

TERRIBLE CONVICTIONS AND GENTLE DRAWINGS

NO. 313

A SERMON
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 AT EXETER HALL, STRAND

*“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.
 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me:
 my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.”
 Psalm 32:3-4*

DAVID here describes a very common experience among convicted sinners. He was subjected to extreme terrors and pangs of conscience. These terrors were continual, they scared him at night with visions, they terrified him all day with dark and gloomy forebodings. “Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me.” His pain was so extreme that when he resorted to prayer, he could scarcely utter an articulate word. There were groans that could not be uttered within his spirit, and hence he calls his prayer roaring—a “roaring all the day long.”

Wherever he was, his spirit seemed to be always sighing, sending a full torrent of melancholy groans upwards towards God, a “roaring all the day long.” So far did this groaning proceed, that at last his bodily frame began to show evidences of it. He grew old, and that not merely in the lines of the countenance and the falling in of the cheeks, but his very bones seemed as if they partook of the suffering. He became like an old man before his time.

We have heard of some who through severe trouble have had their hair blanched in a single night. But here was a man who did not show merely externally, but even internally, the heavy pressure of grief on account of sin. His bones grew old and the sap of his life, the animal spirits, were all dried up, his “moisture was turned into the drought of summer.”

So intimate is the connection between the body and the soul, that when the soul suffers extremely, the body must be called to endure its part of grief. Verily, in this case it was but simple justice, for David had sinned with his body and with his soul too. By fornication he had defiled his members, he had looked out from his eyes with lustful desires and had committed iniquity with his body, and now the frame which had become the instrument of unrighteousness becomes a vehicle of punishment, and his body bears its share of misery—“my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.”

We gather from what David says in this psalm, and indeed in all these seven penitential psalms, that his convictions on account of his sin with Bathsheba and his subsequent murder of Uriah, were of the deepest and most poignant character, and that the terrors he experienced were indescribable, filling his soul with horror and dismay.

Now this morning, I propose to deal with this case, so common among those who are under conviction of sin. There are many, who, *when the Lord is bringing them to Himself, are alarmed by reason of the hardness of the stroke with which He smites them, and the sternness of the sentence which He pronounces against them.* After having dealt very solemnly with that character, I shall then turn and spend a few moments *in trying to comfort another class of persons, who, strange to say, are without comfort because they do not have these terrors, and are unhappy because they have never experienced this unhappiness.* Strange perversity of human nature, that when God sends the terrors we doubt, and when He withholds them we doubt none the less. May God the Spirit bless my discourse doubly to these two different conditions of men and women.

I. First then, let me address myself with lovingkindness to those who are now THE SUBJECTS OF GOD’S REBUKE AND THE TERRORS OF GOD’S LAW.

To you I would speak on this wise, first, detect the causes of your terror. In the second place tell you God's design in subjecting you thereto, and then point you to the great remedy.

1. As for *the causes of your terror* they are many, and perhaps in your case the cause may be so peculiar that the wit of man may not be able to discover it. Nevertheless, the remedy which I have to propound at the end will most assuredly be adapted to your case, for it is a remedy which reaches all diseases, and is a panacea for all ills.

You tell me you are sorely troubled by reason of conviction, and that your convictions of sin are attended by the most terrible and gloomy thoughts, I am not at a loss to tell you why it is. I shall this morning borrow my divisions from quaint old Thomas Fuller, whose book happened to be thrown in my way this week by providence. As I cannot say better things than he said, I shall borrow much of his description of the causes of the terrors of conviction.

First, *those wounds must be deep which are given by so strong a hand as that of God*. Remember sinner, it is *God* who is dealing with you, when you lay dead in your sins He looked on you, and now He has begun not only to look, but to smite, He is now wounding you with the design of afterwards making you whole, He is killing you that He may afterwards make you spiritually alive.

You have now entered the lists with no other than the Almighty God, do you wonder then, that when He smites, His blows fell you to the ground? Are you astonished that when He wounds, His wounds are deep and hard to heal? Besides, remember it is an angry God that you have to deal with, one who has had patience with you in your sins these thirty, forty, or fifty years, and now He has come forth Himself to compel you to throw down the weapons of your rebellion, and to take you captive by His justice, that He may afterwards set you free by His grace.

Is it any marvel then, that when an angry God—a God who has restrained His anger these many years—comes out in battle against you, you find it hard to resist Him, and that His blows bruise you and break your bones, and make your spirit feel as if it must verily die, crushed beneath the mighty hand of a cruel one? Be not astonished at all your terrors, God on Sinai, when He came to give the law, was terrible, but God on Sinai, when He comes to bring the law into the conscience, and to strike it home, must be more terrible far.

When God did but stretch out His hand with the two tablets of stone, Moses did exceedingly fear and quake, but when He throws those tablets of stone upon you, and makes you feel the weight of that law which you have broken, it is but little marvel that your spirit is bruised and mangled, and dashed into a thousand slivers.

Again, it is no wonder that you are sorely troubled when you remember *the place where God has wounded you*. He has not wounded you in your hand, or in your head, or in your foot, He is striking at your conscience—the eye of your soul, He wounds you in your heart—in your inmost soul. Every wound that God gives to the convicted man is a wound in the very heart—in the very vitals, He cuts into the core of the liver, and makes His darts cut through the gall, and parches your inward parts with agony.

It is not now a disease that has laid hold merely on your skin or flesh, but it is something which makes the life-floods boil with hot anguish. He has now shot His arrows into your inmost spirit, thrust His fingers into your eyes and put out their light.

Oh! ye need not wonder that your pains are fearful, when God thus smites you on the tenderest part of a conscience which He has made tender by His grace. He may well smart that has salt rubbed into his wounds. *You* have been lashed with the ten-thronged whip of the law till your heart is all bare and bleeding, and now God is scattering, as it were, the salt and making all those wounds to tingle and smart. Oh! ye might wonder, if ye did not feel, when God is thus casting bitterness into the fountain of your life.

Besides these, there is a third cause for your pain, namely, that *Satan is now busy upon you*. He sees that God is wounding you, and he does not wish that those wounds shall heal, he therefore thrusts in his fangs and tears open the flesh, and tries if he cannot pour his poison into that very flesh which God has been wounding with the sword.

“Now,” saith he, “that God is against him will I be against him too. God is driving him to sadness, I will drive him farther still, and urge him to despair. God has brought him to the precipice, to the edge of his self-righteousness, and bid him look down and see the yawning gulf. Now,” says Satan, “one push more and over he will go.”

He has come forth therefore, with all his strength, hoping that the hour of your conviction shall also be the hour of your condemnation. He will tempt you, perhaps as he did Job, till you cry, “My soul chooseth strangling rather than life.” He will seek to bring you low, like Jeremiah, until you are ready to wish you had never been born, rather than that you should suffer like this.

You can well understand, if a man had been wounded, that it were hard work for the most skillful surgeon to heal him if some vile wretch should tear away the liniments and rend open the wounds as fast as they began to close. Oh! pray against Satan! Cry aloud to your God to deliver you from this fiend, for he is the cause of much of your distress, and if you were rid of him, it may be that your wound would soon heal, and you would find peace.

But remember, the remedy that I shall have to propound to you is a remedy against devils. It is the fiend’s confusion as well as sin’s destruction. Let them come against you as they may. The remedy I shall have to propound can heal the wounds of Satan, and the tearing of his fangs, as well as those sorrows of soul which God has brought upon you.

You may discover a yet further reason why you are so sorely wounded when you consider the *terrible nature of that weapon with which God has wounded you*. He has not made a little gash with some slender instrument, but if I understand your case aright, He has brought against you *the sword* of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Its Word condemns you, its threatenings strike you like barbed arrows.

You turn to the law as it is here revealed, and it is altogether on a smoke against you. You turn to the promises and even they wound you, because you feel you have no right to them. You look at the most precious passages, but they do not assuage your grief, but they rather increase it because you cannot realize them and lay hold upon them for yourself.

Now this is God using His Word against you, and you know what a weapon that is—“the sword of the Spirit, which is quick and powerful, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

They are cut deep that are wounded by the Word of God. If it were my words which had brought you into this fear, you might soon get rid of it, but these are God’s words. Were it a father’s curse, it might be hard to give you comfort, but it is God’s curse that has gone out against you—the curse of the God who made you. He Himself has told you that the sinner shall not stand in His sight, and that He hates the workers of iniquity! He has Himself brought home to your conscience some of those awful passages—“God is angry with the wicked every day,” “He will by no means clear the guilty,” “Our God is a consuming fire,” “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”

With such weapons as these, with red-hot shot fired against you with all the power of the Spirit, it remains no longer a wonder that your soul should be sharply racked, and your very bones should wax old through your roaring all the day long.

Furthermore, there is another cause for this deep disease of conviction, namely, *the foolishness of the patient*. Physicians will tell you that they can heal one man vastly more quickly than another, even though the disease be precisely the same and the same remedies be used, for there are some men who help the physician by the quietude of their spirits, by the ease and resignation of their minds. Their heart is right, and this gives “health to the navel, and marrow to the bones.”

But other men are fretful, disturbed, vexed, anxious, questioning this and questioning that, and then the remedies themselves cease to have their proper effect. It is even so with you, you are a foolish patient, you will not do that which would cure you, but you do that which aggravates your woe, you know that if you would cast yourselves upon Christ Jesus you would have peace of conscience at once, but instead of that you are meddling with doctrines too high for you, trying to pry into mysteries which

the angels have not known, and so you turn your dizzy brain and thus help to make your heart yet more singularly sad.

You know that you are trying still to work out a righteousness of your own, and this is making your wounds stinking and corrupt. You know too, that you are looking more to your faith than you are to the object of your faith, you are looking more to what you feel than to what Christ felt, you spend more time in looking at your convictions than you do at Christ's vicarious sacrifice upon the cross. You are a foolish patient, you are doing that which aggravates your complaint.

Oh that you were wiser, and these terrors and these pangs might the sooner be over, you would not tarry so long in the prison if you would but use the means of escape, instead of seeking to dash your head against its strong walls—walls that will not move with all your ravings, but which will only break, and bruise, and wound you the more.

You seek to file your fetters, but you rivet them; you seek to unbind them yourself, and you thrust them the deeper into your flesh; you grasp the hammer, and here is the fetter about your wrist; you think to snap it, but you send the iron through the flesh and make it bleed; you make yourself worse by all your attempts to make yourself better, so that much of your sorrowful conviction is due to your own absurdity, your own ignorance and folly.

And once more, I must give you another reason. There is no wonder that you are under great and terrible pain when under conviction, for it is a disease in which *nothing can ever help you but that one remedy*. All the joys of nature will never give you relief.

I have heard of some vain man who once wore the gown of a clergyman, who was visited by a poor creature under distress of mind, in the days of Whitefield, he said to the penitent, "You have been among the Methodists." "I know I have," said he. "Then don't go among those fellows, they have made you mad." "But what am I to do to get rid of the distress of mind I now feel?" "Attend the theater," said he, "Go off to balls, take to gaming and the like, and in that way you will soon dissipate your woe."

But as he that poureth vinegar upon niter, so is he that singeth songs to a sad heart, it is taking away a man's garment to make him warm, it is heaping snow upon his head to dissolve the frostbite, sending him back to the draff and dung that he may stay his hunger therewith, thrusting him into the kennel that he may get rid of the stench that offends his nostrils.

Nay, but if these be the true woundings of God, sinful pleasures will make you worse instead of better, and even the usual comforts of life will lose all power to console you. The words of the tenderest wife, the most loving husband, the mercies of providence, the blessings of home—all these will be of no avail to you to cure this disease. There is one remedy for it, but none of these will so much as touch it.

Quaint old Fuller uses language to this effect, when Adam had sinned, he became suddenly plunged in misery, the birds sang as sweetly, the flowers bloomed as brightly, and the air was as balmy, and Eden quite as blissful, but Adam was in misery, he had un-paradised paradise. God had not said a word against him, and yet he went and hid himself under the trees of the garden to find a shelter there. There was nothing in the whole garden that could give Adam a moment's delight, because he was under a sense of sin. And so will it be with you. If you could be put in paradise, you would not be happier.

Now that God has convinced you of sin, there is only one cure for you, and that one cure you must have, for you may ramble the world round and you will never find another. You may try your best with all the pleasures and mercies of this life, but you would be in torment, even though you could be taken to heaven, unless this one remedy should appease your aching heart.

2. I have thus, I think, given you sufficient reasons for the great poignancy of your grief, but now secondly, *what are God's designs in thus plunging you deeply in the mire?* He does not deal so with all His people, some He brings in a very gentle way to Himself. Why then, does He deal harshly with you? The answers to this question are these, *there are some questions best unanswered*, there are some dealings of God about which we have no right to ask a question. If He draws you to heaven, though it were through hell itself, you ought to be content. So long as you are but saved, however fearful the process, you ought not to murmur. But I may give you some reasons after all.

In the first place, it is *because you were such a stony-hearted sinner*—so dead, so careless—that nothing else ever would have awakened you but this trumpet. It would have been of no use to bring out the Gospel with its dulcet notes, it would have been of little service for David to play on his harp before you. You needed to be aroused, and therefore it is that God has hurled His thunderbolts at you one after another, and has been pleased to make heaven and earth shake before you that you might be made to tremble. You were so desperately set on mischief, so stolid, so indifferent, that if saved, God must save you in such a way, or else not at all.

And then again, the Lord knows that *there is that in your heart which would take you back to your old sins, and so He is making them bitter to you*, He is burning you, that you may be like the burnt child that dreads the fire, He is letting you see the disease in its full climax, that you may from henceforth avoid the company in which that disease was found, He has taught you the full evil of your heart, the full obnoxiousness of sin, in order that from this day forth you may become a more careful walker, and may the more zealously hate every false way.

Besides, it may possibly happen that He designs this out of *love to your soul, to make you the more happy afterwards*. He is filling your mouth with wormwood and breaking your teeth with gravel stone, that you may have a richer appreciation of the luscious flavor of the wine of pardon when He pours it into your heart. It is making you feed on ashes—the serpent’s meat—that when you come to eat children’s meat—the bread of heaven—your joy may be multiplied sevenfold.

I am one of those poor souls who for five years led a life of misery, and was almost driven to distraction, but I can heartily say that one day of pardoned sin was a sufficient recompense for the whole five years of conviction. I have to bless God for every terror that ever seared me by night, and for every foreboding that alarmed me by day. It has made me happier ever since, for now if there be a trouble weighing upon my soul, I thank God it is not such a trouble as that which bowed me to the very earth, and made me creep like a very beast upon the ground by reason of heavy distress and affliction.

I know I never can again suffer what I have suffered, I never can, except I be sent to hell, know more of agony than I have known, and now, that ease, that joy and peace in believing, that “no condemnation” which belongs to me as a child of God, is made doubly sweet and inexpressibly precious, by the recollection of my past days of sorrow and grief.

Blessed be Thou, O God, forever, who by those black days, like a dreary winter, hath made these summer days all the fairer and the sweeter. The shore is never so welcome as when you mount it with the foot of a shipwrecked mariner just escaped from the sea, food never so sweet as when you sit at the table after days of hunger, water is never so refreshing as when you arrive at the end of a parched desert, and have known what it is to thirst.

And yet one other reason let me give you, and I need not keep you longer on this point. Possibly, God is bringing you thus, my dear friends, because *He means to make great use of you*. We are all God’s weapons against the enemy. All His saints are used as instruments in the Holy War, but there are some whom God uses in the thickest part of the battle. They are His swords whom He wields in His hand, and strikes innumerable blows with them. These He anneals again, and again, and again. He is annealing you. He is making you meet to be a mighty one in His Israel, by and by.

Oh! how sweetly you will be able to talk to others like yourself, when you once get comfort, and oh! how much you will love Him when He once puts away your sin! Will you not? Oh! I think I see you the first day after your sins are forgiven. Why you will be wanting to preach! I should not wonder if you will be going out into the streets, or hurrying to your old companions, and saying to them, “My sins are washed away.” Why there will be nothing too hard for you.

The Lord gets His best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction. These are His Highlanders who carry everything before them. They know the rivers of sin, they know the glens of grief, and now their sins are all washed away, they know the heights of self-consecration, and of pure devotion, they can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth them, the Christ who has forgiven them.

Do you not think I have just driven the nail home here? Do you not feel in your spirit, that if Jesus would forgive you, you would do everything for Him? Oh! I know if I should give out that hymn—

*“Then loudest of the crowd I’ll sing,
While heaven’s resounding mansions ring
With shouts of sovereign grace,”*

you would say, “Ah, that I will, if ever He forgives such a wretch as I am, and takes such a poor worm as me to His bosom, nothing shall be too hard for me. I will give Him all in this life, and I will give an eternity of praise in the life to come.”

3. But now I am impatient to come to the word of comfort which I have for you upon *the great remedy*. Sinner! distressed on account of sin, and bowed with terror down, there is a way of salvation for you, a way open and accessible—accessible now. You may *now* have all your griefs assuaged, and all your sorrows may flee away. Hear you then the remedy, and hear it as from the lip of God, and take care that you avail yourself of it now, for the longer you tarry, the harder will it be to avail yourself of it, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

Do you understand me? Trust Christ and you are saved, trust Him now and all your sins are gone, there is not one left. Past, present, and to come, all gone. “Am I to feel nothing?” No, not as a preparation for Christ, trust Jesus and you are saved. “Are there no good works required of me?” None, none, good works shall follow afterwards. The remedy is a simple one, not a compound mixture of your things and Christ, it is just this—the blood of Jesus Christ.

There is Jesus on His cross. His hands are bleeding, His heart is bursting, His limbs are tortured, the powers of His soul are full of agony. Those sufferings were offered to God in the place of our sufferings, and “Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” Believe on Him *now*.

“But I may not,” says one. You may, nay, not only you *may*, but you are condemned if you do not believe Him *now*. “I cannot,” saith one. Cannot believe your Lord? Is He a liar? Can you not believe His power to save? The Son of God in agony, and yet no power to save!! “I cannot think He shed His blood for me,” saith such an one. You are *commanded* to trust Him. You shall read your title clear in Him afterwards. Your business now is simply with Him, not with your interest in Him. That shall be known afterwards. Trust Him now and you are saved.

Faith is not believing that Christ died for me. If Christ died for every man, then every Arminian, saved or unsaved, has the true faith, for he believes Christ died for every man. We as Calvinists, do not believe this, but we believe faith consists in trusting Christ, and whosoever trusts Christ shall know the effect of that trust, that Jesus died for him, and he is saved. Trust Jesus now, just as you are, fall flat on your face before Him. Away with that last dirty rag of yours—that last good work, away with that last filthiness—that last good thought, your good thought, and your good works are rags and filthiness. Come just as you are, naked, lost, ruined, helpless, poor.

If you are so bad that I cannot describe you, and you cannot describe yourself, yet come. Mercy’s free, mercy’s free. I am never afraid of preaching grace too free, or a Christ too willing to save. You do want a Mediator to come to God with, but you want none to come to Christ with. You do need some preparation if you are going to the Father, you want none if you are coming to the Son. Come as you are, and God Himself must be untrue, His throne must have foundations apart from righteousness, Christ must be false, and this Bible a lie, before one soul that trusts Jesus can ever perish.

There is the remedy, by the power of the Holy Spirit, avail yourself of it. Now God help you and you are fully saved.

II. I shall now want your patient attention for another five or ten minutes, while I take upon myself what was a double duty, because I was afraid to without the last part of the sermon, the first part might do hurt. In the last part of the sermon I have to deal with some WHO HAVE NEVER FELT THESE TERRORS AT ALL, AND WHO STRANGE TO SAY IT, WISH THEY HAD FELT THEM.

I suppose I may have conversed now with somewhere verging upon two thousand souls who have been brought to know the Lord under my instrumentality, and I have very often noticed that a considerable proportion of these, and of the best members of our church too, were brought to know the Lord not by legal terrors, but by gentler means.

Sitting one day last week, I saw some twenty-three, and I should think that there might be as many as twelve out of the twenty-three whose convictions of sin were not distinctly marked with the terrors of the law. An excellent young woman comes before me—"What was the first thought that set you really seeking the Savior?" "Sir, it was Christ's lovely character that first made me long to be His disciple. I saw how kind, how good, how disinterested, how self-sacrificing He was, and that made me feel how different I was to what He was. I thought, 'Oh! I am not like Jesus!' and that sent me up to my chamber and I began to pray."

I often have cases like this—I preach a terrible sermon upon the law, and I find sinners get comfort under it, I preach another sermon upon election, and I find poor sinners get awakened under it. God blesses the Word in the very opposite manner to which I thought it would be blessed, and He brings very, very many, to know their state by nature by things which we should have thought would rather have comforted than alarmed them.

"The first religious impression I ever had," said another, "that set me seeking the Savior, was this, a young companion of mine fell into sin, and I knew that I was likely to do the same if I was not kept by some one stronger than myself, I therefore sought the Lord, not on account of past sin at first, but because I was afraid of some great future sin. God visited me, and I then felt conviction of sin and was brought to Christ."

Singularly enough too I have met with at least a score of persons who found Christ and then mourned their sins more afterwards than they did before. Their convictions have been more terrible after they have known their interest in Christ than they were at first. They have seen the evil after they have escaped from it, they had been plucked out of the miry clay, and their feet set on a rock, and then afterwards they have seen more fully the depth of that horrible pit out of which they have been snatched.

So that it is not true that all who are saved suffer these convictions and terrors, there are a considerable number who are drawn by the cords of love and the bands of a man. There are some who, like Lydia, have their hearts opened, not by the crowbar of conviction, but by the pick-lock of divine grace. Sweetly drawn, almost silently enchanted by the loveliness of Jesus, they say, "Draw me, and I will run after thee."

And now you ask me the question—"Why has God brought me to Himself in this gentle manner?" Again I say—there are some questions better unanswered than answered, God knows best the reason why He does not give you these terrors, leave that question with Him. But I may tell you an anecdote.

There was a man once who had never felt these terrors, and he thought within himself—"I never can believe I am a Christian unless I do." So he prayed to God that he might feel them, and he did feel them, and what do you think is his testimony? He says, "Never, never do that, for the result was fearful in the extreme." If he had but known what he was asking for, he would not have asked for anything so foolish.

I knew a Christian man once who prayed for trouble. He was afraid he was not a Christian, because he had no trouble, but when the trouble came, he soon discovered how foolish he was to be asking for a thing which God in mercy had kept back from him. O be not foolish enough to sigh for misery. Thank God that you go to heaven along the walls of salvation, bless the Master that He does not call you in the cloudy and dark day, but brings you gently to Himself, and be content, I pray you, to be called by the music of the voice of love.

May it not happen that Jesus Christ has thus brought you for another reason? He knew that you were very weak, and your mind was very frail, and if you had felt these terrors, you might have gone mad, and you might have been in a lunatic asylum now instead, if you had passed through them. It is true His grace could have kept you, but God always tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and He will not treat the weak ones as He does the strong ones.

And I think again, it may be that if God had given you these feelings you would have grown self-righteous. You would have trusted in them, so He has not given you them. You have not got them to build on, thank God for that, for now you *must* build on Christ. You say—“If I had felt these things, I think I should have been saved.” Yes, then you would have trusted in your feelings, the Lord knew that, and therefore, He has not given you them. He has given you nothing at all, therefore you must now rest on Christ and nowhere else but there. Oh! do so now.

It may be, again, that He has kept you there because He means to make you useful—useful to some who like yourself have come gradually to Him, for you can say to them when you find them in distress, “Why Jesus Christ brought me gently, and therefore be of good cheer, He is bringing you, too.”

I always like to see in my church some of all sorts. Now there is a brother I could point out this morning who has never known in his life, and I think never will know, about the plague of his own heart, to such an extent as some of us have learned. He has never gone through fire and through water, but on the contrary is a loving-hearted spirit, a man who spends and is spent in his Master’s service, he knows more of the heights of communion than some of us.

For my part—though I do not want to change places with anybody—I think I could trust my Master if I had his experience, as well as I can trust Him with my own. For what has experience to do with it after all? We do not rest on experiences, and frames, and doings—

***“Our hopes are fixed on nothing less,
Than Jesu’s blood and righteousness.”***

Now to you then, in conclusion, I preach the same remedy. Poor soul, you long to be troubled ay! but I’d rather have you long to get relief. Jesus Christ hangs on the cross, and if you will trust Him, you shall be saved. Just as you are, as I said to my other friend just now—just as you are, take Christ as He is.

Now never think about getting ready for Christ, He does not want anything of yours. You need not trim and dress yourselves to come to Christ. Even your frames and feelings are not the wedding garment. Come naked. “But sir, I am so careless”—come careless, then. “But I am so hard-hearted”—come hard-hearted, then. “But I am so thoughtless”—come thoughtless, then, and trust Christ now. If you trust Him, you will not trust a deceiver. You will not have put your soul into the hands of one who will let it fall and perish.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,” whether convicted by terror or by love, for “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not” feel what he may, and be in terror though he may, “shall be damned.”

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.