namely, complete transformation, “They shall be like He, for they shall see Him as He is.” If they see His face they shall be “changed from glory to glory” by this face to face vision of the Lord. Beholding Christ, His likeness is photographed upon them—they become in all respects like He as they gaze upon Him world without end!

Thus have I very briefly mentioned the privileges involved in seeing Christ face to face.

IV. We must conclude by noting WHO THEY ARE TO WHOM THIS CHOICE GIFT IS AFFORDED BY DIVINE MERCY. “They shall see His face.” Who are *they*? They are all His elect, all His redeemed, all His effectually called ones, all the justified, all the sanctified. They are the tens of thousands and myriads who have died in Jesus, of whom the Spirit says, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”

Thank God we are not strangers to those who now behold His face. As we look back to the associations of our youth, and to the friendships of our manhood, we remember many whose privilege it has been to precede us and to know long before us the things which we desire and expect so soon to learn. Some are taken away to see His face while yet young. We bless God that our babes shall have the same Heaven as our holy parents—they shall not be placed in the back settlements of Canaan—but they shall, with equal clearness, see the face of Jesus!

Those dear boys and girls who learned to love Christ and made a profession of His name in their youth—who were never spared to reach the ripeness of manhood and womanhood—they shall equally see His face with the gravest and most reverend fathers of the Church! I read of no secondary joys. Whoever may have invented the doctrine of degrees in Heaven I do not know, but I believe there is as much foundation for it in Scripture as there is for the doctrine of “purgatory,” and no more! All the saints shall see their Master’s face. The thief dying on the cross was with Christ in Paradise, and Paul could be no more!

I like, sometimes, to think of Heaven in the same way as old Ryland did when he wrote his rhyming letter from Northampton—

***“They all shall be there,
The great and the small:
For I shall shake hands
With the blessed St. Paul.”***

Doubtless we all shall. Whether dying young or old, whether departing after long service of Christ, or dying immediately after conversion as the thief—of all the saints shall it be said in the words of the text, “They shall see His face.” What more can Apostles and martyrs enjoy? Do you regret that your friends have departed? Do you lament that wife, and husband, and child, and father, and grandparents have all entered into their rest? Be not so unkind, so selfish to yourself, so cruel to them! No, rather, soldier of the Cross, be thankful that another has won the crown before you, and you press forward to win it, too. Life is but a moment—how short it will appear in eternity!

Even here Hope perceives it to be brief, and though Impatience counts it long, yet Faith corrects her and reminds her that one hour with God will make the longest life to seem but a point of time, a mere *nothing*, a watch in the night, a thing that was and was not, that has come and gone!

So we will close our sermon by observing that they who see His face already make only a part of the great “they” who shall see His face—for many of us here below are on the way to the same reward! As many as have felt the burden of sin and have come to the foot of the Cross and looked to those five crimson founts—the wounds of Jesus! As many as can say, “He is all my salvation and all my desire.” As many as can serve Him feeling that for them to live is Christ. As many as shall fight, day by day, against sin, and shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb! As many as, by the eternal Spirit’s power, shall be kept by faith unto salvation—they shall all see His face! It is mine to hope to see it, and it is yours, too. Beloved, the hope shall not be disappointed! It makes not ashamed! We shall see His face and that vision shall yield us perfect bliss!

I fear my text is not true of all here assembled. Just this word for the unconverted—I am afraid you may almost say with Balaam, “I shall see Him but not now. I shall behold Him but not near.” For every eye *shall* see Him, and they, also, which crucified Him—and what will *they* say when they see Him? These ungodly ones—what will *they* do? They shall cry to the rocks, “Hide us!” And to the mountains, “Cover us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne.” Ah, my dear Hearer, what a dreadful thing it will be if that very face which is the Heaven of your mother, and the Heaven of your husband, or the Heaven of your wife and of your child, should be the Hell to *you* from which you shall desire to be *hidden*!

Now it will be the case unless, first of all, you seek His face on earth. Certain Greeks said to the disciples, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” I wish *you* had that same desire this morning in a *spiritual* sense, for He Himself has said, “Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.” If you see Him, now, by simple faith, as your Savior, you shall see Him at the last as your King, your Friend, your Beloved! But you must first see Him to trust Him *here*, or you shall not see Him to rejoice in Him hereafter—

***“You sinners, seek His face,
Whose wrath you cannot bear!
Fly to the shelter of His Cross,
And find salvation there.”***

May God, even our own God, bless you for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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