

“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,
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THEIR FAITH.

“When he saw their faith.” LUKE 5:20.

In beginning his sermon, Mr. Moody called attention to a clause of the 20th verse of the 5th chapter of St. Luke: “When he saw their faith.” A little while before this, said he, Christ had been driven out of Nazareth, his native town, and had come down to Capernaum to live; and he had begun his ministry, and some mighty miracles had already been wrought in Capernaum. A little while before this, one of the officers in King Herod’s army had a son who had been restored. Peter’s wife’s mother, that lay sick with the fever, had been healed, and Mark tells us that the whole city was moved; that they had come to the door of the house where he was sitting, the whole city bringing their sick. In fact, there was a great revival in Capernaum. That is what it was, and it is all it was. The news was spreading far and near. Everybody coming out of Capernaum was taking out tidings of what this mighty preacher was doing, and his mighty miracles, and the sayings that were constantly falling from his lips. And we read in a few verses before this 20th verse that a man full of leprosy had come to him and said: “Lord, if thou canst, make me clean;” and I want to call your attention to the difference between the man that had the palsy and the man that had the leprosy. The man with the palsy had friends who had faith. The man who had the leprosy had no friends who believed he could be cleansed. There had been no leper cleansed for eight hundred years, and we read back in the days of Elisha that there was a leper that was cleansed; but none since that time until now. Here is a leper that has faith, and goes right straight to the Son of God himself. And I want to say, if there is a poor sinner here tonight, that has not got any friends that would pray for him, you can go right straight to Jesus himself. You don’t need any bishop or priest or potentate to intercede. Right away to Christ came this poor leper, and he said, “If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”

There is faith for you. He did not say, like the man in the 9th chapter of Mark, “If thou canst do anything for us, have compassion.” He put the “if” in the wrong place; but this leper said, “If thou wilt, thou canst do it.” It pleased the Lord, and he said: “I will; be thou clean.” And away went the leprosy; he was made well in a minute. And of course this news had gone out of Capernaum, and not only the city was stirred, but the country also; and now we read that they were coming up from all parts of Judea, from Galilee and all the villages, and even from Jerusalem. The news had reached Jerusalem; and the Pharisees and philosophers and wise men were coming up to this northern town, to see what this great revival meant. They didn’t come up to get a blessing; like a great many who come to these meetings, they came

out of curiosity. They came to see how it was that this man was performing such mighty miracles; and they were told that he was in the house. There they were sitting around the Master, and we are told the power of the Lord was present to heal them. But it doesn't say that they were healed. They didn't think that they were sick and needed a Savior. Like hundreds now, that are drawing around them their filthy rags of self-righteousness, they think they are good enough without salvation; and they just come here to reason out the philosophy of the meeting, and how it is so many people come together night after night to hear this old Gospel, which has been preached eighteen hundred years. "And the power of the Lord was present to heal them." I have thought, a number of times, what a glorious thing it would have been if they had all been healed. What a glorious thing if those men coming out of Judea had been converted, and gone back to publish the glad tidings in their homes and villages. What a revival it would have been. But they didn't come for that purpose, but only to reason out the thing.

But while these things were being done, suddenly a noise was heard overhead. The people heard a noise on the roof, and looked up to see what was the matter. Now, there were four men in Capernaum—I have an idea they were young converts—who found a man who had the palsy, and they could not get him to Jesus. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all three, give an account, but not one of them says that the man himself had any faith. I can imagine these four men said to the man with the palsy: "If we can get you to Jesus, all he has to do is to speak and the palsy is gone." And I see these four men making arrangements to take this man with the palsy away to Christ. They prepared a couch, something like the stretcher we had in the war; and I see these four men, each one taking his place to carry that couch through the streets of Capernaum. They go with a firm step and steady tread. They are moving toward that house where Christ is. These men have confidence. They know that the Son of God has power to heal this man, and they say, "If we can only get him to Jesus, the work will be done;" and while these philosophers and scribes and wise men were there, trying to reason out the philosophy of the thing, these men arrived at the door, and, for the crowd, could not get in. They undoubtedly asked some of the men to come out and let this man with the palsy in; but they could not get them out, and there they are. But faith looks over obstacles. Faith is not going to surrender. Now these men felt they must get in in some way, and I can imagine they went to one of the neighbors and asked them: "Just allow us to use your stairway; here is a man that has the leprosy, and we want to get him in." And I see the men taking this man up, and at last they got him upon the roof of the house above where Christ is preaching; and now you can hear them ripping up the roof, and everybody looks up to see what the noise is; and at last they see that, while Christ

is preaching, these four men are making a hole large enough to let a man down through. He must have been a good man [whose house it was], or he would have complained to see his roof torn up in that way. But these men wanted to get the leper cleansed; that was worth more than the roof. They wanted to get the man blessed. They let the man right down in the presence of these Pharisees and scribes. It would have been like letting him down into an ice-house, if Christ had not been there. Those scribes and Pharisees—they didn't have any compassion; they didn't have any sympathy for the fallen; they didn't have any sympathy for the erring. There was One who had sympathy for the man who was suffering. They laid him right down at the feet of Jesus. My friends, you can't take palsied souls to a better place than to the feet of Jesus. They called upon the crowd to stand aside and make room, and they just placed him at the feet of Jesus. Christ looks up, and when he saw their faith—not the man's faith; it doesn't say that he had any—he saw their faith—that's the point. I believe that that whole miracle is to teach us—that that whole lesson is to teach us Christians, that God will honor our faith. I see the Son of God looking up at those four men who laid this leper down. He looked up yonder and saw their faith. There is nothing on this earth that pleases him so much as faith. Wherever he finds faith, it pleases him. Twice Christ marveled. I believe Christ marveled only twice. Once he marveled at the faith of the Centurion, and he marveled at the unbelief of the Jews.

When he saw their faith, he said to the man, looking down at him: "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven." Why, he didn't come for that; he only expected to get rid of his palsy; he didn't expect to have his sins forgiven. These men began to look around with amazement. "That is a very grievous charge; he forgives sins. What right has he to do that? It is God, and God alone, who does that." I tell you, the Jews to a man didn't believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ. They began to reason among themselves; but Christ knew what they were thinking about. He could read their thoughts. Christ said to them: "Is it easier for me to say to the man, 'His sins be forgiven,' or for me to say, 'Rise up and walk'? Now that you may know that the Son of Man hath power to forgive sins, I say, 'Rise up and walk.'" Now the man was palsied. He hadn't the power to rise, but he leaps up in a minute. He packs up that old bed that he had lain on for years, and away he goes. The man walks out with his bed on his back, and away he goes home. The men began to look at one another with amazement; and one and another said, "We have seen strange things today." How long did it take the Lord Jesus Christ to heal that man? Some men say, "Oh, we don't believe in instantaneous conversions." How long did it take the Lord to heal the man of the leprosy? One word, and away went the leprosy. One word, and the man stood up, and he rolled his bed up, and away he went on his way home. I should like to

have seen his wife. I can imagine she was about as surprised as any woman you ever saw.

But now the word I want to call your attention to is this: “When he saw their faith.” Now, there are a great many men in New York that don’t have any faith in the Gospel at all. They don’t believe in that Bible. There are a great many men in New York who are infidels. There are a great many skeptics. There is one thing that encourages me very much. The Lord can honor our faith, and raise those men. “When he saw their faith.” Suppose a man should go to the house of his neighbor, and say: “Come, let us take neighbor Levi to neighbor Peter’s house; Christ is there, and we can get him healed;” and the two found they weren’t able to carry the man, so they got three, and the three weren’t able; so they got the fourth. Now I don’t know of anything that would make a man get up quicker than to have four people combining to try to bring him to Christ. Suppose one man calls upon him after breakfast; he doesn’t think much about it; he has had some one invite him to Christ before. Suppose before dinner the second man comes and says: “I want to lead you to Christ; I want to introduce you to the Son of God.” The man has got quite aroused now; perhaps he has never had the subject presented to him by two different men in one day. But the third man has come, and the man has got thoroughly aroused by this time and he says to himself, “Why, I never thought so much about my soul as I have today.” But before the man gets to bed at night, the fourth man has come, and I will guarantee that he won’t sleep much that night—four men trying to bring him to Christ. If we can’t bring our friends to Christ, let us get others to help us. If four men won’t do it, let us add the fifth, and the Lord will see our faith, and the Lord will honor our faith, and we will see them brought to the Son of God.

When I was at Nashville during the late war, I was closing the noon prayer-meeting one day, and a great strong man came up to me, trembling from head to foot. He took a letter out of his pocket and wanted to have me read it. It was a letter from his sister. The sister stated in that letter that every night, as the sun went down, she went down on her knees to pray for him. The sister was 600 miles away, and said the soldier: “I never thought of my soul until last night. I have stood before the cannon’s mouth, and it never made me tremble; but, sir, I haven’t slept a wink since I got that letter.” I think there is many a Christian here who understands what that letter meant. The Lord had seen her faith; it was God honoring faith, and it was God answering prayer. And so, my friends, if God sees our faith, these friends that we are anxious for will be brought to Christ. When we were in Edinburgh, a man came to me and said: “Over yonder is one of our most prominent infidels in Edinburgh. I wish you would go over and see him.” I took my seat beside him and asked if he was a Christian. He laughed at me, and said he didn’t

believe in the Bible. “Well,” said I, after talking for some time, “will you let me pray with you? Will you let me pray for you?” “Yes,” said he, “just pray, and see if God will answer your prayer. Now let the question be decided.” “Will you kneel?” “No, I won’t kneel. Who be I going to kneel before?” He said it with considerable sarcasm. I got down and prayed before the infidel. He sat very straight, so that the people should understand that he was not in sympathy at all with my prayer. After I got through I said: “Well, my friend, I believe that God will answer my prayer; and I want you to let me know when you are saved.” “Yes, I will let you know when I am saved,” all with considerable sarcasm. At last, up at Wick, at a meeting in the open air, one night, on the outskirts of the crowd, I saw the Edinburgh infidel. He said, “Didn’t I tell you God wouldn’t answer your prayer?” I said, “The Lord will answer my prayer yet.” I had a few minutes’ conversation with him and left, him; and just a year ago this month, when we were preaching in Liverpool, I got a letter from one of the leading pastors of Edinburgh, stating that the Edinburgh infidel had found his way to Christ, and found the Lord. He wrote an interesting letter, saying how God had saved him. And there may be many in the city of New York who will laugh at this idea, and they will cavil, and perhaps they will say tonight that God don’t answer prayer; but he does, if Christians will only have faith; God can save the greatest infidel, the greatest skeptic, the greatest drunkard.

What we want is to have faith. Oh, let that word sink down deep into the heart of every Christian here tonight; and let us show our faith by our works. Let us go out and bring all our friends here; and if there is poor preaching, we can bring down from heaven the necessary blessings without good preaching. In Philadelphia, a skeptic came in just out of curiosity. He wanted to see the crowd, and he hadn’t more than crossed the threshold of the door before the Spirit of God met him; and I asked him if there was anything in the sermon that influenced him, in hopes that I was going to get something to encourage me; but he could not tell what the text was. I asked him if it was the singing; but he didn’t know what Mr Sankey had sung. It was the power of God alone that converted him; and that is what we want in these meetings. If we have this power, when we invite our friends here, the Lord will meet them, and will answer prayer and save them. Let us go and bring our unconverted friends here. All through the services let us be lifting up our hearts in prayer. God save our friend! O God, convert him! And in answer to our prayer, the Lord will save them.

While in London, there was a man away off in India—a godly father—who had a son in London; and he got a furlough, and came clear from India to London to see after his boy’s spiritual welfare. Do you think God let that man come thus far without honoring that faith? No. He converted that son,

and that is the kind we want—where faith and works go together; and if we have faith, God will honor it, and answer our prayer. Only a few weeks ago, in the city of Philadelphia, there was a mother that had two sons. They were just going as fast as they could to ruin. They were breaking her heart; and she went into a little prayer-meeting, and got up and presented them for prayer. They had been on a drunken spree, or had just got started in that way, and she knew that their end would be a drunkard's grave; and she went among these Christians and said, "Won't you just cry to God for my two boys?" The next morning those two boys had made an appointment to meet each other on the corner of Market and Thirteenth streets—though not that they knew anything about our meeting; and while one of them was there at the corner, waiting for his brother to come, he followed the people who were flooding into the depot building; and the Spirit of the Lord met him, and he was wounded and found his way to Christ. After his brother came, he found the place too crowded to enter; so he too went curiously into another meeting and found Christ, and went home happy. And when he got home he told his mother what the Lord had done for him; and the second son came in with the same tidings. I heard one get up afterward to tell his experience in the young convert's meeting, and he had no sooner told the story than the other got up and said: "I am that brother; and there is not a happier home in Philadelphia than we have got." And they went out bringing their friends to Christ.

Let us now show our faith by our works. Let us away to our friends, to our neighbors, and to those we have an influence over, and let us talk about Christ, and let us plead with God that they may be converted; and instead of there being a few thousand converted in New York, tens of thousands can be converted; and let our prayers go up to God in our homes, and around our family altars. Let the prayers go up, "O God, save my unconverted husband." "O God, save my unconverted wife." "O God, save my unconverted children," and God will hear that cry. As I was coming out of a daily prayer-meeting in one of our Western cities, a mother came up to me and said, "I want to have you see my husband, and ask him to come to Christ." I took out my memorandum book, and I put down his name. She says: "I want to have you go and see him." I knew the name, and that it was a learned judge; and so I said to her: "I can't argue with him. He is a good deal older than I am, and it would be out of place. Then I am not much for infidel argument." "Well, Mr. Moody," she says, "that ain't what he wants. He's got enough of that. Just ask him to come to the Savior." She urged me so hard, and so strong, that I consented to go. I went up to the office where the judge was doing business, and told him what I had come for. He laughed at me. "You are very foolish," he said, and began to argue with me. I said: "I don't think it will be profitable for me to hold an argument with you. I have just one

favor I want to ask of you; and that is, that when you are converted you will let me know.” “Yes,” said he, “I will do that. When I am converted I will let you know,”—with a good deal of sarcasm. I thought the prayers of that wife would be answered, if mine were not. A year and a half after, I was in that city; and a servant came to my door and said: “There is a man in the drawing room.” I found the judge there. He said, “I promised I would let you know when I was converted.” I had heard it from other lips; but I wanted to hear it from his own. He said his wife had gone out to a meeting one night, and he was home alone; and while he was sitting there by the fire, he thought: “Supposing my wife is right, and my children are right; suppose there is a heaven and hell, and I shall be separated from them.” His first thought was, “I don’t believe a word of it.” The second thought came: “You believe in the God that created you, and that the God that created you is able to teach you. You believe that God can give you life.” “Yes, the God that created me can give me life.” “I was too proud to get down on my knees by the fire, and I said, ‘O God, teach me.’ And as I prayed, I don’t understand it, but it began to get very dark, and my heart got very heavy. I was afraid to tell my wife, and I pretended to be asleep. She kneeled down beside that bed, and I knew she was praying for me. I kept crying, ‘O God, save me; O God, take away this burden.’ But it grew darker and darker, and the load grew heavier and heavier. All the way to my office I kept crying, ‘O God, take away this load.’ I gave my clerks a holiday, and just closed my office and locked the door. I fell down on my face; I cried in agony to my Lord, ‘O Lord, for Christ’s sake, take away this guilt.’ I don’t know how it was, but it began to grow very light. I said: ‘I wonder if this isn’t what they call conversion. I think I will go and ask the minister if I am not converted.’ “The old judge said to me: “Mr. Moody, I have enjoyed life in the last three months more than all the others put together.” The judge did not believe; the wife did, and God honored her faith and saved that man. And he went up to Springfield, Ill.; and the old judge stood up there and told those politicians what God, for Christ’s sake, had done for him. And now let this text sink down deep into your hearts: “When he saw their faith.” Let us lift up our hearts to God in prayer, that he may give us faith.