

GOING HOME—A CHRISTMAS SERMON NO. 109

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, DECEMBER 21, 1856
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS

*“Go home to thy friends,
and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”
Mark 5:19*

THE case of the man here referred to is a very extraordinary one—it occupies a place among the memorabilia of Christ’s life, perhaps as high as anything which is recorded by either of the evangelists. This poor wretch being possessed with a legion of evil spirits had been driven to something worse than madness. He fixed his home among the tombs, where he dwelt by night and day, and was the terror of all those who passed by.

The authorities had attempted to curb him. He had been bound with fetters and chains, but in the paroxysms of his madness, he had torn the chains in sunder and broken the fetters in pieces. Attempts had been made to reclaim him, but no man could tame him. He was worse than the wild beasts, for they might be tamed, but his fierce nature would not yield.

He was a misery to himself, for he would run upon the mountains by night and day, crying and howling fearfully, cutting himself with the sharp flints, and torturing his poor body in the most frightful manner. Jesus Christ passed by. He said to the devils, “Come out of him.” The man was healed in a moment. He fell down at Jesus’ feet. He became a rational being—an intelligent man. Yea, what is more, a convert to the Savior.

Out of gratitude to his deliverer, he said, “Lord, I will follow You whithersoever You go. I will be Your constant companion and Your servant. Permit me to be so.” “No,” said Christ, “I esteem your motive, it is one of gratitude to Me, but if you would show your gratitude, ‘go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.’”

Now this teaches us a very important fact, namely this—that true religion does not break in sunder the bonds of family relationship. True religion seldom encroaches upon that sacred, I had almost said divine institution called *home*. It does not separate men from their families and make them aliens to their flesh and blood.

Superstition has done that. An awful superstition, which calls itself Christianity, has sundered men from their kind. But true religion has never done so. Why, if I might be allowed to do such a thing, I would seek out the hermit in his lonely cavern and I would go to him and say, “Friend, if you are what you do profess to be, a true servant of the living God and not a hypocrite, as I guess you are—if you are a true believer in Christ and would show forth what He hath done for thee, upset that pitcher, eat the last piece of your bread, leave this dreary cave, wash your face, untie your hempen girdle, and if you would show your gratitude, go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee.

Can you edify the sere leaves of the forest? Can the beasts learn to adore that God whom your gratitude should strive to honor? Do you hope to convert these rocks and wake the echoes into songs? Nay, go back. Dwell with your friends, reclaim your kinship with men, and unite again with your fellows, for this is Christ’s approved way of showing gratitude.”

And I would go to every monastery and every nunnery, and say to the monks, “Come out brethren, come out! If you are what you say you are, servants of God, go home to thy friends. No more of this absurd discipline. It is not Christ’s rule. You are acting differently from what He would have you. Go home to your friends!”

And to the sisters of mercy we would say, “Be sisters of mercy to your own sisters. Go home to your friends. Take care of your aged parents. Turn your own houses into convents. Do not sit here nursing your pride by a disobedience to Christ’s rule, which says, “Go home to thy friends.” “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

The love of a solitary and ascetic life—which is by some considered to be a divine virtue—is neither more nor less than a disease of the mind. In the ages when there was but little benevolence, and consequently few hands to build lunatic asylums, superstition supplied the lack of charity, and silly men and women were allowed the indulgence of their fancies in secluded haunts or in easy laziness.

Young has most truly said,

*“The first sure symptoms of a mind in health
Are rest of heart and pleasure found at home.”*

Avoid, my friends, above all things, those romantic and absurd conceptions of virtue which are the offspring of superstition and the enemies of righteousness. Be not without natural affection, but love those who are knit to you by ties of nature.

True religion cannot be inconsistent with nature. It can never demand that I should abstain from weeping when my friend is dead. “Jesus wept.” It cannot deny me the privilege of a smile, when providence looks favorably upon me. For once “Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, “Father, I thank thee.” It does not make a man say to his father and mother, “I am no longer your son.” That is not Christianity, but something worse than what beasts would do, which would lead us to be entirely sundered from our fellows, to walk among them as if we had no kinship with them.

To all who think a solitary life must be a life of piety, I would say, “It is the greatest delusion.” To all who think that those must be good people who break the ties of relationship, let us say, “Those are the best who maintain them.” Christianity makes a husband a better husband, it makes a wife a better wife than she was before. It does not free me from my duties as a son. It makes me a better son, and my parents better parents.

Instead of weakening my love, it gives me fresh reason for my affection. And he whom I loved before as my father, I now love as my brother and co-worker in Christ Jesus. And she whom I revered as my mother, I now love as my sister in the covenant of grace, to be mine forever in the state that is to come.

Oh! suppose not any of you, that Christianity was ever meant to interfere with households. It is intended to cement them and to make them households which death itself shall never sever, for it binds them up in the bundle of life with the Lord, their God, and re-unites the several individuals on the other side of the flood.

Now, I will just tell you the reason why I selected my text. I thought within myself, there are a large number of young men who always come to hear me preach. They always crowd the aisles of my chapel and many of them have been converted to God. Now, here is Christmas Day come round again and they are going home to see their friends.

When they get home they will want a Christmas Carol in the evening. I think I will suggest one to them—more especially to such of them as have been lately converted. I will give them a theme for their discourse on Christmas evening. It may not be quite so amusing as, “The Wreck of the Golden Mary,” but it will be quite as interesting to Christian people.

It shall be this—“Go home and tell your friends what the Lord hath done for your souls, and how he hath had compassion on you.” For my part, I wish there were twenty Christmas days in the year. It is seldom that young men can meet with their friends. It is rarely they can all be united as happy families. And though I have no respect to the religious observance of the day, yet I love it as a family institution, as one of England’s brightest days—the great Sabbath of the year—when the plough rests in its furrow,

when the din of business is hushed, when the mechanic and the working man go out to refresh themselves upon the green sward of the glad earth.

If any of you are masters you will pardon me for the digression, when I most respectfully beg you to pay your servants the same wages on Christmas Day as if they were at work. I am sure it will make their houses glad if you will do so. It is unfair for you to make them feast or fast, unless you give them wherewithal to feast and make themselves glad on that day of joy.

But now to come to the subject. We are going home to see our friends and here is the story some of us have to tell. “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” First, *here is what they are to tell*. Then, secondly, *why they are to tell it*. And then thirdly, *how they ought to tell it*.

I. First, then, HERE IS WHAT THEY ARE TO TELL.

It is to be a story of *personal experience*. “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” You are not to repair to your houses and forthwith begin to preach. That you are not commanded to do. You are not to begin to take up doctrinal subjects and expatiate on them, and endeavor to bring persons to your peculiar views and sentiments.

You are not to go home with sundry doctrines you have lately learned and try to teach these. At least you are not commanded to do so. You may, if you please and none shall hinder you. But you are to go home and tell not what you have believed, but what you have *felt*—what you really know to be your own. Not what great things you have read, but what great things the Lord hath *done for you*.

Not alone what you have seen done in the great congregation and how great sinners have turned to God, but what the Lord hath done for *you*. And mark this—there is never a more interesting story than that which a man tells about himself. The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner derives much of its interest because the man who told it was himself the mariner.

He sat down, that man whose finger was skinny, like the finger of death, and began to tell that dismal story of the ship at sea in the great calm, when slimy things did crawl with legs over the shiny sea. The wedding guest sat still to listen, for the old man was himself a story. There is always a great deal of interest excited by a personal narrative.

Virgil, the poet, knew this, and therefore he wisely makes Aeneas tell his own story, and makes him begin it by saying, “In which I also had a great part myself.” So if you would interest your friends, tell them what you felt yourself. Tell them how you were once a lost abandoned sinner, how the Lord met with you, how you bowed your knees, and poured out your soul before God, and how at last you leaped with joy, for you thought you heard Him say within you, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my name’s sake.” Tell your friends a story of your own personal experience.

Note, next, it must be a story of *free grace*. It is not, “Tell thy friends how great things *you* have done yourself,” but “how great things *the Lord* hath done for thee.” The man who always dwells upon free will and the power of the creature, but denies the doctrines of grace, invariably mixes up a great deal of what he has done himself in telling his experience.

But the believer in free grace, who holds the great cardinal truths of the Gospel, ignores this and declares, “I will tell what the Lord has done for me. It is true I must tell how I was first made to pray. But I will tell it thus—

*“Grace taught my soul to pray
Grace made my eyes overflow.”*

“It is true, I must tell in how many troubles and trials God has been with me. But I will tell it thus—

*“’Twas grace which kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.”*

He says nothing about his own doings, or willings, or prayers, or seekings, but ascribes it all to the love and grace of the great God who looks on sinners in love and makes them His children, heirs of everlasting life. Go home, young man, and tell the poor sinner's story. Go home, young woman, and open your diary and give your friends stories of grace. Tell them of the mighty works of God's hand which He has wrought in you from His own free, sovereign, undeserved love. Make it a free grace story around your family fire.

In the next place, this poor man's tale was a *grateful* story. I know it was grateful, because the man said, "I will tell thee how great things the Lord hath done for me." And (not meaning a pun in the least degree) I may observe, that a man who is grateful is always full of the greatness of the mercy which God has shown him. He always thinks that what God has done for him is immensely good and supremely great.

Perhaps when you are telling the story, one of your friends will say, "And what of that?" And your answer will be, "It may not be a great thing to you, but it is to me. You say it is little to repent, but I have not found it so. It is a great and precious thing to be brought to know myself to be a sinner and to confess it—do you say it is a little thing to have found a Savior?"

Look them in the face and say, "If you had found Him too you would not think it little. You think it little I have lost the burden from my back—but if you had suffered with it and felt its weight as I have for many a long year, you would think it no little thing to be emancipated and free, through a sight of the cross."

Tell them it is a great story, and if they cannot see its greatness, shed great tears and tell it to them with great earnestness, and I hope they may be brought to believe that you at least are grateful, if they are not. May God grant that you may tell a grateful story. No story is more worth hearing than a tale of gratitude.

And lastly, upon this point—it must be a tale told by a poor sinner who feels himself *not to have deserved* what he has received. "How He has had *compassion* on thee." It was not a mere act of kindness, but an act of free compassion towards one who was in misery.

Oh, I have heard men tell the story of their conversion and of their spiritual life in such a way that my heart has loathed them and their story too, for they have told of their sins as if they did boast in the greatness of their crime, and they have mentioned the love of God not with a tear of gratitude, not with the simple thanksgiving of the really humble heart, but as if they as much exalted themselves as they exalted God.

Oh, when we tell the story of our own conversion, I would have it done with deep sorrow—remembering what we used to be—and with great joy and gratitude, remembering how little we deserve these things.

I was once preaching upon conversion and salvation, and I felt within myself, as preachers often do, that it was but dry work to tell this story, and a dull, dull tale it was to me, but on a sudden the thought crossed my mind, "Why, you are a poor lost ruined sinner yourself. Tell it, tell it, as you received it. Begin to tell of the grace of God as you trust you feel it yourself."

Why, then, my eyes began to be fountains of tears—those hearers who had nodded their heads began to brighten up and they listened because they were hearing something which the man felt himself, and which they recognized as being true to him, if it was not true to them. Tell your story, my hearers, as lost sinners.

Do not go to your home and walk into your house with a supercilious air, as much as to say, "Here's a saint come home to the poor sinners to tell them a story." But go home like a poor sinner yourself. And when you go in, your mother remembers what you used to be—you need not tell her there is a change—she will notice it, if it is only one day you are with her.

And perhaps she will say, "John, what is this change that is in you?" And if she is a pious mother, you will begin to tell her the story, and I know, man though you are, you will not blush when I say it,

she will put her arms round your neck and kiss you as she never did before—for you are her twice-born son, hers from whom she shall never part, even though death itself shall divide you for a brief moment.

“Go home, then, and tell your friends what great things the Lord hath done for you, and how He hath had compassion on you.”

II. But now, in the second place—Why SHOULD WE TELL THIS STORY?

For I hear many of my congregation say, “Sir, I could relate that story to any one sooner than I could to my own friends. I could come to your vestry, and tell you something of what I have tasted and handled of the Word of God, but I could not tell my father, nor my mother, nor my brethren, nor my sisters.”

Come, then. I will try and argue with you to induce you to do so, that I may send you home this Christmas Day to be missionaries in the localities to which you belong and to be real preachers, though you are not so by name. Dear friends, do tell this story when you go home.

First, for your *Master's sake*. Oh! I know you love Him. I am sure you do, if you have proof that He loved you. You can never think of Gethsemane and of its bloody sweat, of Gabbatha and of the mangled back of Christ, flayed by the whip—you can never think of Calvary and His pierced hands and feet without loving Him.

And it is a strong argument when I say to you, for His dear sake who loved you so much, go home and tell it. What! do you think we can have so much done for us and yet not tell it? Our children, if anything should be done for them, do not stay many minutes before they are telling all the company, “such a one has given me such a present, and bestowed on me such and such a favor.”

And should the children of God be backward in declaring how they were saved when their feet made haste to hell, and how redeeming mercy snatched them as brands from the burning? You love Jesus, young man! I put it to you, then, will you refuse to tell the tale of His love to you? Shall your lips be dumb when His honor is concerned? Will you not, wherever you go, tell of the God who loved you and died for you?

This poor man, we are told, “departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him, and all men did marvel.” So with you. If Christ has done much for you, you cannot help it—you must tell it.

My esteemed friend, Mr. Oneken, a minister in Germany, told us last Monday evening that as soon as he was converted himself, the first impulse of his new-born soul was to do good to others. And where should he do that good? Well, he thought he would go to Germany. It was his own native land and he thought the command was, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them.”

Well, there was not a single Baptist in all Germany, nor any with whom he could sympathize, for the Lutherans had swerved from the faith of Luther and gone aside from the truth of God. But he went there and preached, and he has now seventy or eighty churches established on the continent. What made him do it? Nothing but love for his Master, who had done so much for him, could have forced him to go and tell his kinsmen the marvelous tale of divine goodness.

But in the next place, are your friends pious? Then go home and tell them, in order *to make their hearts glad*. I received last night a short epistle written with a trembling hand by one who is past the natural age of man, living in the county of Essex. His son, under God, had been converted by hearing the Word preached, and the good man could not help writing to the minister, thanking *him* and blessing most of all, his God, that his son had been regenerated.

“Sir,” he begins, “an old rebel writes to thank you, and above all to thank his God, that his dear son has been converted.” I shall treasure up that epistle. It goes on to say, “Go on! and the Lord bless you.”

And there was another case I heard some time ago, where a young woman went home to her parents, and when her mother saw her, she said, “There! if the minister had made me a present of all London, I should not have thought so much of it as I do of this—to think that you have really become a changed character and are living in the fear of God.”

Oh! if you want to make your mother's heart leap within her and to make your father glad—if you would make that sister happy who sent you so many letters, which sometimes you read against a lamp-post, with your pipe in your mouth—go home and tell your mother that her wishes are all accomplished, that her prayers are heard, that you will no longer chaff her about her Sunday school class, and no longer laugh at her because she loves the Lord, but that you will go with her to the house of God, for you love God, and you have said, “Your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God, for I have a hope that your heaven shall be my heaven forever.”

Oh! what a happy thing it would be if some here who had gone astray, should thus go home! It was my privilege a little while ago to preach for a noble institution for the reception of women who had led abandoned lives—and before I preached the sermon, I prayed to God to bless it, and in the printed sermon you will notice that at the end of it there is an account of two persons who were blessed by that sermon and restored.

Now, let me tell you a story of what once happened to Mr. Vanderkist, a city missionary, who toils all night long to do good in that great work. There had been a drunken broil in the street. He stepped between the men to part them and said something to a woman who stood there concerning how dreadful a thing it was that men should thus be intemperate.

She walked with him a little way, and he with her, and she began to tell him such a tale of woe and sin too—how she had been lured away from her parents' home in Somersetshire and had been brought up here to her soul's eternal hurt. He took her home with him and taught her the fear and love of Christ. And what was the first thing she did, when she returned to the paths of godliness and found Christ to be the sinner's Savior?

She said, “Now, I must go home to my friends.” Her friends were written to—they came to meet her at the station at Bristol and you can hardly conceive what a happy meeting it was. The father and mother had lost their daughter—they had never heard from her. And there she was, brought back by the agency of this institution [The London Female Dormitory] and restored to the bosom of her family.

Ah! is there such an one be here! I know not, among such a multitude there may be such an one. Woman! have you strayed from your family? Have you left them long? “Go home to thy friends,” I beseech you, ere your father totters to his grave and ere your mother's grey hairs sleep on the snow-white pillow of her coffin.

Go back, I beseech you! Tell her you are penitent. Tell her that God has met with you—that the young minister said, “Go back to thy friends.” And if so, I shall not blush to have said these things, though you may think I ought not to have mentioned them. For if I may but win one such soul, I will bless God to all eternity. “Go home to thy friends. Go home and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.”

Cannot you imagine the scene, when the poor demoniac mentioned in my text went home? He had been a raving madman. And when he came and knocked at the door, don't you think you see his friends calling to one another in affright, “Oh! there he is again,” and the mother running upstairs and locking all the doors, because her son had come back who was raving mad? And the little ones crying because they knew what he had been before—how he cut himself with stones because he was possessed with devils.

And can you picture their joy when the man said, “Mother! Jesus Christ has healed me. Let me in. I am no lunatic now!” And when the father opened the door, he said, “Father! I am not what I was—all the evil spirits are gone. I shall live in the tombs no longer. I want to tell you how the glorious man who wrought my deliverance accomplished the miracle—how He said to the devils, ‘Get ye hence,’ and they ran down a steep place into the sea, and I am come home healed and saved.”

Oh! if such a one, possessed with sin, were here this morning, and would go home to his friends to tell them of his release, methinks the scene would be somewhat similar.

Once more, dear friends. I hear one of you say. “Ah! sir, would to God I could go home to pious friends! But when I go home, I go into the worst of places. For my home is among those who never

knew God themselves, and consequently never prayed for me and never taught me anything concerning heaven.” Well, young man, go home to thy friends. If they are ever so bad, they are your friends.

I sometimes meet with young men wishing to join the church, who say, when I ask them about their father, “Oh, sir, I am parted from my father.” Then I say, “Young man, you may just go and see your father before I have anything to do with you. If you are at ill-will with your father and mother, I will not receive you into the church. If they are ever so bad, they are still *your parents*.”

Go home to them and tell them, not to make them glad, for they will very likely be angry with you, but tell them *for their soul’s salvation*. I hope, when you are telling the story of what God did for you, that they will be led by the Spirit to desire the same mercy themselves.

But I will give you a piece of advice. Do not tell this story to your ungodly friends when they are all together, for they will laugh at you. Take them one by one, when you can get them alone, and begin to tell it to them and they will hear you seriously.

There was once a very pious lady who kept a lodging-house for young men. All the young men were very gay and giddy, and she wanted to say something to them concerning religion. She introduced the subject and it was passed off immediately with a laugh. She thought within herself, “I have made a mistake.”

The next morning, after breakfast, when they were all leaving, she said to one of them, “Sir, I should like to speak with you a moment or two,” and taking him aside into another room she talked with him. The next morning she took another, and the next morning another, and it pleased God to bless her simple statement, when it was given individually.

But without doubt, if she had spoken to them all together, they would have backed each other up in laughing her to scorn. Reprove a man alone. A verse may hit him while a sermon flies. You may be the means of bringing a man to Christ who has often heard the Word and only laughed at it, but who cannot resist a gentle admonition.

In one of the states of America, there was an infidel who was a great despiser of God, a hater of the Sabbath, and all religious institutions. What to do with him, the ministers did not know. They met together and prayed for him. But among the rest, one Elder B _____ resolved to spend a long time in prayer for the man.

After that, he got on horseback and rode down to the man’s forge, for he was a blacksmith. He left his horse outside and said, “Neighbor, I am under very great concern about your soul’s salvation. I tell you I pray day and night for your soul’s salvation.” He left him and rode home on his horse. The man went inside to his house after a minute or two, and said to one of his faithful friends, “Here’s a new argument. Here’s Elder B _____ been down here, he did not dispute and never said a word to me except this, ‘I say, I am under great concern about your soul. I cannot bear you should be lost.’ Oh! that fellow,” he said, “I cannot answer him.”

And the tears began to roll down his cheeks. He went to his wife and said, “I can’t make this out. I never cared about my soul but here’s an Elder that has no connection with me, but I have always laughed at him, and he has come five miles this morning, on horseback just to tell me he is under concern about my salvation.”

After a little while he thought it was time he should be under concern about his salvation too. He went in, shut the door, began to pray, and the next day he was at the Elder’s house telling him that he too was under concern about his salvation and asking him to tell him what he must do to be saved.

Oh! that the everlasting God might make use of some of those now present in the same way, that they might be induced to—

***“Tell to others round
What a dear Savior they have found;
To point to His redeeming blood,
And say, Behold the way to God!”***

III. I shall not detain you much longer, but there is a third point, upon which we must be very brief. HOW IS THIS STORY TO BE TOLD?

First, *tell it truthfully*. Do not tell more than you know. Do not tell John Bunyan's experience, when you ought to tell your own. Do not tell your mother you have felt what only Rutherford felt. Tell her no more than the truth. Tell your experience truthfully, for mayhap one single fly in the pot of ointment will spoil it and one statement you may make which is not true may ruin it all. Tell the story truthfully.

In the next place, *tell it very humbly*. I have said that before. Do not intrude yourselves upon those who are older and know more, but tell your story humbly. Not as a preacher, not *ex-cathedra* but as a friend and as a son.

Next, *tell it very earnestly*. Let them see you mean it. Do not talk about religion flippantly. You will do no good if you do. Do not make puns on texts. Do not quote Scripture by way of joke—if you do, you may talk till you are dumb—you will do no good, if you in the least degree give them occasion to laugh by laughing at holy things yourself. Tell it very earnestly.

And then, *tell it very devoutly*. Do not try to tell your tale to man till you have told it first to God. When you are at home on Christmas Day, let no one see your face till God has seen it. Be up in the morning. Wrestle with God. And if your friends are not converted, *wrestle with God for them*—and then you will find it easy work to *wrestle with them for God*.

Seek, if you can, to get them one by one and tell them the story. Do not be afraid—only think of the good you may possibly do. Remember, he that saves a soul from death has covered a multitude of sins and he shall have stars in his crown forever and ever. Seek to be under God—Saviors in your family, to be the means of leading your own beloved brethren and sisters to seek and to find the Lord Jesus Christ, and then one day, when you shall meet in Paradise, it will be a joy and blessedness to think that you are there and that your friends are there too, whom God will have made you the instrument of saving.

Let your reliance in the Holy Spirit be entire and honest. Trust not yourself, but fear not to trust Him. He can give you words. He can apply those words to their heart and so enable you to “minister grace to the hearers.”

To close up, by a short, and I think, a pleasant turning of the text, to suggest another meaning to it. Soon, dear friends, very soon with some of us, the Master will say, “Go home to thy friends.” You know where the home is. It is up above the stars.

*“Where our best friends, our kindred dwell,
Where God our Saviour reigns.”*

Yon grey-headed man has buried all his friends. He has said, “I shall go to them but they will not return to me.” Soon his Master will say, “You have had enough tarrying here in this vale of tears—go home to thy friends!” Oh, happy hour! Oh! blessed moment when that shall be the word—“Go home to thy friends!”

And when we go home to our friends in Paradise, what shall we do? Why, first we will repair to that blessed seat where Jesus sits, take off our crown and cast it at His feet, and crown Him Lord of all. And when we have done that, what shall be our next employ? Why, we will tell the blessed ones in heaven what the Lord has done for us and how He has had compassion on us.

And shall such a tale be told in heaven? Shall that be the Christmas Carol of the angels? Yes, it shall be. It has been published there before—blush not to tell it yet again—for Jesus has told it before. “When he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.”

And you, poor sheep, when you shall be gathered in, will you not tell how your Shepherd sought you and how He found you? Will you not sit in the grassy meads of heaven and tell the story of your own redemption? Will you not talk with your brethren and your sisters, and tell them how God loved you and has brought you there?

Perhaps, you say, “It will be a very short story.” Ah! it would be if you could write now. A little book might be the whole of your biography. But up there when your memory shall be enlarged, when your passion shall be purified, and your understanding clear, you will find that what was but a tract on earth, will be a huge tome in heaven.

You will tell a long story, there, of God’s sustaining, restraining, constraining grace, and I think that when you pause to let another tell his tale, and then another, and then another, you will at last, when you have been in heaven a thousand years, break out and exclaim, “O saints, I have something else to say.” Again they will tell their tales, and again you will interrupt them with, “Oh, beloved, I have thought of another case of God’s delivering mercy.”

And so you will go on, giving them themes for songs, finding them the material for the warp and woof of heavenly sonnets. “Go home,” He will soon say, “go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

Wait awhile. Tarry His leisure and you shall soon be gathered to the land of the hereafter, to the home of the blessed, where endless felicity shall be your portion. God grant a blessing for His name’s sake!

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.