

The Glorious Gospel

A Sermon

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at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens.

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”—1 Timothy 1:15.

I SUPPOSE that the message delivered by God’s servants to the people must always be called “the burden of the Lord.” When the old prophets came forth from their Master, they had such dooms, and threatenings, and lamentations, and woe to preach, that their countenances were wan with sorrow, and their hearts heavy within them. They usually commenced their discourses by announcing, “The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord.” But now, our message is no heavy one. No threatening and no thunders compose the theme of the gospel minister. All is mercy; love is the sum and substance of our gospel—love undeserved; love to the very chief of sinners. But it is still a burden to us. So far as the matter of our preaching is concerned, it is our joy and our delight to preach it; but if others feel as I feel now, they will all acknowledge it to be a hard matter to preach the gospel. For now I am sore vexed, and my heart is troubled, not concerning what I have to preach, but how I shall preach it. What if so good a message should fail because of so ill an ambassador? What if my hearers should reject this saying which is worthy of all acceptance, because I may announce it with lack of earnestness? Surely—surely such a supposition is enough to draw the tears to the eyes of any man! But may God in his mercy prevent a consummation so fearfully to be dreaded; and, however I may now preach, may this Word of God commend itself to every man’s conscience; and may many of you now gathered together, who have never as yet find to Jesus for refuge, by the simple preaching of the Word, now be persuaded to come in, that you may taste and see that the Lord is good.

Our text is one that pride would never prompt a man to select. It is quite impossible to flourish about it, it is so simple. Human nature is apt to cry, “Well I cannot preach upon that text—it is too plain; there is no mystery in it; I cannot show my learning: it is just a plain, common-sense announcement—I scarcely would wish to take it, for it lowers the man, however much it may exalt the Master.” So, expect nothing but the text from me this morning, and the simplest possible explanation of it.

We shall have two heads: first there is *the text*; then there is a *double commendation* appended to the text—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.”

II. First, there is THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TEXT—“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” In that there are three things very prominent. There is *the Saviour*, there is *the sinner*, and there is *the salvation*.

1. There is first of all, *the Saviour*. And in explaining the Christian religion, this is where we must begin. The person of the Saviour is the foundation-stone of our hope. Upon that person depends the usefulness of our gospel. Should someone arise and preach a Saviour, who was man, he would be unworthy of our hopes, and the salvation preached would be inadequate to what we need. Should another preach salvation by an angel, our sins are so heavy that an angelic atonement would have been insufficient; and therefore his gospel totters to the ground. I repeat it, upon the person of the Saviour rests the whole of the salvation. If he be not able, if he be not commissioned to perform the work, then indeed, the work itself is worthless to us, and falls short of its design. But, men and brethren, when we preach the gospel, we need not stop and stammer. We have to show you this day such a Saviour that earth and heaven could not show his fellow. He is one so loving, so great, so mighty, and so well adapted to all our needs, that it is evident enough that he was prepared of old to meet our deepest wants. We know that Jesus Christ who came into the world to save sinners was God; and that long before his descent to this lower world, he was adored by angels as the Son of the Highest. When we preach the Saviour to you, we tell you that although Jesus Christ was the Son of man, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, yet was he eternally the Son of God, and hath in himself all the attributes which constitute perfect Godhead. What more of a Saviour can any man want than God? Is not he who made the heavens able to purge the soul? If he of old stretched the curtains of the skies, and made the earth, that man should dwell upon it, is he not able to rescue a sinner from the destruction that is to come? When we tell you he is God, we have at once declared his omnipotence and his infinity; and when these two things work together, what can be impossible? Let God undertake a work, it cannot meet with failure. Let him enter into an enterprise, and it is sure of its accomplishment. Since, then, Christ Jesus the man was also Christ Jesus the God, in announcing the Saviour, we have the fullest confidence that we are offering you something that is worthy of all acceptance.

The name given to Christ suggests something concerning his person. He is called in our text, “Christ Jesus.” The two words mean, the “Anointed Saviour.”—The Anointed Saviour “came into the world to save sinners.”

Pause here, my soul, and read this o’er again:—He is the anointed Saviour. God the Father from before all worlds anointed Christ to the office of a Saviour of men; and, therefore, when I behold my Redeemer coming from heaven to redeem man from sin, I note that he does not come unsent, or uncommissioned. He has his Father’s authority to back him in his work. Hence, there are two immutable things whereon our soul may rest,—there is the person of Christ, divine in itself; there is the anointing from on high, giving to him the stamp

of a commission received from Jehovah his Father. O sinner, what greater Saviour dost thou want than he whom God anointed? What more canst thou require than the eternal Son of God to be thy ransom, and the anointing of the Father to be the ratification of the treaty?

Yet we have not fully described the person of the Redeemer, until we have noted that He was man. We read that he came into the world; by which coming into the world we do not understand his usual coming. for he often came into the world before. We read in Scripture, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." In fact, he is always here. The goings of God are to be seen in the sanctuary; both in providence and in nature they are to be seen most visibly. Does not God visit the earth when he makes the tempest his chariot, and rides upon the wings of the wind? But this visitation was different from all these. Christ came into the world in the sense of the fullest and most complete union with human nature. Oh, sinner, when we preach a Divine Saviour, perhaps the name of God is so terrible to thee, that thou canst scarcely think the Saviour is adapted to thee. But hear thou again the old story. Although Christ was the Son of God he left his highest throne in glory and stooped to the manger. There he is, an infant of a span long. See, he grows from boyhood up to manhood, and he come forth into the world to preach and suffer! See him as he groans under the yoke of oppression; he is mocked and despised; his visage more marred than that of any other man, and his form more than the sons of men! See him in the garden, as he sweats drops of blood! See him in Pilate's chamber, in which he is scourged and his shoulders run with gore! On the bloody tree behold him! See him dying with agony too exquisite to be imagined, much less to be described! Behold him in the silent tomb! See him at last bursting the bonds of death, and rising the third day, and afterwards ascending up on high, "leading captivity captive!" Sinner, thou hast now the Saviour before thee, plainly manifested. He who was called Jesus of Nazareth, who died upon the cross, who had his superscription written, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," this man was the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his Father, "begotten by his Father before all worlds, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father." He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Oh, could I bring him before you, could I now bring him here to show you his hands and his side, if ye could now, like Thomas, put your fingers in the holes of the nails and thrust your hand into his side, methinks you would not be faithless, but believing. This much I know, if there be anything that can make men believe under the hand of God's most Holy Spirit, it is a true picture of the person of Christ. Seeing is believing in his case. A true view of Christ, a right-looking at him, will most assuredly beget faith in the soul. Oh, I doubt not if ye knew our Master, some of you who are now doubting, and fearing, and trembling,

would say, “Oh, I can trust him; a person so divine, and yet so human, ordained and anointed of God, must be worthy of my faith I can trust him; nay more, if I had a hundred souls I could trust him with them all. or, if I stood accountable for all the sins of all mankind, and were myself the very reservoir and sink of this world’s infamy, I could trust him even then—for such a Saviour must be “able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.” This, then, is the person of the Saviour.

2. Now. the second point is *the sinner*. If we had never heard this passage before, or any of similar import, I can suppose that the most breathless silence would reign over this place if for the first time I should commence to read them in your hearing, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save—“ I know how you would thrust forward your heads. I know how you would put your hand against your ear, and look as if you would hear with the eye as well as with the ear, to know for whom the Saviour died. Every heart would say, whom did he come to save? And if we had never heard the message before, how would our hearts palpitate with fear lest the character described should be one unto which it would be impossible for us to attain! Oh, how pleasant it is to hear again that one word which describes the character of those Christ came to save:—“He came into the world to save *sinners*.” Monarch, there is here no distinction; princes, he hath not singled you out to be the objects of his love; but beggars and the poor shall taste his grace. Ye learned men, ye masters of Israel, Christ does not say he came specially to save you; the unlearned and illiterate peasant is equally welcome to his grace. Jew, with all thy pedigree of honor, thou art not justified more than the Gentile. Men of Britain, with all your civilization and your freedom, Christ does not say he came to save you: he names not you as the distinguishing class who are the objects of his love—no, and ye that have good works, and reckon yourselves saints among men, he doth not distinguish you either. The one simple title, large and broad as humanity itself, is simply this;—“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” Now, mark, we are to understand this in a general sense when we read it, “~ viz. ”~, that all whom Jesus came to save are sinners. but if any man asks, may I infer from this that I am saved; we must then put another question to him. To begin then, with the general sense:—“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” The men whom Christ came to save were by nature sinners, nothing less and nothing more than sinners. I have often said that Christ came into the world to save awakened sinners. It is quite true; so he did. But those sinners were not *awakened* sinners when he came to save them—they were nothing but “sinners dead in trespasses and sins” when he came to them. It is a common notion that we are to preach that Christ died to save what are called sensible sinners. Now that is true, but they were not sensible sinners when Christ died to save them. He makes them sensible or feeling sinners as the effect of his death. Those he died for are described, without any adjective to diminish the breadth of it, as being sinners, and simply sinners, without any badge of merit or mark of goodness which could distinguish

them above their fellows. Sinners! Now, the term includes some of all kinds of sinners. There are some men whose sins appear but little. Trained up religiously, and educated in a moral way, they do not dash into the deeps of sin; they are content to coast along the shores of vice—they do not launch out into the depths. Now, Christ hath died for such as these, for many of these have been brought to know and love him. Let no man think, because he is a less sinner than others, that therefore there is less hope for him. Strange it is that some have often thought that. “If I had been a blasphemers,” says one, “or injurious, I could have had more hope; though I know I have sinned greatly in my own eyes yet so little have I erred in the eye of the world, that I can scarcely think myself included.” Oh, say not so. It says, “Sinners.” If thou canst put thyself in that catalogue, whether it be at the top or at the bottom, thou art still within it; and the truth still holds good that those Jesus came to save were originally sinners, and thou being such, thou hast no reason to believe that thou art shut out. Again, Christ died to save sinners of an opposite sort. We have some men whom we dare not describe; it would be a shame to speak of the things which are done by them in private. There have been men who have invented vices of which the devil himself was ignorant until they invented them. There have been men so bestial that the very dog was a more honorable creature than they. We have heard of beings whose crimes have been more diabolical, more detestable, than any action ascribed even to the devil himself. Yet my text does not shut out these. Have we not met with blasphemers so profane that they could not speak without an oath? Blasphemy, which at first was something terrible to them, has now become so common that they would curse themselves before they said their prayers, and swear when they were singing God’s praises. It has come to be part of their meat and drink, a thing so natural to them that the very sinfulness of it does not shock them, they so continually do it. As for God’s laws, they delight to know them for the mere sake of breaking them. Tell them of a new vice and you will please them. They have become like that Roman emperor whose parasites could never please him better than by inventing some new crime—men who have gone head over ears in the Stygian gulf of hellish sin—men, who not content with fouling their feet while walking through the mire have lifted up the trap-door with which we seal down depravity, and have dived into the very kennel—rebelling in the very filth of human iniquity. But there is nothing in my text which can exclude even these. Many of these shall yet be washed in the Saviour’s blood, and be made partakers of the Saviour’s love.

Nor does this text make a distinction as to the age of sinners. I see many among you here whose hairs if they were the color of your character would be the very reverse of what they are; ye have become white without, but ye are blackened all within with sin. Ye have added layer to layer of crime; and, now, if one were to dig down through the various deposits of numerous years, he would discover stony relics of youthful sins, hidden down in the depths of your rocky hearts. Where once all was tender, everything has become sere and hardened. You have gone far into sin. If you were to be converted now, would it not, indeed,

be a wonder of grace? For the old oak to be bent, oh, how hard! Now, that it has grown so rugged and tough, can it be bent? Can the Great Husbandman train it? Can he graft on so old and so rough a stem something that shall bring forth heavenly fruit? Ah, he can, for age is not mentioned in the text, and many of the most ancient of men have proved the love of Jesus in their latest years. "But," says one, "my sin has had peculiar aggravations connected with it. I have sinned against light and against knowledge. I have trampled on a mother's prayers; I have despised a father's tears. Warnings given to me have been neglected. On my sick bed God himself has rebuked me. My resolves have been frequent and as frequently forgotten. As for my guilt, it is not to be measured by any ordinary standard. My little grimes are greater than other men's deepest iniquities, for I have sinned against the light, against the prickings of conscience, and against everything that should have taught me better. "Well, my friend, I do not see that thou art shut out here; my text makes no distinction but just this;—"Sinners!" And as far as my text is concerned there is no limit whatever: I must deal with the text as it stands; and even for you I cannot consent to limit it; it says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." There have been men of your sort saved; why, then, should you not be saved? There have been the grossest blackguards, and the vilest thieves, and the most debauched harlots saved; then, why not you, even if you be such as they are? Sinners a hundred years old have been saved; we have instance on record of such cases; then, why not you? If from one of God's instances we may generally infer a rule, and moreover, we have his own Word to back us, where lives the man who is so wickedly arrogant as to shut himself out, and close the door of mercy in his own face? No, beloved, the text says "Sinner;" and why should it not include you and me within its list? "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

But I said, and I must return to it if any-one wishes to make a particular application of the text to his own case it is necessary he should read this text in another way. Every man in this place must not infer that Christ came to save him. Those whom Christ came to save were sinners; but Christ will not save all sinners. There are some sinners who undoubtedly will be lost, because they reject Christ. They despise him; they will not repent; they choose their own self-righteousness; they do not turn to Christ, they will have none of his ways and none of his love. For such sinners, there is no promise of mercy, for there remains no other way of salvation. Despise Christ, and you despise your own mercy. Turn away from him, and you have proved that in his blood there is no efficacy for you. Despise him, and die doing so, die without giving your soul into his hands, and you have given a most awful proof that though the blood of Christ was mighty, yet never was it applied to you, never was it sprinkled on your hearts to the taking away of your sins. If, then, I want to know did Christ so die for me that I may now believe in him, and feel myself to be a saved man, I must answer this question;—Do I *feel* to-day that I am a sinner? Not, do I *say* so, as a compliment, but do I feel it? In my inmost soul is that a truth printed in great capitals of burning fire—I am

a sinner? Then, if it be so, Christ died for me. I am included in his special purpose. The covenant of grace includes my name in the ancient roll of eternal election. there my person is recorded, and I shall, without a doubt, be saved, if now, feeling myself to be a sinner, I cast myself upon that simple truth, believing it and trusting in it to be my sheet anchor in every time of trouble Come, man and brother, are you not prepared to trust in him. Are not many of you able to say that you feel yourself sinners? Oh, I beseech you, whoever you are, believe this great truth which is worthy of all acceptance—Christ Jesus came to save you, I know your doubts, I know your fears, for I have suffered them myself; and the only way whereby I can keep my hopes alive is just this:—I am brought every day to the cross; I believe that to my dying hour I shall never have any hope but this—

“Nothing in my hands I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling.”

And my only reason at this hour for believing Jesus Christ is my Redeemer is just this:—I know that I am a *sinner*: this I feel, and over this I mourn; and though I mourn it much, when Satan tells me that I cannot be the Lord’s, I draw from my very mourning the comfortable inference, that inasmuch as he has made me feel I am lost, he would not have done this if he had not intended to save me; and inasmuch as he has given me to see that I belong to that great class of characters whom he came to save, I infer from that, beyond a doubt, that he will save me. Oh, can you do the same, ye sin stricken, weary, sad, and disappointed souls, to whom the world has become an empty thing? Ye weary spirits who have gone your round of pleasure, now exhausted with satiety, or even with disease, are longing to be rid of it—oh, ye spirits that are looking for something better than this mad world can ever give you here, I preach to you the blessed Gospel of the blessed God:—Jesus Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; dead and buried, and raised again the third day to save you—even you, for he came into the world to save sinners.

3. And, now, very briefly, the third point: What is meant by *saving* sinners? “Christ came to save sinners.” Brethren, if you want a picture to show you what is meant by being saved, let me give it to you here. There is a poor wretch who has lived many a year in the grossest sin; so inured to sin has he become, that the Ethiopian might sooner change his skin than he could learn to do well. Drunkenness, and vice, and folly have cast their iron net about him, and he has become loathsome and unable to escape from his loathsomeness. Do you see him? He is tottering onwards to his ruin. From childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, he has sinned right on, and now he is going towards his last days. The pit of hell is flaring across his path, flinging its frightful rays immediately before his face, and yet he sees it not: he still goes on in his wickedness, despising God and hating his own salvation. Leave him there. A few years have and now hear another story. Do you see that spirit yonder—foremost among the ranks most sweetly singing the praises of God? Do you mark it robed in white, an emblem of its purity? Do you see it as it casts its crown before the feet of

Jesus, and acknowledges him the Lord of all? Hark! do you hear it as it sings the sweetest song that ever charmed Paradise itself? Listen to it, its song is this:—

“I, the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.”

“Unto him that loved me, and washed me from my sins in his blood, unto him be glory and honor, and majesty, and power, and dominion, world without end.” And who is that whose song thus emulates the seraph’s strains The same person who a little while ago was so frightfully depraved, the selfsame man! But he has been washed, he has been sanctified, he has been justified. If you ask me, then, what is meant by salvation, I tell you that it reaches all the way from that poor, desperately fallen piece of humanity, to that high-soaring spirit up yonder, praising God. That is to be saved—to have our old thoughts made into new ones, to have our old habits broken off, and to have new habits given; to have our old sins pardoned, and to have righteousness imputed; to have peace in the conscience, peace to man, and peace with God; to have the spotless robe of imputed righteousness cast about our loins, and ourselves healed and cleansed. To be saved is to be rescued from the gulf of perdition; to be raised to the throne of heaven; to be delivered from the wrath and curse! and the thunders of an angry God, and brought to feel and taste the love, the approval, and applause of Jehovah, our Father and our Friend. And all this Christ gives to sinners. When I preach this simple gospel, I have nothing to do with those who will not call themselves sinners. If you must be canonized, if you claim a saintly perfection of your own, I have nothing to do with you. My gospel is to sinners, and sinners alone; and the whole of this salvation, so broad and brilliant, and unspeakably precious, and everlastingly secure, is addressed this day to the outcast, to the offscouring—in one word, it is addressed to sinners.

Now, I think I have announced the truth of the text. Certainly, no man can misunderstand me unless he does so intentionally:—“Christ Jesus came to save sinners.”

II. And, now, I have but little to do, but yet I have the hardest work—THE DOUBLE COMMENDATION of the text. First, “it is a faithful saying; that is a commendation to the *doubter*: secondly, it is worthy of all acceptance; “that is a commendation to the *careless*—nay, to the *anxious*, too.

1. First, “it is a faithful saying;” that is a commendation to the *doubter*. Oh, the devil, as soon as he finds men under the sound of the word of God, slips along through the crowd, and he whispers in one heart, “Don’t believe it!” and in another, “Laugh at it!” and in another, “Away with it!” And when he finds a person for whom the message was intended—one who feels himself a sinner, he is generally doubly in earnest, that he may not believe it at all. I know what Satan said to you, poor friend, over there. He said, “Don’t believe it—it’s too good to be true.” Let me answer the devil by God’s own words: “This is a faithful saying.” It is good, and it is as true as it is good. *It is* too good to be true if God had not himself said it; but, inasmuch as he said it, it is not too good to be true. I will tell thee why thou thickest

it to too good to be true, it is because thou measurest God's corn by thine own bushel. Please to remember, that his ways are not as thy ways, nor his thoughts as thy thoughts; for as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his ways high above thy ways, and his thoughts above thy thoughts. Why, thou thinkest that if any man had offended thee, thou couldst not have forgiven him. Ay, but God is not a man: he can forgive where thou canst not; and where thou wouldst take thy brother by the throat, God would forgive him seventy times seven. Thou dost not know Jesus, or else thou wouldest believe him. We think that we are honoring God when we think great thoughts of our sin. Let us recollect, that while we ought to think very greatly of our own sin, we dishonor God if we think our sin greater than his grace. God's grace is infinitely greater than the greatest of our crimes. There is but one exception that he has ever made, and a penitent cannot be included in that. I beseech you, therefore, get better thoughts of him. Think how good he is, and how great he is; and when you know this to be a true saying, I hope you will thrust Satan away from you, and not think it too good to be true I know what he will say to you next;—"Well, if it is true, it is not true to you: it is true to all the world, but not to you. Christ died to save sinners; it is true you are a sinner, but you are not included in it." Tell the devil he is a liar to his face. There is no way of answering him except by straightforward language. We do not believe in the individuality of the existence of the devil, as Martin Luther did. When the devil came to him, he served him as he did other impostors; he turned him out of doors, with a good hard saying. Tell him on the authority of Christ himself, that he is a liar. Christ says, he came to save sinners; the devil says he did not. He says, virtually, he did not, for he declares that he did not come to save you, and you feel that you are a sinner. Tell him he is a liar, and send him about his business. At any rate, never put his testimony in comparison with that of Christ. He looks today on thee from Calvary's cross with those same dear tearful eyes that once wept over Jerusalem. He looks on thee my brother, my sister, and says through these lips of mine, "I came into the world to save sinners." Sinner! wilt thou not believe on him, and trust thy soul in his hands? Wilt thou not say,—“Sweet Lord Jesus, thou shalt be our confidence henceforth! ‘For thee all other hopes I resign, thou art, thou ever shalt be mine.’ ” Come, poor timid one, I must endeavor to re-assure you, by repeating again this text:—"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." It is a true saying, I cannot have you reject it You say you cannot believe it. Let me ask you, "Do you not believe the Bible?" "Yes," you say, "every word of it." Then, this is one word of it—"Jesus came into the world to save sinners." I charge thee by thy honesty—as thou sayest, "I believe the Bible," believe this. There it stands. Dost thou believe Jesus Christ? Come, answer me Dost thou think he lieth? Would a God of Truth stoop to deceit? "No," thou sayest, "whatever God says, I believe." It is God that says it to thee, then, in his own book. He died to save sinners.-Come, once again. Dost thou not believe facts? Did not Jesus Christ rise from the dead? Does not that prove his gospel to be authentic? If, then, the gospel be authentic, the whole of what Christ declares to be the gospel must

be true. I charge thee, as thou believest his resurrection, believe that he died for sinners, and cast thyself upon this truth. Once again. Wilt thou deny the testimony of all the saints in heaven and of all the saints on earth? Ask every one of them, and they will tell you this is true—he died to save *sinners*. I, as one of the least of his servants, must bear my testimony. When Jesus came to save me, I protest he found nothing good in me. I know of a surety, that there was nothing in me to recommend me to Christ; and if he loved me, he loved me because he would do so; for there was nothing loveable, nothing that he could desire in me. What I am, I am by his grace; he made me what I am. But a sinner he found me at first, and his own sovereign love was the only reason for his choice. Ask all the people of God, and they will all say the same.

But you say you are too great a sinner. Why. you are not greater than some in heaven already. You say that you are the greatest sinner that ever lived. I say you are mistaken. The greatest sinner died some years ago and went to heaven. My text says so:—“Of whom I am chief” So, you see, the chief one has been saved before you; and if the chief one has been saved, why should you not be? There are the sinners standing in a line, and I see one starting out from the ranks, and he says, “Make way, make way; I stand at the head of you, I am the chief of sinners. give me the lowest place; let me take the lowest room.” “No,” cries another, “not you; I am a greater sinner than you.” Then the apostle Paul comes, and says: “I challenge you all, Manasseh and Magdalene, I challenge you. I will have the lowest place. I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, but I have obtained mercy, that in me first God might show his long-suffering.” Now, if Christ has saved the greatest sinner that ever lived, oh, sinner, great as you may be, you cannot be greater than the greatest, and he is able to save you. Oh, I beseech you by the myriads of witnesses around the throne, and by the thousands of witnesses on earth, by Jesus Christ, the witness on Calvary, by the blood of sprinkling that is a witness even now, by God himself, and by his Word which is faithful, I beseech you believe this faithful saying, that “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

2. And, now, to close. The second commendation of the text is to the *careless* and to the *anxious* too To the careless one this text is worthy of all acceptance. Oh, man, thou scornest it. I saw thee curl thy lip in derision. The story was badly told, and therefore thou didst scorn it. Thou saidst in thine heart, “What is that to me? If this be what the man preaches, I care not to hear it: if this be the gospel it is nothing.” Ah, sir, it is something, though thou knowest it not. It is worthy of thy acceptance: the thing I have preached, however poor the way in which it is preached, is well worthy of thy attention I care not what orator may lecture to you, he can never have a subject greater than mine. Damosthenes himself, might stand here, or Cicero, his later compeer, they could never have a weightier subject. Though a child should tell you of it, the subject might well excuse him, for it is so important. Man it is not your house that is in danger, it is not your body only, it is your soul I beseech you, by

eternity, by its dreadful terrors, by the horrors of hell, by that fearful word, “Eternity—Eternity,” I beseech thee as a man, thy brother, one who loves thee, and who would fain snatch thee from the burning, I beseech thee do not despise thine own mercies; for this is worthy of thee, man, worthy of all thy attention, and worthy of thy heartiest acceptance. Art thou wise? This is more worthy than thy wisdom. Art thou rich? This is worthier than all thy wealth. Art thou famous? This is worthier than all thy honor. Art thou princely? This is worthier than thine ancestry, or than all thy goodly heritage. The thing I preach is the worthiest thing under heaven, because it will last thee when all things else fade away. It will stand by thee when thou hast to stand alone. In the hour of death it will plead for thee when thou hast to answer the summons of justice at God’s bar. And it shall be thine eternal consolation through never ending ages. It is worthy of thy acceptance.

And, now, dost thou feel anxious? Is thy heart sad? Dost thou say, “I desire to be saved. Can I trust to this gospel? Is it strong enough to bear me? I am an elephantine sinner; will not its pillars crumble like leaves beneath my weight of sin?” “I the chief of sinners am;” will its portals be wide enough to receive me? My spirit is diseased with sin; can this medicine cure it? Yes, it is worthy of you: it is equal to your disease, it is equal to your wants, it is all-sufficient for your demands. If I had a half-gospel to preach, or a defective one, I would not preach it earnestly; but I have one that is worthy of all acceptance. “But, sir I have been a thief, a whoremonger, a drunkard.” It is worthy of thee, for he came to save sinners, and thou art one. “But, sir, I have been a blasphemer.” It does not exclude even thee; it is worthy of thy acceptance. But, mark, it is worthy of all the acceptance you can give it. You may not only accept it in your head but in your heart; you may press it to your soul and call it all in an, you may feed on it, and live on it. And if you live for it, and suffer for it, and die for it, it is worthy of all.

I must let you go now; but my spirit feels as if it would linger here. Strange it should be that many men should not care for their own souls, when your minister this day cares for you. What matters it to me whether men be lost or saved? Shall I be any the better for your salvation? Assuredly there is little gain there. And yet I feel more for you, many of you, than you feel for yourselves. Oh, strange hardening of the heart, that a man should not care for his men salvation, that he should, without a thought, reject the most precious truth. Stay, sinner stay, ere thou turnest from thine own mercy—stay, once more—perhaps this shall be thy last warning, or worse, it may be the last warning thou shalt ever feel. Thou feelest it now. Oh I beseech thee quench not the Spirit. Go not forth from this place to talk with idle gossip on thy way home. Go not forth to forget what manner of man thou art. But hasten to thy home; seek thy chamber; shut to the door; fall on thy face by thy bedside; confess thy sin; cry unto Jesus, tell him thou art a wretch undone without his sovereign grace, tell him thou has heard this morning that he came to save sinners, and that the thought of such a

love as that hath made thee lay down the weapons of thy rebellion, and that thou art desirous to be his. There on thy face plead with him, and say unto him, "Lord save me, or I perish."

The Lord bless you all for Jesus' sake. Amen.