

# “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

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## SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS.

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” 2 CORINTHIANS 4:3, 4.

You who have been here during the week have heard me speaking on the 4th chapter of Luke and 18th verse. I spoke on the first three clauses of that verse, and we have now come to the next clause, in which he tells us he came to give sight to the blind—for the recovery of sight to the blind. Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, 4th chapter and 3d verse: “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, shall shine unto them.” “If the gospel be hid”—“In whom the god of this world hath blinded.” Now you may see this world is just one large blind asylum—it is full of blind people. Last Wednesday night, I tried to tell you that the world was full of broken hearts; last night, I tried to tell you that the world was full of captives, bound hand and foot in sin; and tonight I tell you that it is full of blind people. Not only blind people, but they are bound and broken-hearted. You might say that nearly all those in the world come under the three heads. Now just look at the contrast between Satan and Christ. Satan breaks men’s hearts; but Christ binds them up. Satan binds the people of this earth, hand and foot; but Christ breaks the fetters and sets them free. Satan makes us blind; but Christ opens our eyes. He came to do this; and just see how he was received. He went into that synagogue at Nazareth and preached this glorious gospel, and commenced by telling them that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and went on to tell them that he had come to save them; and what did they do? They thrust him out of the city, and took him to the brow of the hill; and would have hurled him into hell, if they could. And men have been as bitter toward the gospel all along these eighteen hundred years. Why, some men would tear the preacher of it limb from limb, if it wasn’t for the law. Then we find when he goes to Bethany, and raises up the brother of Martha and Mary and binds up broken hearts as he went along and preaches mercy; and they want to kill him. We find him, in the 3d chapter of Mark, setting the captive free. Here we find a man possessed of demons, whom no one could cure, set at liberty by the Son of man; and in the healing, because they lost a few swine, they told him to depart from their coasts. Then we find him, just a few days before his death, almost on his way to Calvary, giving sight to that blind man. And for all this they take him to that mount and nail him to a cross. Oh, what blindness!

We are told that there are 3,000,000 people in the world who are called blind. Every one calls them blind because they haven't their natural sight. But do you ever think how many are spiritually blind in this world? Why, if there are 3,000,000 people in the world who have not their natural sight, how many do you suppose are spiritually blind? We sympathize with those who have lost their sight. Nothing appeals to our sympathy so readily. I believe I could raise thousands of dollars among you by telling you about some blind one who is suffering for the necessities of life, through that affliction. How many of you wouldn't put your hand in your pockets and give liberally? How it moves our compassion—how it moves our hearts, as we see the blind men, women or children in the streets. How your heart goes out to those poor unfortunates. I was at a meeting in London when I was there, and I heard a man speaking with wonderful power and earnestness. "Who is that man?" I asked, my curiosity being excited. "Why, that is Dr. —; he is blind." I felt some interest in this man, and at the close of the meeting I sought an interview; and he told me that he had been stricken blind when very young. His mother took him to a doctor, and asked him about his sight. "You must give up all hope," the doctor said, "your boy is blind, and will be forever." "What, do you think my boy will never see?" asked his mother. "Never again." The mother took her boy to her bosom and cried: "Oh, my boy, who will take care of you when I am gone—who will look to you!" forgetting the faithfulness of that God she had learned him to love. He became a servant of the Lord, and was permitted to print the Bible in twelve different languages, printed in the raised letters, so that all the blind people could read the scriptures themselves. He had a congregation, my friends, of 3,000,000 people; and I think the blind man was one of the happiest beings in all London. He was naturally blind; but he had eyes to his soul, and could see a bright eternity in the future. He had built his foundation upon the living God. We pity those who have not their natural sight; but how you should pity yourself if you are spiritually blind. If we could get all the blind, spiritually, in this city! You talk about those great political meetings; they would be nothing to the crowd you would collect. Why, just look at all the men in this city who are blind; and many of them are in the churches. This has been the trouble with men always; Christ couldn't get men to understand they were blind. He couldn't even get his disciples to open their eyes until after he went up to heaven; and then they received the spiritual truth. How many are the professed children of God we read of in the book of Revelations?

I think tonight I might pick up some of the different classes who are blind. I am somewhat acquainted with the rich men of this city; and I don't think it would take long to prove that the leading men of this city are blind—blind to their own interests. Take a man just spending all his

strength and energies to get money. He is money blind; he is so blind in his pursuit that he cannot see the God of heaven. Money is his god. His cry is continually “Money, money;” and it is the cry of many here in Chicago. They don’t care about God, don’t care about salvation, don’t heed their eternal condition, so long as they get money, *money*, MONEY. And a great many of them have got it; but how lean their souls are. God has given them the desire of their heart; but he has given them leanness of soul. I heard of a man who had accumulated great wealth, and death came upon him suddenly; and he realized, as the saying is, that “there was no bank in the shroud,” that he couldn’t take anything away with him. We may have all the money on earth, but we must leave it behind us. He called a lawyer in and commenced to will away his property, before he went away. His little girl couldn’t understand exactly where he was going, and she said, “Father, have you got a home in that land you are going to?” The arrow went down to his soul. “Got a home there?” The rich man had hurled away God, and neglected to secure a home there for the sake of his money; and he found it was now too late. He was money mad, and he was money blind. It wouldn’t be right for me to give names; but I could tell you a good many here in Chicago who are going on in this way— just spending all their lives in the accumulation of what they cannot take with them. This is going on, while how many poor people are suffering for the necessaries of life. These men don’t know they are blind—money is their god.

There is another class who don’t care so much for money. We might call them business blind. It is business, business, business with them all the time. In the morning, they haven’t time to worship. They must attend to business; must get down to the store. Down they run, and haven’t time to get home to dinner. They mustn’t let anyone get ahead of them; and they get home late at night, and their families have gone to bed. They scarcely ever see their children. It is all business with them. A man told me not long ago: “I must attend to my business, that is my first consideration, and see that none gets ahead of me.” That is his god. I don’t care if he is an elder or a deacon in the church. That is his god; the god of business has blinded him. Look at the merchant prince who died the other day. Men call him a clever, shrewd man. Call that shrewdness—to pile up wealth for a lifetime, and leave no record behind so that we know he has gone to heaven? He rose above men in his business; he devoted his whole soul to it, and the world called him a power among men; the world called him great. But let the Son of God write his obituary; let him put an epitaph on his tombstone, and it would be, “Thou fool.” Man says, “I must attend to business first;” God says, “Seek first the kingdom of God.” I don’t care what your business may be; it may be honorable legitimate, and all that, and you think you

must attend to it first. Bear in mind that God tells every man to seek his kingdom first.

There is another class of people who are blind. They don't care so much about riches; they are not very ambitious to become rich; they don't spend their lives in business matters. They are politically blind. They are mad over politics; they are bound up in the subject. There will be a great many broken hearts in a week hence. They have got their favorite candidate to attend to, and they cannot find time to worship God. How little prayer there has been about the election. There has been a good deal of work; but how much praying has been done? We want prayer to go up all over our land, that high and honest men may rule over us. But they are so excited over this election that they have no time to pray to the God of heaven. They are politically blind. How many men within our recollection, who have set their hearts upon the Presidential chair, have gone down to the grave with disappointment? They were poor, blind men; and the world called them great. Oh, how foolish; how blind. They didn't seek God; they only sought one thing—greatness—position and office. They were great, brilliant, clever men; but when they were summoned into the presence of their God, what a wreck. Men so brilliant might have wielded an influence for the Son of God that would have lived in the hearts of the people for generations to come; and the streams of their goodness might have flowed long after they went to heaven. But they lived for the world, and their works went to dust.

But a greater number of people don't care for business or politics; they only want a little money, so as to get pleasure. How many men have been blinded by pleasure. A lady told me in the inquiry-room she would like to become a Christian; but there was a ball coming on, and she didn't want to become a Christian until after the ball. The ball was worth more to her than the kingdom of God. For this ball she would put off the kingdom of God until it was over, forgetting that death might come to her in the meantime and usher her into the presence of God. How blind she was; and many are just like her. The kingdom of God is offered to them without money and without price; and yet for a few days of pleasure they forfeit heaven, and everything dear to their eternity. I was talking to a lady who, with the tears running down her cheeks upon my speaking to her, said: "The fact is, if I become a Christian I have to give up all pleasure. I cannot go to a theatre; I cannot read any novels; I cannot play cards. I have nothing else to do." Oh, what blindness! Look at the pleasure of being taken into the Lord's vineyard, and the joy and luxury of working for him and leading souls to Christ. And people, with their eyes wide open, would rather bend down to the god of pleasure than become Christians.

Then there is the god of fashion. How many women just devote their lives to it. They want to see the last bonnet, the last cloak, the last dress;

they can't think of anything else. Said a lady to me: "I am always thinking of fashion; it don't matter if I get down on my knees to pray, I am always thinking of a new dress." You may laugh at this, but it is true. Pleasure in the ball-room and fashion is the god of a great many people. Oh, that we may lift our eyes to something nobler. Suppose you don't have so many dresses, and give something to the poor, you will have something then which will give you joy and comfort, that will last you always. I pity the man or woman that lives for the day like the butterfly; those whose minds are fixed upon fashion and pleasure, and have no time to look to their perishing soul. A good many people don't know they are blind. Look at that young man. You call him a fast young man. He has got a salary of \$1,000; and it costs him \$3,000 to live. Where does he get the money? Where does it come from? His father cannot give it him, because he is poor. His employer begins to get suspicious. "I only give him \$1,000 a year; and he is living at the rate of \$3,000." By and by, he looks into his account book and finds it overdrawn. Thus he is ruined—character blasted. Oh, how many are of this stamp in Chicago! It is only a question of time. How many young men have we got just living beyond their income—taking money out of their employer's drawer. They say: "Well, I am going to the theatre tonight, and I will just take a dollar; will put it back next week." But when next week comes, he hasn't put it back; and takes another dollar. He has taken two dollars now. He keeps on draw, draw, drawing, when by and by it all comes out. He loses his place, don't get any letters of recommendation, and the poor man is ruined. My friends, this is not the description of an isolated case; this class is all over the country. I wish I could send you the letters I get about just such cases. I got one, the other day, from a young mother with a family of beautiful children. She told me how happy they had lived—husband, wife, and children; and how one night her husband came home excited, his face white with terror, and said: "I've got to fly from justice. Good-bye." He has gone from her, and she said it seemed as if she could die; her husband, disgraced and starving, couldn't get anything to do. Her cry seemed to be, "Help, help me." Is not the country full of such cases? Is it not blindness and madness for men to go on in this way. If any one is here tonight following in the way of these men, I pray God your eyes may be opened before you are led to death and ruin.

You know we had a full meeting today, and the subject was Intemperance. How many young men are there who spend their time in the saloons of the city? I am afraid many will be led astray next Tuesday. I always dread an election day; I generally see so many young men beastly drunk. They are led away; and that is another quick road down to hell. May the young men see the folly of this, and on that day stand firm. May God open your eyes! How many young men are there whose characters have

been blasted by strong drink. How many brilliant men in the Chicago bar have gone down to death by it. Some of the noblest statesmen, some of the most brilliant orators and men of all professions, have been borne down to the drunkard's grave. May God open your eyes to show the folly of tampering with strong drink. Now, many men say, "I am not going down to the grave of a drunkard." They think they have strength to stop when they like. When it gets hold, there is nothing within us by which we can save ourselves. He alone can give you power to resist the cup of temptation: he alone can give you power to overcome its influence, if you only will believe him. The god of this world has been trying to make you believe that man can do it himself, and Christ will have nothing to do with him. The god of this world is a liar. I come with authority to tell you—I don't care how far gone you are; don't care how blessed you may be—that the Son of God can and will save you if you only believe him. If there is one here tonight under the power of strong drink, come tonight. We lift up our voice to warn you.

Look at that man in a boat on Niagara River. He is only about a mile from the rapids. A man on the bank shouts to him: "Young man, young man, the rapids are not far away; you'd better pull for the shore." "You attend to your own business; I will take care of myself," he replies. Like a great many people here, and ministers, too, they don't want any evangelist here—don't want any help, however great the danger ahead. On he goes, sitting coolly in his boat. Now he has got a little nearer; and a man from the bank of the river sees his danger, and shouts: "Stranger, you'd better pull for the shore; if you go further you'll be lost. You can be saved now, if you pull in." "Mind your business, and you'll have enough to do; I'll take care of myself." Like a good many men, they are asleep to the danger that's hanging over them, while they are in the current. And I say, drinking young men, don't you think you are standing still. You are in the current; and if you don't pull for a rock of safety, you will go over the precipice. On he goes. I can see him in the boat, laughing at the danger. A man on the bank is looking at him, and he lifts up his voice and cries: "Stranger, stranger, pull for the shore; if you don't you will lose your life." And the young man laughs at him, mocks him. That is the way with hundreds in Chicago. If you go to them and point out their danger, they will jest and joke at you. By and by, he say: "I think I hear the rapids—yes, I hear them roar." And he seizes his oars and pulls with all his strength; but the current is too great, and nearer and nearer he is drawn on to that abyss, until he gives one unearthly scream, and over he goes. Ah, my friends, this is the case with hundreds in this city. They are in the current of riches, of pleasure, of drink, that will take them to the whirlpool. Satan has got them blindfolded; and they are on their road to the bottomless pit.

We hear some men say, in a jesting way: “Oh, we are sowing our wild oats; we will get over this by and by.” I have seen men reap their wild oats. It’s all well enough sowing; but when it comes to the reaping, it’s a different thing. I remember, I went home one night and found all the people in alarm. They had seen a man come running down the street; and as he approached the house he gave an unearthly roar, and in terror they bolted the door. He came right up to my door, and instead of ringing the bell, just tried to push the door in. They asked him what he wanted, and he told them he wanted to see me. They said I was at the meeting, and away he ran; and they could hear him groan as he disappeared. I was coming along North Clark street, and he shot past me like an arrow. But he had seen me, and turned and seized me by the arm, saying eagerly: “Can I be saved tonight? The devil is coming to take me to hell at one o’clock tonight.” “My friend, you are mistaken.” I thought the man was sick. But he persisted, that the devil had come and laid his hand upon him, and told him he might have till one o’clock; and said, “Won’t you go up to my room and sit with me?” I got some men up to his room, to see to him. At one o’clock, the devils came into that room; and all the men in that room could not hold him. He was reaping what he had sown. When the Angel of Death came and laid his cold hand on him, oh, how he cried for mercy—how he beseeched for pardon. Ah, yes, young men, you may say in a laughing and jesting way, you are sowing your wild oats; but the reaping time is coming. May God show you tonight what folly it is—what a miserable life you are leading. May we lift our heart here to the God of all grace, so that we may see our lost and ruined condition if we do not come to him. Christ stands ready and willing to save—to save tonight all those who are willing to be saved.