

“THE GOSPEL AWAKENING.”

COMPRISING THE

SERMONS AND ADDRESSES,

Prayer Meeting Talks and Bible Readings,

OF THE

GREAT REVIVAL MEETINGS,

CONDUCTED BY

MOODY AND SANKEY,

IN THE CITIES OF

Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Boston,

WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

CHRISTIAN CONVENTIONS OF MINISTERS AND LAYMEN.

From Verbatim Reports by our own Phonographer, and those of the New York Tribune, Chicago Inter-Ocean, Boston Journal and Boston Globe.

ALSO THE LIVES OF

D. L. MOODY, I. D. SANKEY, P. P. BLISS, REV. JOSEPH COOK,
AND FRANCES E. WILLARD.

BY M. LAIRD SIMONS,

Author of “Companion Articles to the Pictorial Home Bible;” Editor of “Sunday Half-Hours with the Great Preachers;” and “Duyckinck’s Cyclopaedia of American Literature.”

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EIGHT "I WILLS" OF CHRIST.

I want to call your attention tonight to the eight "I wills" of Christ. Now, when we say "I will," very often it don't mean much. My friends, I want you to pay attention to the text; I see some of you looking after Mr. Sankey. (Mr. Sankey moving out.) You may forget the songs which have been sung tonight, you may forget the sermon; but if the text gets down to your heart, you will never forget it. The eight "I will's" of Christ. I was going to say that a man, when he says "I will," may not mean much. We very often say "I will," when we don't mean to fulfill what we say; but when we come to the "I will" of Christ, He means to fulfill it. Everything he has promised to do he is able and willing to accomplish; and he is going to do it. I cannot find any passage in scripture in which he says "I will" do this, or "I will" do that, but it will be done.

The first "I will" I want to call your attention to, occurs in Matthew 11: 28: "Come unto me all ye that labor, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Now what is it that man wants more than rest? What is it that the world is in pursuit of? What are all the men in Chicago after, if it isn't rest? What do business men toil for, if it isn't for rest? Why do men spend their lives in hunting for wealth, if it is not for rest? But my friends, that is not the way to get rest. A man cannot find it in wealth; he cannot find it in pleasure. Take the pleasure-seekers of Chicago, and ask them if they have rest. They are like the waves of the sea, perpetually troubled. My friends, the men who are away from God never know what rest is. You can see this in their faces, in the wrinkles of their brow. They don't know what rest is. What does Christ say? "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It isn't in the market for sale. How many men in Chicago would not gladly go up to the Board of Trade tomorrow morning, and give thousands of dollars for it, if it was for sale?

But it ain't for sale. If you get it, you must take it as a gift from him who came from heaven to give it. The moment a man is willing to take it as a gift, it is his. There is one thing I notice: that a man goes in every direction, seeks every means, tries every person for rest, before he comes to the true source. He will try to get rest in the world; he will try to find honor in pleasure, in politics; but he don't get it. You can't find one of these politicians who knows what rest is; you cannot find one of those business men who knows what rest is, unless he has Christ. Ask any man who is after the things of the world if he really knows what rest is, and he will answer you, "No." If you come to Christ, he tells you: "I will" give it. I like this "I will." He means it; and if you want rest, go tonight and say you are weary and your soul is seeking rest,

and he will give it. He will give it without price. Take it. "O man, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help." In him is your help and in him will you find rest. If there is a poor, mangled one here, come to Christ tonight and confess to him. Come to Christ and he will take your burden away and put it behind his back, and he will give that weary soul rest. Now just test it tonight. Let every one who is weary and heavy-laden come to him tonight.

The next "I will" is in John, 6th chapter: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." That is as broad as the world itself. It takes that man in the gallery yonder; it may be there is a poor, afflicted one hidden behind that post, it takes him; it just sweeps around this building, taking rich and poor alike. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He is so anxious to save sinners, He will take every one who comes. He will take those who are so full of sin that they are despised by all who know them, who have been rejected by their fathers and mothers, who have been cast off by the wives of their bosoms. He will take those who sunk so low that upon them no eye of pity is cast. "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." Now, why not take him at his word? I remember, a few years ago, a man in Farwell Hall was greatly troubled about his soul. "Now," said I, "take that verse; what does the Lord mean when he says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out,'" when he says that, he means it. The man replied, "I will just take him at his word." He started home, and while going over the Clark street bridge, something whispered to him: "How do you know but that is a wrong translation?" He was just laying right hold of it, when this was whispered to him. The poor fellow didn't sleep any that night. He was greatly troubled, but at last he made up his mind that he would just believe it, and when he got to the Lamb of God he would tell him of it, and the devil left him. Now, my friends, just take it. Some men say, "I am not worthy to come." I never knew a man yet to go to church that was worthy. Why, he does not profess to save worthy men; he saves sinners. As a man said in the inquiry-room: He didn't come to save make-believe sinners, or painted sinners, but real sinners. A man don't want to draw his filthy rags of self-righteousness about him, when he comes to him. The only thing a sinner has that God wants is his sin. You need not bring your tears, your prayers, your good works, or deeds; you must come to him as a sinner, and he will clothe you in a garment fit to come before him. Now the kings of this earth call around them the wealthy and influential men of their kingdom; but when Christ came down here, he called the outcasts, the publicans, and sinners around him. And that was the principal fault the people found with him. Those self-righteous Pharisees were not going to associate with harlots and publicans. The principal charge against him was, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Who would have such a man around him as John Bunyan in his time. He, a Bedford tinker, why, he couldn't get inside one of the princely castles. I was very

much amused when I was over on the other side. They had erected a monument to John Bunyan, and it was unveiled by lords and dukes and great men. Why, while he was on earth they wouldn't allow him inside the walls of their castles. Yet he was made one of the mightiest instruments in the spread of the gospel. No book that has ever been written comes so near the Bible as John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." And he was a poor Bedford tinker. So it is with God. He picks up some poor, lost tramp, and makes him an instrument to turn hundreds and thousands to Christ. It is a question whether in all Chicago there is a man who is exercising such an influence for good as this man Sawyer. Four years ago he was a tramp; he had been cast off by his own mother, by his own sisters, by his wife; and he hadn't seen his own son for fifteen years. Then he was a lost man. Cast off by every one; but the Son of God stooped low enough to save him. I doubt, as I said before, whether there is a man who has so much influence as that man has today. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Is there some poor outcast, some poor tramp, here tonight? I've got a good message for you. May be you are hiding away behind that post; but I've got a good message for you, the best message you ever heard: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Come all just as you are; don't wait. He will take you as you sit into his loving bosom; he will make you a champion of the cross, and you will become an instrument in his hand to build up his kingdom. Thank God for such a book; thank God for such a gospel—thank the God of heaven for such a text: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The next "I will" is found in Luke. We are told of a man who was full of leprosy; he was just rotten with it. Perhaps his fingers had rotted off; it might have been that his nose was eaten off. That is the way leprosy affects a man. Well, there is a man full of leprosy, and he comes to Christ just as he was. A good many people, if they had been in his place, would have waited till they got a little better before they came before him; but this man wanted to get the leprosy away. If he had waited to see if he got better, there would have been no sense in it. A man might as well, if he had a sick child, say: "When it gets better, I will send for the doctor." It is because your child is sick that you want the doctor. It is because this man had the leprosy that he wanted Christ. The leper came to him and said: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." There is faith for you; and the Lord touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean;" and away went the leprosy, as if it had been struck by lightning. I have often wondered if he ever turned around to see where it had gone: no doubt, like Naaman, his flesh became as the flesh of a little child. He didn't wait to see whether the leprosy would improve; because he was convinced that it was growing worse and worse, every day. So it is with you. You will never have a night so favorable for coming to Christ as this one. If you put off till tomorrow, your sins will have become more numerous. If you wait

till Sunday next, a whole week's sins will be built upon those you have already. Therefore, the sooner you come, the fewer sins you will have to be forgiven. Come to him tonight. If you say to him, "Lord, I am full of sin; thou canst make me clean;" "Lord, I have a terrible temper; thou canst make me clean;" "Lord, I have a deceitful heart; cleanse me, O God; give me a new heart. O God, give me the power to overcome the flesh, and the snares of the devil!" If you come to him with a sincere spirit you will hear the voice, "I—will; be thou clean." It will be done. Do you think that the God who created the world out of nothing, who by a breath put life into the world—do you think that if he says, "Thou wilt be clean," you will not? A great many people say, "If I become converted, I am afraid I will not hold out." Why, don't you see that we cannot serve God with our own strength. When we accept him, he gives us strength to serve him. When he has taken away the leprosy of sin, it is easy to live for him. And I want to call your attention to the fact that even if you are bad, he don't care. It may be that some one here has disgraced his or her father or mother; it may be that they have disgraced every friend they ever had, and that they just despise themselves. Come to him, and he will cleanse you. It is to you I am speaking tonight. He can save you to the uttermost.

The next "I will" I want to call your attention to is the "I will" of confession, in Matthew. "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Let me say, right here, that this is the very verse up to which men in Chicago will have to come. Men come to me and say: "Do you mean to affirm, Mr. Moody, that I've got to make a public confession when I accept Christ; do you mean to say I've got to confess him in my place of business, and in my family? Am I to let the whole world know that I am on his side?" A great many are willing to accept Christ; but they are not willing to publish it, to confess it. A great many are looking at the lions and the bears in the mountains. Now, my friends, the devil's mountains are only made of smoke. Why, he can throw a straw into your path and make a mountain of it. He says to you: "You cannot confess and pray to your family; why, you'll break down. You cannot tell it to your shopmate; he will laugh at you." But when you accept him you will have power to confess him. He has said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." It is the way to heaven—by the way of the cross; and I believe in my soul that more men are stumbling upon this verse than upon any other. They are willing to do everything necessary except take up the cross and follow him. Now, let me read this verse again: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my father, which is in heaven." When I was in London there was a leading doctor in that city, upwards of seventy years of age, who wrote me a note to come and see him privately about his soul. He

was living at a country seat, a little way out of London, and he only came into town two or three times a week. He was wealthy, and was nearly retired. I received the note right in the midst of the London work, and told him I could not see him. I received a note a day or two after from a member of his family, urging me to come. The letter said his wife had been praying for him for fifty years, and all the children had become Christians by her prayers. She had prayed for him all those years, but no impression had been made upon him. Upon his desk they had found the letter from me, and they came up to London to see what it meant; and I said I would see him. When we met, I asked him if he wanted to become a Christian, and he seemed every way willing; but when it came to confession to his family, he halted. "I tell you," said he, "I cannot do that; my life has been such that I would not like to confess before my family." "Now there is the point; if you are not willing to confess Christ, he will not confess you; you cannot be his disciple." We talked for some time, and he accepted. I found that, while I had been in one room, the daughter and some friends, anxious for the salvation of that aged parent, were in the other room praying to God; and when he started out, willing to go home and confess Christ, I opened the door of the other room, not knowing the daughter was there. And the first words she said were, "Is my father saved?" "Yes, I think he is," I answered; and ran down to the front door and called him back. "Your daughter is here," I said; "this is the time to commence your confession." The father, with tears trickling down his cheeks, embraced his child. "My dear daughter, I have accepted Christ;" and a great flood of light broke upon him at that confession. A great many here in Chicago are ashamed to come out and take their stand for Christ. If you want peace and joy, my friends, you must be willing to confess. I am told that, in China, the height of a Chinaman's ambition is to have his name put in the house of Confucius. He must have performed some great act of valor, or done the State some great service, before he can have his name there. That is the highest point of a Chinaman's ambition. It ought to be the height of our ambition to have our name registered in heaven, and have Christ to confess us in the courts of heaven. How excited we used to be during the war when some general did something extraordinary, and someone got up in Congress to confess his exploits; how the papers used to talk about it! If we come out for Christ here, he will confess us in heaven before the throne and the angels. May God help you to confess him tonight.

Another "I will"—to me a very precious "I will"—was given to those early fishermen. He said, "If you will follow me, I will make you fishers of men." That is the "I will" of service. I pity those Christians from the very depth of my heart, who have only made a profession of religion, and stopped there. My friends, they don't have the joy of salvation. I tell you, the only happy Christians are those who are fishers of men. If a man be a true

Christian, he wins souls. He cannot help it.; for He says: "If you will follow me, I will make you fishers of men." Peter caught more men at Pentecost than he ever caught fish in his nets. I have often thought of the remark one of the disciples made to Him as they were standing together one day: "Lord, we have left all to follow thee." What did they leave? A few old fishing boats and broken nets. They were looking to those things they had left behind; and a great many people here are looking to what they will leave, if they serve him. It is not necessary to leave the things of this life when you follow him. It is not necessary to give up your business, if it's a legitimate one, in order to accept Christ. But you mustn't set your heart on the old nets, by a good deal. Now, my friend, if you want to be a religious Christian, follow him fully. No man follows Christ and ever regrets it; and the nearer we get to him the more useful we become. Then we will save men. It seems to me, after I am dead and gone, I would rather have a man to come to my grave and drop a tear and say: "Here lies the man who converted me, who brought me to the cross of Christ"—it seems to me I would rather have this than a column of pure gold reaching to the skies, built in my honor. If a man wants to be useful, follow Him. You will succeed, if you follow Him. Whenever you find a man who follows Christ, that man you will find a successful one. He don't need to be a preacher, he don't need to be an evangelist, to be useful. He may be useful in business. See what power an employer has, if he likes. How he could labor with his employees, and in his business relations. Often a man can be far more useful in a business sphere than he could in another. If we want to spend a life of usefulness, accept him, and He will make you "fishers of men." Young man, don't you want to win souls to Christ? Well, then, just follow him. "You follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The next "I will," a very precious one, is, "I will not leave you comfortless," down here in this dark world. Now, some people think they have a very hard battle before them when they accept him. A lady came to me lately and said: "I am the only one of my family who is a Christian; and I feel lonely." "Why," said I, "Christ is with you; if you have got an elder brother sitting at the right hand of God, what more do you want?" Oh, this precious "I will;" this comfort and joy, "I will be with you to the end of the world;" "I will never forsake you." You may take comfort tonight. He will be with you always. You may not see him with the eye of flesh; but you will see him by the eye of faith.

The next "I will" is found in the 4th chapter of John: "I will raise him up at the last day." These bodies of ours are going down to the grave; but they are not going to lie there long: the Son of God will wake them up. When he was here he raised up three bodies; and let me say to you, young children, that the first one he raised was a little child. Ah, there will be many little children there, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He gave us three

instances. The first was the little girl. When the people heard he had raised up some one from the dead, they thought it was a mistake. She wasn't dead, but only asleep; it wasn't a real miracle. The next one was a young man. "Oh, no," they thought, "that's no miracle; if they had left him alone, he'd have awoke; he was only asleep." But the next case that came along was that of Lazarus; and Matthew tells us that he had been dead four days; he had been laid away in the sepulcher, and the Son of God merely said, "Lazarus, come forth." Now, I like a religion that gives me such comfort, that when I lay away my loved ones in the grave I know they will by and by hear the voice of the Son of God calling them forth. I used to wonder how Christians had so much comfort in affliction, and used to question whether I could have as much; but I have learned that God gives us comfort when we need it. A few weeks ago I stood at the grave of a man I loved more than any one on earth, except my wife and family. As he was laid down in the narrow bed and the earth dropped upon the coffin-lid, it seemed as if a voice came to me, saying, "He will rise again." I like a religion by which we can go to the grave of our loved ones and feel that they will rise again. I like a religion that tells us, although we sow them in corruption they will rise incorruptible; that although we sow them in weakness they will rise in power and glory, and ascend to the kingdom of light. This is the comfort for Christians. Thank God for this, "I will not leave you comfortless."

"I will that they may be with me" is the sweetest of all. The thought that I will see him in his beauty; the thought that I will meet him there, that I will spend eternity with him, is the sweetest of them all. This last week we had Thanksgiving day. How many families gathered together, perhaps the first time in many years; and the thought would come stealing over some of them, Who will be the first to break the circle? Perhaps many of these circles of friends will never meet again. Thank God, yonder the circles shall never be broken—when the fathers and mothers and children gather around him in those mansions into which death never enters, Where sickness and sorrow never enter through yon pearly gates. Oh, thank God for this blessed religion; thank God for the blessed Christ; thank God for those blessed eight "I wills." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven;" "If you will follow me, I will make you fishers of men;" "I will, be thou clean;" "I will not leave you comfortless;" "I will that they may be with me." May God bless every soul in this building tonight, and bring you to the cross.