

THE HOLY CHILD, JESUS

NO. 545

A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“That signs and wonders may be done by the name of Your holy child, Jesus.”
Acts 4:30.

THE opposition of the world is often a very great blessing to the Church. If it is met by holy boldness, it is sure to yield a glorious triumph for the servants of God. Sanctified by the Holy Spirit, out of the eater comes forth honey, for it becomes an incentive to greater zeal. Now that the enemy is determined to conquer, the Church will be resolved to hold its own. Pressure from without drives the members of the Church together, and so promotes holy love, and when love and zeal come together, then there is such a blessed unity of action, and such a power in every effort that great success must follow! Woe unto the world when it persecutes the Church, for it kicks with its naked foot against the pricks; it stirs up a nest of hornets about its own ears; yes, it provokes the Lion of the tribe of Judah to spring upon His enemies!

Our text is a portion of an apostolic song which celebrated the release of Peter and John and the confusion of the priests and scribes. Every persecution shall yield songs of victory for the people of God! There is one sweet result which always flows from the opposition of the world, namely, that it draws true disciples nearer to their Master. You will perceive that they sing concerning the birth, and death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the Lord is the theme of their grateful song! The title by which they salute Him, “Your holy child, Jesus,” is most appropriate to their case. The history of the Church is Christ’s life written out in length. Our Lord enters the world a holy child—when the Church begins her history, she is as a holy child, too, and therefore rejoices in the childhood of her gracious Lord. How precious is it to see Jesus as made in all points like His people and how rapturous for His people to see their Redeemer’s features drawn by the pencil of fellowship in themselves. Trial is often sanctified to this noble end. Let the world oppress the Church; let the members of that Church be thoroughly weaned from any other ground of comfort; let the Lord Jesus be their only rock and refuge, and they will soon perceive analogies in the history of Christ beautifully explaining their own—analogies which they never would have discovered except in the glare of the furnace. In the chapter before us, the apostles are thrown back upon the person of Jesus for comfort, and they revel in the thought of His being a child, because they discover in this His likeness to the Church, which, in its infancy, the enemy sought to destroy, even as Herod sought to slay the newborn King of the Jews!

Brothers and sisters, whenever we endure adversities, or tribulations, or distresses, it is ours to turn to Christ, and consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession; for we may rest assured that the black finger of our distresses will often point out beauties in the person of Immanuel up to now unseen. There is a certain spot from which alone each glorious trait in the Savior’s character can be seen—and many of our most painful positions are ordained for us in order that we may, from their vantage ground, behold the Lamb of God!

Our subject this morning may, perhaps, be suitable to the experience of some—may the Lord make it useful to all! Taking the text as we find it, we shall, first of all, meditate upon *the humanity of Christ as here declared*. Secondly, we shall *view it as here described*—“A holy child.” And thirdly, we shall then *behold it in the glory which surrounds it*—signs and wonders are worked by the name of the holy child, Jesus.

I. First, then, dear friends, may our hearts be enlightened to see, as the apostles did, the beauty and excellence of THE REAL HUMANITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

While we always contend that Christ is God, very God of very God, let us never lose the firm conviction He is most certainly and truly a man. He is not a God humanized, nor yet a human being deified; but, as to His Godhead, pure Godhead, equal and co-eternal with the Father; as to His manhood, perfect

manhood—made in all respects like unto the rest of mankind, sin alone excepted. His humanity was real, *for He was born*. He lay hidden in the virgin's womb, and, in due time, was born into a world of suffering. The gate by which we enter upon the first life, He also passed through; He was not created, nor transformed, but His humanity was begotten and born. As He was born, *so in the circumstances of His birth*, He is completely human; He is as weak and feeble as any other baby. He is not even royal, but human. Those who were born in marble halls of old were wrapped in purple garments, and were thought by the vulgar to be a superior race. But this baby is wrapped in swaddling clothes and has a manger for His cradle—that the true humanity of His being may come out. More than a man, He is a Prince of the House of David. He knows the woes of a peasant's child. As He grows up, the very *growth* shows how completely human He is. He does not spring into full manhood at once, but He grows in stature, and in favor both with God and man. When He reaches man's estate, He gets the common stamp of manhood upon His brow. "In the *sweat* of your brow shall you eat bread" is the common heritage of us all, and He receives no better! The carpenter's shop must witness to the toils of a Savior, and when He becomes the preacher and the prophet, still we read such significant words as these—"Jesus, being weary, sat thus on the well." We find Him needing to betake Himself to rest in *sleep*, He slumbers at the stern of the vessel when it is tossed in the midst of the tempest. Brothers and sisters, if *sorrow* is the mark of real manhood, and "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward," certainly Jesus Christ has the true evidence of being a man! If to hunger and to thirst are signs that He was no shadow, and His manhood no fiction, you have these. If to associate with His fellow men, and eat and drink as they did, will be proof to your mind that He was none other than a man—you see Him sitting at a feast one day—at another time, He graces a marriage supper, and on another occasion, He is hungry, and "has not where to lay His head." Since the day when the prince of the power of the air obtained dominion in this world, men are *tempted* and He, though He is born pure and holy, must not be delivered from temptation—

***"The desert His temptation knew
His conflict and His victory, too."***

The garden marked the bloody sweat, as it started from every pore, while He endured the agony of conflict with the prince of this world. If, since we have fallen and must endure temptation, we have need to *pray*, so had He—

***"Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of His prayer."***

Strong crying and tears go up to heaven mingled with His pleas and entreaties! What clearer proof could we have of His being man of the substance of His mother, and man like ourselves, than this, that He was heard in that He feared? There appeared unto Him an angel strengthening Him; to whom but *men* are angels ministering spirits? Beloved, we have never discovered the weakness of our manhood more than when God has deserted us. When the spiritual consolations which comforted us have been withdrawn, and the light of God's face has been hidden from us, then, we have said, "I am a worm and no man," and out of the dust and ashes of human weakness have we cried unto the most high God. Let, "Eloi! Eloi! lama Sabachthani" assure you that Christ has felt the same! Follow man wherever you will, and you find the footprints of the Son of Mary. Go after man where you will, into scenes of sorrow of every hue, and you shall find traces of Jesus' pilgrimage there. You shall find in whatever struggle and conflict of which man is capable, the Captain of our salvation has had a share! Leave out sin, and Christ is the perfect picture of humanity. Simple as the truth of God is, and lying as it does at the very basis of our Christianity, yet, let us not despise it, but try to get a personal grip of it if we can. Jesus, my mediator, is a man—"Immanuel, God with us." He is a child born. He is better than that, for "Unto *us* a child is born, unto *us* a son is given." He is to us a brother; He is bone of our bone today. As a man leaves his father and mother, and cleaves unto his wife and they, two, become one flesh, so has He left the glory of His Father's house and become one flesh with His people. Flesh and bone, and blood and heart, that may ache and suffer, and be broken and be bruised, yes, and may die—such is Jesus; for herein He completes the picture. As the whole human race must yield its neck to the great iron-crowned monarch, so must Christ Himself say, "Into Your hands I commend My spirit, Father," and He, too, must yield up the ghost. Oh, Christian, see your nearness to Him and be glad this morning! Oh, sinner, see His nearness to you! Come to Him with confidence, for in body and soul He is completely human!

Having thus, insisted upon the humanity of Christ, let us gather a few reflections from it. There are a thousand things which it indicates, but, as the garden is too full of flowers for us to bring them all, we have gathered but a handful.

As the first meditation, let us marvel at His *condescension*. It is the greatest miracle that was ever heard or read of, that, “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” Cyprian well said, “I do not wonder at any miracle, but I do marvel at this, which is a miracle among miracles, that God should become man.” That God should make a creature out of nothing is certainly a marvelous manifestation of power, but that God should enter into that creature, and should take it into intimate union with His own nature—this is the strangest of all acts of condescending love! Indeed, so marvelous is it, that in all the heathen mythologies—though imagination has there played strange freaks—in their theology, we do find instances of the gods appearing in the likeness of men—yet never do we find anything like the hypostatical union of the two natures in the person of Christ. Human wisdom, in its most happy moments, has never risen to anything like the thought of Deity espousing manhood that man might be redeemed! To you and to me, the marvel lies in the motive which prompted the incarnation. What could it have been that brought Immanuel to such a stoop as this? What unrivalled, indescribable, unutterable love was this that made Him leave His Father’s glory, the adoration of angels, and all the hallowed joy of heaven, that He might be made a man like ourselves, to suffer, to bleed, to die? “He was seen of angels,” says the apostle, and this was a great wonder, for the angels had worshipped at His throne! But their created eyes could not bear to look upon the brightness of His person—they veiled their faces with their wings when they cried, “Holy! Holy! Holy!” And yet, angels saw the Son of God lying in a manger! They saw the Lord of all wrestling with a fallen spirit in the wilderness! They saw the Prince of Peace hanging upon the tree on Calvary! “Seen of angels” was one of the wonders concerning the incarnation of Christ; but that He should be seen of *men*? No, that He should be the associate of the worst of men, that He should be called the friend of publicans and sinners, so perfectly incarnating Himself and condescending so low that He comes to the very lowest state of humanity—all this, my brothers and sisters, is condescension concerning which words fail me! A prince who puts aside his crown, and clothes himself with beggar’s rags to investigate the miseries of his country, is but a worm condescending to his fellow worm. An angel that should lay aside his beauty, and become decrepit and lame, and walk the streets in pain and poverty to bless the race of man were nothing, for this were but a creature humbling himself to creatures a little lower than himself; but, here is the *Creator* taking the creature into union with Himself! The Immortal becoming *mortal*, the Infinite an *infant*, the Omnipotent taking weakness, even human weakness, into union with His own person! We may truly say of Jesus that He was weak as the dust, and yet, as mighty as the Eternal God. He was subject to suffering, and yet, God over all blessed forever. O the depth of the love of Jesus!

Let us reflect upon another theme. *See the fitness of Christ for His work!* He is perfect man—He could not be a priest if He were not. But now, “He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, seeing He was tempted in all points like as we are.” being not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters, He can compassionate the ignorant and those who are out of the way. O brothers and sisters, if He were not man, He could not have been our substitute; man sinned, and man must pay the penalty—He must be *perfect* man to make atonement! If He were not man, His righteousness would not have availed us, for while we need a divine righteousness to cover the infiniteness of God’s demands, we need a righteousness which is *human*, for it is that which the law requires. O Soul, if you are in sadness and sickness today, let your arms embrace the man, Christ Jesus. Feel, in the fact that He is your brother, how suitable is such a Savior to your poverty, your weakness, and your sin!

Let us think, too, of another thought. Inasmuch as Christ is man, think of *His near relationship and union to His people*. He is no stranger of whom we speak—He is our brother—no, more than that, He has become our Head. Not a head of gold, and feet of clay, or limbs of baser metal; but, as we are, so was He, that as He is, so might we be. It is manhood which is at the head of the Church, as it is manhood which constitutes the members. Union to Jesus is, I think, the sweetest doctrine in revelation. There are other doctrines which possess a more transcendent grandeur, but the doctrine of union is the quintessence of all delights. What is heaven, but union to Christ realized? And what shall be the foretaste of heaven, but union to Christ believed? As you see Him, *then*, completely—such as you are—know, Christian, how near, how dear, how intimately one with Him you are, and be glad this day!

Let me give you another flower. *See the glory of manhood now restored!* Man was but a little lower than the angels, and had dominion over the fowl of the air, and over the fish of the sea. That royalty he lost; the crown was taken from his head by the hand of sin, and the beauty of the image of God was dashed by his rebellion. But all this is given back to us! We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; and, at this day, all things are put under Him, waiting, as He does, and expecting the time, when all His enemies shall be beneath His feet, and the last enemy, Death, shall be destroyed by man—by the very man whom he boasted that he had destroyed! It is our nature, brothers and sisters, Jesus in our manhood, who is now Lord of Providence; it is our nature which has hanging at its belt the keys of heaven, and earth, and hell; it is our nature which sits upon the throne of God at this very day! No angel ever sat upon God's throne, but a man has done it, and is doing it now! Of no angel was it ever said, "You shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords, they who dwell in the wilderness shall bow before you, and your enemies shall lick the dust." But this *is* said of a man! It is the *man* who shall judge the world in righteousness; a man who shall distribute crowns of reward—a man who shall denounce, "Depart, you cursed"; a man, the thunder of whose words shall make hell shrink with fright! Oh, how glorious is renovated manhood! What an honor it is, my brothers and sisters, to be man, not of the fallen first Adam, but man made in the image in the second Adam! Let us, with all our weaknesses, and infirmities, and imperfections, yet bless and praise God, who made us what we are by His divine grace, for man, in the person of Christ, is second only to God—no, is in such union with God, that he cannot be nearer to Him!

When we think of the true and proper manhood of Christ, ought we not to rejoice that *a blessed channel is opened by which God's mercy can come to us?* "How can God reach man?" was once the question; but now, brothers and sisters, there is another question—"How can God refuse to bless those men who are in Christ?" The everlasting Father must bless His only-begotten Son, and, in blessing Him, He has blessed a *man*, and that man, having all the elect in His loins, they are necessarily all blessed in Him. Look upon the person of Christ as that of a representative individual. Whatever Christ is, all His elect are, just as whatever Adam was, all men who were in him became. If Adam fell, all manhood fell; if Christ stands and is honored and glorified, then all who are in Christ—that is the goodly fellowship of His elect—are all blessed in Him! Now, it is utterly impossible but that God should bless Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is forever one with God, and His manhood is also One with Godhead. As an old writer observes, "The nearest union that we know of is the union between the humanity and the divinity in the person of Christ. That of the three persons in the Trinity may rather be called a unity than a *union*—but this is the closest union we know of—the union between humanity and Deity in Christ." So complete is it that you cannot think of Christ aright as a man apart from God, nor as God apart from man. The very idea of Christ has in it the two natures, and it is a clear impossibility that the Godhead should not impart of its blessedness to the manhood, and that manhood, being thus blessed, every elect soul is necessarily blessed, also. O see what a channel is thus opened; a channel through which the stream cannot but flow; a golden pipe through which divine grace cannot but come! The laws of nature might be reversed, but not the laws of God's nature, and it is a law of God's nature that, in the person of Christ, the Deity must bless the manhood, and that manhood, being blessed, it is another law that elect manhood must be blessed, since that elect manhood is forever indissolubly bound up with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. See what a deep and broad river is here opened for us, and what a fullness there is in that river—for all the fullness of the Deity dwells in Christ, and the fullness of that Deity, thus, flows to man.

See again, beloved, *what a door of access is thus opened between us and God!* I am a man; Christ is a man. I come to the man Christ Jesus—No, I have not even to do that—I am *in* the man Christ! If I am a believer, I am a portion of Him. Well, being a portion of the man Christ, and God being united with Him, I am very near to God. I have such nearness of access, then, to God, that whatever may be my desires and my prayers, I have no need to climb to heaven nor to descend into the depth in order to obtain them, for God's ear must be near to me inasmuch as God is in Christ, and, my soul being in Christ, I am very, very near to God. Christ's body is the veil that hangs before the majesty of God, that veil was torn; and whoever, by a living faith, knows how to come through the torn body of the man, Christ, comes at once into the presence of God! Such communion, such sacred commerce—such blessed interchanges between mankind and God could never have taken place in any other plan. That ladder which Jacob saw was but a faint and dreamy picture of this. This is no ladder, but the access is such as though God, who

was at the top of Jacob's ladder, had come down to Jacob as he lay sleeping there. There is no ladder needed now—the person of Christ brings God to man; and brings man to God in closer contact than the ladder can ever picture! Brothers and sisters let us come boldly unto the throne of the heavenly grace, to obtain grace to help in every time of need!

Another thing I cannot leave out is this—beloved, do see it, do see it—*how safe we are!* Our soul's estate was once put in the hands of Adam—he was a fallible man—how unsafe our salvation was then! The salvation of every believer now is in the hand of a man; it is the man Christ Jesus! And what a man! Can He fail? Can He sin? Can He fall? O no, beloved, for the Deity is in intimate union with the manhood, and the man Christ Jesus, since He can never sin, can never fall, and is, therefore, a sure foundation for the perpetual salvation of all the elect. When the angels were all in heaven, before the fall of Satan, I think they could never be perfectly happy because they knew that if they sinned they would perish, and this surely would mar their bliss—because there was a fear of their losing all their glory. But, beloved, our salvation does not rest with ourselves, we may have all the joy of perfect security because it rests in the hands of one who cannot by any possibility sin, one who cannot err, cannot fail, but who stands fast forever, from everlasting to everlasting, God! See then, the comfort and security of God's people! But, indeed, there are so many sheaves in this field of incarnation that I cannot possibly unbind them all for you. You must come and pluck an ear or two for yourselves, and rub them in your hands on this Sunday that your hunger may be relieved.

Beloved, do you not see that *here is your adoption?* You become sons of God because Christ becomes a Son of man. Do you not perceive that *here is your acceptance?* The man, Christ, is accepted, and you, since He stands for you, are accepted in Him. No, there is not a mercy in the covenant; there is not a single stream of blessing which flows to the believer, that does not spring from the fact that Christ is to be called the “holy child Jesus,” being most certainly and properly a man. Thus much, then, upon the first point.

II. Now, let us VIEW THE HUMANITY AS IT IS HERE DESCRIBED. The words teach it to us—*holy child.*

Christ's humanity was *perfectly holy*. Upon this doctrine, you are well established; but you may well wonder that Jesus was always holy. He is *conceived* of a woman, and yet, no sort of sin comes from His birth. “That holy Thing which is born of you shall be called the Son of God.” He is *educated* in the midst of sinful persons. It could not be otherwise, for there were none on earth who could be called good—all having become unprofitable—and although residing in the midst of sinners, in Him is no taint or trace of sin! He *goes into the world*, and as a physician must mingle with the sick, so He is found in the very worst of society. The harlot may speak to Him, and from the publican He turns not away, yet, from none of these did He receive any corrupt influence. He is *tempted*, and it is usually supposed that a man can scarcely be tempted; even should he overcome the temptation, without receiving some injury to his innocence. But the prince of this world came and had nothing in Christ; his fiery darts fell upon the nature of Christ as upon water, and were quenched at once. Satan was but as one who should whip the sea; he left no mark upon the perfect holiness of Christ. *Imputation of sin* would be the nearest approach to making our Lord a sinner; but let it always be remembered that, though Jehovah made Him to be sin for us, yet, He knew no sin. The world's sin was put upon the shoulders of Christ, and yet, He had no sin for all that; the imputation was accomplished in such a manner that it did not in any sense or in any degree derogate from His title to perfect holiness. I have read sermons upon the imputation of sin to Christ which have left painful impressions upon my mind, because I remember to have met with the expression that Christ was the greatest sinner who ever lived, because He stood in the place of millions of sinners! Now, it is true that Jesus took the sinner's place, but yet, He never *was a sinner*, nor ever can in any sense be thought of as unholy. The great Redeemer stood perfect, pure, spotless; and even in the conflict, when all the powers of hell were let loose against Him, and when *God Himself had withdrawn*—that withdrawal of God from us would have hardened our hearts—but it did not harden His heart. The taking away of God's grace from us is the ruin of our graces; but He had a wellspring of divine grace within Himself, and His purity lived on when God had withdrawn from Him. From the first dawn of His humanity in the womb to the time when He is laid in the new tomb, He is “holy.”

The next word is one that requires most attention. Why is Christ called a “holy child”? We can understand His being called a child while He was so, but why a “holy child” now that He is ascended up

on high? Why, dear friends, because the character of Christ is more aptly pictured by that of a child than that of a man! If you conceive of a perfectly holy child, you have, then, before you a representation of Christ. There is that in childhood, in holy childhood, which you cannot find even in holy manhood! You note in childhood its *simplicity*—the absence of all cunning. We dare not in manhood usually wear our heart upon our sleeve as children do; we have lost the trustfulness of our youth, and are upon our guard in society. We have learned by very painful experience to suspect others, and we walk among our fellow men often with our heart locked up with many locks, thinking that, when thieves are abroad, good housekeepers must not leave the door open. We have to practice the wisdom of serpents, as well as the harmlessness of doves.

But a child is perfectly guileless; it prattles out its little heart; it has no caution or reserve; it cannot scheme, for it cannot go round about with the skillful words of the politician; it knows not how to spin the web of sophistry; it is plain, transparent, and you see through it. Now, such was Christ! Not foolish, for there is much difference between simplicity and folly. He was never foolish; they who mistook Him for such and sought to entrap Him, soon discovered that the child was a wise child. Still, He is always a child—He tells His heart out everywhere. He eats, He drinks like other men. They call Him a drunk and a wine-bibber; does He, then, from prudential motives, cease to eat and drink as other men? O no! He is quite a child. In everything that He does, there is an artless simplicity. You see through Him, and you can trust Him, because there is trustfulness about His whole nature; He knows what is in man, yet, He does not act with suspicion towards men, but always with simplicity.

In a child we expect to see much *humbleness*. There is a humbleness of association. There is a little child yonder—it is a king's daughter, and here is another little child belonging to a gypsy woman. Leave the two in a room, and see if they will not be at play together in five minutes. If it had been the queen and the gypsy woman, they would have sat as far apart as possible. O no! They do not associate together at all! Distinctions of rank, and all that kind of thing, they studiously maintain, and therefore, remain isolated. But the two children will be down on the floor together, and if there happens to be some little heap of dust or a few pieces of broken crock, the princess will find in them almost as much mirth as the beggar woman's child! Here is humbleness of mind. So with Christ—He is King of kings and Prince of the House of David—yet, He is always with the poor and needy, and sympathizes with them just as heartily as though He were altogether such as they were. You do not find little children sitting down and planning how they shall win crowns—in what way they shall obtain popularity or applause. O no! They are quite satisfied to do their father's will, and live on his smile. It is so with Christ. What a childlike act that was—when they would have made Him a king, He went and hid Himself! And how childlike does He seem when He rides upon the colt, the foal of an ass, through the streets of Jerusalem, and must have the mother ass there, too, lest either of the two creatures should be distressed. He is the friend of the brute creation as well as of man in general—so thoughtful and so kind, so simple, so humble in all that He does!

We picture a holy child as being all *obedient*. You have but to say to it, "Do this," and it does it. It asks no questions. Was it not so with Jesus His whole life? "My meat and My drink is to do the will of Him who sent Me." "Know you not that I must be about My Father's business?"

So, again, we look in holy children for a *forgiving temper*. We know that sometimes the blood comes up in the little face, and a little angry quarrel ensues, but it is soon over, and with their arms about each other's neck, and many a loving kiss, it is soon made up again by the little ones. Well, with Jesus this characteristic of childhood is carried out to the fullest extent, for His latest Words are, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Ah, holy child! No fire from heaven do You call, like John. No denunciations come from Your lips against sinners. "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more," says He to the woman taken in adultery. He is the child all through. Scripture calls Him the man-child and what if we call Him the great child-man? He was a child when He had become a man! He never had childish things to put away in the sense in which the apostle speaks of it, for as to all the folly, and the littleness, and giddiness of youth, Christ knew not these. He knew everything that is beautiful, and lovely, and just, in the virgin innocence of a pure and holy child—such as children would have been, if their parents had not fallen. all this you see in the person of Christ Jesus!

Beloved, I think there is something very sweet in this picture of Christ's humanity, because we are none of us afraid to approach a child. Men who are childlike men—we are never afraid of. You know

certain people in the world—you could not tell your trouble to them; they have a haughty manner; they look down upon you; you feel that you can never reach their hearts. There are certain others with an open and honest face, and you instinctively feel, “There, I can tell that man anything; I know I can. If I were in any kind of distress, or trouble, I would go to him—I know he would help me if he could.” Well, that is because such a man has a degree of childlikeness about him. Now, in the person of Christ there is all this carried out to the fullest degree! Come, then, and tell Jesus everything. Whatever your trouble or difficulty may be, stand not back through shame or fear. Will you fear Immanuel, or dread the Lamb of God? Will you be afraid of a holy child? No, rather come, and like Simeon, take Him in your arms, and acknowledge Him as your consolation and your trust. I would I could get a hold, this morning, on those timid ones who always say, “I am afraid of Jesus.” Why, dear friends, how can you talk so? You do Him wrong. You know Him not, or you would not thus speak! This is the unkindest cut of all, to think that He is unwilling to forgive. Dying for you, living as a holy child for you—O can it be, can it be possible that He should be hard to forgive and receive you?

Thinking of a holy child while I looked through this verse, I turned to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s story of Eva and little Topsy. She gives a graphic picture there of a holy child, indeed. There is the law in the person of Miss Ophelia—she whips the child, but the more she whips her, the worse she is; she gets no further than, “I’s so wicked, I can’t help it; I’s so wicked.” That is all the law can do; it can only make a man feel he is “so wicked,” that he cannot help it, and he goes on sinning. But what a picture is that when St. Clair draws the curtain and sees the two little children sitting with their cheeks together. Eva says, “What does make you so bad, Topsy? Why won’t you try and be good? Don’t you love *anybody*, Topsy?” “Don’t know nothing ‘bout love; I loves candy and sich, that’s all,” said Topsy. “But you love your father and mother?” “Never had none, you know; I telled you that, Miss Eva.” “Oh, I know,” said Eva sadly, “but hadn’t you any brother, or sister, or aunt, or—” “No, none of ‘em—never had nothing nor nobody.” “But, Topsy, if you’d only try to be good, you might.” “Couldn’t never be nothin’ but a Nigger, if I was ever so good,” said Topsy. “O Topsy, poor child, *I love you!*” said Eva, with a sudden burst of feeling. And laying her little thin white hand on Topsy’s shoulder, she said, “I love you because you haven’t had any father, or mother, or friends—because you’ve been a poor, abused child! I love you, and I want you to be good. I am very unwell, Topsy, and I think I shan’t live a great while; and it really grieves me to have you be so naughty. I wish you would try to be good for my sake. It’s only a little while I shall be with you.” The round, keen eyes of the black child were overcast with tears—large, bright drops rolled heavily down, one by one, and fell on the little white hand. Yes, in that moment, a ray of real belief, a ray of heavenly love had penetrated the darkness of her heathen soul! She laid her head down between her knees, and wept and sobbed—while the beautiful child, bending over her, looked like the picture of some bright angel stooping to reclaim a sinner.

Now, something like this, only in a far nobler style, Jesus Christ has behaved towards us. He sees us lost and ruined, wicked—hopelessly wicked—and He comes as a holy child and sits down by our ruined humanity. And He says, “I love you—I love you because you are so lost, so ruined, so hopelessly ruined—because I know the dreadful doom into which you will fall. There is nothing in you that makes Me loves you, but I do love you; I cannot bear to see you die like this. I would sooner die than you should remain a sinner. I would sooner die and bear My Father’s wrath for you, than that you should be a sinner and disobedient to Him.” The holy child sits down by you, this morning, and weeps for you. Will you grieve Immanuel? Will you break the heart of Jesus, your soul’s lover? Oh, will you open His wounds afresh and crucify Him again? If you would not, then trust Him now—fly to Him—give yourselves up to Him! He waits to be gracious to you; His loving arms are wide open to receive you. “Whoever will,” He says, “let him come, and he who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.” Such is the coming of the “holy child Jesus.”

III. To conclude—it seems that the name of this holy child is to work great wonders. Only for one second, let us turn aside, and behold THE GLORY OF HIS HUMANITY.

Although Christ was a man, all the powers of nature knew their Master and crouched at His feet. He could command the sea or the boisterous wind—diseases, the myrmidons of death, and Death their prince, all owned allegiance to Him who is immortality and life. After His resurrection, He endowed His disciples with His own power and more than His own power—“For greater works than these shall you do, because I go unto My Father.” The name of Jesus was uttered, uttered by feeble men—and devils

fled, dumb mouths began to sing, lame men leaped like a hart, and the blind began to see—no, in several instances the grave, itself, yielded up its prey when the name of Jesus sounded through its hollow vaults! The age of miracles passed off, it was well it should. Miracles are but the cradle in which the man-child, the Church, must be rocked. When the Church became strong enough to stand alone, she left her swaddling bands behind her; but the name of Jesus has not less power today because no risen dead, no opened eyes follow in our train. At this hour, dead souls hear the voice of God and live! At this moment, spiritual eyesight is restored—hearts that were stone are turned to flesh—and tongues that were ready enough at cursing begin to sing! The miracles of the spirit world are infinitely greater than those of the natural. It is little to turn a stone into bread, but it is much to turn a stony *heart* into flesh! It is comparatively little to open a blind eye, but it is divine, indeed, to enlighten the understanding, and illuminate the dark heart! The name of Jesus is just as mighty in this Tabernacle, today, as it was on the lips of Paul upon Mars Hill, or when he stood in his own hired house in Rome! Do not say that you entertain a doubt concerning it; look around and see the proofs! O brothers and sisters, you and I have been the willing trophies of the power of that great name in this house, or in the Surrey Music Hall and elsewhere, where that name was proclaimed! We received a broken heart—we who once had hearts hard as adamant! There, the tears of repentance began to flow; there, the griefs, the heavy glooms of our spirit, were scattered by the Sun of Righteousness. If we have been made to walk in holiness, this is one of the signs and wonders of His name; if drunkenness and lust have been shaken off, this, too, is to His praise! If the demoniac, the man who was full of devilry, has been clothed and made to sit in his right mind at the feet of Jesus, this is another of the signs and wonders in this place—not only in this great chamber, but below stairs in our classes, and in our Sunday schools, too, signs and wonders are worked by the name of the holy child, Jesus! And in other places of worship in London, wherever Christ is lifted up—wherever His sacrifice is made the prominent theme—the dry bones in the valley come together—the Spirit breathes upon them, and they live as an exceeding great army! We defy the whole world to show anything comparable to the power of Jesus' name! There is more magic in it than ever was in Moses' rod; it is more mighty even than his voice, though he divided the Red Sea and brought water out of the rock!

Brothers and sisters let us spread His name; let it be always on our tongues! Let us each, in our proper sphere, declare His glory, and we shall see His kingdom come, and His will shall be done on earth, even as it is in heaven! I wonder whether there is anyone here who will be a sign and wonder of the love of Christ! Do you wish to be? Ah, then, I hope you are! Do you wish to be? Then the door is open! “Whoever believes in Him is not condemned.” One look at Jesus and you are saved—a trustful casting of yourself on Him, and you are delivered! God enable you to do this now, and you shall see in the change which is worked within you, an internal evidence of the majesty of Christ's person which shall never fail you! You shall be established by that which you feel within, in so sure and certain a manner, that the arguments of infidelity or deism shall never be able to shake you off the rock. May God grant this for His holy name's sake! Amen.

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