

# “THE GOSPEL AWAKENING.”

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Prayer Meeting Talks and Bible Headings,

OF THE

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WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

CHRISTIAN CONVENTIONS OF MINISTERS AND LAYMEN.

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ALSO THE LIVES OF

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## THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

“And who is my neighbor?”—LUKE 10:29

You will find my text in part of the 29th verse of the 10th chapter of Luke: “And who is my neighbor?” We are told that as Christ stood with his disciples, a man, a lawyer, stood up and tempted him, and said: “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He asked what he could do to inherit eternal life, what he could do to buy salvation. And the Lord answered his question, “What is written in the law? How readest thou?” To which the lawyer answered: “Thou shalt love the Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.” “Thou hast answered right.” But, “Who is my neighbor?” And he drew a vivid picture, which has been told for the last eighteen hundred years; and I do not know anything that brings out more truthfully the wonderful power of the gospel than this story, which we have heard read tonight—the story of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and who fell among thieves. Jerusalem was called the city of peace. Jericho and the road leading to it were infested with thieves. Probably it had been taken possession of by the worst of Adam’s sons. I do not know how far the man got from Jerusalem to Jericho; but the thieves had come out and fallen upon him, and had taken all his money, and stripped him of his clothes, and left him wounded—left him, I suppose, for dead. By and by, a priest came down the road from Jerusalem. We are told that he came by chance. Perhaps he was going down to dedicate some synagogue, or preach a sermon on some important subject, and had the manuscript in his pocket. As he was going along on the other side, he heard a groan; and he turned around and saw the poor fellow lying bleeding on the ground, and pitied him. He went up close, took a look at him, and said: “Why, that man’s a Jew; he belongs to the seed of Abraham. If I remember aright, I saw him in the synagogue last Sunday. I pity him. But I have too much business, and I cannot attend to him.” He felt a pity for him, and looked on him, and probably wondered why God allowed such men as those thieves to come into the world, and passed by. There are a good many men just like him. They stop to discuss and wonder why sin came into the world, and look upon a wounded man, but do not stop to pick up a poor sinner, forgetting the fact that sin is in the world already, and it has to be rooted out.

But another man came along, a Levite, and he heard the groans: he turned and looked on him with pity, too. He felt compassion for him. He was one of those men that, if we had here, we should probably make him an elder or a deacon. He looked at him and said: “Poor fellow! he’s all covered with blood, he has been badly hurt, he is nearly dead; and they have taken

all his money, and stripped him naked. Ah, well, I pity him!” He would like to help him; but he, too, has pressing business, and passes by on the other side.

But he has scarcely got out of sight, when another comes along, riding on a beast. He heard the groans of the wounded man, went over and took a good look at him. The traveler was a Samaritan. When he looked down, he saw the man was a Jew. Ah, how the Jews looked down upon the Samaritans. There was a great, high partition wall between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Jews would not allow them in the temple; they would not have any dealings with them; they would not associate with them. I can see him coming along that road, with his good, benevolent face; and as he passes, he hears a groan from this poor fellow. He draws in his beast and pauses to listen. “And he came to where he was.” This is the sweetest thing to my mind in the whole story. A good many people would like to help a poor man if he was on the platform, if it cost them no trouble. They want him to come to them. They are afraid to touch the wounded man; he is all blood, and they will get their hands soiled. And that was just the way with the priest and the Levite. This poor man, perhaps, had paid half of all his means to help the service of the Temple, and might have been a constant worshiper; but they only felt pity for him. This good Samaritan “came to where he was;” and after he saw him, he had compassion on him. That word “compassion”—how sweet it sounds! The first thing he did on hearing him cry for water—the hot sun had been pouring down on his head—was to go and get it from a brook. Then he goes and gets a bag, that he had with him—what we might call a carpet-bag or a saddlebag, in the West—and pours in oil on his wounds. Then he thinks, “The poor fellow is weak;” and he goes and gets a little wine. He has been lying so long in the burning sun that he is nearly dead now—he was left half dead—and the wine revives him. He looks him over, and he sees his wounds that want to be bound up; but he has nothing to do this with. I can see him now tearing the lining out of his coat, and with it binding up his wounds. Then he takes him up and lays him on his bosom till he revives; and, when the poor fellow gets strength enough, the good Samaritan puts him on his own beast. If the Jew had not been half dead, he would never have allowed him to put his hands on him. He would have treated him with scorn. But he is half dead, and he cannot prevent the good Samaritan treating him kindly and putting him on his beast.

Did you ever stop to think what a strong picture it would have been if the Samaritan had not been able himself to get the man on the beast—if he had to call any assistance? Perhaps a man would have come along, and he would have asked him to help him with the wounded man. “What are you?”

he might have said. "I am a Samaritan." "You are a Samaritan, are you? I cannot help you; I am a Jew." There is a good deal of that spirit now, just as strong as it was then. When we are trying to get a poor man on the right way, when we are tugging at him to get his face toward Zion, we ask someone to help us; and he says, "I am a Roman Catholic." "Well," you say. "I am a Protestant." So they give no assistance to one another. The same party spirit of old is present today. The Protestants will have nothing to do with the Catholics; the Jews will have nothing to do with the Gentiles. And there was a time—but, thank God, we are getting over it—when a Methodist would not touch a Baptist (a voice—"Amen"), or a Presbyterian a Congregationalist; and if we saw a Methodist taking a man out of a ditch, a Baptist would say, "Well, what are you going to do with him?" "Take him to a Methodist church." "Well, I'll have nothing to do with him." A great deal of this has gone by; and the time is coming when, if we are trying to get a man out of the ditch, and they see us tugging at him, and we are so weak that we cannot get him on the beast, they will help him. And that is what Christ wants.

Well, the Samaritan gets him on his beast, and says to him: "You are very weak; my beast is sure-footed, he will take you to the inn, and I will hold you." He held him firmly; and God is able to hold every one he takes out of the pit. I see them going along that road, he holds him on, and he gets him to the inn. He gets him there, and he says to the innkeeper: "Here is a wounded man; the thieves have been after him; give him the best attention you can; nothing is too good for him." And I can imagine the good Samaritan as stopping there all night, sitting up with him, and attending to his wants. And the next morning he gets up, and says to the landlord, "I must be off," leaving a little money to pay for what the man has had; "and if that is not enough, I will pay what is necessary when I return from my business in Jericho." This good Samaritan gave this landlord twopence to pay for what he had got, and promised to come again and repay whatever had been spent to take care of the man; and he had given him, besides, all his sympathy and compassion. And Christ tells this story in answer to the lawyer who came to tempt him, and showed that the Samaritan was the neighbor. Now this story is brought out here to teach the church-goers this thing: that it is not creeds or doctrines that we want, so much as compassion and sympathy. I have been talking about the qualifications which we require in working for Christ. First night I took "Courage," then "Love," and last night "Faith;" and now it is "Compassion and Sympathy."

If we have not compassion and sympathy, our efforts will go for naught. There are hundreds of Christians who work here who do very little because they have not sympathy. If they go to lift up a man, they must put them-

selves into his place. If you place yourself in sympathy with a man you are trying to do good to, you will soon lift him up.

When at the Hippodrome in New York, a young man came up to me; he looked very sad, his face was troubled. I asked him what was the matter, and he said: "I am a fugitive from justice. When in England, when I was young, my father used to take me into the public-house with him, and I learned the habit of drinking; and liquor has become to me like water. A few months ago I was in England, where I was head clerk in a large firm. I was doing well; I had \$50 a week. Well, one night I was out, and I had some money of my employers with me, and I got to gambling and lost it. I ran away from England, and left a wife and two lovely children. Here I am; I cannot get anything to do; I have no letters of recommendation; and what shall I do?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," said I. "I cannot become a Christian with that record behind me; there is no hope for me," he replied. "There is hope; seek Jesus, and leave everything behind," I told him. "Well," said he, "I cannot do that until I make restitution." But I keep him to that one thing. He wrote me a letter, and said that the sermon "You must be born again," had made a great impression on him. He could not sleep that night, and he finally passed from darkness into light. He came to me, and he said: "I am willing to go back to England and surrender myself, and go into prison, if Christ wants it." I said to him: "Don't do that; but write to your employers, and say that if Christ helps you, you will make restitution. Live as economically as you can, and be industrious, and you will soon find all well." The man wrote to his employers, and I got a letter from him shortly afterward, and he told me that his wife was coming out to New York. When I was last there I made inquiry about him, and found that he was doing well. He only wanted sympathy—someone to take him by the hand and help him. I believe that there are not less than 10,000 young men in Chicago who are just waiting for someone to come to them with sympathy. You do not know how far a loving word will go. When I came to this city twenty years ago, I remember I walked up and down the streets trying to find a situation; and I recollect how, when they roughly answered me, their treatment would chill my soul. But when someone would say: "I feel for you; I would like to help you, but I can't; but you will be all right soon," I went away happy and light-hearted. That man's sympathy did me good.

When I first went away from home, and to a place some thirteen miles away, it seemed as if I could never be any further away. My brother had gone to live at that town a year and a half before. I recollect as I walked down the street with him, I was very homesick, and could hardly keep down the tears. My brother said to me: "There's a man here will give you a cent; he gives a cent to every new boy that comes here." I thought that he

would be the best man I had ever met. By and by he came along, and I thought he was going to pass me. My brother stopped him, thinking, I suppose, I was going to lose the cent, and the old gentleman—he was an old gentleman—looked at me and said: “Why, I have never seen you before: you must be a new boy.” “Yes,” said my brother; “he has just come.” The old man put his trembling hand upon my head, and patted it and told me that I had a Father in heaven, although my earthly father was dead, and he gave me a new cent. I don’t know where that cent went to; but the kindly touch of that old man’s hand upon my head has been felt by me all these years. What we want is sympathy from men. There are hundreds of men with hearts full of love, who, if they received but words of sympathy, their hearts would be won to a higher life. But I can imagine men saying: “How are you going to reach them? How are you going to do it? How are you going to get into sympathy with these people?” It is very easy done. Put yourself into their places. There is a young man, a great drunkard; perhaps his father was a drunkard. If you had been surrounded with influences like this, perhaps you would have been a worse drunkard than he is. Well, just put yourself into his place, and go and speak to him lovingly and kindly.

I want to tell you a lesson taught me in Chicago, a few years ago. In the months of July and August a great many deaths occur among children, you all know. I remember I attended a great many funerals; sometimes I would go to two or three funerals a day. I got so used to it that it did not trouble me to see a mother take the last kiss and the last look at her child, and see the coffin-lid closed. I got accustomed to it, as in the war we got accustomed to the great battles, and to see the wounded and the dead never troubled us. When I got home one night, I heard that one of my Sunday-school pupils was dead; and her mother wanted me to come to the house. I went to the poor home, and saw the father drunk. Adelaide had been brought from the river. The mother told me she washed for a living; the father earned no money, and poor Adelaide’s work was to get wood for the fire. She had gone to the river that day and seen a piece floating on the water, had stretched out for it, had lost her balance and fallen in. The poor woman was very much distressed. “I would like you to help me, Mr. Moody,” she said, to bury my child. I have no lot, I have no money.” Well, I took the measure for the coffin and came away. I had my little girl with me, and she said: “Papa, suppose we were very, very poor, and mamma had to work for a living; and I had to get sticks for the fire, and was to fall into the river, would you be very sorry?” This question reached my heart. “Why, my child, it would break my heart to lose you,” I said, and I drew her to my bosom. “Papa, do you feel bad for that mother?” she said, and this word woke my sympathy for the woman; and I started and went back to the house, and

prayed that the Lord might bind up that wounded heart. When the day came for the funeral, I went to Graceland. I had always thought my time too precious to go out there; but I went. The drunken father was there, and the poor mother. I bought a lot, the grave was dug, and the child laid among strangers. There was another funeral coming up, and the corpse was laid near the grave of little Adelaide. And I thought how I would feel if it had been my little girl that I had been laying there among strangers. I went to my Sabbath-school thinking this, and suggested that the children should contribute and buy a lot in which we might bury a hundred poor little children. We soon got it, and the papers had scarcely been made out when a lady came and said: "Mr. Moody, my little girl died this morning, let me bury her in the lot you have got for the, Sunday-school children." The request was granted, and she asked me to go to the lot and say prayers over her child. I went to the grave—it was a beautiful day in June, and I remember asking her what the name of her child was. She said Emma. That was the name of my little girl; and I thought, What if it had been my own child. We should put ourselves in the places of others. I could not help shedding a tear. Another woman came shortly after and wanted to put another one into the grave. I asked his name. It was Willie, and it happened to be the name of my little boy—the first two laid there were called by the same names as my two children, and I felt sympathy and compassion for those two women.

If you want to get into sympathy, put yourself into a man's place. Chicago needs Christians whose hearts are full of compassion and sympathy. If we haven't got it, pray that we may have it, so that we may be able to reach those men and women that need kindly words and kindly actions far more than sermons. The mistake is that we have been preaching too much and sympathizing too little. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of deeds and not of words. May the Spirit of the Lord come upon us this night. May we remember that Christ was moved in compassion for us, and may we, if we find some poor man going down among thieves, or lying wounded and bleeding, look upon him with sympathy, and get below him and raise him up.