

Man Humbled, God Exalted

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"And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." [Isaiah 2:17](#).

THIS is the case when God visits a nation with terrible judgments. When the Jews were led away captive into Babylon, the great men of the land were bound in chains and treated as common slaves. And as they marched across the weary wilderness, the iron entered into their souls. Then was the loftiness of their spirit bowed down and the haughtiness of the king and the princes, who laughed at the Prophet, was laid low.

So also when God is pleased to send famine upon a land, then again man has to humble himself. It is not easy to say, "I am my own. Who is Lord over me?" when the barn is empty and when the wine vats no longer burst with new wine. Famine is a wondrous leveler—and when the king of Samaria went through his straitened cities—where women had eaten their own children in the straitness of the siege, I think there was none brought so low as the king—none so humbled as the highest and none so base as the haughtiest!

It is so, too, when pestilence comes. With equal foot, it kicks at the door both of the palace and of the cottage. Then the prince must mourn because his first-born dies—and majesty must sit in weeds when desolation is in the palace.

God has wondrous ways of making men feel that they are but dust, but when nothing else can serve His turn He will sweep whole dynasties away, as men remove an anthill when it has become a nuisance. Yes, He will shake mighty nations, and make "eternal cities," as they were called, only to stand as the memorials and the wrecks of greatness! The Lord, in all the works of Providence hitherto, if you analyze the pages of history, you will find has been constantly bringing down high looks and making the haughtiness of man to be humbled. Indeed, this seems to be God's great work! And if any man should say to me, "What is God doing?" I would answer, "He is lifting up the lowly and he is casting down the proud! He seems always to be engaged in this, as though it were His natural work and He delighted in it—the taking down of those nests that were built among the stars—and the stooping in the almightiness of His love to pick up the beggar from the mire and set him among the princes, even among the princes of His people."

What is thus constantly being done in His Providence will be continued to be done until the haughtiness of man shall be completely driven away—until in this world there shall be no place for any majesty, but the majesty of the King of kings—until beneath the cape of

Heaven there shall be but one name before which men shall bow, one Throne which alone shall be august in men's minds and only one name by which all the families of the earth shall be named! "In that day," when all the earth shall be filled with His Glory, as the waters cover the sea, it shall be said, "He has thrown down the high looks of man and the Lord, alone, is exalted!"

But I want to come to something more distinctly personal to ourselves. This text is certainly true, though in so applying it we may seem to be wresting it from its original setting and connection, it is certainly true in the economy of Grace. Man in all matters of religion and in all his dealings with God, is proud, but it is amazing how apparently humble men will be when they worship false gods. They will cut themselves with knives and roll themselves in the mire. We have known some votaries to kneel before the representation of the Virgin Mary and lick the very pavement with their tongues by way of penance—and perform the most degrading rites in honor of their false gods. Man seems to be humble enough in his dealings with a false deity, but as soon as ever he comes to deal with the true God, the first things that have to be got out of him are his pride, his high looks, his haughtiness—Oh, strange is it that before the Majesty of Heaven a worm

of the dust should think himself great, and that in the blaze of the infinite purity of the thrice-holy God a mass of corruption like man should fancy himself to be good! But so it is! One of the greatest works of Grace in the heart is to humble our pride.

Going now into this subject with as much brevity as possible, we shall observe, in the first place, that—

I. THE PLAN OF SALVATION, ITSELF, AIMS AT THE BOWING DOWN OF THE LOFTINESS OF MAN AND AT THE EXALTATION OF GOD.

This is very apparent to us at once when we remember that there is no plan of salvation at all for man except as a sinner. The plan of salvation necessarily considers man as needing salvation and as being lost. Its very first promise is forgiveness, which implies sin. It begins to talk with man of pardon and justification, which implies guilt and a lack of righteousness. If there is anybody here that is not a sinner, there is nothing in the Bible for him! As old Wilcox well observes, "Christ can save everybody except the self-righteous." He came into the world to save sinners, but not the righteous. He is the Physician for any form of disease, except that form of disease which consists in not being diseased. "The whole," says He, "have no need of a physician, but they that are sick." If you are a sinner, there is some relation between you and Christ. But if you proudly say in your heart, "I am better than other men. I am not as the thief, or the harlot. I need not wash in the fountain which they need so much, for I am clean." I tell you, man or woman, there is no Christ for you, no pardon for you, no justification for you, no Heaven for you! Your self-righteousness, like an iron bar across the gates of Paradise, shuts you out forever! Your good works can do for you what your sins need not do—they may ruin your soul forever by making you too proud to come to Christ.

The plan of salvation appeals to men as sinners! It comes to them on no other terms but as sinners—and thus it is evidently meant to bring down man's high looks.

Moreover, it not only treats men as sinners, but as dead sinners. There is not a complimentary word to human nature within the covers of the Bible. It says, "You has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"—and this was said of New Testament saints who had warm praise from the Apostle Paul! They had been originally dead. If you want an image of human nature, you will find it in the rottenness of Lazarus when he had been dead four days! The Gospel comes to give life to the dead! It comes to deal out everlasting life to those who have lost it and could never have obtained it except as a gift from Heaven. Now, is not this humbling to the high looks of men? What? Must it be so—that I must see, "Death," written upon all my hopes, upon all my doings, upon all my willings? Must all these be written down as being dead things? It must be so. And if you do not know this, you do not know vital godliness as yet, for the Grace of God deals with you in your natural estate as being lost and utterly ruined and undone!

Another humbling point in the plan of salvation is that it distinctly informs the sinner that the way of salvation is in no sense or manner in himself, but is altogether in Another. It tells him that if he is saved, his salvation is entirely the work of Him who, though He was God, yet condescended to become Man that He might lift manhood up into companionship with Godhead! It says the sinner, when he prostrates himself upon his knees, "Your prayers are well enough, but they avail not with the Eternal Father to put away sin. Blood! Blood! Blood must flow, not tears alone!" It tells the sinner that all his merits and his good works cannot obtain salvation for him. It bids him look to Christ and mark the crimson currents as they spring from those matchless wounds, that mouth of mercy, those gates of Paradise, those fountains of immortality, those sources of all our richest treasure and abiding peace! It tells the sinner that the head that once was crowned with thorns must be crowned with the glory of His salvation, if he is saved at all, and that the Man who was despised and spat upon when here below must be honored and adored above by him as his Savior, and his only Savior, or there is no salvation for him! This, too, has a tendency to bring down the high looks and to lower the haughtiness of man.

Perhaps, however, there is nothing in the Gospel which grates more upon some men's pride, touching, as it were, the very marrow of their bones, than the Doctrine, not only that man is a sinner, and a dead sinner, and is saved by the work of Another, but that the very will to be saved is determined not so much by himself as by God. I do not know a text that makes a sinner grind his teeth more than this one—"So then, it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy." You remember that amazing expression of the Savior's, "You will not come unto Me that you might have life." "You have a will. You are responsible. You are free agents, but that will of yours, you have so wickedly set against Me that you will not come unto Me that you may live! You refuse Me—you will not accept

My Grace—you will sooner starve than come to the feast of mercy." Many a man has turned on his heel and said, "I will not hear this any

longer," and then we are reminded of those who left the Master because of certain Truths of God which He taught, and we say, "Will you also go away?" Oh, you who have had your haughtiness brought down, I believe you will be swept out of that idea and will acknowledge that you never came to Christ of your own free will, but only of Sovereign Grace. You do not deny it, for you are always conscious of it, that unless your will had been moved by Sovereign Grace, and constrained by the blessed interposition of the Divine Spirit, you were as obstinate as the heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, kicked against the pricks and would not come to Christ that you might have life! Now, this part of the plan of salvation tends to bring down high looks.

There is another point which I must notice and which is not always understood, but it is a mighty bringer-down of high looks, viz., the understanding of this—that our depraved nature is not in the plan of salvation supposed to be either improved or improvable. Are you startled at such an assertion? Well, if you have read the Word of God, you will have found plenty of warrant for it. All that God Himself can do for your depraved nature as it now stands is to kill it and let it be buried when dead! The ordinance of Baptism is intended to set forth this very Truth of God—that you must be dead and buried to the old life, and the new and true life that you are henceforth to live does not spring out of the ashes of the old, like the phoenix out of the ashes of the departed one, but is an emanation of the Holy Spirit! "Created anew in Christ Jesus." It is not that the carnal man is ever reconciled to God, for it is plainly declared that it is "enmity against God," and cannot be reconciled! The carnal mind cannot even understand spiritual truth! The carnal mind knows not the things which are of God, for they are spiritual and must be spiritually discerned. The process by which a man is practically saved is this—a new nature is put into us! That new and incorruptible nature immediately begins to contend with the old Adam, "the body," as Paul calls it, "of sin and death." This causes a conflict, a conflict which is constantly maintained, and which at certain times is extremely intense and makes the subject of it to cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Or, "From this body of death, this death which has taken such a tangible form as to be to me a realizing tangible thing—a very body of death—who will get me rid of it?" He does not ask that it may be improved, but that he may be delivered from it! He does not ask that it may be changed, but that a new nature may come in and trample it down and rise superior to it!

Oh, Brothers and Sisters, how humbling this is! To think that all Christ found in me when He met with me was so utterly good-for-nothing that all He could do with it was to bury it—and all the life that I had when Christ met with me was in His sight such death that He had to quicken me with an entirely new life—and to make the old life die daily! Happy, happy day when it is completely dead and gone and the new life, delivered from the bondage

of corruption, shall rise into Glory! Now, this is a humbling Doctrine. I am, however, persuaded that it is both a Doctrine declared in God's Word and a Doctrine verified by human experience, so far as that experience is Christian experience. All this is intended by our gracious God to bring down the high looks of man and to humble the haughty and the proud.

But now, in the next place, while the plan of salvation aims at this—

II. THE FIRST WORK OF SALVATION ALSO SECURES IT TO A VERY LARGE EXTENT.

When the Grace of God comes into a man, it comes with an axe in its hand. It does not come at first to build up, but to pull down. I think we should beware of being too suddenly filled with strong confidence and assurance. I do not say beware of too suddenly believing in Christ! That is a blessed thing and is a sinner's present business. When the Holy Spirit gives faith—joy and peace come immediately. But I believe that, as a general rule, God strips before He clothes, and when He means to build a house for His own indwelling, He does what every wise architect does—He first digs out the deep foundations. An early work of Grace in the soul is conviction of sin. We who speak to hundreds and thousands of souls—for we speak without exaggeration when we say we have seen thousands of souls under conviction of sin—we observe this, that conviction of sin is a wondrous puller-down. When a man begins to feel his sin lying heavy upon his heart, when his iniquity is continually before him, as David puts it in the 51st Psalm, then his high looks are gone. Have you ever seen a rich man in the anguish of conviction? You would not know him from a beggar then! His purse-pride has gone! All his wealth gives him but little comfort. "My sin! My sin! My sin!" he says. "Would to God I were as poor as the paupers in the workhouse, if I were but rid of my sin! What is my wealth while I have my sin?"

Have you ever seen the man of knowledge, the man who knows everything, the sharp, quick, critical man, who takes everybody up and thinks he can set all the world right—have you ever seen him under a sense of sin? He feels himself to be a fool at once, and would sit down on a form with the infant class in a school if there he might learn of a Savior, being content to give up all his wisdom and to be a babe in Christ! And have you ever observed the man who was naturally of a high and haughty disposition, who reared up among his fellows—have you ever seen how he acts when God's hand is on him? Why, he would hide himself anywhere—and he envies even the meanest and most obscure of the children of God! Once get a sight of sin, and those things which now prop us up will all give way and we shall be beggars in the face of all the world when once we see how exceedingly sinful a thing our sin is! Some of us have passed through this season of deep penitential humbling before the Lord and we can bear our witness that when the Lord casts us down, there is nothing that can lift us up but the hand of the Lord Himself! For when we did try to rise, our wings melted like the wax wings of Icarus and we fell to the ground broken in pieces.

But if conviction humbles, let me say that conversion humbles a great deal more! It is thought, perhaps, by you that as soon as you find pardon you will not be so humble as you were. Distrust the pardon that does not humble you! Be persuaded that the forgiveness which does not make you lie low in the dust is no forgiveness at all, but a mere fancy of your infatuated heart! When the Lord pardons a sinner, that sinner feels that he could sink and go out of sight. As soon as Peter's boat began to fill, it began to sink—and as soon as our boat gets full of mercy it begins to sink! Peter, too, said, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." And so we feel as if the abundance of God's mercy taught us more than ever a sense of sin. I do not think that a sense of sin is such a heart-breaking thing as a sense of mercy, for sometimes a sense of sin is attended with a despair which steels the soul and makes the mind hardened against God. A criminal may know himself to be guilty, very guilty, but yet if he feels sure that there is no mercy for him, he is like a hunted stag at bay which turns upon its oppressors and fights for dear life. But when a man is conscious of guilt, and then receives a free pardon from his offended God, then he knows not what to do! He is broken in heart, first with his unworthiness, and next with the mercy of God! God compares His Word in one place to a hammer, and in another place to a fire. Now, why are the two put together? Why, because there are some rocks, which, after a line of fire has been made across them, will crack readily in a fissure as soon as the hammer is used! Now, the hammer of conviction, when it comes upon the cold heart, frozen with despair, may break that heart, but oh, when the fire of God's love comes and the hammer, too, then surely the rock gives way and our stubborn will flies into pieces before the Lord, broken by His fire—

"Dissolved by Your goodness, I fall to the ground, And weep to the praise of the mercy I've found." Some say they do not believe this point. If there is anyone of you who has passed through conviction of sin without soul-humbling, I pray God to show you that such a conviction of sin as you have had is not the work of His Spirit! If you have not been led to see this, then, whatever you may have seen of the corruption of your own heart, you have not seen yourself aright. And, on the other hand, if, in coming to Christ, you have been able to keep anything with which to feed your pride, anything in which you can glory, anything of which you can say, "This is mine. This is not Christ's. This came from my own good nature and excellent disposition and not from the Most High"—then you have need to go to Christ again, for you have never yet been to Him aright! All that our unregenerate nature spins must be unraveled. All the pottery that unregenerate nature burns in her kiln shall be broken as with a rod of iron! But that which comes from Christ is grounded, bottomed, and stayed upon the rock of Eternal Mercy! That shall stand, and only that! Oh, this is indeed the way in which God, in the hearts of His people, brings down the loftiness of man, lays low his haughtiness and makes the Lord, alone, to be exalted! Thirdly—

III. THIS SAME WORK IS CARRIED ON IN THE AFTER-WORKS OF GRACE.

I cannot single out all these—it would take too long for this evening—but let us just pick out four of the works of Grace in a Christian in his advance in the spiritual life.

The first is his growth in Grace. I am sure that as the Christian grows in Grace, he grows in humility. Or, at any rate, if there is a growth which is not accompanied by a deeper sense of unworthiness and feebleness than existed before, then it is a supposed growth, not a real one! The farmer is very glad when he sees his root plants growing upwards for a time. He likes to see the green leaf, but he will shake his head to the boy who is pleased with the green leaf only. "Oh," he says, "I want to see it grow downwards as well as upwards—I want the root—that is the most precious thing." If it does not grow in the root, in the underground part, it is but of little value to him. It is well for the Christian, when he has plenty of humility and when he can spread out the very roots of his life and draw up nourishment from the precious Word of God. We must grow in humility! It was remarked by an excellent Divine that growing souls think themselves nothing,

but that grown saints think themselves less than nothing, and I suppose that when they are fully grown they fail to find language in which to express their sense of insignificance! The Apostle Paul, I suppose, committed an error in grammar when he said, "Less than the least of all saints." It may be bad grammar, but it is precious truth! Everyone who has come to such knowledge as the Apostle—and I am afraid there are not many of us who have grown to that!—can truly say that he is "less than the least of all saints." As the Lord then enables us to grow in Grace, Brothers and Sisters, our proud looks will come down and God will be exalted!

In the next place, if the Lord Jesus Christ shall favor us with communion with Himself, it will have the same result. You have sometimes, in happy moments, been with the Savior on the Mount. We scarcely like to speak of these things here, but we have had times when, before we were aware, our souls made us like the chariots of Amminadib. But no chariot of Amminadib could have set forth our rapture! We have had such fellowship with Jesus that, though these eyes have never seen Him, yet we have been conscious of His Presence, joyful and sure that He was near! He has kissed us with the kisses of His lips—His love has been better than wine. Now, no man ever came out of the place of communion proud. If there is one thing that always goes with it, it is a prostration of spirit in the Presence of the precious Savior! See Jesus and be proud? Impossible! Lean your head upon that bosom and be exalted? Impossible! You will feel, when you have seen the Lord, that henceforth you must blush to think that you are so little like He and love Him so little. This is another way in which God brings down our high looks—it is a very blessed way of doing it—may He use it more and more!

A third way of bringing down our high looks is really to make His children practically active. It is thought by some that activity and usefulness have in them a strong tendency to lift us up in pride. I suppose they have, but I believe that idleness has far more—that nobody

is so proud of his strength as the man who has never tried it and that very likely some of those gentlemen who are so apt to pray for the workers lest they should be exalted, and who sit down and do nothing themselves—are much the prouder people of the two! Let me say to you, Brothers and Sisters, that of all the temptations that the workers have, they are not so often tempted to pride as they are to some other things. Take the preacher, for instance, who has to preach twice a day and be the pastor of a multitude of souls. Well, he succeeds upon some one occasion, but he has no time to cradle himself upon that because the trumpet sounds for another battle—and he has to feel that he needs fresh strength! He cannot lift up the banner, for he has to sharpen his sword again! When nightfall comes, he has still some work to do for his Master and the first ray of the morning's light sees him still busy. He has no time to congratulate himself upon what he has performed! He is compelled to—

"Forget the steps already trod, And onward press his way."

I should prescribe to any Christian here tonight, who feels tempted to pride, to attempt some great work for Christ that is a little above his present strength! And when he has done—to let him try something a little above even that! And if he can do that, to go still further! If you always have something on hand more than you can do, and which puts a strain upon your faith and upon your earnestness, I believe it will be one of the best cures for pride and one of the best things, through God the Holy Spirit's power, to make you see your own insufficiency and to bring your haughtiness down.

Well, dear Brothers and Sisters, so base are we naturally that the fourth way of bringing us down is the most common one—not by communion with Christ, nor by activity, so much as by affliction. Must it always be that? Must it always be that? They are bad children who always need the rod, but there are some Christians who seem as if they never would obey without it! "Be you not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle lest they come near unto you." Oh, what hard mouths we have and with what a sharp bit of affliction are we driven—and how we champ that bit, sometimes, and would gladly get it out of our mouths! And if we could do so, we would dash on to our own destruction! The only way that God has to keep us right is to give us, every now and then, a touch with His whip. Blessed be God for it! It is hard to bear, but oh, how profitable it is! Blessed be God for slander! It cuts us to the quick, but oh, how beaded with blessings has it been to us! Blessed be God for depression of spirit! We have groaned under it, some of us, till our life has become a burden to us—but if we had not been so depressed when alone, we would never have been able to bear the prosperity which God has given us abroad! We thank His blessed name, for by all these means, in some way or other, the loftiness of man shall be brought down, the haughtiness of man shall be made low and the Lord alone shall be exalted!

Let us look forward to the works of Grace which are yet incomplete, but which are soon to be completed. Let us anticipate the day when the Spirit of God shall complete His great

work—when the old nature in us shall be utterly conquered and when the new nature, born of God—shall reign in its greatest vitality and fullest development!

Then shall we be, before the Eternal Throne, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness and decked with the jewels of our perfected salvation! Then, indeed, shall every haughty look be gone and every proud thought be banished! And in that day the Lord alone shall be exalted! Then shall our one song be, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Your name be the Glory. Unto Him who loved us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God, unto Him be glory forever and ever." I shall not detain you much longer, but we ought not to leave this subject without mentioning yet another Truth of God that our text suggests.—

IV. THE EFFECT OF THE WORKS OF GRACE WHICH GOD DOES IN HIS CHURCH AT LARGE IS TO

BRING DOWN THE LOFTINESS OF MAN.

Dear Friends, we believe, and some of us believe it very firmly, that God is going to visit our Churches with a revival. We have seen indications of the coming blessing. In connection with this one Church, and it is but an instance of several others, the very presence of this multitude on a Thursday evening is, to some of us, one of the most hopeful signs that there is a spirit of inquiry growing! And on Monday evenings I see the greater part of this area filled with people who come only to pray. I am not conscious of having stirred you up particularly of late, but I have seen a very marked change over the whole face of things. Why, for the last two or three months, our friends who keep the gates outside, although we have always had as many as we could by any process hold, yet find themselves now compelled to shut the gates in the face of hundreds and even of thousands—although before we scarcely knew where to put those who came within the walls, yet there were not so many sent away! The mass who come here has become perfectly astounding to us all. We can hardly realize it. We think it is a good sign if they are willing to hear—and when they will come and even tread upon one another in their desire to hear the Gospel! But a better sign than that is that last Tuesday week, that day of fasting and of prayer, left an impression on the ministers present which they can never forget. And last Tuesday, when we met in our association, the ministers present all said, "Why cannot we have such a day of fasting and prayer?" Ah, indeed, why not? We all agreed that there should be such a day. Then when the delegates and representatives of most of the Baptist Churches in London came, they said, "Cannot we come?" Well, we had not thought of that. "Oh," they said, "you cannot keep us out! We should like to consecrate a whole day to fasting and prayer." "Yes," we replied, "we are right glad to find your hearts so warmed to it." Some asked if all the deacons and elders of Baptist churches could not come, and they were told, "Yes, certainly." And I believe that on Monday, the 5th of November, you will find us by hundreds met together to spend the day, from ten until six, in humiliation and prayer to God for a blessing!

This came so spontaneously, without any plan or proposal, everybody desiring it, that I took it at once as being a token for good! I am glad that the good old Puritan preaching and fasting has come back to our Churches. There are certain demons that afflict mankind, that will not go forth without prayer and fasting, and when many are not only willing, but eager to spend a day entirely for this, it is a good sign! God never sets us praying and longing without meaning to bless us, only here is the point—as sure as ever God blesses us, He will be sure to take us down. We are mistaken if we think He is going to bless us for our own exaltation! If any of you want a blessing for your own self-glorification, you will be wonderfully mistaken! If I, as your pastor, should ask for the conversion of sinners that I might be able to say, "Oh, there are so many added to the Church in a year," I shall not get it, or if it should come, there will come with it some stinging rebuke that will make the soul cry out to God! You must mind that God is in it and then we shall have the blessing! And the only thing that will hinder it is our getting any sinister motive, or any idea that we can exalt ourselves! I say, Brothers and Sisters, that if we seek God's blessing for the mere extension of our denomination, we shall seek it from a wrong motive. We must seek it for God's Glory and for that only, for the Lord will bring down our high looks as well as the high looks of other people! And the more He loves us, the more will He be sure to do this, for what He will not tolerate in sinners, He will not bear in His saints. What I cannot put up with in strangers, I will never endure in my own friends, and so will the Lord chasten His people if they are proud and haughty. Let us then wait and expect to receive a blessing, but let us also expect to be humbled by it. Lastly—

V. WHERE DEEDS OF MERCY DO NOT PROVE THE TRUTH OF THIS, DEEDS OF JUSTICE WILL CONFIRM IT.

I will say but a few sentences, but let them be caught by your ears and seized by your hearts. In this house tonight there are some of you who are not reconciled to God by the death of His Son. You have never humbled yourselves and taken the Lord's Christ to be your only hope. Now, mark this—if you will not come down by Grace, you must and shall come down by judgment! You will be humbled, Sinner, if not to penitence, then to remorse! If not to hopeful conversion, to hopeless despair! Every high look shall be brought down in the day when He shall sit upon the Great White Throne and call the quick and the dead to judgment. "Rocks, hide us! Mountains, fall upon us! Hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne!" Who said that? Why, the very man who once said, "Lord, I thank You that I am not as other men are." Yes, Sirs, and the very man who once said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" He it is who now cries, "Hide me, hide me from the accusing face." Behold, you despisers, wonder and perish! If you will not be humbled at the Cross, you shall be humbled at the Throne of Judgment! If mercy wins you not, judgment shall subdue you! If you will not bend, you shall break! He who will not melt in the fires of love shall be consumed in the furnace of wrath! Oh, my Hearer, what a dread alternative is this! "Kiss the

Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little! Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him!"

There is a wonderful power in humiliation. Ahab humbled himself and though it was not with a saving humility, yet the curse did not fall upon him as it would have done. Even in a natural humiliation there may be some withdrawal of temporal chastisement, but if the Lord shall give you true brokenness of heart, remember it is written, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." There is not one word in the Bible against a humble soul. There is not one curse against a sinner who feels his need and comes empty-handed! Come, poor needy one, poor helpless one, you ruined sinner, without any hope of yourself, you bankrupt sinner, come—

"'Tis perfect poverty alone,
That sets our soul at large.
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."

When we have done with self and with all self's hopes, projects and plans—and trust only in the finished work of Jesus—then may we rejoice, for we are saved and saved eternally!