

WHERE ART THOU?"

GENESIS 3:9

Sermon By D.L. Moody

THE very first thing that happened after the news reached heaven of the fall of man, was that God came straight down to seek out the lost one. As He walks through the garden in the cool of the day, you can hear Him calling "Adam! Adam! Where art thou? " It was the voice of grace, of mercy, and of love. Adam ought to have taken the seeker's place, for he was the transgressor. He had fallen, and he ought to have gone up and down Eden crying, "My God! my God! where art Thou?" But God left heaven to seek through the dark world for the rebel who had fallen — not to hurl him from the face of the earth, but to plan him an escape from the misery of his sin. And he finds him — where? Hiding from his Creator among the bushes of the garden.

The moment a man is out of communion with God, even the professed child of God, he wants to hide away from Him. When God left Adam in the garden, he was in communion with his Creator, and God talked with him; but now that he has fallen, he has no desire to see his Creator, he has lost communion with his God. He cannot bear to see Him, even to think of Him, and he runs to hide from God. But to his hiding place his Maker follows him. "Where art thou, Adam? Where art thou?"

Six thousand years have passed away, and this text has come rolling down the ages. I doubt whether there has been anyone of Adam's sons who has not heard it at some period or other of his life — sometimes in the midnight hour stealing over him — "Where am I? Who am I? Where am I going? and what is going to be the end of this?" I think it is well for a man to pause and ask himself that question. I would have you ask it, little boy; and you, little girl; and you, old man with locks turning gray, and eyes growing dim, and natural force abating, you who will soon be in another world. I do not ask you where you are in the sight of your neighbors; I do not ask you where you are in the sight of your friends; I do not ask you where you are in the sight of the community in which you live. It is of very little account where we are in the sight of one another, it is of very little account what men think of us; but it is of vast importance what God thinks of us — it is of vast importance to know where men are in the sight of God; and that is the question now. Am I in communion with my Creator, or out of communion? If I am out of communion, there is no peace, no joy, no happiness. No man on the face of the earth, who was out of communion with his Creator, ever knew what peace, and joy, and happiness, and true comfort are. He is a foreigner to it. But when we are in communion with

God, there is light all around our path. So ask yourselves this question. Do not think I am preaching to your neighbors, but remember I am trying to speak to you, to everyone of you as if you were alone. It was the first question put to man after his fall, and it was a very small audience that God had — Adam and his wife. But God was the preacher; and although they tried to hide, the words came home to them.

Let them come home to you now. You may think that your life is hid, that God does not know anything about you. But he knows our lives a great deal better than we do; and His eye has been bent upon us from our earliest childhood until now. "Where art thou?" I should like to divide my audience into three classes — the professed Christians, the Backsliders, and the Ungodly.

First, I would like to ask the professors this question, or rather let God ask it — Where art thou? What is my position in the church, and among my circle of acquaintance? Do my friends know me to be, out and out, on the Lord's side? You may have been a professing Christian for twenty years, perhaps thirty, perhaps forty years. Well, where are you tonight?

Are you making progress towards heaven? And can you give a reason for the hope that is within you? Suppose I were to ask those who were really Christians here to rise, would you be ashamed to stand up? Suppose I should ask every professed child of God here, "If you should be cut down by the hand of death, have you good reason to believe you would be saved?" Would you be willing to stand up before God and man, and say that you have good reason to believe you are passed from death unto life?

Or would you be ashamed? Run your mind back over the past years: would it be consistent for you to say, "I am a Christian;" and would your life correspond with your profession? It is not what we say so much as how we live. Actions speak louder than words. Do your shopmates know that you are a Christian? Do your family know? Do they know you to be out and out on the Lord's side? Let every professed Christian ask, Where am I in the sight of God? Is my heart loyal to the King of heaven? Is my life here as it should be in the community I live in? Am I a light in this dark world? Christ says, "Ye are My witnesses." Christ was the Light of the world, and the world would not have the true Light; the world rose up and put out the Light, and now Christ says, "I leave you down here to testify of Me; I leave you down here as My witnesses." That is what the apostle meant when he said that Christians are to be living epistles, known and read of all men. Then, am I standing up for Jesus as I should in this dark world? If a man is for God, let him say so. If a man is for God, let him come out and be on God's side; and if he is for the world, let him be in the world. This serving God and the world at the same time — this

being on both sides at the same time — is just the curse of Christianity at the present time. It retards the progress of Christianity more than any other thing. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

I have heard of a great many people who think if they are united to the church, and have made one profession, that will do for all the rest of their days. But there is a cross for everyone of us daily . Oh, child of God, where are you? If God should appear to you tonight in your bedroom and put the question, what would be your answer? Could you say, "Lord, I am serving Thee with my whole heart and strength; I am improving my talents and preparing for the kingdom to come?" When I was in England in 1867, there was a merchant who came over from Dublin, and was talking with a business man in London; and as I happened to look in, he introduced me to the man from Dublin. Alluding to me, the latter said to the former, "Is this young man all O O?" Said the London man, "What do you mean by O O?" Replied the Dublin man, "Is he Out-and-Out for Christ? " I tell you it burned down into my soul. It means a good deal to be O O for Christ; but that is what all Christians ought to be, and their influence would be felt on the world very soon, if men who are on the Lord's side would come out and take their stand, and lift up their voices in season and out of season. As I have said, there are a great many in the church who make one profession, and that is about all you hear of them; and when they come to die you have to go and hunt up some musty old church records to know whether they were Christians or not. God won't do that. I have an idea that when Daniel died, all the men in Babylon knew whom he served. There was no need for them to hunt up old books. His life told his story. What we want is men with a little courage to stand up for Christ. When Christianity wakes up, and every child that belongs to the Lord is willing to speak for Him, is willing to work for Him, and, if need be, willing to die for Him, then Christianity will advance, and we shall see the work of the Lord prosper. There is one thing which I fear more than anything else, and that is the dead cold formalism of the Church of God. Talk about the isms! Put them all together, and I do not fear them so much as dead, cold formalism. Talk about the false isms! There is none so dangerous as this dead, cold formalism, which has come right into the heart of the Church. There are so many of us just sleeping and slumbering while souls all around are perishing. I believe honestly that we professed Christians are all half asleep. Some of us are beginning to rub our eyes and to get them half-opened, but as a whole we are asleep.

There was a little story going the round of the American press that made a great impression upon me as a father. A father took his little child out into the field one Sabbath, and, it being a hot day, he lay down under a beautiful shady tree. The little child ran about gathering wild flowers and little blades of grass, and coming to its father and saying, "Pretty! pretty!"

At last the father fell asleep, and while he was sleeping the little child wandered away. When he awoke, his first thought was, "Where is my child?" He looked all around, but he could not see him. He shouted at the top of his voice, but all he heard was the echo of his own voice. Running to a little hill, he looked around and shouted again. No response! Then going to a precipice at some distance, he looked down, and there upon the rocks and briars, he saw the mangled form of his loved child. He rushed to the spot, took up the lifeless corpse and hugged it to his bosom, and accused himself of being the murderer of his child. While he was sleeping his child had wandered over the precipice. I thought as I heard that, what a picture of the church of God!

How many fathers and mothers, how many Christian men, are sleeping now while their children wander over the terrible precipice right into the bottomless pit of hell. Father, where is your boy tonight? It may be just out there in some public house; it may be reeling through the streets; it may be pressing onwards to a drunkard's grave. Mother, where is your son? Is he in the house of the publican drinking away his soul — everything that is dear and sacred to him? Do you know where your boy is? Father, you have been a professed Christian for forty years; where are your children tonight? Have you lived so godly, and so Christ-like, that you can say, Follow me as I followed Christ? Are those children walking in wisdom; are they on their way to glory; have they been gathered into the fold of Christ; are their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

How many fathers and mothers today would be able to answer? Did you ever stop to think that you were to blame; that you had not been faithful to your children? Depend upon it, as long as the church is living so much like the world, we cannot expect our children to be brought into the fold.

Come, O Lord, and wake up every mother, and may everyone of us who are parents feel the worth of the souls of the children that God has given us. May they never bring our gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, but may they become a blessing to the church and to the world. Not long ago the only daughter of a wealthy friend of mine sickened and died. The father and mother stood by her dying bed. He had spent all his time in accumulating wealth for her; she had been introduced into gay and fashionable society; but she had been taught nothing of Christ. As she came to the brink of the river of death, she said, "Won't you help me; it is very dark, and the stream is bitter cold." They wrung their hands in grief, but could do nothing for her; and the poor girl died in darkness and despair. What was their wealth to them? And yet, you mothers and fathers are doing the same thing in London today, by ignoring the work God has given you to do. I beseech you, then, each one of you, begin to labor now for the souls of your children!

A young man, some time ago, lay dying, and his mother thought he was a Christian. One day, passing his room door she heard him say, "Lost! lost! lost!" The mother ran into the room and cried, "My boy, is it possible you have lost your hope in Christ, now you are dying?" "No, mother, it is not that; I have a hope beyond the grave, but I have lost my life. I have lived twenty-four years, and done nothing for the Son of God, and now I am dying. My life has been spent for myself; I have lived for this world, and now, while I am dying, I have given myself to Christ; but my life is lost." Would it not be said of many of us, if we should be cut down, that our lives have been almost a failure — perhaps entirely a failure as far as leading anyone else to Christ is concerned? Young lady! are you working for the Son of God? Are you trying to win some soul to Christ? Have you tried to get some friend or companion to have her name written in the book of life? Or would you say, "Lost, lost! long years have rolled away since I became a child of God, and I have never had the privilege of leading one soul to Christ?" If there is one professed child of God who never had the joy of leading even one soul into the kingdom of God, oh! let him begin at once. There is no greater privilege on earth. And I believe, my friends, there has never been a time, in our day, at least, when work for Christ was more needed than at present. I do not believe there ever was in your day or mine a time when the Spirit of God was more poured out upon the world.

There is not a part of Christendom where the work is not being carried on; and it looks very much as if the glad tidings were just going to take, as it were, a fresh start, and go round the globe. Is it not time that the Church of God should wake up and come to the help of the Lord as one man, and strive to beat back those dark waves of death that roll through our streets, bearing upon their bosom the noblest and the best we have? Oh, may God wake up the Church! And let us trim our lights, and go forth and work for the kingdom of His Son.

Now, Secondly, let me talk a little while to those who have gone back into the world — to the Backslider. It may be you came to some great city a few years ago a professed Christian. You were member of a church once, and a teacher in the Sabbath school, perhaps; but when you came among strangers you thought you would just wait a little — perhaps take a class by and by. So you gave up teaching in the Sunday school; you gave up all work for Christ. Then in your new church you did not receive the attention or the warm welcome that you expected. and you got into the habit of staying away. You have gone so far now, that you are found in the theater, perhaps, and the companion of blasphemers and drunkards.

Perhaps I am speaking now to someone who has been away from his father's house for many years. Come, now, backslider, tell me, are you happy? Have you had one happy hour since you left Christ? Does the world satisfy you, or those husks that

you have got in the far country? I have traveled a good deal, but I never found a happy backslider in my life.

I never knew a man who was really born of God that ever could find the world satisfy him afterwards. Do you think the Prodigal Son was satisfied in that foreign country? Ask the prodigals in this city if they are truly happy. You know they are not. "There is no peace, saith my God to the wicked." There is no joy for the man in rebellion against his Creator.

Supposing he has tasted the heavenly gift, and been in communion with God, and had sweet fellowship with the King of Heaven, and had pleasant hours of service for the Master, but has backslidden, is it possible that he can be happy? If he is, it is good evidence he was never really converted. If a man has been born again, and has received the heavenly nature, this world can never satisfy the cravings of his nature. Oh, backslider, I pity you! But I want to tell you that the Lord Jesus pities you a good deal more than anyone else can. He knows how bitter your life is; He knows how dark your life is; He wants you to come home. Oh, backslider, come home tonight! I have a loving message from your Father. The Lord wants you, and calls you back tonight Come home, oh wanderer, this night; return from the dark mountains of sin." Return, and your Father will give you a warm welcome. I know that the devil has told you that God won't have anything to do with you, because you have wandered away. If that is true, there would be very few men in heaven. David backslid; Abraham and Jacob turned away from God; I do not believe there is a saint in heaven but at some time of his life with his heart has backslidden from God. Perhaps not in his life, but in his heart. The prodigal's heart got into the far country before his body got there. Backslider! tonight come home.

Your Father does not want you to stay away. Think you the prodigal's father was not anxious for him to come home all those long years he was there? Every year the father was looking and longing for him to return home. So God wants you to come home. I do not care how far you have wandered away; the great Shepherd will receive you back into the fold tonight. Did you ever hear of a backslider coming home, and God not willing to receive him? I have heard of earthly fathers and mothers not being willing to receive back their sons; but I defy any man to say he ever knew a really honest backslider want to get home, but God was willing to take him in.

A number of years ago, before any railway came into Chicago, they used to bring in the grain from the Western prairies in wagons for hundreds of miles, so as to have it shipped off by the Lakes. There was a father who had a large farm out there, and who used to preach the gospel as well as attend to his farm. One day, when church business engaged him, he sent his son to Chicago with grain. He waited and waited

for his boy to return, but he did not come home. At last he could wait no longer, so he saddled his horse and rode to the place where his son had sold the grain. He found that he had been there and got the money for the grain; then he began to fear that his boy had been murdered and robbed. At last, with the aid of a detective, they tracked him to a gambling den, where they found that he had gambled away the whole of his money. In hopes of winning it back again, he then had sold the team, and lost that money too. He had fallen among thieves, and like the man who was going to Jericho, they stripped him, and then they cared no more about him. What could he do? He was ashamed to go home to meet his father, and he fled. The father knew what it all meant. He knew the boy thought he would be very angry with him.

He was grieved to think that his boy should have such feelings towards him. That is just exactly like the sinner. He thinks because he has sinned, God will have nothing to do with him. But what did that father do? Did he say, "Let the boy go?" No, he went after him. He arranged his business and started after the boy. That man went from town to town, from city to city. He would get the ministers to let him preach, and at the close he would tell his story. "I have got a boy who is a wanderer on the face of the earth somewhere." He would describe his boy and say, "If you ever hear of him or see him, will you not write to me?" At last he found that he had gone to California, thousands of miles away. Did that father say "Let him go?" No; off he went to the Pacific coast, seeking the boy. He went to San Francisco, and advertised in the newspapers that he would preach at such a church on such a day. When he had preached he told his story, in hopes that the boy might have seen the advertisement and come to the church.

When he had done, away under the gallery there was a young man who waited until the audience had gone out; then he came towards the pulpit.

The father looked, and saw it was that boy, and he ran to him, and pressed him to his bosom. The boy wanted to confess what he had done, but not a word would the father hear. He forgave him freely, and took him to his home once more.

Oh, prodigal, you may be wandering on the dark mountains of sin, but God wants you to come home. The devil has been telling you lies about God; you think he will not receive you back. I tell you, He will welcome you this minute if you will come. Say, "I will arise and go to my Father."

May God incline you to take this step. There is not one whom Jesus has not sought far longer than that father. There has not been a day since you left Him but he has followed you. I do not care what the past has been, or how black your life, He will receive you back. Arise then, O backslider, and come home once more to your

Father's house.

Not long ago, in Edinburgh, a lady who was an earnest Christian worker, found a young woman whose feet had taken hold of hell, and who was pressing onwards to a harlot's grave. The lady begged her to go back to her home, but she said no, her parents would never receive her. This Christian woman knew what a mother's heart was; so she sat down and wrote a letter to the mother, telling her how she had met her daughter, who was sorry, and wanted to return. The next post brought an answer back, and on the envelope was written, "Immediately — immediately!" That was a mother's heart. They opened the letter. Yes, she was forgiven. They wanted her back, and they sent money for her to come immediately.

Sinner, that is the proclamation, "Come immediately". That is what the great and loving God is saying to every wandering sinner — immediately.

Yes, backslider, come home tonight. He will give you a warm welcome, and there will be joy in heaven over your return. Come now, for everything is ready.

A friend of mine said to me some time ago, Did you ever notice what the prodigal lost by going into that country? He lost his food. That is what every poor backslider loses. They get no manna from heaven. The Bible is a closed book to them; they see no beauty in the Word of God.

Then the prodigal lost his work. He was a Jew, and they made him take care of swine; that was all loss for a Jew. So every backslider loses his work. He cannot do anything for God; he cannot work for eternity. He is a stumbling block to the world. My friend, do not let the world stumble over you into hell.

The prodigal also lost his testimony. Who believed him? I can imagine some of these men came along, natives of that country, and they saw this poor prodigal in his rags, barefooted and bareheaded. There he stands among the swine and someone says to another, "Look at that poor wretch." "What," he says, "do you call me a poor wretch? My father is a wealthy man; he has got more clothes in his wardrobe than you ever saw in your life. My father is a man of great wealth and position." Do you suppose these men would believe him? "That poor wretch the son of a wealthy man!" Not one of them would believe him. "If he had such a wealthy father he would go to him." So with the backsliders; the world does not believe that they are the sons of a King. They say, "Why don't they go to Him, if there is bread enough and to spare? Why don't they go home?"

Then, another thing the prodigal lost was his home. He had no home in that foreign country. As long as his money lasted, he was quite popular in the public house and

among his acquaintances; he had professed friends, but as soon as his money was gone, where were his friends? That is the condition of every poor backslider in London.

But now I can imagine someone saying, "There would be little use of me attempting to come back. In a few days I should just be where I was again.

I should like very much to go to my Father's home again, but I'm afraid I wouldn't stay there." Well, just picture this scene. The poor prodigal has got home, and the father has killed the fatted calf; and there they are, sitting at the table eating. I can imagine that was about the sweetest morsel he ever got — perhaps the nicest dinner he ever had in his life. His father sits opposite; he is full of joy, and his heart is leaping within him. All at once he sees his boy weeping. "My son, what are you weeping for? Are you not glad to have got home?" "Oh, yes, father; I never was so glad as I am today: but I am so afraid I will go back into that foreign country!"

Why, you cannot imagine such a thing! When you have got one meal in your Father's house, you will never be inclined to wander away again.

Now let me speak to the Third class. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Sinner, what is to become of you? How shall you escape? "Where art thou?" Is it true that you are living without God and without hope in the world? Did you ever stop to think what would become of your soul if you should be taken away by a sudden stroke of illness — where you would stand in eternity? I read that the sinner is without God, without hope, and without excuse. If you are not saved, what excuse will you have to give? You cannot say that it is God's fault. He is only too anxious to save you. I want to tell you tonight that you can be saved if you will. If you really want to pass from death to life, if you want to become an heir of eternal life, if you want to become a child of God, make up your mind this night that you will seek the kingdom of God. I tell you, upon the authority of this Word, that if you seek the kingdom of God you will find it. No man ever sought Christ with a heart to find Him who did not find Him. I never knew a man make up his mind to have the question settled, but it was settled soon. This last year there has been a solemn feeling stealing over me. I am what they call in the middle of life, in the prime of life. I look upon life as a man who has reached the top of a hill, and just begins to go down the other side. I have got to the top of the hill, if I should live the full term of life — threescore years and ten — and am just on the other side. I am speaking to many now who are also on the top of the hill, and I ask you, if you are not Christians, just to pause a few minutes, and ask yourselves where you are. Let us look back on the hill that we have been climbing. What do you see? Yonder is the cradle. It is not far away. How short life is! It all seems but as yesterday. Look along up the hill, and yonder is a tombstone; it

marks the resting place of a loved mother. When that mother died, did you not promise God that you would serve Him? Did you not say that your mother's God should become your God? And did you not take her hand in the stillness of the dying hour, and say, "Yes, mother, I will meet you in heaven!" And have you kept that promise? Are you trying to keep it? Ten years have rolled away: fifteen years — but are you any nearer God? Did the promise work any improvement in you? No, your heart is getting harder: the night is getting darker; by and by death will be throwing its shadows round you. My friend, Where art thou? Look again. A little further up the hill there is another tombstone. It marks the resting place of a little child. It may have been a little lovely girl — perhaps her name was Mary; or it may have been a boy — Charley; and when that child was taken from you, did you not promise God, and did you not promise the child, that you would meet it in heaven? Is the promise kept? Think! Are you still fighting against God? Are you still hardening your heart? Sermons that would have moved you five years ago — do they touch you now?

Once more look down the hill. Yonder there is a grave; you cannot tell how many days, or weeks, or years it is away, you are hastening towards that grave. Even should you live the life allotted to man, many of you are near the end, you are getting very feeble, and your locks are turning gray. It may be the coffin is already made that this body shall be laid in; it may be that the shroud is already waiting. My friend, is it not the height of madness to put off salvation so long? Undoubtedly I am speaking to some who will be in eternity a week from now. In a large audience like this, during the next week death will surely come and snatch some away; it may be the speaker, or it may be someone who is listening. Why put off the question another day? Why say to the Lord Jesus again tonight, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for Thee?"

Why not let him come in tonight? Why not open your heart, and say, "King of Glory, come in?"

Will there ever be a better opportunity? Did not you promise ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty years ago that you would serve God? Some of you said you would do it when you got married and settled down; some of you said you would serve Him when you were your own master. Have you attended to it?

You know there are three steps to the lost world; let me give you their names. The first is Neglect. All a man has to do is to neglect salvation, and that will take him to the lost world. Some people say, "What have I done!" Why, if you merely neglect salvation, you will be lost. I am on a swift river, and lying in the bottom of my little boat. Down yonder, ten miles below, is the great cataract. Everyone that goes over it perishes. I need not row the boat down; I have only to pull in the oars, and fold

my arms and neglect. So all that a man has to do is to fold his arms in the current of life, and he will drift onwards and be lost.

The second step is Refusal. If I met you at the door and pressed this question on you, you would say, "Not tonight, Mr. Moody, not tonight;" and if I repeated, "I want you to press into the kingdom of God," you would politely refuse: "I will not become a Christian tonight, thank you; I know I ought, but I won't tonight."

Then the last step is to Despise it. Some of you have already got on the lower round of the ladder. You despise Christ. You hate Christ, you hate Christianity; you hate the best people on the earth and the best friends you have got; and if I were to offer you the Bible, you would tear it up and put your foot upon it. Oh, despisers! you will soon be in another world. Make haste and repent and turn to God. Now, on which step are you, my friend; neglecting, or refusing, or despising? Bear in mind that a great many are taken off from the first step; they die in neglect. And a great many are taken away refusing. And a great many are on the last step, despising salvation.

A few years ago they neglected, then they got to refuse; and now they despise Christianity and Christ. They hate the sound of the church bell; they hate the Bible and the Christian; they curse the very ground that we walk on. But one more step and they are gone. Oh ye despisers, I set before you life and death; which will you choose? When Pilate had Christ on his hands, he said, "What shall I do with him?" and the multitude cried out, "Away with Him! crucify Him!" Young men, is that your language tonight? Do you say, "Away with this gospel! Away with Christianity!"

Away with your prayers, your sermons, your gospel sounds! I do not want Christ?" Or will you be wise and say, "Lord Jesus, I want Thee, I need Thee, I will have Thee?" Oh, may God bring you to that decision! "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE" ROMANS 3:22 THAT is one of the hardest truths man has to learn. We are apt to think that we are just a little better than our neighbors, and if we find they are a little better than ourselves, we go to work and try to pull them down to our level. If you want to find out who and what man is, go to the third chapter of Romans, and there the whole story is told. "There is none righteous, no not one." "All have sinned and come short." All. Some men like to have their lives written before they die; if any of you would like to read your biography, turn to this chapter, and you will find it already written.

I can imagine someone saying, "I wonder if he really pretends to say that 'there is no difference.'" The teetotaler says, "Am I no better than the drunkard?" Well, I want to say right here, that it is a good deal better to be temperate than intemperate; a good deal better to be honest than dishonest; it is better for a man

to be upright in all his transactions than to cheat right and left, even in this life. But when it comes to the great question of salvation, that does not touch the question at all, because "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Men are all bad by nature; the old Adam-stock is bad, and we cannot bring forth good fruit until we are grafted into the one True Vine. If I have an orchard and two apple trees in it, which both bear some bitter apples, perfectly worthless, does it make any difference to me that the one tree has got perhaps five hundred apples, all bad, and the other only two, both bad? There is no difference; only one tree has more fruit than the other. But it is all bad. So it is with man. One thinks he has got one or two very little sins — God won't notice that; why, that other man has broken everyone of the ten commandments! No matter, there is net difference; they are both guilty; they have both broken the law. The law demands complete and perfect fulfillment, and if you cannot do that, you are lost, as far as the law is concerned. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Suppose you were to hang up a man to the roof with a chain of ten links; if one were to break does it matter that the other nine are all sound and whole? Not the least. One link breaks, and down comes the man. But is it not rather hard that he should fall when the other nine are perfect, when only one is broken? Why, of course not; if one is broken, it is just the same to the man as if all had been broken; he falls. So the man who breaks one commandment is guilty of all. He is a criminal in God's sight. Look at yonder prison, with its thousand victims. Some are there for murder, some for stealing, some for forgery, some for one thing and some for another. You may classify them, but every man is a criminal.

They have all broken the law, and they are all paying the penalty. So the law has brought every man in a criminal in the sight of God.

If a man should advertise that he could take a correct photograph of people's hearts, do you believe he would find a customer? There is not a man among us whom you could hire to have his photograph taken, if you could photograph the real man. We go to have our faces taken, and carefully arrange our toilet, and if the artist flatters us, we say, "Oh, yes, that's a first rate likeness," as we pass it around among our friends. But let the real man be brought out, the photograph of the heart, and see if a man will pass that round among his neighbors. Why, you would not want your own wife to see it! You would be frightened even to look at it yourself.

Nobody knows what is in that heart but Christ. We are told that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" We do not know our own hearts; none of us have any idea how bad they are. Some bitter things are written against me, but I know a good many more things about myself that are bad than any other man. There is nothing good in the old Adam nature. We

have got a heart in rebellion against God by nature, and we do not even love God unless we are born of the Spirit. I can understand why men do not like this third chapter of Romans — it is too strong for them. It speaks the truth too plainly. But just because we do not like it, we shall be all the better for having a look at it; very likely we shall find that it is exactly what we want, after all. It's a truth that men do not at all like, but I have noticed that the medicine we do not like is the medicine that will do us most good. If we do not think we are as bad as the description, we must just take a closer look at ourselves.

Here is a man who thinks he is not just so bad as it makes him out to be.

He is sure he is a little better than his neighbor next door; why, he goes to church regularly, and his neighbor never goes to church at all! "Of course," he congratulates himself, "I'll certainly get saved easier." But there is no use trying to evade it. God has given us the law to measure ourselves by, and by this most perfect rule "we have all sinned and come short," and "there is no difference."

Paul brings in the law to show man that he is lost and ruined. God, being a perfect God, had to give a perfect law, and the law was given not to save men, but to measure them by. I want you to understand this clearly, because I believe hundreds and thousands stumble there. They try to save themselves by trying to keep the law: but it was never meant for men to save themselves by. The law has never saved a single man since the world began. Men have been trying to keep it, but they have never succeeded, and never will. Ask Paul what it was given for. Here is his answer, "That every mouth might be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God." In this third chapter of Romans the world has been put on its trial, and found guilty. The verdict has been brought in against us all — these ministers and elders and church members, just as much as the prodigal and the drunkard — "All have sinned and come short."

The law stops every man's mouth. God will have a man humble himself down on his face before Him, with not a word to say for himself. Then God will speak to him, when he owns that he is a sinner, and gets rid of all his own righteousness. I can always tell a man who has got near the kingdom of God: his mouth is stopped. If you will allow me the expression, God always shuts up a man's lips before he saves Him. Job was not saved until he stopped talking about himself. Just see how God dealt with him. First of all, He afflicts him, and Job begins to talk about his own goodness. "I delivered the poor," he says, "and the fatherless, and him who had none to help him. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor!" Why, they would have made Job an elder, if there had been elders in those days! He had been a wonderfully good man! But now God says, "I'll put a few questions to you. Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and

answer thou Me.”

And Job is down directly; he is ashamed of himself; he cannot speak of his works any more. “Behold,” he cries, “I am vile; what shall I answer Thee?”

I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.” But he is not low enough yet, perhaps, and God puts a few more questions. “Ah!” says Job, “I never understood these things before — I never saw it in that light.” He is thoroughly humbled now; he can’t help confessing it. “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. ” Now he has found his right position before God, and now God can talk to him. And God helps him and raises him up, and gives him the double of all that he had before. The clouds, and the mist, and the darkness round his path are driven away, and light from eternity bursts into his soul when he sees his nothingness in the sight of a pure and holy God.

This, then, is what God gives us the law for — to show us ourselves in our true colors.

I said to my little family, one morning, a few weeks before the Chicago fire, “I am coming home this afternoon to give you a ride.” My little boy clapped his hands. “Oh, papa, will you take me to see the bears in Lincoln Park?” “Yes.” You know boys are very fond of seeing bears. I had not been gone long when my little boy said, “Mamma, I wish you would get me ready.” “Oh,” she said, “it will be a long time before papa comes.” “But I want to get ready, mamma.” At last he was ready to have the ride, face washed, and clothes all nice and clean. “Now, you must take good care and not get yourself dirty again,” said mamma. Oh, of course he was going to take care; he wasn’t going to get dirty. So off he ran to watch for me. However, it was a long time yet until the afternoon, and after a little he began to play. When I got home, I found him outside, with his face all covered with dirt. “I can’t take you to the Park that way, Willie.” “Why, papa? you said you would take me.” “Ah, but I can’t; you’re all over mud.

I couldn’t be seen with such a dirty little boy.” “Why, I’m clean, papa; mamma washed me.” “Well, you’ve got dirty since.” But he began to cry, and I could not convince him that he was dirty. “I’m clean; mamma washed me!” he cried. Do you think I argued with him? No. I just took him up in my arms, and carried him into the house, and showed him his face in the looking glass. He had not a word to say. He could not take my word for it; but one look at the glass was enough; he saw it for himself. He didn’t say he wasn’t dirty after that!

Now the looking glass showed him that his face was dirty — but I did not take the

looking glass to wash it; of course not. Yet that is just what thousands of people do. The law is the looking glass to see ourselves in, to show us how vile and worthless we are in the sight of God; but they take the law, and try to wash themselves with it! Man has been trying that for six thousand years, and has miserably failed. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Only one Man ever lived on the earth who could say He had kept the law, and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. If he had committed one sin, and came short in the smallest degree, his offering Himself for us would have been useless. But men have tried to do what He did, and have failed. Instead of sheltering under his righteousness, they have offered God their own. And God knew what a miserable failure it would be. "There is none that doeth righteous, no, not one."

I don't care where you put man, everywhere he has been tried he has proved a total failure. He was put in Eden on trial; and some men say they wish they had Adam's chance. If you had, you would go down as quickly as he did. You put five hundred children into this hall, and give them ten thousand toys; tell them they can run all over the hall, and they can have anything they want except one thing, placed, let us say, in one of the corners of Mr. Sankey's organ. You go out for a little while, and do you think that is not the very first place they will go to? Why, nothing else in the room would have any attraction for them but just the thing they were told not to touch. And so let us not think Adam was any worse than ourselves. Adam was put on trial, and Satan walks into Eden. I do not know how long he was there, but I should think he had not been there twenty minutes before he stripped Adam of everything he had. There he is, fresh from the hands of his Creator; Satan comes upon the scene, and presents a temptation, and down he goes. He was a failure.

Then God took man into covenant with Him. He said to Abraham, "Look yonder at the stars in the heavens and the sands on the seashore; I will make your seed like that. I will bless thee and multiply thee upon the earth." But what a stupendous failure man was under the covenant. Go back and read about it.

They are brought out of Egypt, see many signs and wonders, and stand at last at the foot of Mount Sinai. Then God's holy law is given them. Did they not promise to keep it? "O yes," they cry, "we'll keep the law, certainly!" To hear them talk you might think it was going to be all right now. But just wait till Joshua and Moses have turned their backs! No sooner have their leaders gone up the mountain to have an interview with God than they begin saying, "Wonder what's become of this man Moses? we don't know where he's got to. Come, let us make unto us another God.

Aaron! make us a golden calf; here are the golden ornaments we got from the

Egyptians, come and make us another God." So when it is made, the people raise a great shout, and fall down and worship it. "Hark! listen; what shout is that I hear?" says Moses, as he comes down the mountainside. "Alas," says Joshua, "there's a war in the camp, it is the shout of the victor." "Ah, no," says Moses, "it isn't the shout of victory or of war, Joshua, it is the cry of the idolaters. They have forgotten the God who delivered them from the Egyptians, who led them through the Red Sea, who fed them with bread from heaven — angel's food. They have forgotten their promises to keep the commandments. Already the first two of them are broken, 'no other gods,' 'no graven image.' They've made them another God — a golden God!" And that's what men have been doing ever since.

There are more men in the land worshipping the golden calf than the God of heaven. Look around you. They bring before it health, and happiness, and peace. "Give me thirty pieces of silver, and I will sell you Christ," is the world's cry today. "Give me fashion, and I will sell you Christ!" "I will sacrifice my wife, my children, my life, my all, for a little drink. I will sell my soul for drink!" It is easy to blame these men for worshipping the golden calf. But what are we doing yourselves? Ah, man was a failure then, and he has been a failure ever since.

Then God put him under the judges, and wonderful judges they were; but once more, what a failure he was! After that came the prophets, and what a failure he was under them! Then came the Son from heaven himself right out of the bosom of the Father. He left the throne and came down here, to teach us how to live. We took Him and murdered Him on Calvary! Man was a failure in Christ's time.

And now we are living under the dispensation of grace — a wonderful dispensation. God is showering down blessings from above. But what is man under grace! A stupendous failure. Look at that man reeling on his way to a drunkard's grave, and his soul to a drunkard's hell. Look at the wretched harlots on your streets. Look at the profligacy, and the pauperism and the loathsome sickness. Look at the vice and crime that festers everywhere, and tell me is it not true that man is a failure under grace?

Yes, man is a failure. I can see right down the other side of the millennium; Christ has swayed his scepter over the earth for a thousand years; but man is a failure still. For "when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle...and they compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and the fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." What man wants is another nature; he must be born again.

What a foolish saying, "Experience teaches." Man has been a long time at that school, and has never learned his lesson yet — his own weakness and inability. He still thinks great things of his own strength. "I am going to stand after this," he says, "I have hit upon the right plan this time. I am able to keep the law now." But the first temptation comes, and he is down. Man will not believe in God's strength. Man will not acknowledge himself a failure, and surrender to Christ to save him from his sins.

But is it not better to find out in this world that we are a failure, and to go to Christ for deliverance, than to sleep on and go down to hell without knowing we are sinners?

I know this doctrine that we have all failed, that we have all sinned, and come short, is exceedingly objectionable to the natural man. If I had tried to find out the most disagreeable verse in the whole Bible, perhaps I could not have fastened upon one more universally disliked than "There is no difference." I can imagine — and I think I have a right to imagine it — Noah, leaving his ark and going off preaching for once in a while. As the passers-by stop to listen, there is no sound of the hammer or the plane. Noah has stopped work. He has gone off on a preaching tour, to warn his countrymen.

Perhaps he was telling them that there was a great deluge coming to sweep away all the workers of iniquity; perhaps he was warning them that every man who was not in the ark must perish; that there would be no difference.

I can imagine one man saying, "You had better go back and finish your work, Noah, rather than come here preaching. You don't think we are going to believe in such nonsense as that. You tell us that all are going to perish alike! Do you really expect us to believe that the kings and governors, the sheriffs and the princes, the rulers, the beggars and thieves and harlots, are all going to be alike lost?" "Yes," says Noah; "the deluge that is coming by and by will take you all away — every man that is not in the ark must die. There will be no difference." Doubtless they thought Noah had gone raving mad. But did not the flood come and take them all away? Princes and paupers, and knaves and kings — was there any difference? No difference.

When the destroying angel was about to pass through Egypt, no doubt the haughty Egyptian laughed at the poor Israelite putting the blood on his doorpost and lintel. "What a foolish notion," he would say derisively; "the very idea of sprinkling blood on a doorpost! If there were anything coming, that would never keep it away. I don't believe there is any death coming at all; and if it did, it might touch these poor people, but it would certainly never come near us." But when the night came,

there was no difference. The king in his palace, the captive in his prison, the beggar by the wayside — they were all alike. Into every house the king of terrors had come, and there was universal mourning in the land. In the home of the poor and the lowly, in the home of the prince and the noble, in the home of the governor and ruler, the eldest son lay dead. Only the poor Israelite escaped who had the blood on the doorpost and lintel. And when God comes to us in judgment, if we are not in Christ, all will be alike. Learned or unlearned, high or low, priest or scribe — there will be no difference.

Once more, I can imagine Abraham going down from the hills to Sodom.

He stands up, let us say, at the corners of the streets, before Sodom was destroyed — “Ye men of Sodom, I have a message from my God to you.”

The people stand and look at the old man — you can see his white locks as the wind sweeps through them — “I have a warning for you,” he cries. “God is going to destroy the five cities of the plain, and every man who does not escape to yonder mountain must perish. When he comes to deal in judgment with you there will be no difference; every man must die. The Lord Mayor, the princes, the chief men, the mighty men, the judges, the treasurers — all must perish. The thief and the vagabond and the drunkard — yes, all must perish alike. There can be no difference.” But these Sodomites answer, “You had better go back to your tent on the hills, Abraham. We don’t believe a word of it. Sodom was never so prosperous; business was never so flourishing as now. The sun never shone any brighter than it does today. The lambs are skipping on the hills, and everything moving on as it has done for centuries. Don’t preach that stuff to us; we don’t believe it.” A few hours pass, and Sodom is in ashes! Did God make any difference among those who would not believe? No, God never utters any opinion; what He says is “there is no difference.” I read of a deluge of fire that is going to roll over this earth, and when God comes to deal in judgment, there will be no difference, and every man who is out of Christ must perish.

It was my sad lot to be in the Chicago fire. As the flames rolled down our streets, destroying everything in their onward march, I saw the great and the honorable, the learned and the wise, fleeing before the fire with the beggar, and the thief, and the harlot. All were alike. As the flames swept through the city it was like the judgment day. The mayor, nor the mighty men, nor wise men could stop these flames. They were all on a level then, and many who were worth hundreds of thousands were left paupers that night. When the day of judgment comes, there will be no difference. When the deluge came there was no difference; Noah’s ark was worth more than all the world. The day before, it was the world’s laughing-stock, and if it had been put up to auction, you could not have got anybody to buy

it except for firewood. But the deluge came, and then it was worth more than all the world together. And when the day of judgment comes, Christ will be worth more than all this world, more than ten thousand worlds. And if it was a terrible thing in the days of Noah to die outside the ark, it will be far more terrible for us to go down in our sins to a Christless grave.

Now I hope that you have seen what I have been trying to prove — that we are all sinners alike. If I have failed to prove that, then the meeting tonight has been a failure. I should like to use another illustration or two. I should like to make this truth so plain that a child might know it. In the olden times in England, we are told, they used to have a game of firing arrows through a ring on the top of a pole. The man that failed to get all his arrows through the ring was called a "sinner." Now I should like for a moment to take up that illustration. Suppose our pole to be up in the gallery, and on the top of it the ring. I have got ten arrows, let us say, and Mr. Sankey has got another ten. I take up the first arrow, and take a good aim. Alas! I miss the mark. Therefore I am a "sinner." "But," I say, "I will do the best I can with the other nine; I have only missed with one." Like some men who try to keep all the commandments but one! I fire again and miss the mark a second time. "Ah, but," I say, "I have got eight arrows still," and away goes an other arrow — miss. I fire all the ten arrows and do not get one through the ring. Well, I was a "sinner" after the first miss, and I can only be a "sinner" after the tenth. Now Mr. Sankey comes with his ten arrows. He fires and gets his first arrow through. "Do you see that?" he says. "Well," I reply, "go on; don't boast until you get them all through." He takes the second arrow and gets that through. "Ha! do you see that?" "Don't boast," I repeat, "until all ten are through;" if a man has not broken the law at all then he has got something to boast of! Away goes the third, and it goes through. Then another and another all right, and another until nine are through. "Now," he says, "one more arrow, and I am not a sinner." He takes up the last arrow, and his hand trembles a little; he just misses the mark. And he is a "sinner" as well as I am. My friend, have you never missed the mark? Have you not come short? I should like to see the man who never missed the mark. He never lived.

Let me give you just one more illustration. When Chicago was a small town, it was incorporated and made a city. When we got our charter for the city, there was one clause in the constitution that allowed the Mayor to appoint all the police. It worked very well when it was a small city; but when it had three or four hundred thousand inhabitants, it put too much power in the hands of one man. So our leading citizens got a new bill passed that took the power out of the hands of the Mayor, and put it into the hands of Commissioners appointed by Government. There was one clause in the new law that no man should be a policeman who was not a certain height — 5 feet 6 inches, let us say. When the Commissioners got into power, they advertised for men as candidates, and in the advertisement they stated that no

man need apply who could not bring good credentials to recommend him. I remember going past the office one day, and there was a crowd of them waiting to get in. They quite blocked up the side of the street; and they were comparing notes as to their chances of success. One says to another, "I have got a good letter of recommendation from the Mayor, and one from the supreme judge."

Another says, "And I have got a good letter from Senator So-and-so. I'm sure to get in." The two men come on together, and lay their letters down on the Commissioners' desk. "Well," say the officials, "you have certainly a good many letters, but we won't read them till we measure you." Ah! they forgot all about that. So the first man is measured, and he is only five feet. "No chance for you, sir; the law says the men must be 5 feet inches, and you don't come up to the standard." The other says, "Well, my chance is a good deal better than his. I'm a good bit taller than he is" — he begins to measure himself by the other man. That is what people are always doing, measuring themselves by others. Measure yourselves by the law of God, or by the Son of God Himself; and if you do that, you will find you have come short. He goes up to the officers and they measure him; he is 5 feet 5 inches and nine-tenths of an inch. "No good," they tell him; "you're not up to the standard." "But I'm only one-tenth of an inch short," he remonstrates. "It's no matter," they say; "there's no difference." He goes with the man who was five feet. One comes short six inches, and the other only one-tenth of an inch, but the law cannot be changed. And the laws of God is that no man shall go into the kingdom of heaven with one sin on him. He that has broken the least law is guilty of all. "Then, is there any hope for me?" you say. "What star is there to relieve the midnight darkness and gloom? What is to become of me? If all this is true, I am a poor lost soul. I have committed sin from my earliest childhood." Thank God, my friends, this is just where the gospel comes in. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin." "He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed." "We all like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all."

You ask me what my hope is; it is, that Christ died for my sins, in my stead, in my place, and therefore I can enter into life eternal. You ask Paul what his hope was. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture."

This is the hope in which died all the glorious martyrs of old, in which all who have entered heaven's gate have found their only comfort. Take that doctrine of substitution out of the Bible, and my hope is lost. With the law, without Christ, we are all undone. The law we have broken, and it can only hang over our head the sharp sword of justice. Even if we could keep it from this moment, there remains the unforgiven past. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission."

He only is safe for eternity who is sheltered behind the finished work of Christ. What the law cannot do for us, He can do. He obeyed it to the very letter, and under His obedience we can take our stand. For us He has suffered all its penalties, and paid all that the law demands. "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." He saw the awful end from the beginning; He knew what death, what ruin, what misery lay before us if we were left to ourselves. And He came from heaven to teach us the new and living way by which "all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses."

There is a well-known story told of Napoleon the First's time. In one of the conscriptions, during one of his many wars, a man was balloted as a conscript who did not want to go, but he had a friend who offered to go in his place. His friend joined the regiment in his name, and was sent off to the war. By and by a battle came on, in which he was killed, and they buried him on the battlefield. Some time after the Emperor wanted more men, and by some mistake the first man was balloted the second time.

They went to take him, but he remonstrated. "You cannot take me." "Why not!" "I am dead," was the reply. "You are not dead; you are alive and well." "But I am dead," he said. "Why, man, you must be mad. When did you die?" "At such a battle, and you left me buried on such a battlefield." "You talk like a madman," they cried; but the man stuck to his point that he had been dead and buried some months. "You look up your books," he said, "and see if it is not so." They looked, and found that he was right. They found the man's name entered as drafted, sent to the war, and marked off as killed. "Look here," they said, "you didn't die; you must have got someone to go for you, it must have been your substitute." "I know that," he said, "he died in my stead. You cannot touch me; I died in that man, and I go free. The law has no claim against me." They would not recognize the doctrine of substitution, and the case was carried to the Emperor. But he said that the man was right, that he was dead and buried in the eyes of the law, and that France had no claim against him.

The story may be true, or it may not, but one thing I know to be true, that the Emperor of heaven recognizes the doctrine of substitution. Christ died for me; that is my hope of eternal life. "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." If you ask me what you must do to share this blessing, I answer, go and deal personally with Christ about it. Take the sinner's place at the foot of the cross. Strip yourself of all your own righteousness, and put on Christ's. Wrap yourself up in his perfect robe, and receive Him by simple trust as your own Savior. Thus you inherit the priceless treasures that Christ hath purchased with his blood. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Yes, sons of

God; power to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; power to crucify every besetting sin, passion, lust; power to shout in triumph over every trouble and temptation of your life, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

I have been trying to tell you the old, old tale that men are sinners. I may be speaking to someone, perhaps, who thinks it a waste of time. "God knows I'm a sinner," he cries; "you don't need to prove it. Since I could speak, I've done nothing but break every law of earth and heaven." Well, my friend. I have good news for you. It is just as easy for God to save you, who have broken the whole decalogue, as the man who has only broken one of the commandments. Both are dead — dead in sins. It is no matter how dead you are, or how long you have been dead; Christ can bring you to life just the same. There is no difference. When Christ met that poor widow coming out of Nain, following the body of her darling boy to the grave — he was just newly dead — His loving heart could not pass her; He stopped the funeral, and bade the dead arise. He was obeyed at once, and the mother was clasped once more in the living embrace of her son. And when Jesus stood by the grave of Lazarus, who had been dead four days, was it not just as easy for Him to say, "Lazarus, come forth?"

Was it not as easy for Him to bring Lazarus from his tomb, who had been dead four days, as the son of the widow, who had been dead but one? Yes, it was just as easy; there was no difference. They were both alike dead, and Christ saved the one just as easily, and as willingly, and as lovingly as the other. And therefore, my friend, you need not complain that Christ cannot save you. Why, Christ died for the ungodly. And if you turn to Him at this moment with an honest heart, and receive Him simply as your Savior and your God, I have the authority of his Word for telling you that He will in no wise cast out.

And you who have never felt the burden of your sin — you who think there is a great deal of difference — you who thank God that you are not as other men — beware. God has nothing to say to the self-righteous. And unless you humble yourself before Him in the dust, and confess before Him your iniquities and sins, the gate of heaven, which is open only for sinners, saved by grace, must be shut against you forever.