

# “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 LAY- MEN.

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

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## SIGNS OF THE NEW BIRTH.

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” John 3:3.

There was a lady came into the inquiry-room this week, and wanted to have me tell her if she was a Christian. I told her I would be very happy to tell her if I knew, but I did not know. I would have liked to have had time to tell her how she might know, how it was her privilege to find out whether she was a child of God or not; because I think the Scripture is very plain about it, and does not leave us in the dark, if we are determined to find out whether we have been born of the Spirit or not. This afternoon, I want to call your attention to nine new things, if we are born of God.

The first is a new heart: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”—born from above, born of the Spirit. Three different ways the Scripture has put it—born again, born from above, born of the Spirit. Now this new birth is not the work of man; it is the work of God. God alone is the author of life. A great many people tell us in the inquiry-room, that this is a great mystery; that they do not understand about this new birth. It is a mystery, they say. Well, there is no doubt about that; Christ says so himself. We will admit it is a mystery; but, nevertheless, it is one of the most important there is in the Word of God. I have no doubt but every woman in this assembly has met someone who has been changed by the Spirit of God: they have been born again; they have received a new heart. They were not the same that they were once. It was not a mere profession. It was not their being confirmed on Easter Sunday, or being baptized in some church on some Sabbath morning; it was not their partaking of the communion. These are all right in their place; but they are not the new birth. Let us keep that in mind. Profession is one thing; conversion is another. A man may be a leper, and cover up his leprosy; but he is a leper still. A man may be a beggar, and put on a new suit of clothes; but he is a beggar still.

We are told here, in the 1st Epistle of John, 5th chapter and 4th verse, what will happen if we are born of God: “For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” Now if we overcome the world, it is a sign that we have been born of God; but if we are all the

time fighting and striving to overcome it and being defeated, it is a good sign we have not been born again of the Spirit. For in the 6th chapter of Galatians, 15th verse, it says: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

Now forms and ordinances are very good; but they do not make a new creature. If we are born of God, then we have power, and will overcome the world. Now I find there are a great many people that, the moment we touch on regeneration and the new birth, say: "I have heard people tell the day and the hour when they were converted; but I never had that experience. I cannot point to a day or an hour when God met me, and when old things passed away." Therefore they are in great trouble, for fear they have not been converted. Let me say, right here, that it is of little account when or where it took place, and you can soon find out whether it has taken place or not. Some people are converted like the flashing of a meteor; with others it is like the rising of the morning sun, and you cannot tell the minute it was light. But if they have passed from death unto life, they can soon tell by reading the Word of God whether they have been born again or not. So it is not necessary for us to be able to tell when or where this birth took place; but it is very important that we should be able to say that we are new creatures in Christ Jesus; that we have been born of the Spirit, because Christ gave no uncertain sound about this thing. He said, Except a man be born again, except he be converted, except he become as a little child, he cannot see the kingdom of God. We have to come like little children into his kingdom. So it is very important to search the Scriptures, and see whether we have been born again or not.

The next new thing we get is a creation. It says in the 5th chapter of the 2d Corinthians, 17th verse: "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." There was a man converted when we were in New York. He was an awful hard case; he had been drinking a great many years. He was a Frenchman, came from Canada. He had been brought up from his childhood to drink; and he never saw any harm in it till he drank his family all away from him; and there he was, a wanderer. He came into one of the meetings, and some friends talked with him, and got down and prayed with him. The moment he began to ask God for mercy, God blessed him right there. When he got up, he did not know himself. He was a new man in old clothes. He has held on ever since;

his appetite for strong drink is gone; and he has become a new creature in Christ Jesus. It takes away the love we have for this world, and the desire for sin. We cannot receive the spiritual blessings that God wants to give us, if we are not born of the Spirit. It says in 1st Corinthians, 2d chapter, 14th verse: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned?" Every week if not every night, we find that literally fulfilled in the inquiry room, The moment you begin to talk to some people about spiritual things, they say, "I don't understand them;" and it is a sign they have not been born of God. I can .tell, when I am preaching, that they do not understand a word I say. The Word of God is all a myth to them, it is all foolishness to them. They do not believe the Word of God. But the moment a person is born of the Spirit, he receives the Word of God into his heart, and so gets strength. The natural man receiveth not spiritual things.

Then, the next thing that we get with this new birth is a new nature. We become partakers of the Divine nature. If we have a nature that is godlike and Christlike, a nature that just longs for God and spiritual things, it is an evidence that we have been born of the Spirit. The old nature may remain, does remain, but we get a new nature; we serve God, and we cannot serve him without that nature. This new nature must have a new God. Everyone in Boston has some god; if not the God of heaven, some idol that has been made into a god. We have new hopes, new aims, new desires, new aspirations then. Old things have floated away; and we have something better. The new things are just as separate from the old as day from night. The moment we get that new nature, then the warfare begins. I never had any conflict with myself till I was born of God. I had a pretty good opinion of myself, till I got a new nature. But then the warfare began, and it has gone on ever since; though, thank God, He can give me the victory. If a man says he is not at war with himself, it is a pretty good sign he has not a heavenly nature. When you find a man with a bad nature, a mean, contemptible disposition, a mean temper, and he is praying to Christ to overcome it, you may know that he has become a partaker of the Divine nature, and he can get strength from God to get victory. I have more respect for a woman with a mean, contemptible nature, who is trying to overcome it, than I have for those who are naturally pretty good and do not want to become any better. You do not know the struggle some of these people have that you look down

upon. They come into this world with a mean, contemptible nature; and Christ has overcome them, so that you can get along with them. I do not know how we could live with a good many people, but for this grace of God. The natural man lives for himself; but when he is born of God, he lives for God; he gets outside of himself, and God calls out the noblest part of his nature. Then we are following in the footsteps of our Master, and we receive his Spirit. We live like him, and talk like him, and act like him; and then we are in harmony with God, and live as God would have us live.

In the 7th and 8th chapters of Romans, you find the conflict going on between these two natures. Paul had that conflict. He was not freed from the old nature when he was converted. Read those chapters carefully, and you will find that he had the same conflict with the flesh that most of us have. Often we do the very thing we hate.

Perhaps we have let our tempers get the better of us, and then have had to apologize. We ought to reckon ourselves dead, not say we are dead. Some have an idea that the old man is dead and cast out, and they are not going to have any more trouble with him. Satan so blinds us. If the old man were dead, we would not have to watch him; and yet, over and over again, Christ tells the disciples to watch. You do not know when the old nature will come up, like a tiger let loose. If the old nature were dead, you would not have to watch it. Now if we keep the old man crucified, as we ought to, and put in the new man, we can walk in the light of the world; we need not have any dark ways. But we have to keep our eyes on the Master, and watch and pray. Then it is all the time peace and joy. You know it is impossible for a man or woman to walk in darkness that follows Christ. I want to call your attention to this one truth of the two natures; and I would like to ask if you would take time this week, any of you that are troubled about your conversion and look up this subject. The first ten years of my Christian experience, I had a good many conflicts with myself; and the question often came up, Have I been converted? If so, how is it that my old temptations and desires come back? How is it I long sometimes to do the things I once used to do? If found, after I had been a Christian ten years, that God never took away my old nature. God gave me a new one, and the two remain. If I don't keep down my old man, he will come up and lead me into bondage and darkness. The question is, Have you got the new nature? Have you become a partaker of the Divine nature? If you have, it is a sign you have been born again.

The next thing we get is a new name; and God gives us a name. When we are brought into the family of God, the household of faith, we get a new name. We are no longer sinners, but the sons of the High God. We are made perfect in Christ, clothed in his garments; we are made sons and daughters of God. We have a birthright, and it is a name. We are not only born into the family of God, but adopted. When we are born into the family of God, and become partakers of his nature, we take his name. The only way to get into that family is to be born in; we cannot educate ourselves in or work our way in. It is the work of God that takes us in. No man until he is born of God can say really that he is a Christian.

Another thing we get in the new way. We do not walk in the same way as before we were converted. A man or woman who professes Christianity and yet goes on in the old way has not been born again. When we are born again, we are born in a new way; and Christ is that way himself. We give up our way, and take his. The old way leads to death, the new way to life everlasting. In the old way, Satan leads us; in the new way the Son of God leads us. We are led by him, not into bondage and darkness, but into the way of peace and joy. A great many people tell us that they do not believe in the Old Testament, or in much of the New; but they believe in the Ten Commandments, and the Sermon on the Mount. Some say this because they have heard others say it; and I have met people who could not tell what they believed, except that it was what their ministers believed. They have no time to read the Word of God, though they have time to read all the novels of the day. Let me say to you people who believe in the Sermon on the Mount and nothing else, that we are told of a broad and a narrow way, the broad that leads to death, and the narrow to life eternal. Which way is yours, my friend? Are you in the narrow way that leadeth into life eternal, or in the broad way that leads to death? There are a great many that do not want to give up the broad way, because they like their own way; they do not like to give up the amusements of the world. There are plenty of churches in the broad way; for you can get almost any kind of preaching, now-a-days. They want men that will tell them everything is going on smoothly, that everybody will be saved, and the Lord is going to take them all into heaven. They can find that kind of preaching. A good many say: "I don't like that narrow, bigoted man that preaches the narrow way; I believe we will all be swept into heaven, whether we want to be or not. But some shake their heads and say they

think they will be put into purgatory, and be punished perhaps a million of years. I would rather bow to Scripture. I can find no chance of repentance in the grave. But even if it were so, why not repent here? Is sin so sweet that you cannot give it up? The broad way is filled with unhappiness. God does not want us to do that which will bring ruin upon ourselves and upon others. If we live as God would have us, we mount higher and higher every year. That is taught in the Word of God. How is it with those who serve Satan? How dark and hard it is. There is no praying down the broad way, though they may say prayers. They do not believe in conversion. Look down the two ways, and decide today which way you will take.

With the new birth, we also get a new tongue. There is, perhaps as much trouble caused in the world by slandering as by drinking. That question was brought up at the dinner table today; and we came to the conclusion that there were about as many dark and miserable homes resulting from slander as from drink. If a person is born of God, he has a new tongue, and he will not go out and slander people. If you love a person, you cannot slander him. Many a man has gone to his grave with a broken heart, because he has been slandered and lied about, perhaps by those who professed to be friends. When we are born of God, we get a new tongue, and there will be no slandering with it. The tongue that is blaspheming today may be praising God tomorrow. We get a new tongue when we get a new heart; and then we get a new song. No one can sing the song of the redemption till he has been born again. I do not know but a man can sing a lie as well as speak it. Now, though I have heard "Rock of Ages," perhaps once a day for twenty years, I could not start it; but I can sing in my heart just as well as Mr. Sankey, or anybody else. I cannot get it through these thick lips, but it is in my heart; and, by and by, I want to sing around the throne the song of Moses and the Lamb. I want to sing of him who redeemed me with his precious blood. Every true church is a singing church. Such a church won't hire three or four women to do their singing; they burst right out singing. And by and by you will see them on resurrection morning, coming from their sepulchres singing. This is the only thing we have heard of that they do in heaven.

The next thing we get is new food. If a man is converted, he is not going to live on the New York *Ledger*, and dime novels. I believe that one of the things that are poisoning the people is this miserable stuff. If we are born of God, we want better than that. When we have read

the Bible through three or four times—and when we have done that, we will find it has spoiled nearly every other book for us. Another thing that a man gets is new friends. I thank God every day for the friends he has given me. I cannot go into a city or town but the best people in it gather around me. Thank God for Christian friends. My friends, if you want true friends, you want the friends of Jesus Christ. When I received Christ, I thought I got a great boon. I thought it was the best gift I ever received; and I used to wonder if he would continue that precious to me. But I can say without exaggeration that he has been a thousand times more to me than I thought he would be. If you want to know how to become a Christian, just receive Christ; and you will get everything in him. If you will let him into your heart, he will bless you and save you. There is the new birth, the new creation, the new nature. Have you got them? Then the new name—have you got that? Can you say you are a child of God? Have you got into the new way? Have you got the new song in your mouth? Are you living on this heavenly food? Have you got new friends? May God help us to get all these things, and this will be the best Sabbath you have spent up to this time.