

PROVING GOD

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“Prove Me now.”
Malachi 3:10.

IT was my pleasure and my privilege, some time ago, to address you from the whole of this verse—“Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in your house, and prove Me now herewith, says the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

If I rightly remember, we had at that time enough room, but very soon afterwards, when we strove to serve our God more, He did really pour us out such a blessing that we had not room to receive it! Then we enlarged this house—still the blessing flowed so copiously that there was no room to receive it and I might have preached again from the same text, to remind you again of the promise. This morning, feeling that we are about to enter on a new enterprise to God's honor and Glory, I thought I would endeavor to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, for which purpose I select such a text as this, “Prove Me now.”

According to the laws of our country, no man can be condemned until his guilt is proved. It were well if we all carried out the same justice toward God which we expect from our fellow men, but how frequently will men condemn the acts of their God as being hard and unkind! They do not *say* so—they dare not—they scarcely admit that they *think* so, but there is a kind of lurking imagination hardly amounting to a deliberate thought which leads them to fear that God has forgotten to be gracious and will no longer be mindful of them. Let us never, my Friends, think harshly of our God till we can prove something against Him. He says to all His unbelieving children who are doubtful of His goodness and His Grace, “Prove Me now. Have you anything against Me? Can you prove anything that will be dishonorable to Me? Wherein have I ever broken My promise? In what have I ever failed to fulfill My word? Ah, you cannot say that. Prove Me now, if you have anything against Me—if you can say anything against My honor—if you have hitherto not received answers to prayer and blessings according to promise. Set me down as false, I beseech you, until you have so proved Me.”

Moreover, not only is it unjust to think ill of anyone until we can prove something against him, but it is extremely unwise to be always suspicious of our fellow creatures. Though there is much folly in being over credulous, I question if there is not far more in being over suspicious. He who believes every man will soon be bitten, but he who suspects every man will not only be bitten, but devoured! He who lives in perpetual distrust of his fellow creatures cannot be happy—he has defrauded himself of peace and happiness—and assumed a position in which he cannot enjoy the sweets of friendship or affection. I would rather be too credulous towards my fellow creatures than too suspicious. I had rather they should impose upon me by making me believe them better than they are, than that I should impose upon them by thinking them worse than they are. It is better to be sometimes cheated than that we should cheat others—and it is cheating others to suspect those on whose characters there rests no suspicion. We acknowledge such morality among men, but we act not so towards God—we believe any liar sooner than we believe Him! When we are in trial and trouble, we believe the devil when he says God will forsake us. The devil, who has been a liar from the beginning, we credit—but if our God promises anything, we say, “Surely this is too good to be true.” And we doubt the fulfillment because it is not brought to pass exactly at the time and in the way we anticipate! Let us never harbor such suspicions of our God. If we say in our haste, “All men are liars,” let us preserve this one Truth of God, “God cannot lie.” His counsel is immutable and He has confirmed it by an oath, “that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set

before us” in Christ Jesus. Let not our faith, then, dally with fear. Let us rather seek Grace—that we may confidently believe and assuredly rely on the words which the lips of God speak. “‘Prove Me now,’ if any of you are suspicious of My Word. If you think My Grace is not sweet, taste and see that the Lord is gracious. If you think that I am not a rock and that My work is not perfect, come now, tread upon the rock and see if it is not firm—build on the rock and see if it is not solid. If you think My arm shortened that I cannot save, come and ask and I will stretch it out to defend you. If you think that My ear is heavy that I cannot hear, come and try it—call upon Me and I will answer you. If you are suspicious, make proof of My promises, so shall your suspicions be removed. But, oh, doubt Me not until you have found Me unworthy of trust! ‘Prove Me now.’”

In these words I find *a fact couched, a challenge given, a time mentioned, and an argument suggested*. Such are the four points I propose to consider this morning.

I. First, then, we have THE FACT that God allows Himself to be proved—“Prove Me now.”

In meditating on this subject, it has occurred to me that all the works of Creation are proofs of God—they evidence His eternal power and Godhead. But inasmuch as He is not only the Creator, but the Sustainer of them all, they make continual proof of Him, His goodness, His faithfulness and His care. I think when God launched the sun from His hand and sent it on its course, He said, “Prove Me now; see, O sun, if I do not uphold you till you have done your work and finished your career. You may rejoice ‘as a strong man to run a race,’ but while you fulfill your circuits, and nothing is hid from your heat, you shall prove My Glory and shed light upon My handiwork.” When the Almighty whirled the earth in space, I think He said, “Prove Me now, O ‘seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night,’ refreshing you with incessant Providences.” And to each creature He made, I can almost think the Almighty said, “Prove Me now. Tiny gnat, you are about to dance in the sunshine—you shall prove My goodness. Huge leviathan, you shall stir up the deep and make it frothy—go forth and prove My power. You creatures whom I have endowed with various instincts, wait on Me—I will give you your meat in due season. And you, you mighty thunder and you swift lightning, go teach the world reverence and show forth My Omnipotence.” Thus, I think, all God’s creatures are not merely proofs of His existence, but proofs of His manifold wisdom, His loving kindness and His Grace! The meanest and the mightiest of His created works, each and all, in some degree prove His love and teach us how marvelous is His Nature. But He has given to man this high prerogative above all the works of His hands, that he alone should make designed and intelligent proof. The things of earth prove God—the cattle on a thousand hills low forth His honor and the very lions roar His praise! Yet they do it not with intent, judgment and will—and although the sun proves the majesty and the might of its Master, yet the sun has neither mind nor thought and it is not its intention to glorify God. They do but prove Him unintentionally. But the saint does it *intentionally*.

It is a great fact, Beloved, that *God will have all His children to be proofs of the various attributes of His Nature*. I do not think any one of the children of God proves all of God, but that they are all proving different parts of His one grand Character so that when the whole history of Providence shall be written and the lives of all the saints shall be recorded, the title of this book will be, “Proofs of God.” There will be one compendious proof that He is God and changes not—that with Him there “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” You will remember how one saint peculiarly proved the long-suffering of God in that he was permitted to pursue his career to the utmost verge of destruction—and while he hung on a cross, the patience that had borne with him so long, brought salvation to him at last! He was “in the article of death,” falling into the Pit, when Sovereign Grace broke the fall, everlasting arms caught his soul and Jesus Himself conducted him to Paradise! Then again, you will remember another saint who plunged into a thousand sins and indulged in the foulest lust—but she was brought to Christ! Out of her did He cast seven evil spirits and Mary Magdalene was made to prove the richness of our Savior’s pardoning Grace as well as the sweetness of a pardoned sinner’s gratitude! It is a fact that the Lord is ready to forgive—and this woman is a great proof of it. There was Job who was tortured with ulcers and made to scrape himself with a potsherd. He proved “that the Lord is full of pity and of tender mercy.” From him we get evidence that God is able to sustain us amidst unparalleled sufferings.

Let me note how Solomon proved the bounty of God. When he asked for wisdom and knowledge, the Lord not only granted his request, but added riches and wealth and honor to his store. And how did Solomon magnify this proof of Divine bounty as he translates the experience of his dream into the counsel of his Proverbs? While he advises us to get wisdom, he assures us that “length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor.” And then, once

more, how great a proof of God's special Providence in maintaining in this world "a remnant according to the election of Grace" we derive from the history of Elijah. There sat the venerable Seer beneath a juniper tree in the lonely desert—a great but sorrowful man—an honored but a dejected Prophet of the Most High. Do you mark him as he comes to Horeb, takes up his lodging in a cave and complains in the awful solitude of his soul, "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away"? Oh, had his fears been realized, what a blank would earth have been without a saint! But Elijah proved from the mouth of God the impossibility! He learned for our sakes, as well as his own, what a reservation God has made in reasons of direst persecution! It is proved that there shall always be a Church in the world while earth's old pillars stand!

Nor need we suppose that the testimony of the witnesses is closed. Each of God's saints is sent into the world to prove some part of the Divine Character. Perhaps I may be one of those who shall live in the valley of ease, having much rest, and hearing sweet birds of promise singing in my ears. The air is calm and balmy, the sheep are feeding round about me and all is still and quiet. Well, then, I shall prove the love of God in sweet communing. Or, perhaps I may be called to stand where the thunderclouds brew, where the lightning plays and tempestuous winds are howling on the mountaintop. Well, then, I am born to prove the power and majesty of our God amidst dangers! He will inspire me with courage! Amidst toils He will make me strong! Perhaps it shall be mine to preserve an unblemished character and so prove the power of sanctifying Grace in not being allowed to backslide from my professed dedication to God. I shall then be a proof of the Omnipotent power of Grace which alone can save from the power as well as the guilt of sin! The divers cases of all the Lord's family are intended to illustrate different parts of His ways—and in Heaven I think one part of our blest employ will be to read the great book of the experience of all the saints and gather from that book the whole of the Divine Character as having been proved and illustrated! Each Christian is a manifestation and display of some attribute or other of God—a different part may belong to each of us, but when the whole shall be combined, when all the rays of evidence shall be brought, as it were, into one great sun and shine forth with meridian splendor—we shall see in Christian experience a beautiful Revelation of our God!

Let us remember, then, as an important fact, that God intends us to live in this world to prove Him. And let us seek to do so, always endeavoring as much as we can to be finding out and proving the attributes of God. Remember, we have all the promises to prove in our lifetime—and it shall be found, in the Last Great Day, that every one of them has been fulfilled! As the promises are read through now, it may be asked, "Who is a proof of such a promise?" Perhaps the question relates to some promises of almost universal application—and millions of saints will rise and say, "We proved the truth of that." Or there may be a promise in the Bible that it will seldom fall to the lot of one of God's children to prove—it is so peculiar and few shall have been able to understand it. But mark, there will be some witnesses to attest it, and all the promises shall be fulfilled in the united experience of the Church. Such, then is the fact—God allows His children to prove Him.

II. And now, secondly, we have here A CHALLENGE GIVEN TO US—"Prove Me now." "You who have doubted Me, prove Me. You who mistrust Me, prove Me. You who tremble at the enemy, prove Me. You who are afraid you cannot accomplish your work, believe My promise and come and prove Me."

Now, I must explain this challenge to you, as to the way in which it has to be carried out. There are different sorts of promises given in God's Word which have to be proved in different ways. In the Bible there are three kinds of promises. In the first class I will place the conditional promises, such as are intended for certain characters—given only to them and then only on certain conditions. There is a second class, referring exclusively to the future—the fulfillment of which does not relate to us at the present time. Then there is a third and most glorious class called absolute promises, which have no conditions whatever, but which graciously supply the requirements that the conditional promises demand.

To begin with *conditional promises*—we cannot prove a conditional promise in the same way as an absolute one. The manner of proving must accord with the character of the promise to be proved. Let me mention, for example, "Ask, and you shall receive." Here it is quite obvious that I must ask in order to verify the promise. I have a condition to fulfill in order to obtain a benefit. The way to test the faithfulness of the Promiser and the truth of the promise is plainly this—comply with the stipulation. Very different is the promise and equally different the proof, when God says, "I will put My spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes." Here we have the simple will of the Almighty. Such a promise is to be proved in a very different manner from the fulfillment on our part of a condition—but more of this soon.

In order to prove conditional promises, then, it is necessary for us to fulfill the condition that God has annexed to them. He says, "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house, and prove Me now herewith." No man can prove God, with reference to this promise, till he has brought all the tithes into the storehouse—for it is, "herewith," this promise has to be proved. Suppose the Lord says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." The only way of proving Him is by calling upon Him in the time of trouble. We may stand as long as we like and say, "God will fulfill that promise." Yes, that He will, but we must fulfill the condition! And it behooves us to seek Grace of Him to enable us to do so, for we cannot prove such promises unless we fulfill the conditions appended to them. There are many very sweet conditional promises—one of them helped to save my soul at rest, it was this, "Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth." The condition there is, "Look unto Me." But you cannot prove it unless you look unto Christ! Here is another, "Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." What a blessed promise that is! But then you cannot prove the promise unless you call on the name of the Lord. So that whenever we see the promise to which a condition is attached, if we wish to prove it in our own experience, we must ask of God to give us Grace to fulfill the condition! That is one way of proving God.

But some will say, "Do not these conditions restrict the liberality and graciousness of God's promises?" Oh, no, Beloved, for first, the conditions are often put to describe the persons to whom the promises are made. Hence, my Brother, when it is written, "He forgets not the cry of the humble," the promise fits your chastened soul. When the Lord says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembles at My Word." And when He says, "I will satisfy her poor with bread," you can, some of you, take comfort that the promise finds you in the fit condition to receive the blessing! But again, if the condition is not a state, but a duty, then let it be prayer—He gives the spirit of prayer! Let it be faith—He is the Giver of faith! Let it be meekness—He it is who clothes you with meekness! Thus the conditions serve to commend the promises to God's own children and to show the bounty of Him who gives "Grace for Grace."

But then there is *the absolute promise* and that is the largest and best promise of all, for if they were all conditional promises and the conditions rested with us to fulfill, we would all be damned! If there were no absolute promises, there would not be a soul saved! If they were all made to characters and no absolute promise were made that the characters should be given, we would perish, notwithstanding all God's promises. If He had simply said, "He that believes shall be saved," we should all be lost, for we could not believe without His Grace. Now, the absolute promise is not to be proved by *doing* anything, but by *believing in it*. All I can do with an absolute promise is to believe it. If I were to try to fulfill a condition, it would not be accepted by God because no condition is appended to that kind of promise. He might well say to me, "If you have fulfilled the condition of another promise, you shall have it, but I have put no condition to this one. I have said, 'I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My ways; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.' That is a promise without any condition." Although the child of God may have sinned, yet the promise stands good that he shall be brought to know his error, to repent, and be wholly forgiven! Such a promise we can only believe—we cannot fulfill any condition relating to it. We must take it to God and say, "Have You said that Christ 'shall see of the travail of His soul'?" Lord, we believe it. Let Him see of the travail of His soul. Do you say, 'My Word shall not return unto Me void'? Lord, do as You have said. You have said it, Lord—do it." Has He said, "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out"? Then go and say, "Lord, I come now. Do as you said." On an absolute promise, I can tell you, faith gets good foothold! Conditional promises often cheer the soul, but it is the absolute promise which is the rock that faith delights to stand upon!

Now, beloved Friends, what promise has been laid this day to your hearts? Many of you have one that God gave you when you arose from your beds. I am always sure to have the most happy day when I get a good text in the morning from my Master. When I have had to preach two or three sermons in a day, I have asked Him for a morning portion, and preached from it. And I have asked Him for an evening portion, and preached from it, after meditating on it for my own soul's comfort—not in the professional style of a regular sermon-maker, but meditating upon it for myself. Such simple food has done more good than if I had been a week in manufacturing a sermon, for it has come warm from my heart just after it has been received in my own conscience and, therefore, it has been well spoken, because well known, well tasted, and well felt! What is your promise, then? Is it a conditional one? Then say, "Lord, I beseech You, enable me to fulfill the condition." And if the promise is applied to your soul with a condition, He will give you both the condition and the

promise, for He never gives by halves. Has He put into your soul, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts”? Then He will give you Grace to forsake your ways and your thoughts too! He will not give you the conditional promise without, in due time, giving you the condition, too.

But have you got an absolute promise laid to your soul? Then you are a happy man! Has God laid to your inmost spirit some of those great and precious promises, such as this, “The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the Covenant of My peace be removed”? Pause not to ask for conditions—take the promise just as it is! Go on your knees and say, “Lord, You have said it.” Again, has the Lord promised, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you”? Plead it! Or are you in trouble? Search out the suitable promise and say, “You have said, ‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.’ I believe you, Lord! I am tried, but you have said I shall have no trial that I am not able to bear. Lord, give me all-sufficient Grace, and make me more than conqueror!” Go and prove God! Be not afraid with any amazement. If He gives you a single word, He means that you should bring it to Him and tell it to Him again—for you know He has said, “I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” Do, I beseech you, put the Lord in mind of His own promises and He will most assuredly fulfill them! Here is a challenge to all the redeemed, “Prove Me now.”

III. In the third place, there is A SEASON MENTIONED—“Prove Me now.”

Do you know what is the most perilous time in a Christian’s life? I think I could hit upon it in a moment—“now.” Many persons—I might well near say all Christians—are always most apprehensive of the present hour. Suppose they are in trouble? Though they may have had ten times worse troubles before, they forget all about *them* and, “now,” is the most critical day they ever knew! Or, if they are at ease, they say—

*“Far more the treacherous calm I dread
Than tempests rolling over my head”—*

and they think no position in life more dangerous than “now.” The lions are before them—how great their danger! And when, a little while ago, they lost their roll in the arbor of ease, how dreadful it was then! And when they got to the slippery ground, going downhill, “now” seemed their greatest danger! When they get a little further and Apollyon meets them, “Here,” they say, “is the worst trial of all.” Then comes the Valley of the Shadow of Death and they say, “Now this is the most serious period of my life!” In fact, it is right that we should feel in some degree that “now” is just the time we ought to be guarded. Yesterdays and tomorrows we may leave, but “now” is the time we must be watchful. God never lays tomorrow’s promise on my heart today, because I am not in immediate need of it. The promises are given in the time, in the place and in the manner He has designed and intended they should be fulfilled. But no doubt some of you will sympathize with me when I say that “now” is the time when the Christian thinks he can trust God the least. “Oh,” he says, “if I were in the same state as I was before, I would be happy. I believe that I could have trusted my Master better then, but just now I cannot lay my head so confidently on the Savior’s breast. I remember, when I was sick, how sweet the promises were. I could then say—

*“Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His.”*

But now I am altered. Somehow or other, a languor has come over me. I cannot believe that I am a Christian.” You compare yourself with some Brother and feel quite sure that if you were only like he, you would have faith. Go and speak to that Brother and he will say, “If I were like *you*, I would be better off.” And so they would change experiences, each failing to trust God under his own circumstances. But the Lord is pleased to always give us a word that suits the particular position we may be in—“Prove Me now.”

To allegorize a moment. There is a ship upon the sea. It is the ship which the Lord has launched and which He has said shall come to its desire haven. The sea is smooth. The waves ripple gently and bear the ship steadily along. “Prove Me now,” says the Lord. The mariner stands on the deck and says, “Lord, I thank You that You have given me such smooth sailing as this. But ah, my Master, perhaps this very ease and comfort may destroy my Grace.” And a Voice says, “Prove Me now, and see if I cannot keep you amidst the storm.” Soon the heavens have gathered blackness, the winds have begun to bluster and the waves lift up their voices while the poor ship is tossed to and fro on the yawning winds. I hear a Voice which says, “Prove Me now.” Look, the ship has been dashed upon the rocks—she has been broken well near in sunder and the mariner sees her hold filling with water, while all his pumps cannot keep her empty! The Voice

still cries, “Prove Me now.” Alas, the ship well-near sinks—another wave will be enough to swamp her! It seems as if one more drop will submerge her. Still the Voice cries, “Prove Me now.” And the mariner does prove God—and he is delivered safely from all his distresses. “They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end,” but, “so He brings them unto their desired haven.” Now the ship is scudding merrily along before the winds and, lo, she comes to the verge of the horizon. The mists have gathered round her. Strange phantoms dance to the waves of night—a lurid light flits through the shades and soon the darkness come again. Something broods about the ship that the mariner has never seen before. The water is black beneath his vessel’s prow. The air hangs damp and thick above him. The very sweat is clammy on his face. Fresh fear has got a hold of him that he never felt before. Just then, when he knows not what to do, a Voice cries, “Prove Me now.” And so he does! He cries unto the Lord and is saved!

Ah, dear Friends, I might give you a hundred illustrations. I think this old Bible speaks to me today. I have wielded it in your midst as God’s soldier. This sword of the Spirit has been thrust into many of your hearts and though they were hard as adamant, it has split them in sunder! Some of you have had sturdy spirits broken in pieces by this good old Jerusalem blade. But we shall be gathered together tonight where an unprecedented mass of people will assemble, perhaps, from idle curiosity, to hear God’s Word—and the Voice cries in my ears, “Prove Me now.” Many a man has come, during my ministrations, armed to his very teeth and having on a coat of mail—yet has this tried weapon cut him in two and pierced to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow! “Prove Me now,” says God, “go and prove Me before blasphemers! Go and prove Me before reprobates, before the vilest of the vile and the filthiest of the filthy! Go and prove Me now.” Lift up that life-giving Cross and let it again be exhibited! Into the regions of death go and proclaim the Word of Life! Into the most plague-smitten parts of the city, go and carry the waving censer of the incense of a Savior’s merits and prove, now, whether He is not able to stop the plague and remove the disease!

But what does God say to the Church? “You have proved Me before. You have attempted great things, though some of you were faint-hearted and said, ‘We should not have ventured.’ Others of you had faith and proved Me. I say again, ‘Prove Me now.’” See what God can do just when a cloud is falling on the head of him whom God has raised up to preach to you! Go and prove Him now—see if He will not pour you out such a blessing as you had not even dreamed of—see if He will not give you a Pentecostal blessing! “Prove Me now.” Why should we be unbelieving? Have we one thing to make us so? We are weak—what of that? Are we not strongest in our God when we are weakest in ourselves? We are fools, it is said—so we are, and we know it—but He makes fools to confound the wise. We are base, but God has chosen the base things of the world. We are unlearned—

“We know no schoolman’s subtle art”—

yet we glory in infirmity when Christ’s power rests upon us. Let them represent us as worse than we are! Let them give us the most odious character that has ever been given to man—we will bless them and wish them good. What though the weapon are a stone, or even the jaw-bone of an ass, if the Lord directs it? “Do you not know,” say some, “what wise men say?” Yes, we do, but we can read their oracles backwards. Their words are the offspring of their wishes. We know who has instructed them and do you shrink from the Truth of God, or do you shrink from His Grace? In either case, you have not the love to your Master that you should have. If you are brave men and true, go on and conquer! Fear not, you shall yet win the day! God’s holy Gospel shall yet shake the earth once more! The banner is lifted up and multitudes are flocking to it—the Pharisees have taken counsel together—the learned stand confounded—the sages are baffled. They know not what to do! The little ones God has made great and he that was despised is exalted. Let us trust Him, then. He will be with us even to the end, for He has said, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

IV. The last division of my subject is AN ARGUMENT and I have already preached on that—“Prove Me now.”

Why should we prove God? Because, Beloved, *it will glorify Him if we do*. Nothing glorifies God more than proving Him. When a poor hungry child of God, without a crust in the cupboard, says, “Lord, You have said that bread shall be given me and water shall be sure. I will prove You”—more Glory is given to God by that simple proof of Him than by the hallelujahs of the archangels! When some poor despairing sinner who has been fluttering round the Word, in hopes that he may—

*“Light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure defense against despair”—*

when such an one gives credence to God's promise in the very teeth of evidence against him, staggering not at the promise through unbelief, then he glorifies God! If you are, this morning, in your own apprehension an almost damned sinner, and you feel yourself to be the vilest of all—if you will believe this, that Christ loves you and that Christ came to save you, sinner as you are—you will glorify God as much by doing that as you will be able to do when your fingers shall sweep across the string of the golden harps of Paradise! We glorify God by proving Him. Try God. This is the way to bring out the glorious points of the Christian character. It is in being singularly qualified for the duties of our holy Christian warfare, in being singularly courageous and singularly ready with the martyr-spirit, to imperil ourselves for His service, that we may bring glory to God! God says, "Prove Me now." Saint, will you rob Him of His honor? Will you not do that which shall crown Him, in the estimation of the world, with many more crowns? Oh, prove Him, for by so doing you will glorify His name!

Prove Him again, for *you have proved Him before*. Can you not remember that you were brought very low and yet you can say, "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles"? What? Will you not prove Him again? Mind you not the goodness you have proved? When you said, "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well near slipped," did He not support you so that you could say with the Psalmist, "Nevertheless I am continually with you: you have held me by my right hand"? Has your foot slipped? Can you not thus far witness to His mercy? Then trust in it to still hold you up!

Again, accept this challenge! Prove God's Word, as He has called you to do, and *how much blessing it will give to yourself!* Beloved Brothers and Sisters, we endure 10 times as much anxiety in this world as we need because we confide not in Divine promises half as much as we might. If we were to live more on God's promises, and less on creature feelings, we would be happier men and women, all of us! Could we live always in faith on the promises, the shafts of the enemy could never reach us. Let us constantly, then, seek to prove Him! How much good Mr. Muller has done by proving God! He is called by God to a special work. What does he do? He builds an orphan asylum and trusts to God. He has no regular income, but he says, "I will prove to the world that God hears prayer." So he lives in the exercise of prayer and though he may, at times be brought to his last shilling, yet there is never a meal that his children sit down to without sufficient bread. Our work may be different from his, but let us seek, whatever our work is, to do it so that when anyone reads of it, he will say, "He tried God in such-and-such a promise and his life was a standing proof that that promise did not fail." Whatever your promise is, let your life be seen to be the working out of the problem which has to be proved, and like any proposition of Euclid, which is stated at the beginning and proved at the end, so may we find a text put at the beginning of our lives as a promise to be fulfilled—and seen at the close, demonstrated, proved, and carried out!

But, dear Friends, let me just conclude by asking those here who have been brought to know their lost and ruined state, to remember this message, "Prove Me now." Thus says my God unto you, O Sinner, "Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." My dear Hearer, are you lost and ruined? Prove God now! He says, "Call unto Me, and I will answer you." Come now, and call unto Him. "Knock," He says, "and it shall be opened unto you." Lift up the knocker of Heaven's door and sound it with all your might! Or, suppose you are too weak to knock—let the knocker fall down of itself. He has said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Go and prove the promise now! Try to prove it. Are you a poor, sick and wounded sinner? You are told that Jesus Christ is able and willing to heal your wounds and extract the poison from your veins. Prove Him, prove Him, poor Soul! You think yourself to be a lost one—therefore I urge you, in Christ's name, to prove this promise—"I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins." Take this to Him and say, "O God, I need faith to trust Your Word! I know You mean what You have said. You have said, this morning, by the mouth of your minister, 'Prove Me now.' Lord, I will prove You now, this very day, even till nightfall if You do not answer me! I will still keep fast by Your promise."

Do this, my Beloved, and you will not be gone long before you will be able to sing—

"I'm forgiven, I'm forgiven!

I'm a miracle of Grace."

Now, do not stand still and say, "God will not hear such an one as I am. My disease is too bad for Him to cure." Go and see, put your hand on the hem of His garment and then if the blood is not staunched, go and tell the world that you have proved God wrong. Go and tell it, if you dare. But oh, you cannot. If you touch the hem of His garment, I know

what you will say—"I have tasted that the Lord is gracious. He said, 'Trust in Me, and I will deliver you.' I have trusted in Him and He has delivered me!" For the promise will always have its fulfillment. "Prove Me now," says God.

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

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