

## David's Dying Song

A Sermon

(No. 19)

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“Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things* and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.”—2 Samuel 23:5.

THESE be the last words of David; so we read at the commencement of the chapter. Many have been the precious sentences which have fallen from his inspired lips; seraphic has been the music which has dropped from his fingers when they flew along the strings of his harp; but now that sweet voice is to be hushed in death, and now the son of Jesse is to sleep with his fathers. Surely it were well to press around his bed, to hear the dying monarch's last testimony; yea, we can conceive that angels themselves would for an instant check their rapid flight, that they might visit the chamber of the dying mighty one, and listen to his last death song. It is always blessed to hear the words of departing saints. How many choice thoughts have we gained in the bedchamber of the righteous, beloved? I remember one sweet idea, which I once won from a death-bed. A dying man desired to have one of the Psalms read to him, and the 17th being chosen, he stopped at the 6th verse, “Incline thine ear unto me and hear my speech,” and faintly whispering, said, “Ah, Lord, I cannot speak, my voice fails me; incline thine ear, put it against my mouth, that thou mayest hear me.” None but a weak and dying man, whose life was ebbing fast, could have conceived such a thought. It is well to hear saints' words when they are near heaven—when they stand upon the banks of Jordan. But here is a special case, for these be the last words of *David*. They are something more than human utterances; for we are told that the Spirit of the Lord spake by him, and his word was in his tongue. These were his closing accents. Ah! methinks, lisping these words he rose from earth to join the chorus of the skies. He commenced the sentence upon earth, and he finished it in heaven. He began, “Although my house *be* not so with God;” and as he winged his flight to heaven, he still sang, “yet hast thou made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure:” and now before the throne he constantly hymns the same strain—“yet hast thou made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.” I hope, my friends, there are many of us who can join in this verse this morning, and who hope to close our earthly pilgrimage with this upon our tongue.

We shall notice first, that the Psalmist had *sorrow in his house*—“Although my house *be* not so with God.” Secondly, he had *confidence in the covenant*—“yet he hath made with

me an everlasting covenant." And thirdly, he had *satisfaction in his heart*, for he says—"this is all my salvation, and all my desire.

I. The Psalmist says he had *sorrow in his house*—"Although my house be not so with God." What man is there of all our race, who, if he had to write his history, would not need to use a great many "althoughs"? If you read the biography of any man, as recorded in the Sacred Word, you will always find a "but," or an "although," before you have finished. Naaman was a mighty man of valour, and a great man with his master, *but* he was a leper. There is always a "but" in every condition, a crook in every lot, some dark tint upon the marble pillar, some cloud in the summer sky, some discord in the music, some alloy in the gold. So David, though a man who had been raised from the sheepfold, a mighty warrior, a conqueror of giants, a king over a great nation, yet, had his "althoughs;" and the "although" which he had, was one in his own house. Those are the worst troubles which we have in our own household. We love not an evil beast abroad, but we hate the lion most when it prowls upon our own estates, or croucheth on the floor of our dwelling. The greatest trouble with the thorn is when it lieth in our bed, and we feel it in our pillow. Civil war is always the fiercest—those are foes indeed who are of our own household. I think, perhaps David intended, when he said "Although my house be not so with God," to speak partly of his *affairs*. If any man else had looked at David's affairs—the government of his country—he would have said, "David's government is the mirror of excellence." His house was so rightly ordered, that few of his subjects could murmur at him; but David recollected that a greater and keener eye than that of man rested on him; and he says, speaking of his empire and his house—for you know the word "house" in Scripture often means our business, our affairs, our transactions, ("Set thine house in order, for thou must die, and not live,")—he says, although before man my house may be well swept, and garnished, yet it is not so with God as I can desire. Oh, beloved, there are some of us who can walk before our fellow-men conscious of innocence; we dare defy the gaze of our fellow-mortals; we can say, "Lord! thou knowest I am not wicked;" we are blameless before this perverse generation: we walk amongst them as lights in the world, and God has helped us, so that we are clean from the great transgression; we are not afraid of a criticism of our character, we are not fearful of being inspected by the eyes of all men, for we feel that through God's grace we have been kept from committing ourselves; he has kept us, and the evil one toucheth us not. But with all this conscious innocence—with all that dignity with which we stand before our fellows—when we go into God's sight, how changed we are! Ah, then, my friends, we say not, "Lord! thou knowest I am not wicked;" but rather, we fall prostrate, and cry, "Unclean, unclean, unclean;" and as the leper cools his heated brow with the water running in the cool sequestered brook, so do we have our body in Siloam's stream, and strive to wash ourselves clean in the water and blood from Christ's riven side. We feel that our house is "not so with God ;" though in the person of Jesus we are free from sin, and white as angels are: yet when we stand before

God, in our own persons, we are obliged to confess, that honest as we may be, upright as we have been, just and holy before men, yet our house is “not so with God.”

But I imagine that the principal meaning of these words of David refers to his family—*his children*. David had many trials in his children. It has often been the lot of good men to have great troubles from their sons and daughters. True, we know some households that are the very image of peace and happiness, where the father and mother bend the knee together in family prayer, and they look upon an offspring, numerous or not, as it may be, but most of them devoting their hearts to God. I know a household which stands like a green oasis in the desert of this world. There be sons who preach God's gospel, and daughters who are growing up to fear the Lord, and to love him. Such a household is indeed a pleasant halting-place for a weary soul in its pilgrimage through this wilderness of life. Oh! happy is that family whom God hath blessed. But there are other houses where you will find the children are the trials of the parents. “Although my house be not so with God,” may many an anxious father say; and ye pious mothers might lift your streaming eyes to heaven, and say, “Although my house be not so with God.” That first-born son of yours, who was your pride, has now turned out your disgrace. Oh! how have the arrows of his ingratitude pierced into your soul, and how do you keenly feel at this present moment, that sooner would you have buried him in his infancy; sooner might he never have seen the light, and perished in the birth, than that he should live to have acted as he has done, to be the misery of your existence, and the sorrow of your life. O sons who are ungodly, unruly, gay, and profligate, surely ye do not know the tears of pious mothers, or ye would stop your sin. Methinks, young man, thou wouldst not willingly allow thy mother to shed tears, however dearly you may love sin. Will you not then stop at her entreaties? Can you trample upon your mother? Oh! though you are riding a steeple-chase to hell, cannot her weeping supplications induce you to stay your mad career? Will you grieve her who gave you life, and fondly cherished you at her breast? Surely you will long debate e'er you can resolve to bring her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Or has sin brutalized you? Are ye worse than stones? Have natural feelings become extinct? Is the evil one entirely your master? Has he dried up all the tender sympathies of your heart? Stay! young prodigal, and ponder!

But, Christian men! ye are not alone in this. If ye have family troubles, there are others who have borne the same. Remember Ephraim! Though God had promised that Ephraim should abound as a tribe with tens of thousands, yet it is recorded in [1 Chron. 7:20—22](#): “And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, and Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.” Abraham himself had his Ishmael, and he cried to God on account thereof. Think of Eli, a man who served God as a high priest, and though he could rule the people,

he could not rule his sons; and great was his grief thereat. Ah! some of you, my brethren in the gospel, may lift your hands to heaven, and ye may utter this morning these words with a deep and solemn emphasis—you may write “Although” in capitals, for it is more than true with some of you—“ Although my house be not so with God.”

Before we leave this point: What must I say to any of those who are thus tried and distressing in estate and family? *First*, let me say to you, my brethren, it *is necessary that you should have an “although”* in your lot, because if you had not, you know what you would do; you would build a very downy nest on earth, and there you would lie down in sleep; so God puts a thorn in your nest in order that you may sing. It is said by the old writers, that the nightingale never sang so sweetly as when she sat among thorns, since say they, the thorns prick her breast, and remind her of her song. So it may be with you. Ye, like the larks, would sleep in your nest did not some trouble pass by and affright you; then you stretch your wings, and carolling the matin song, rise to greet the sun. Trials are sent to wean you from the world; bitters are put into your drink, that ye may learn to live upon the dew of heaven: the food of earth is mingled with gall, that ye may only seek for true bread in the manna which droppeth from the sky. Your soul without trouble would be as the sea if it were without tide or motion; it would become foul and obnoxious. As Coleridge describes the sea after a wondrous calm, so would the soul breed contagion and death.

But furthermore, recollect this, O thou who art tried in thy children—that *prayer can remove thy troubles*. There is not a pious father or mother here, who is suffering in the family, but may have that trial taken away yet. Faith is as omnipotent as God himself, for it moves the arm which leads the stars along. Have you prayed long for your children without a result? and have ye said, “I will cease to pray, for the more I wrestle, the worse they seem to grow, and the more am I tried?” Oh! say not so, thou weary watcher. Though the promise tarrieth, it will come. Still sow the seed; and when thou sowest it, drop a tear with each grain thou puttest into the earth. Oh, steep thy seeds in the tears of anxiety, and they cannot rot under the clods, if they have been baptized in so vivifying a mixture. And what though thou diest without seeing thy sons the heirs of light? They shall be converted even after thy death; and though thy bones shall be put in the grave, and thy son may stand and curse thy memory for an hour, he shall not forget it in the cooler moments of his recollection, when he shall meditate alone. Then he shall think of thy prayers, thy tears, thy groans; he shall remember thine advice—it shall rise up, and if he live in sin, still thy words shall sound as one long voice from the realm of spirits, and either affright him in the midst of his revelry, or charm him heavenward, like angel’s whispers, saying, “Follow on to glory, where thy parent is who once did pray for thee.” So the Christian may say, “Although my house be not so with God now, *it may be yet*,” therefore will I still wait, for there be mighty instances of conversion. Think of John Newton. He even became a slaver, yet was brought back. Hope on; never despair; faint heart never winneth the souls of men, but firm faith winneth all things;

therefore watch unto prayer. "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." There is your trouble, a small cup filled from the same sea of tribulation as was the Psalmist's when he sung, "Although my house be not so with God."

II. But secondly: David had *confidence in the covenant*. Oh! how sweet it is to look from the dulness of earth to the brilliancy of heaven! How glorious it is to leap from the ever tempest-tossed bark of this world, and stand upon the *terra firma* of the covenant! So did David. Having done with his "Although," he then puts in a blessed "yet" Oh! it is a "yet," with jewels set: "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

Now let us notice these words as they come. First, David rejoiced in the covenant, because it is *divine in its origin*. "Yet hath HE made with me an everlasting covenant." O that great word HE. Who is that? It is not my odd-father or my odd mother who has made a covenant for me—none of that nonsense. It is not a covenant man has made for me, or with me; but yet hath HE made with me an everlasting covenant." It is divine in its origin, not human. The covenant on which the Christian rests, is not the covenant of his infant sprinkling: he has altogether broken that scores of times, for he has not "renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," as he should have done, nor "all the lusts of the flesh." Nor has he really become regenerate through those holy drops of water which a cassocked priest cast on his face. The covenant on which he rests and stands secure, is that covenant which God has made with him. "Yet hath HE made." Stop, my soul. God, the everlasting Father, has positively made a covenant with thee; yes, that God, who in the thickest darkness dwells and reigns for ever in his majesty alone; that God, who spake the world into existence by a word; who holds it, like an Atlas, upon his shoulders, who poises the destiny of all creation upon his finger; that God, stooping from his majesty, takes hold of thy hand and makes a covenant with thee. Oh! is it not a deed, the stupendous condescension of which might ravish our hearts for ever if we could really understand it? Oh! the depths! "HE hath made with me a covenant." A king has not made a covenant with me—that were somewhat: an emperor has not entered into a compact with me; but the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Shaddai, the Lord of all flesh, the Jehovah of ages, the everlasting Elohim. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant." O blessed thought! it is of divine origin.

But notice *its particular application*. "Yet hath he made with ME an everlasting covenant." Here lies the sweetness of it to me, as an individual.

"Oh how sweet to view the flowing  
Of Christ's soul-redeeming blood,  
With divine assurance knowing,  
That he made my peace with God."

It is nought for me that he made peace for the world; I want to know whether he made peace for *me*: it is little that he hath made a covenant, I want to know whether he has made

a covenant with ME. David could put his hand upon his heart and say, "Yet hath he made a covenant with ME." I fear I shall not be wrong in condemning the fashionable religion of the day, for it is a religion which belongs to the crowd; and not a personal one which is enjoyed by the individual. You will hear persons say, "Well, I believe the doctrine of justification; I think that men are justified through faith." Yes, but are *you* justified by faith? "I believe," says another, "that we are sanctified by the Spirit." Yes, all very well, but are *you* sanctified by the Spirit? Mark you, if ever you talk about personal piety very much, you will always be run down as extravagant. If you really say from your heart, "I know I am forgiven; I am certain that I am a pardoned sinner;"—and every Christian will at times be able to say it, and would always, were it not for his unbelief—if you say, "I know in whom I have believed; I am confident that I have not a sin now recorded in the black roll; that I am free from sin as if I had never transgressed, through the pardoning blood of Jesus," men will say it is extravagant. Well, it is a delightful extravagance, it is the extravagance of God's Word; and I would to God more of us could indulge in that holy, blessed extravagance. For we may well be extravagant when we have an infinite sum to spend; we may well be lavish when we know we never can exhaust the treasure. Oh! how sweet it is to say, "Yet hath he made with ME an everlasting covenant. It is nought that you talk to me of my brother being saved. I am very glad that my friend should get to glory, and I shall rejoice to meet you all; but after all, the thing is, "Shall I be there?"

"Shall I amongst them stand,  
To see his smiling face?"

Now, Christian, thou canst apply this personally. The covenant is made with thee. Man, open thine eyes; there is thy name in the covenant. What is it? It is some plain English name, perhaps. It never had an M.P. nor an M.A. after it, nor a "Sir," before it. Never mind, that name is in the covenant. If you could take down your Father's family Bible in heaven, you would find your name put in the register. O blessed thought! *my* name—positively mine! not another's. So, then, these eyes shall see him, and not another's for me. Rejoice, Christian; it is a personal covenant. "Yet hath he made *with me* an everlasting covenant."

Furthermore, this covenant is not only divine in its origin, but it is *everlasting in its duration*. I have had some very pretty letters sent me from anonymous writers who have listened to me; and being great cowards (whom I always abhor) they cannot sign their names. They may know what fate they receive; the condign punishment I appoint to them. I cut them asunder, and thrust them into the fire. I hope the authors will not have a similar fate. Some of them, however, quarrel with me, because I preach the everlasting gospel. I dare not preach another, for I would not have another if it were offered to me. An everlasting gospel is the only one which I think worthy of an everlasting God. I am sure it is the only one which can give comfort to a soul that is to live throughout eternity. Now, you know what an "everlasting covenant" signifies. It meant a covenant which had no beginning, and which

shall never, never end. Some do not believe in the everlasting nature of God's love to his people. They think that God begins to love his people when they begin to love him. My Arminian friends, did you ever sing that verse in your meeting?—of course you have—

“O yes, I do love Jesus,  
Because he first lov'd me.”

That is a glorious Calvinistic hymn, though we know whose hymn book it is in. Well, then, if Jesus loved you before you loved him, why cannot you believe that he always did love you? Besides, how stupid it is to talk so, when you know God does not change. There is no such thing as time with him; there is no past with him. If you say, “he loves me now,” you have in fact said, “he loved me yesterday, and he will love me for ever.” There is nothing but *now* with God. There is no such thing as past or future; and to dispute about eternal election and so on, is all of no avail; because, if God did choose his people at all—and we all admit that he chooses them now—I do not care about whether you say he did so ten thousand, thousand years ago, because there is no such thing as the past with God; with him it is all *now*. He sees things, past and future, as present in his eye. Only tell me that he loves me now; that word “now,” in God's dictionary, means everlasting. Tell me that God has now pardoned my sins; it means, that he always has, for his acts are eternal acts. Oh how sweet to know an everlasting covenant! I would not barter my gospel for fifty thousand other gospels. I love a certain salvation; and when I first heard it preached, that if I believed, God's grace would keep me all my life long, and would never let me fall into hell, but that I should preserve my character unblemished, and walk among my fellow-creatures pure and holy, then said I, “That is the gospel for me; an everlasting gospel.” As for that sandy gospel, which bets you fall away and then come back again, it is the wickedest falsehood on earth. If I believed it, I would preach the gospel and be holy on the Sunday, and fall away on the Monday, and be a Christian again on the Tuesday; and I should say, “I have fallen from grace and have got up again.” But now, as a true Calvinistic Christian, I desire to have in myself, and see in others, a life of constant consistency; nor can I think it possible to fall away, and then return, after the many passages which assert the impossibility of such a thing. That is the greatest safeguard on earth—that I have something within me that never can be quenched; that I put on the regimentals of a service which I never must leave, which I cannot leave without having proved that I never was enlisted at all. Oh! that keeps me near my God. But once make me doubt that, and you will see me the vilest character living under the sun. Take from me the everlastingness of the gospel, and you have taken all. Dear old Watts Wilkinson once said to Joseph Irons, when he said, “I love you to preach the covenant everlasting nature of God's love,”—“Ah!” said the old saint, “What is there else in the gospel if you do not preach it?” Brother, what is there else? If we do not preach an everlasting gospel, the gospel is not worth twopence. You may get anything uncertain anywhere else; it is in the Bible alone that we get everlasting things.

“I to the end shall endure  
As sure as the earnest is given;  
More happy, but not more secure,  
Are the glorified spirits in heaven.”

But notice the next word, for it is a sweet one, and we must not let one portion go, ” It is ordered *in all things*.” “Order is heaven’s first law,” and God has not a disorderly covenant. It is an orderly one. When he planned it, before the world began, it was in all things ordered well. He so arranged it, that justice should be fully satisfied, and yet mercy should be linked hand-in-hand with it. He so planned it that vengeance should have its utmost jot and tittle, and yet mercy should save the sinner. Jesus Christ came to confirm it, and by his atonement, he ordered it in all things; he paid every drop of his blood; he did not leave one farthing of the ransom-money for his dear people, but he ordered it in all things. And the Holy Spirit, when he sweetly applies it, always applies it in order; he orders it in all things. He makes us sometimes understand this order, but if we do not, be sure of this, that the covenant is a well-ordered covenant. I have heard of a man who bought a piece of land, and when the covenant was being made, he thought he knew more about it than the lawyer; but you know it is said that when a man is his own lawyer he has a fool for his client. In this case the man had a fool for his client; and he drew up the covenant so badly, that in a few years it was discovered to be good for nothing, and he lost his property. But our Father’s covenant is drawn up according to the strictest rules of justice; and so is ordered in all things. If hell itself should search it—if it were passed round amongst a conclave of demons, they could not find a single fault with it. There are the technical terms of heaven’s court; there is the great seal at the bottom, and there is the signature of Jesus, written in his own blood. So it is “ordered in all things.”

That word *things* is not in the original, and we may read it *persons*, as well as *things*. It is ordered in all persons—all the persons whose names are in the covenant; it is ordered for them, and they shall come according to the promise: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” O my beloved Christian, stop at this promise a moment, for it is a sweet well of precious water to slake thy thirst and refresh thy weariness. It is “ordered in all things.” What dost thou want more than this? Dost thou need constraining grace? It is “ordered in *all things*.” Dost thou require more of the spirit of prayer? It is “ordered in *all things*.” Dost thou desire more faith? It is “ordered in *all things*.” Art thou afraid lest thou shouldst not hold out to the end? It is “ordered in *all things*.” There is converting grace in it; pardoning grace in it; justifying grace, sanctifying grace, and persevering grace; for it is “ordered in all things, and sure.” Nothing is left out; so that whene’er we come, we find all things there stored up in heavenly order. Galen, the celebrated physician, says of the human body, that its bones are so well put together, all the parts being so beautifully ordered, that we could not change one portion of it without



spoiling its harmony and beauty; and if we should attempt to draw a model man, we could not, with all our ingenuity, fashion a being more wondrous in workmanship than man as he is. It is so with regard to the covenant. If we might alter it, we could not change it for the better; all its portions are beautifully agreed. I always feel when I am preaching the gospel covenant that I am secure. If I preach any other gospel, I am vulnerable, I am open to attack; but standing upon the firm ground of God's covenant, I feel I am in a tower of strength, and so long as I hold all the truths, I am not afraid that even the devils of hell can storm my castle. So secure is the man who believes the everlasting gospel; no logic can stand against it. Only let our preachers give the everlasting gospel to the people, and they will drink it as the ox drinketh water. You will find they love God's truth. But so long as God's gospel is smothered, and the candle is put under a bushel, we cannot expect men's souls will be brought to love it. I pray God that the candle may burn the bushel up, and that the light may be manifest.

But now, to wind up our description of this covenant, it is *sure*. If I were a rich man, there would be but one thing I should want to make my riches all I desire, and that would be, to have them sure, for riches make to themselves wings, and fly away. Health is a great blessing, and we want but to write one word on it to make it the greatest blessing, that is the adjective "sure." We have relatives, and we love them; ah! if we could but write "sure" on them, what a blessed thing it would be. We cannot call anything "sure" on earth; the only place where we can write that word is on the covenant, which is "ordered in all things and *sure*." Now there is some poor brother come here this morning who has lost his covenant, as he thinks. Ah! brother, you once had peaceful hours and sweet enjoyment in the presence of God; but now you are in gloom and doubt; you have lost your roll. Well, let me tell you, though you have lost your roll, the covenant is not lost, for all that. You never had the covenant in your hands yet; you only had a copy of it, You thought you read your title clear, but you never read the title-deeds themselves; you only held a copy of the lease and you have lost it. The covenant itself; where is it? It is under the throne of God; it is in the archives of heaven, in the ark of the covenant; it is in Jesus's breast, it is on his hands, on his heart—it is there. Oh! if God were to put my salvation in my hands, I should be lost in ten minutes; but my salvation is not there—it is in Christ's hands. You have read of the celebrated dream of John Newton, which I will tell you to the best of my recollection. He thought he was out at sea, on board a vessel, when some bright angel flew down and presented him with a ring, saying, "As long as you wear this ring you shall be happy, and your soul shall be safe." He put the ring on his finger, and he felt happy to have it in his own possession. Then there came a spirit from the vasty deep, and said to him; "That ring is nought but folly;" and by cajolery and flattery the spirit at last persuaded him to slip the ring from off his finger, and he dropped it in the sea. Then there came fierce things from the deep; the mountains bel-  
lowed, and hurled upward their volcanic lava: all the earth was on fire, and his soul in the

greatest trouble. By-and-bye a spirit came, and diving below, fetched up the ring, and showing it to him, said, "Now thou art safe, for I have saved the ring." Now might John Newton have said, "Let me put it on my finger again." "No, no; you cannot take care of it yourself;" and up the angel flew, carrying the ring away with him, so that then he felt himself secure, since no cajolery of hell could get it from him again, for it was up in heaven. My life is "hid with Christ in God." If I had my spiritual life in my own possession, I should be a suicide very soon; but it is not with me; and as I cannot save myself, *as a Christian* I cannot destroy myself, for my life is wrapped up in the covenant: it is with Christ in heaven. Oh, glorious and precious covenant!

III. Now to close our meditation. The Psalmist had *a satisfaction in his heart*. "This is," he said, all my salvation, and all my desire." I should ill like the task of riding till I found a satisfied worldly man. I suspect there is not a horse that would not be worn off its legs before I found him; I think I should myself grow grey with age before I had discovered the happy individual, except I went to one place—that is, the heart of a man who has a covenant made with him, "ordered in all things, and sure." Go to the palace, but there is not satisfaction there; go to the cottage, though the poet talks about sweet retirement and blest contentment, there is not satisfaction there. The only solid satisfaction—satisfying the mouth with good things—is to be found in the true believer, who is satisfied from himself, satisfied with the covenant, Behold David: he says, "As for my salvation, I am secure; as for my desire, I am gratified: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." *He is satisfied with his salvation*. Bring up the moralist. He has been toiling and working in order to earn salvation. Are you confident that if you died you would enter into heaven? "Well, I have been as good as other people, and, I dare say, I shall be more religious before I die;" but he cannot answer our question. Bring up the religious man—I mean the merely outwardly religious man. Are you sure that if you were to die you would go to heaven? "Well, I regularly attend church or chapel, I cannot say that I make any pretensions to be able to say, 'He hath made with me an everlasting covenant.'" Very well, you must go. So I might introduce a score of men, and there is not one of them who can say, "This is all my salvation." They always want a little supplement, and most of you intend making that supplement a little while before you die. An old Jewish Rabbi says, that every man ought to repent at least one day before his last day; and as we do not know when our last day shall be, we ought to repent to-day. How many wish they knew when they were going to die, for then they fancy they would be sure to repent, and be converted a little while before. Why, if you had it revealed to you, that you would die at twenty minutes past twelve next Sunday, you would go on in sin up till twelve o'clock, and then you would say, "There are twenty minutes more—time enough yet;" and so until the twenty minutes past had come, when your soul would sink into eternal flames. Such is procrastination. It is the thief of time; it steals away our life; and did we know the hour of our dissolution, we should be no more prepared for it than we are now. You cannot

say, can you, that you have all your salvation? But a Christian can. He can walk through the cholera and the pestilence, and feel that should the arrow smite him, death would be to him the entrance of life; he can lie down and grieve but little at the approach of dissolution, for he has all his salvation; his jewels are in his breast, gems which shall shine in heaven.

Then, the Psalmist says, he has *all his desire*. There is nought that can fill the heart of man except the Trinity. God has made man's heart a triangle. Men have been for centuries trying to make the globe fill the triangle, but they cannot do it: it is the Trinity alone that can fill a triangle, as old Quarles well says. There is no way of getting satisfaction but by gaining Christ, getting heaven, winning glory, getting the covenant, for the word covenant comprises all the other things. "All my desire,"—says the Psalmist.

"I nothing want on earth, above,  
Happy in my Saviour's love."

I have not a desire; I have nothing to do but to live and be happy all my life in the company of Christ, and then to ascend to heaven, to be in his immediate presence, where

"Millions of years these wondering eyes  
Shall o'er my Saviour's beauties rove,  
And endless ages I'll adore  
The wonders of his love."

Just one word with my friends who do not agree with me in doctrine. I am sure, my dear friends, that I wish not to anathematize any of those whose creed is the reverse of mine; only they must allow me to differ from them and to speak freely; and if they do not *allow* me they know very well that I shall. But I have this much to say to those dear friends who cannot bear the thought of an everlasting covenant. Now, you cannot alter it, can you? If you do not like it, there it is. "God hath made with me an everlasting covenant." And you must confess, when you read the Bible, that there are some very knotty passages for you. You might, perhaps, remove them out of your Bible; but then you cannot erase them out of divine verities. You know it is true, that God is immutable, do you not? He never changes—you must know that, for the Bible says so. It declares that when he has begun a good work, he will carry it through. Do not get reading frothy commentators any longer; take the Bible as it stands, and if you do not see everlasting love there, there is some fault in your eyes, and it is a case rather for the Ophthalmic hospital, than for me. If you cannot see everlasting, eternal security, blood-bought righteousness, there, I am hopeless altogether of your conversion to the truth, while you read it with your present prejudices. It has been my privilege to give more prominence in the religious world to those old doctrines of the gospel. I have delighted in the musty old folios which many of my brethren have kept bound in sheepskins and goatskins, on their library shelves. As for new books, I leave them to others. Oh! if we might but go back to those days when the best of men were our pastors—the days of the Puritans. Oh! for a puritanical gospel again; then we should not have the sleepy

hearers, the empty chapels, the drowsy preachers, the velvet-mouthed men who cannot speak the truth; but we should have "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill towards men." Do go home and search. I have told you what I believe to be true; if it is not true, detect the error by reading your Bibles for yourselves, and searching out the matter. As for you, ye ungodly, who hitherto have had neither portion nor lot in this matter, recollect that God's Word speaks to you as well as to the Christian, and says, "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?" graciously promising that whosoever cometh to Christ he will in no wise cast out. It is a free gospel, free as the air, and he who has but life to breathe it may breathe it; so that every poor soul here, who is quickened, and has a sense of his guilt, may come to Christ.

"Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream."

All the evidence you require is to feel your need of Christ; and recollect, if you only once come, if you do but believe, you will be safe through all eternity; and amidst the wreck of matter, the crash of worlds, the conflagration of the universe, and the destruction of all terrestrial things, your soul must still be eternally secure in the covenant of God's free grace. God enable you now to become his adopted children by faith in Jesus.