

Scriptural Salvation

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, MAY 18, 1890,

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"For the Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." [Romans 10:11](#).

THE shepherd on the hill is most of all anxious about his sheep—he cares for his cottage, he trains the woodbine around his porch, sows flowers before his door and digs his little plot of garden ground—but, since he is a shepherd, his chief thought follows his flock and especially any of the sheep that are wandering, or the lambs that are tender. Even so I feel that my main business is the saving of souls. I may fitly preach to you upon any Scriptural subject and I may minister to the delight of the family of the redeemed. I may lead them into the deep things of God—but my principal business must always be watching for souls. This one thing I do.

When a city is to be stored for a siege it will be well for those who attend to the commissariat to lay in a proportion of everything that is necessary for human comfort and even a measure of certain luxuries—but it will be of first importance to bring in great quantities of corn. The necessities of life must be the chief provision. These we place in storehouses by the tons, whereas in other articles pounds may suffice. If there is a failure of bread, what will the people do? For this reason, I feel I must preach over and over again the plain Gospel of salvation by Divine Grace through faith in Christ Jesus!

While I would withhold nothing that may minister to edification, to comfort, to growth or to the perfecting of the saints, yet, first and foremost in abundance, even to overflowing, I must gather for you the Bread of Life and set forth Christ Crucified as the sinner's only hope. Faith must be urged upon you, for without it there is no salvation. Paul, in this case, was acting upon this safe principle as he always did, for he is speaking of salvation in the plainest terms. His heart's desire and prayer for Israel was that they might be saved and he proved the truth of that desire by setting forth that which would save them—he keeps to faith in Christ—and hammers upon that nail to fasten it securely.

I. I shall begin my sermon this morning by reminding you that **HERE IS AN OLD-FASHIONED WAY OF PROOF**—"The Scripture says." In this enlightened age little is made of Scripture. The tendency is to undermine men's faith in the Bible and persuade them to rest on something else. It is not so with us, as it certainly was not so with Paul. He enforced and substantiated his teaching by declaring, "The Scripture says." In this he follows the manner of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Though quite able to speak of Himself, our Lord continually referred to Holy Scripture.

His first public sermon was based upon the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. All along to the very end He was always quoting the Old Testament. So did His Apostles. One is struck with

their continual reference to Moses and the Prophets. While they set the Truth of God in a fresh light, they fell back continually upon the old Revelation. "As says the Scripture," "According to the Scriptures"—these are phrases constantly repeated. Paul declared that he spent his life "witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come."

Evidently they regarded the statements of Scripture as conclusive. They took counsel of the Scriptures and so they ended the matter. "It is written," was to them proof positive and indisputable. "Thus says the Lord," was the final word—enough for their mind and heart—enough for their conscience and understanding. To go beyond Scripture did not occur to the first teachers of our faith. They heard the Oracle of Divine Testimony and bowed their heads in reverence. So it ought to be with us! We have erred from the faith and we shall pierce ourselves through with many sorrows unless we feel that if the Scripture says it, it is even so. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," and therefore they spoke not erroneously, nor even dubiously.

In the passage before us we have an instance of Inspiration endorsing Inspiration and building thereon. Paul wrote by the direction of the Holy Spirit. He was himself a fully inspired man and he had no lack of original speech—yet he falls

back upon the Scripture. He calls the Old Testament to bear witness to the doctrine of the New and in the same act expresses the agreement of the New with the Old. How far have they diverged from the Christian spirit, who begin to question the authenticity and authority of the books of Moses and the Prophets!

Brothers and Sisters, had Paul been without Inspiration, he was so great a saint and so eminent a confessor that his reverence for the Old Testament would have been a lesson to us! But since we believe this Epistle to have been Inspired of the Holy Spirit we are bound, as by Divine Law, to treat the ancient Scriptures as the great Apostle treated them, namely, with absolute deference, regarding them as the sure Word of the Lord. To us it matters not what critics may say to shake faith in Holy Writ—their efforts will be all in vain if we are intimate with the Author of these books and by His Holy Spirit possess a personal sense of His truth, His wisdom and His faithfulness.

After God has spoken, it little concerns us what the wise men of the world may have to say. They have always spoken against the Word of the Lord—and they have always spoken in vain—and so will they speak even to the world's end. Paul, in saying here, "For the Scripture says," is referring, I think, to the general sense of Scripture rather than to any one passage. There are several texts from which it may be gathered that Believers shall not be put to shame, such as, "They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed." But if the Apostle is referring to any one passage of the Old Testament, he is not quoting it verbatim but he is expounding it and giving its general sense.

Assuming that he refers to [Isaiah 28:16](#), I am glad of the lesson which he affords us in a kind of instructive criticism. When the Spirit of God Himself deals with Scripture, we can gather from His example how we may deal with it. It is best, as far as possible, to quote the very words of Scripture, lest we should err, but we have, here, a permit to quote the clear and evident sense—and we are allowed to regard that sense as equally authoritative with the exact words. Paul quotes, if he quotes at all, from the Septuagint translation rather than from the Hebrew, thus sanctioning a translation.

Let us read the words in [Isaiah 28:16](#). "Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believes shall not make haste." You see at once the difference between the text as Paul gives it to us and the original Hebrew. Observe, first, that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Paul reads the passage in its largest sense. The original text is, "He that believes," but Paul makes it, "Whoever believes." That is the true meaning. "He that believes," means any "he" that believes. And to make this fact clear, Paul says, "Whoever believes."

We ought to take the promises of Holy Scripture in their widest possible application. When we meet with a passage distinctly referring to one person only, we are allowed to remember that no Scripture is exhausted by one fulfillment. You, being like that person and in similar circumstances to him, may quote the promise as made to you—for it is intended for the whole class of persons of whom that one person is the representative. "He that believes," is, in Paul's judgment—no, in the judgment of the Holy Spirit—tantamount to, "Whoever believes." A promise made by man will legally be interpreted in its narrowest sense—but a promise made by God may always be taken in its major sense, since God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways than our ways. Everything it will honestly bear, you may pile upon the back of a Divine promise! God loves to see faith taking Him at His word and He will do for it exceeding abundantly above what we ask or even think.

Next, note that Paul reads the verse with the context. In the Hebrew it is, "He that believes," but Paul reads it, "Whoever believes on Him." Did he do right to supply the, "on Him"? Certainly, since he thus gives the sense of the quotation as it stands in the Prophet. I said before that Paul is not quoting verbatim et literatim—he aims at giving the sense of the passage and, therefore, paraphrases it so as to remind you of its connection. "On Him" is necessary to a perfect quotation of the passage as it stands. Let us read again: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believes"—evidently it is, "He that believes" in this foundation—"shall not make haste."

That foundation is not an "it," but an "Him," for it refers to Christ. Expressions separated from that which comes before them and follows after them, may not express the writer's mind and, therefore, when we quote from Holy Scripture we should endeavor not merely

to give the words which are actually in the text, but to add such words as duly set forth the context. This lesson is worth learning.

Once more, the Apostle gives us the true and plain meaning of the text. He leaves the figure which was suitable for Isaiah, but might have been misunderstood by the Romans, and he gives the sense intended by Isaiah in plainer language.

The Prophet said, "He that believes shall not make haste." That "making haste," means being fluttered and alarmed and so being led to run from the foundation. Such a person fled in haste because he was ashamed of his hope. Paul puts aside the drapery of the metaphor to let the uncovered sense stand out boldly! He expounds the Scripture under Infallible guidance and gives its meaning to us in this form, "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." The true sense of the passage our Apostle uses by way of argument—he enforces the promise of the Gospel by the teaching of the Prophet.

Dear Friend, when you go to win souls, go with a clear understanding of the Scriptures and then quote those Scriptures frequently if you would have power over the minds of men. Do not think to convince sinners by your own fine phrases, but use the words which the Holy Spirit teaches. If you want to bring souls to faith in Christ, remember that faith is begotten by the Word—"faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." The more of the true sense of the Word of God we can compress into our exhortations, the more likely shall we be to succeed in our gracious design. This is Paul's mode of argument, "the Scripture says"—and we know no better.

II. And now, secondly, we have before us A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF THE WAY OF SALVATION—"The Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." The way of salvation is to believe on Christ, whom God has laid in Zion for a foundation. What is believing on Him? It is trusting in Him. The language is not "Believe Him"—such belief is a part of faith but not the whole. We believe everything which the Lord Jesus has taught, but we must go a step further and trust Him.

It is not even enough to believe in Him as being the Son of God and the Anointed of the Lord—we must believe on Him, just as in the building (for that is the figure used by Isaiah) the builder takes his stone and lays it on the foundation. There it rests with all its weight—there it abides. The faith that saves is not believing certain Truths of God nor even believing that Jesus is a Savior—but it is resting on Him, depending on Him, lying with all your weight on Christ as the foundation of your hope. Believe that He can save you! Believe that He will save you! At any rate, leave the whole matter of your salvation with Him in unquestioning confidence. Depend upon Him without fear as to your present and eternal salvation. This is the faith which saves the soul.

Notice, next, that this faith is believing on a Person—"He that believes on—it"? No! On, "Him." Our faith is not based on a doctrine, or a ceremony, or an experience—but on "Him!" Our Lord Jesus Christ is God. He is also Man— He is the appointed and anointed Savior.

In His death He is the Propitiation for sin. In His Resurrection He is the justification of His people. And in His intercession He is the eternal guarantee of their preservation. Believe "on Him." Our faith fixes herself upon the Person of the Lord Jesus as seen in His sufferings, His offices and His achievements. "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed."

The text refers to the truth of the trusting. The Apostle does not say, "Whoever believes on Him with full assurance, or with a high degree of confidence shall not be ashamed." No, it is not the measure of our faith, but the sincerity of our faith which is the great question! If we believe on Him at all we shall not be ashamed. Our faith may be very trembling and this will cause us sorrow—but a trembling faith will save. The greater your faith, the more comfortable for you. But if your faith is small as a grain of mustard seed, it will save you. If your faith can only touch the hem of the Savior's garment behind Him, it will heal your soul, for, "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." Is there not blessed comfort about this assurance?

Observe, again, that all depends upon the presence of this trusting and not upon the age of it. "He that believes on Him"—this relates to the immediate present. Perhaps the truster has only believed on Jesus during the last five minutes. Very well, he does believe on Him and he shall not be ashamed! Some of us are glad to remember that we were built on the sure Foundation more than 40 years ago. But the length of years during which we have believed does not enter into the essence of the matter—Believers are saved whether their faith has lasted through half a century or half an hour. "Whoever believes on Him," takes in the convert of this morning as well as the hero of a thousand fights. My newly-believing Friend, I am sorry you have put off faith so long but, still, I am greatly glad that you have believed at all—for your faith shall not be put to shame!

One other remark needs to be made before I leave this point. Note the Object of faith. "Whoever believes on Him." Nothing else is mentioned in connection with the Lord Jesus, who is the sole Foundation. It is not written, "He that believes on Jesus nine parts out of ten and on himself for the other tenth." No! "Whoever believes on Him"—on Him alone. Jesus will never be a part Savior! We must not rest in part upon what we hope to do in the future, nor in part upon

the efficacy of an outward ceremony. No! The faith must be "on Him." Both feet must be on the Rock of Ages. The whole stone must rest on the Foundation. Take Christ to be the sole Savior of your soul!

I saw written at the foot of a cross in France, "SPES UNICA"—"Jesus is the lone hope of men." There is but one star in your sky, Sinner, and that star is the Star of Bethlehem! There is but one light for the tempest-tossed mariner on the stormy sea of conviction of sin—and that Light is the Pharos of the Cross. Look there! Look there! Only there—"For the Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." Now if any soul here perishes, it will not be my fault. However feebly I may preach this morning, I shall go home

satisfied that I have set before you enough for your salvation, if you are willing and obedient. I have most plainly set before you the way of salvation.

What more can I do? I can bring the horse to water but I cannot make him drink! I can set the Water of Life before you, but I can do no more if you turn away from Him. If you accept the Lord Jesus and believe on Him you shall not be ashamed—but if you put Him far from you, you will die in your sins—and your blood will be upon your own heads!

III. So I pass on to the third point—THE GLORIOUS PROMISE TO THOSE WHO OBEY THE GOSPEL. "The Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." Take the Hebrew form of it first—"shall not make haste." When a man builds his hope upon the Lord Christ he is not driven into worry and hurry. He quietly walks with God and does not hasten through fear.

They say that the floods are out, that the winds are howling, that the rains are descending—he that trusts in a refuge of lies may well make haste to flee—but he that has built his house upon the rock, quietly answers, "The flood is coming. I supposed it would. The rains are falling. I expected that they would. The winds are blowing. I was forewarned of the tempest and I am prepared for it by being on the rock!" His house will stand. He will never be ashamed of its foundation. In patience he possesses his soul—

"Calm 'mid the bewildering cry; Confident of victory."

The Holy Spirit's reading of the Holy Spirit's Word in the Old Testament is, "He shall not be ashamed," and this means that he shall not be ashamed at any time by discovering that he has been deluded. Men are ashamed when their hopes fail. If a man has an expectation of eternal life and all of a sudden he sees his hope dashed to shivers, is he not ashamed? If on his dying bed his confidence should turn out to be based on a falsehood, how ashamed he will be! He will then say, "I am ashamed to think I did not take more care. I am ashamed that I followed my own judgment instead of God's Word." They shall lie down in sorrow who find their hope to be as a spider's web. It will be an awful thing in our last moments, when we most need comfort, to be driven to despair by the wreck of our confidence!

If any of you are trusting in your gold, it will turn out to be a poor confidence when you are called upon to leave all earthly things. I have heard of one, who, on his deathbed laid bags of money to his heart—but he was forced to lay them away and cry, "These will not do! These will not do!" It will be a sorry business if we have been trusting in our good temper, our charity, our patriotism, our courage, or our honesty and when we come to die shall be made to feel that these cannot satisfy the claims of Divine Justice or give us a passport to the skies! How sad to see robes turn to rags and comeliness into corruption! How wretched to regard one's self as covered with a garment fit for Christ's great wedding feast and then to wake out of a dream and find one's self naked!

You will never have this vexation of spirit if you take Christ Jesus to be your confidence. So far from being ashamed, you will boast in the crucified Savior! Yes, you will vow with

Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Furthermore, dear Friends, he that believes on Christ shall not be ashamed to admit his faith. This is a sharp saying and it cuts as a razor. I wish it would make a great gash in cowardly spirits. "Whoever believes on him shall not be ashamed." Some think they believe on Christ and yet they are ashamed to admit their faith in the Lord's appointed way or, indeed, in any way.

If they are in ungodly company, they do with their faith as they do with their dog when a friend comes in—they say, "Lie down, Sir." Because it is inconvenient to be known to be a Believer they treat the Lord Christ as they would treat a dog. Some of you have never made a confession of your Lord—what will become of you? "Oh," you say, "do not say hard things!" I do not say them out of my own head—let me read the passage to you from verse ten—"For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, Whoever believes on him shall not be ashamed."

What is the meaning of the whole passage? I cannot shut my eyes to the Truth of God—that it speaks of confessing Christ—and declares that he who really believes on him will not be ashamed of it. If you, my Hearer, are ashamed of your Lord, your faith is not real! Or, to say the least of it, you have cause to suspect that it is not. If you are ashamed, you are an unbeliever for, "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." The Christian's song is—

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, Or to defend His cause; Maintain the honor of His Word, The glory of His Cross." For my own part, I have often said and I cannot help repeating it yet again—

"Ever since by faith I saw the stream His flowing wounds supply, Redeeming love has been my theme, And shall be till I die."

I am not ashamed of my hope! I love to state it, to glory in it and to make it widely known.

I heard of a "modern-thought" minister of some repute, that a person asked him, "Sir, what is your theory of the Atonement?" He replied, "My dear Sir, I have never told that to any living person, although I have been a preacher for years. And I am not going to commit myself now." He seemed to think that this was rather a wise thing. My course runs in the opposite direction—I believe in the vicarious Sacrifice of Christ and I am not ashamed of the old-fashioned doctrine. "He loved me and gave Himself for me"—why should I be ashamed to admit it? I will not believe anything that I dare not preach! I have a grave suspicion that it will go ill at last with the man who has one faith for the public and another for himself! We should be ashamed at being ashamed of Christ and His Truth!

Still, this is not all the meaning of our text—the Believer shall have no cause to be ashamed. Let me try to illustrate this assertion. We shall not be ashamed because our faith is proved to be unreasonable. When a man is convicted of believing an absurdity, he is ashamed. But there is nothing unreasonable in the Truth that, "God so loved the world that

He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I will not say that reason teaches this grand fact—for reason could not reach so high! This Truth of God is above reason, but it is not contrary to reason. When you get some idea of the Infinite goodness and justice of God, it will not seem unreasonable that He should be willing to forgive sinners, nor unreasonable that He should devise a way by which He can do this without injury to His moral government.

There is a sweet reasonableness in the provision of a Substitute for guilty men and a still sweeter reasonableness in the salvation of those who believe in the Lamb of God. In fact the Gospel system is so blessedly reasonable that when it comes home to the enlightened understanding it carries the mind by storm! I have seen love at first sight with many a man who, for the first time, has heard how God is "just, and the Justifier of him which believes in Jesus." It has seemed so Godlike a method that the man has accepted it at once! It bore its proof on its face.

Next, we are not ashamed because our faith has been disproved, for it has never been disproved. No man has been able to prove that the Son of God was not here on earth and that He did not die on the Cross, the "Just for the unjust, to bring us to God." The Resurrection has never been disproved, nor the Ascension, nor the descent of the Holy Spirit. Nothing has overthrown Apostolic testimony! To quibble at a statement is not to disprove it. To make it a matter of coarse jest is not to disprove it.

The Apostles and their companions bore public witness and died because of their solemn conviction of the truth of their testimony! They were simple men who could not have invented the Gospel story if they could—and they were good men who would not have invented it if they could. Until men can prove that there was no Christ and no propitiation for sin, we shall not be ashamed to believe on Him. We shall never be ashamed of believing on Jesus, because by experience we shall find it to be unsatisfactory to our conscience. No, no! We are more than content with the ground of our trust in this respect.

Well do I remember when I first gripped the thought that Jesus suffered in my place and that I, looking to Him, was saved. I felt a peace like a river, ever flowing, ever deepening, ever widening. My former trouble had arisen from the question—how could God, as a righteous Judge, pass by my violation of His holy Law? Sin is not to be viewed as a personal offense to God, as a Being, but a rebellion against His Laws as the Judge of all the earth, who must do right.

How could He wink at sin? How could He treat the guilty as the innocent? When I saw that He did not wink at sin, but that Jesus came to vindicate the Divine Law by suffering in our place, I rested with all confidence on that blessed fact! My heart said, "It is enough," and today it still cries, "It is enough."

My conscience has never raised a question about the security furnished by the ransom of the Lord Jesus. My heart remains perfectly at ease now she knows that "He His own self

bore our sins in His own body on the tree." If the Nature of God had not required an atonement for sin, the conscience of the sinner might have needed it! The righteous apprehension of conscience as to wrath to come demands a vindication of the Law. Because we have this vindication in Christ we are not ashamed. We are not ashamed of the Gospel of salvation by faith in Christ because it proves inoperative upon our lives.

I remember the witty clergyman Sidney Smith who managed to come into collision with the Methodists—he charged them with so much preaching faith that good works were at a discount! Surely he never heard Mr. Wesley! I venture to say that the Methodists produced more good works than Mr. Smith's preaching ever did! If any say to us, "This faith of yours takes you off from trusting in works," we answer, "It does—but it does not take us off from practicing them." Faith is the mother of holiness and the nurse of virtue. The lives of the Puritans who taught the Gospel of faith in Christ were infinitely preferable to the lives of those Cavaliers who believed in human merit. The fact is that men who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ have even been ridiculed for being too righteous and rated for a sort of moroseness of morality! But history has never afforded the least support to the charge that they were indifferent to morality.

Indifferent to morality? We never knew what holiness was until we believed in Jesus! We had no aspirations after purity till we were saved by Him! The spiritual effect of faith in Jesus is of the noblest. Oh that we could display more of it! We are not ashamed to challenge investigation as to the philanthropic effect of faith in the Gospel. If anyone should sneer and say, "You Believers think yourselves saved and so you are comfortably unconcerned as to what becomes of others." I should answer, "What a lie!" We love the souls of men and we have proved it in our ministry and in our incessant efforts to save them! We have gone with breaking heart and bowed head because certain of our hearers remain in unbelief!

I can appeal to you all, that my ministry has been full of earnest expostulations, affectionate appeals and tearful entreaties. God is our witness how truly we can say our heart's desire and prayer to God for others is that they may be saved! We are not ashamed to say that the ministry of those who believe alone in Christ and who know assuredly that they are saved by Divine Grace, has about it, as a rule, a greater power to win souls than the ministry of those who preach other gospels. We say no more, lest we become fools in glorying. We are not ashamed of our hope on this ground.

We are never ashamed of it, again, as to its operation upon others. When I look back through my life, having preached nothing in this place but faith in Christ as the way of salvation, I can, without any effort of memory, remember many drunkards made sober, harlots made chaste, lovers of pleasure made lovers of God! Many have been reclaimed from among the poorest and most degraded and some from the rich and vicious. We have seen what faith in God has done by lifting them from the level of selfishness to the heights of Divine Grace. If we had to go down into the worst slum of London we would not wish for anything

better than to preach Christ Crucified—and if we had to visit the wildest hells of the West End, we would not wish for any theme more powerful than the Cross of our Lord Jesus! "Believe and live" is still a charm most potent.

We have no cause to be ashamed of what the Truth of God has done in ages past and is doing even at this day. I will tell you when we should be ashamed of our hope and that would be if we saw it repudiated by dying saints. It is all very well to be a Believer when you are young, in health and can go about your business—but how will it fare with men and women when they are called to go upstairs and suffer—and never to come down again till carried to their long home? How does the Gospel serve them when they know that they cannot live another week? What is the condition of Believers on the brink of the grave? Those who believe in Jesus are calm and happy! Frequently they are exultant and the bed can scarcely hold them because of their supreme joy in the prospect of being with their Lord! I am not telling you idle tales, Brothers and Sisters. Many of you know that I speak the truth—for it is of your own relatives that I am speaking of now. Our people die well. We have no occasion to be ashamed. Tested by the dying of our fellow Believers, we are not ashamed of the Gospel!

We might be ashamed, once more, if we could be outbid in our prospects by some other system. What form of religion offers more to the Believer than the system of Grace and simple faith in Jesus? Nowhere in the world, that I know of, is there any other system of religion which promises sure salvation to its followers. The Roman Catholic system does not at all provide for present and everlasting salvation. What does it provide for? For your getting out of "purgatory" in due time and no more. When I was in the Church of St. John Lateran, at Rome, I read a request for prayer for the repose of the soul of his Eminence, Cardinal Wiseman. Now Cardinal Wiseman was a great man, a prince of the church, but yet he is somewhere in the other world where he is not in repose—so this request indicates. That must mean a very poor outlook for an ordinary Catholic!

For my part I would give up so cheerless a hope and become a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and go to Heaven! "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." When the best Catholic finds himself in "purgatory" he will be ashamed and will say, "Oh, that I had taken to the way of trust in the all-sufficient merit of the Lord Jesus, for then I should have been covered with His righteousness and should have been with Him where He is." Beloved Friends, our rivals do not outbid us! Our Gospel brings immediate pardon for every sin, a gracious change of Nature, the regeneration of the heart and the preservation of the soul to Christ's eternal kingdom and glory. Hallelujah!

IV. I have done, when I say to you, lastly, that in my text we see A WIDE DOOR OF HOPE FOR THE SEEKER. Read that word, "whoever," whoever, whoever. I must keep on ringing that silver bell! It rings in the 13th verse— "Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." It rings in the text—"Whoever believes on Him shall not be

ashamed." No secret decree has ever been made to shut out any soul that believes on Him! God has not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth and said, "Such a man may believe in Christ and yet he shall be lost." Do not be afraid of this, for it is impossible!

No measure of sin in your past life can deprive you of this promise. "Whoever believes on Him," though he had been a murderer, or a thief, or a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a liar, or a blasphemer—he shall find his faith removing his sins through the blood of Jesus and renewing his heart by the Holy Spirit. "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." Says one, "I shall always be ashamed that I have so greatly transgressed." Yes, I know, but still you shall be so perfectly pardoned that your sin shall be blotted out and you shall not remember the shame of your youth. "But I do not feel as I ought," says one. You shall feel aright if you will believe on Him.

You shall not be shut out of the promise through any lack of sensitiveness. It is not said, "Whoever believes on Him and is sensitive to a high degree shall be saved." No—"Whoever believes on Him." You ought to be sensitive. You ought to be tender. You ought to be grieved for sin and you shall be if you believe on Him. If you believe on Jesus, He will give you true repentance and deep self-aborrence—but you must come to Jesus for these things and not try to find them in your own depraved hearts. Nothing limits this "whoever"! "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." "Alas," cries one, "I have a strong besetting sin, I have a hot temper, or fierce lusts, or a desperate thirst for drink."

Yes, I know. But if you believe on Him you shall not be ashamed, for these shall be conquered and destroyed. You shall be helped to fight against them until you get a complete victory and so you shall never be ashamed. "Ah," says one, "but I once made a profession and I have gone back." Yes, but, "whoever" does not shut out the wanderer! Backsliding is a great and bitter evil but he that believes is justified from every sin. "Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Come, then, with your heaped-up sins and be unburdened! Come, though seven devils dwell within you! Come to have them driven out and yourself made white in the blood of the Lamb! Come, for you shall not be ashamed! Let no man stand back and say, "I dare not come." Remember the word of the Savior, "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." "In no wise." That is, for no possible reason. "Oh, but my birth was shameful." I may be speaking to one who is illegitimate. This is no barrier, for children of shame may be made heirs of Glory! The Lord rejects none, however uneducated, coarse or dull they may be. Neither does race offer hindrance. Be you an Englishman or a Chinaman, there is no difference. White, black, brown, red, or blue—still does the promise stand—"Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." There is no distinction as to rank, name, class, or reputation.

"Oh, but look at my occupation!" I am sorry if it is an evil profession—get out of it and do something honest—but whatever you may be by trade, come to Jesus and believe on

Him, for, "Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." "Alas, I am too old!" says another. What are you? Two hundred? "No, not so old as that." Then you are still under age!

Never mind how old you are—"Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." If you have one foot in the grave, faith may put both feet on the Rock of Ages! You are yet on praying ground and pleading terms with God, therefore come to Jesus, for He has said, "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." Come with your little faith, your trembling hope and believe on the Lord Jesus and you shall not be ashamed!

Lastly, in that day when the earth and Heaven shall melt and nothing shall be seen but Christ upon the Throne, judging all the earth, those who have not believed in Him will be ashamed. They will have no excuse to offer—they have none even now! They will be ashamed, then, that they did not take the counsel of their godly friends and heed the pleadings of their minister. They will be ashamed to think how they put off thoughts of Christ and lingered until they found themselves in Hell! The face of the Lord Jesus will be terrible to unbelievers to the last degree! One young person, in great trouble of soul, said to me the other day, "When I am lost, I shall always see your face—it will accuse and condemn me."

She will not be lost, dear girl—I trust she will soon find peace with God through Jesus Christ. It will be terrible, for those who refuse the Gospel, even to remember the preacher of it—but infinitely more so to see the face of Him who bled and died and loved unto the uttermost. Oh, to think, "I would not have Him! I would not be saved by Him! I preferred to trust to myself or not to think at all—and now here I am." Assuredly, the flames of Hell will be more tolerable than a sight of His face!

The bitterest wail of Tophet is this—"Hide us from the face of Him that sits upon the Throne!" You sinners seek His face, whose wrath you cannot bear. God help you to seek it now! Before you leave this house may you seek it and find it! He says, "Seek you My face." May God the Holy Spirit lead you to obey the call. Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON— [Romans 10](#). HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—907, 118, 531.