

# “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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## WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST.

“What think ye of Christ.” Matthew, 22:42.

We have for our text this evening a part of the 42d verse of the 22d chapter of Matthew: “What think ye of Christ?” We find in this chapter that the Pharisees had made two attempts to entangle him in his talk and in his teaching. The Sadducees tried it; but they were silenced by the wisdom of Christ. After they had appealed to Christ, Christ turns and asks them a question. He says: “What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?” And they said, “He is the son of David.” Then says Christ, “How then did David call him his Lord?” And they were silenced forever. The Sadducees did not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ. They would never have put him to death if they had believed him to be the God-man—what he proclaimed himself to be. Now, before I go on, I want to ask you a question—not what you think of this church or that church; not what you think of this minister or that minister; nor what you think of this creed or that creed; not what you think of this denomination or that denomination. The question is not what do you think of this belief or that belief; but, “What think ye of Christ?” And I think it is a proper question. There isn’t a noted public man in this country but that if I ask what you think of him, you would give your opinion, quite freely. I hear some of you going out of the hall giving your opinion about the sermon, and sometimes it isn’t very complimentary; but that is nothing. The question is not what you think of the preaching, or what you think of the singing; but, “What think ye of Christ?” It is of very little account what you think of the minister; it is of very little account what you think of this dogma or that dogma; but it is of vast importance what you think of Christ.

I don’t think there is any one in this hall, unless it is some little infant, but ought to have an opinion about Christ. I would like to talk about him as a preacher; for there never was a preacher that preached as he did. He preached in words so very plain that little boys like these down here, and little girls could understand them; yet the deepest theologians could not understand their meaning. Coming down today I heard the little birds singing, and I could not help but think of his saying: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.” He makes even the rocks preach. I am told by travelers in the East, that there isn’t a spot that hasn’t got some sermon of his. He just touched them, and he made them preach. There isn’t a prodigal in New York but that knows the story of the Prodigal Son. He drew a picture of the prodigal so vivid that you can’t forget it. Try as much as they will to wipe out the picture, they can’t forget it; it is like a nail in a sure place. Oh! he is a wonderful preacher. I have got a boy six years old, and sometimes he comes and tumbles into bed with me—sometimes much earlier than I wish he would—and wants to have me tell him

a story; and there is no story interests him so much as the stories that Christ preaches. Yes, I would like to have time to talk to you, and ask you what you think of him as a preacher.

I want you just to ask yourselves this question, Do you believe in Christ? Do you believe that he was the Son of God? Do you believe that he was the God-man? Do you believe that he was with God before the morning stars sang together, and voluntarily left heaven and came down into this world? Whose son was he? Was he the son of man and the Son of God? Who was he, the God-man? That is the question. Now, if I had come into this city to find out about someone, to find out about his character, who he was, what he was, there would be two classes of people I would go to see. I wouldn't go to his friends only; I would go to his enemies; I would go to both classes. I would go to his friends and go to his enemies, and see what his enemies had to say about him, before I gave judgment about the man. I have got a few witnesses I want to examine, and I will just imagine my audience is the jury. My witnesses are the men that talked with Christ—the bitterest enemies that he had. The first I would like to summon into this court would be the Sadducees. What was it they had against the Son of God? Why he proclaimed the resurrection; and they didn't believe in the resurrection. They didn't believe in future punishment. They didn't believe that they were going to rise again. And they put a question to Christ: "Now here is a woman married seven times; whose wife will she be in the resurrection?" and Christ answered that question. And then the Pharisees went about planning how they might destroy him. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them"—that was all they could bring against him. That is what we like to glory in. Suppose we could summon the officers that arrested him. The Sanhedrim sent out officers to arrest the Son of God. Where did they find him! Did they find him breaking the law? Well, these officers, they found him in Gethsemane. What was he doing? Praying for a lost world. There he was, the drops of blood trickling down upon his cheeks; for we are told that he sweat great drops of blood. They set false witnesses to testify against him. They couldn't find any for a long time; and at last they found two men that would come in and swear falsely, and what did they swear to? They heard him say, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up again in three days." "Destroy this temple," that is—as explained by John—destroy this body, and he would raise it up. Let us bring in Caiaphas, the highest ecclesiastical potentate of the earth, president of the Sanhedrim, the chief priest; and let Caiaphas open his lips, and let him tell us why he condemned the Son of God to death. They did not go and summon his friends; they did not go and bring up Zacchaeus of Jericho; they did not bring the poor man that had those legions of devils cast out of him; they did not bring the blind man of Jericho—they brought his enemies. Let Caiaphas tell his own story—suppose he stood in my place. Caiaphas, just tell us what was the evidence you found against the

Son of God. He said to him, "I adjure thee by the living God, Art thou the Son of God?" And he said, "I am." And Caiaphas says: "When I heard it, I tore my mantle and said he was guilty of blasphemy." That is what we glory in, his being the Son of God. Stephen said, when the heavens were opened, he looked in and saw him standing at the right hand of God. That is why they condemned the Son of God, just because he was the God-man. If he wasn't divine, they did right to put him to death; but he was.

Let Pilate come in; now he is an impartial witness. He is no Jew; he has no prejudice against Christ. Pilate, just speak out now and tell us why you condemned him to the scourge, and to be crucified, and why you wrote up there upon the cross: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Tell us, what did you find in him—what fault? And hear what Pilate says, "I find no fault in him." Now men condemn Pilate, and yet there are a great many men worse than Pilate; for they find fault in Jesus Christ. Said he, "I will chastise this man and let him go; for I find no fault in him." But I have got a woman we can bring in as a witness; it was Pilate's wife. Whose messenger is that that comes from the palace? He brings a message from Pilate's wife: "Have nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered much in a dream through him." She thought he was a just man. Yea, my friends, I will bring in Judas, the very prince of traitors. Suppose I should say: "Judas, you sold the Son of God for thirty pieces of silver; you betrayed him; you knew more about him than Caiaphas; you knew more about him than Pilate. Come, now, Judas, tell us why you betrayed Christ? You were with him; you ate with him, and drank with him, and slept with him; tell us what you think of him?" I can imagine him throw down the thirty pieces of silver, as he cries in agony, "I betrayed innocent blood." Oh, yes, it is easy to condemn Judas nowadays; but how many men are worse than that! And he went out and put an end to his existence. Now bear in mind, I am not calling up his friends; I am calling up his enemies. The testimony is perfectly overwhelming in favor of Jesus Christ, that he was the Son of God, as well as the son of David. But here is another witness, and that is the Roman centurion. He occupied the same position as the sheriff does now. This centurion of the Roman band had to go to Calvary and put the Son of God to death. He is a Gentile, and an impartial judge; let him tell us what he thinks of the Son of God. Come, now, centurion, you had charge of the execution of Jesus of Nazareth; you were there when he died. Here is his testimony: "Truly, this was the Son of God." That is what he thought; and to me it is one of the most striking things in all Scripture that God made every man testify that he was not guilty. I will go further. I will take the very devils in hell, for God made them testify; and what did they testify? They called him, "the Son of the Most High God." They knew him. "We adjure thee by the living God, why hast thou come here to torment us before our time?" And, my friends,

what think ye today? Was he the Son of God? and did he die for a sinful world? What think ye of Christ today? Whose Son is he?

I wish I had time to examine his friends. It would take all day and all night, and I think the whole of the week. Suppose I could examine that mighty preacher, the prince of preachers, a man that with his eloquence—and he had the eloquence of heaven—drew all men to hear him. All Judea and Jerusalem came down from the mountains to hear him. He drew the cities of Judea into the wilderness, to hear him preach. What mighty power he had! Now, let us call in this wilderness preacher, who looks more like Elijah than any other prophet since Elijah. Ask John the Baptist, What think ye, John, of Christ? Hear his testimony: “I bear record, this is the Son of God.” That is what he thought; he forever settled that question. Another time he says of Christ: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.” John didn’t have but one text after that: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.” John said: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” O sinner, what do you think of him today? Do you think he will save you if you trust him? Let us bring in some more of these witnesses. There is Peter. You know there was a time he swore he never knew him. Do you think he would say now with a curse, “I never knew him?” We are told that he was crucified with his head downward, because he was not worthy to be crucified in the same way that Christ was. Peter thought a good deal of him. I might bring in doubting Thomas; he didn’t believe that Christ had risen. But Christ says: “Thomas, did you say that you wouldn’t believe unless you saw? Put your fingers in my side and feel the wound there; put your fingers in the palm of my hand and feel the wound there;” and Thomas cried out, “My Lord and my God.” Convinced of the divinity of Jesus Christ, his cloud of unbelief was scattered to the four winds of heaven. If I should call up that beloved disciple who knew him better than anyone else upon earth, it would take a great while to find out what John thought of him. I could just summon into this audience another witness, and one that had such a hatred against Christ. The Frenchman said: “It took twelve fishermen to establish the kingdom of Christ; and one Frenchman could tear it down.” So Saul of Tarsus thought. The Son of God just spoke to him, “Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?” “Who art thou, Lord?” “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” “Lord, what wilt thou have me do?” One glance, and he became a new man. He held a high position in Jerusalem. O sinner, may you hear that tender, loving voice of the Savior; and may you this day and this hour think well of the Son of God. If you will pardon me, and I say it with reverence, we might summon the angels of heaven here. Only once they were permitted to burst through the clouds and come down to this world. Yes, they were there, long before the morning stars sang together; there when Christ was in glory. They saw him when he left the throne of God and came down into a manger; they saw him pass by thrones

on earth, and come down into a manger. Hear them upon the plains of Bethlehem: "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, for unto us is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior." The angels of heaven thought that he was a Savior; and so he is, the Savior of the world. If we could ask the angels what they think of God's Son, what a shout would go up from around the throne. John heard the voice of many angels ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and they were singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

I would to God that I had the voice of an angel, that I might win your soul to the Son of God. A man was preaching in Brooklyn today about the white robes; and a friend said the halls of that building never heard such preaching before. And the minister said they might be wearing those robes a good deal sooner than they thought. And just as he got through, he threw up both his hands and said "Jesus" —and fell dead. Would that I could stand aside and let him take my place for five minutes. Oh, won't you think well of Jesus? Won't you think well of Jesus of the New Testament? Won't you think well of God's own Son? I want to bring one more witness. "May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth and this right hand forget its cunning if I cease" to give praises unto his name. There is one more witness, which is that beloved One. When Jesus of Nazareth was coming up out of the Jordan, lo! a voice from the Throne—a voice from heaven—Hark! sinners, listen! God speaks: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." That is what God thought of him. Once he took Peter, James, and John where Moses and Elias were, and he spoke: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." Won't you think something of the Son of God? Young lady, what do you think? Mother, what do you think? Do you think enough of him to trust him? If you want to please the father here on earth, you will think well of his son; and if you want to please the Heavenly Father you will think well of his Son.

Now, before I close, let me ask you one question—take it home with you—and that is this: "Why don't you love him?" Just think now, can you give a reason for not loving him? I knew an infidel who was asked by a little child why he didn't love Jesus, and he finally said to himself, I will just find out why I don't love Jesus. He took the Bible and opened it to the book of John—if you want to find out why you don't love Jesus, don't you look there. He found that God so loved the world that he gave Christ for it, and the poor infidel's heart was broken. And that night he was on his knees crying for mercy. O sinner, do think well of Christ today! Love him today! Give your souls to him this blessed evening, the last Sabbath of this blessed month! This day and this hour let us press into the kingdom of God.