

“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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WHERE ART THOU?

“Where art thou!” GENESIS 3:9.

I want to direct your attention to the 3d chapter of Genesis, part of the 9th verse: “Where art thou?” You see I have got a very personal text this afternoon. All those ministers in this audience will bear me out in this statement, that it is the hardest kind of work to get their congregations to apply this text to themselves. When they hear it, one man passes it on to another; and away it goes, text and sermon. This afternoon I want you to understand that it means me, you, and every one of us—that it points to us; that it applies to us personally—that it ought to come home to every soul here—to these merchants, to these ministers, to these reporters, to these great-hearted men, to these women, to these little boys and girls, as a personal question. It was the first question God put to man after his fall; and in the 6,000 years that have rolled away, all of Adam’s children have heard it. It has come to them all. In the silent watches of the night, in the busy hours of the day, it has come upon us many a time—the question “Where am I? Whither am I going?” And I want you to look at it now as a personal question. So let us be solemn for a few minutes, while we try to answer it. Some men look with great anxiety as to how they appear in the sight of their fellowmen. It is of very little account what the world thinks of us. The world is not worth heeding; public opinion is of very little account. We should not pay any attention to its opinion. “Where art thou going?” is the question that ought to trouble. “What is to be your hereafter?” May the question strike home to us, and may a heart-searching take place in us, and the Holy Spirit search us, so that we may know before we sleep tonight where we are now in the sight of God, and where we are going in eternity.

I remember when preaching in New York City, at the Hippodrome, a man coming up to me and telling me a story that thrilled my soul. One night, he said, he had been gambling; had gambled all the money away he had. When he went home to the hotel that night, he did not sleep much—half drunk, and with a sort of remorse for what he had done. The next morning happened to be Sunday. He got up, felt bad, couldn’t eat anything, didn’t touch his breakfast, was miserable, and thought about putting an end to his existence. That afternoon he took a walk up Broadway; and when he came to the Hippodrome, he saw great crowds going in and thought of entering too. But a policeman at the door told him he couldn’t come in, as it was a women’s meeting. He turned from it and strolled on; came back to his hotel and had dinner. At night he walked up the street until he reached the Hippodrome again; and this time he saw a lot of men going in. When inside he listened to the singing and heard the text, “Where art thou?” and

he thought he would go out. He rose to go out and the text came upon his ears again, "Where art thou?" This was too personal, he thought; it was disagreeable, and he made for the door; but as he got to the third row from the entrance, the words came to him again, "Where art thou?" He stood still; for the question had come to him with irresistible force, and God had found him right there. He went to his hotel and prayed all that night; and now he is a bright and shining light. And this young man, who is a commercial traveler, went back to the village in which he had been reared, and in which he had been one of the fastest young men—went back there, and went around among his friends and acquaintances and testified for Christ, as earnestly and beneficially for him as his conduct had been against him. I hope the text will find out some young man here who has strayed away from God, and come upon him with such force personally as will turn him from his present course to take the offers of salvation. Won't you believe we are here for you? won't you believe we are preaching for you? won't you believe that this enterprise has been carried out for you? and that this assembly has been drawn together for you? and may you ask your heart, solemnly and candidly this question, "Where art thou?"

I am going to divide this audience into three classes. Don't let this startle you; I am not going to make three divisions among you. The first class is the class who profess to be Christians. I don't know who you are, or whether you are sincere. It rests between you and God. The other class are the backsliders—those who have been good children, but who have turned their backs upon him, and have gone into the regions of sin. And the other class is that one that has never been saved, who have never been born of the Spirit, who have never sought to reach Christ.

And now, my friends, as to you who profess to be Christians. We who profess to be Christians, are we living up to what we preach? God forgive me! I feel I am not doing as much as I should for him. I don't except myself. You who profess to be Christians, this question is personal to you, "Where art thou?" Do you believe what you are preaching? do you live the life you ought to be living as professed Christians? If you were doing this, tens of thousands of people would be converted in Chicago within thirty days. By your neglect to practice what you preach, men have got sick of you; the world has become tired of you. They say if we really feel what we talk about and profess, we would be more earnest about their salvation. And I say, they are right. If Christians felt as they should, every church in Chicago, every church in the Northwest, would be on fire for the salvation of souls. They are lukewarm. Is the Church today in its right position; is it true to its teachings? Are we not mingling with the world in our professed Christian lives, so that the world has become tired of our shamming professions? If the world does not see us act according to our professions, they

say Christianity is not real. Why, a young man some time ago, a professed Christian, spoke to another young man upon the subject, and the Christian was answered with the words: "I don't believe a word of your Christianity; I don't believe a word of what you talk about; I don't believe your Bible." "You don't mean that?" asked the Christian. "Yes I do," said the young man; "It's all a sham; you are all hypocrites." The Christian said to him, knowing he had a mother who was a professed Christian: "You don't mean to say that your mother is a hypocrite?" "Well, no," said the young fellow, not willing to admit his mother was one; "she is not exactly a hypocrite; but she don't believe what she professes. If she did, she would have talked to me about my soul long ago." That young man, my friends, had the best of it. And this is the condition of nine-tenths of us—we don't practice what we profess to believe. We have not really taken the cross of Christ. We have not put off the old man and taken on the new. We are not living truly in Christ Jesus; and the world is sick of us, and goes stumbling over us. If we don't practice in every particular the professions we make, and try to influence the lives of others, and lead the lives of Christians according to Christian precept, the world will go on stumbling over us. A few years ago, in a town somewhere in this State, a merchant died; and while he was lying a corpse, I was told a story I will never forget. When the physician that attended him saw there was no chance for him here, he thought it would be time to talk about Christ to the dying man. And there are a great many Christians just like this physician. They wait till a man is just entering the other world, just till he is about nearing the throne, till the sands of life are about run out, till the death-rattle is in his throat, before they commence to speak of Christ. The physician stepped up to the dying merchant and began to speak of Jesus, the beauties of Christianity, and the salvation he had offered to all the world. The merchant listened quietly to him, and then asked him, "How long have you known of these things?" "I have been a Christian since I came from the East," he replied. "You have been a Christian so long and have known all this, and have been in my store every day. You have been in my home, and have associated with me; you knew all these things, and why didn't you tell me before?" The doctor went home and retired to rest, but could not sleep. The question of the dying man rang in his ears. He could not explain why he had not spoken before; but he saw he had neglected his duty to his principles. He went back to his dying friend, intending to urge upon him acceptance of Christ's salvation; but when he began to speak to him, the merchant only replied in a sad whisper, "Oh, why didn't you tell me before?" Oh, my friends, how many of us act like this physician. You must go to your neighbor, and tell him who does not know Christ of what He has done for us. If you do not tell the glad tidings, they are listening to the promptings of the devil; and we make people believe that

Christianity is hypocrisy, and that Christ is not the Savior of the world. If we believe it, shall we not publish it, and speak out the glorious truth to all for Christ—that He is the Redeemer of the world. Some time ago, I read a little account that went through the press; and it burned into my soul. A father took his little child into the fields one day. He lay down while the child was amusing itself, picking up little blades of grass and flowers. While the child was thus engaged, the father fell asleep; and when he awoke the first thought that occurred to him was, “Where is my child?” He looked around everywhere, but nowhere could he see the child. He looked all around the fields, over the mountains, but could not see her, and finally came to a precipice and looked down among the stones and rocks; and there he saw his little child lying down at the bottom, and ran down, took the child up, and kissed it tenderly. But it was dead. He was filled with remorse, and accused himself of being the murderer of his child. And this story applies to Christians, in their watchful care of their fellow-creatures.

It was not long ago that I heard of a mother making all sorts of fun and jeering at our preaching; not in Chicago, but in another town. She was laughing and scoffing at the meetings, she was scorning the preachers; and yet she had a drunken son. It might have been, if she had helped to support the meetings, the meetings would have been the means of saving that son from a drunkard’s grave; and mothers and fathers here today, you have the responsibility upon you of turning the faces of your children toward Zion. Ah, my friends, it is a solemn question to you today; and may you ask yourself where you are in the sight of God.

The next class I want to speak to, for a few moments; for I cannot help believing that in this assembly there must be a number of backsliders, who have gone away from the wayside. You have probably come from an Eastern town to this one, and you have come to some church with a letter—to some Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Episcopalian church. And when you came to that church, you did not find the love you expected. You didn’t find the cordiality you looked for, and you did not go near it again. So you kept the letter in your pocket for weeks, for years. It might have been thrown in your trunk, might have been burned up in the Chicago fire; and you have forgot all about your church life, and the letter has disappeared. You lead an ungodly life; but you are not happy. I have traveled about a good deal in the last five years, and I never knew a man who had turned away from religion to be a happy man. That man’s conscience is always troubling him. He may come to Chicago and become prosperous and wealthy, but his wealth and position in the world cannot fill his heart. If there is a poor backslider in this building today, let him come back. Hear the voice that calls you to come back. There is nothing you have done which God is not ready and able to forgive. If there is a poor wanderer on

the mountains of sin, turn right round and face him. He will hear your transgressions, and forgive your backsliding, and take you to his loving bosom; and this will be a happy night to you. Look at the home of the backslider. No prayers, no family altar there. As in the days of Elijah, they have put up the image of Baal in the place of their God. They have no peace; their conscience troubles them, they know they are not bringing their family up as they should. Is not that the condition of a good many here today? Oh, backslider, you know what your life is; but what will be your eternity if you fight against the Lord, who is only waiting to do you good?

I heard of a young man who came to Chicago to sell his father's grain. His father was a minister somewhere down here. The boy arrived in Chicago and sold the grain; and when the time came for him to return home, the boy did not come. The father and mother were up all night expecting to hear the sound of the wagon every minute; but they waited and waited, and still he did not come. The father became so uneasy that he went into the stable and saddled his horse, and came to Chicago. When he reached here he found that his son had sold the grain, but had not been seen since the sale; and he concluded that he was murdered. After making investigation, however, he found that the boy had gone into a gambling house and lost all his money. After they had taken all his money from him, they told him to sell his horse and wagon, and he would recover his money, which he did. He was like the poor man who came down from Jericho to Jerusalem, and who fell among thieves, and after they had stripped him of everything cast him off. And a great many of you think as this young man thought. You think that rum-sellers and gamblers are your best friends, when they will take from you your peace, your health, your soul, your money—everything you have, and then run away. Well, the father, after looking about for him fruitlessly, went home and told his wife what he had learned. But he did not settle down, but just took his carpet-bag in his hand and went from one place to another, getting ministers to let him preach for them; and he always told the congregation that he had a boy dearer to him than life, and left his address with them, and urged them, if ever they heard anything about his boy, to let him know. At last, after going around a good deal, he got on his track, and learned that he had gone to California. He went home, but did not write a letter to him. No; he just arranged his business affairs and started for the Pacific coast, to find his boy. This is but an illustration of what God has been doing for you. There has not been a day, an hour, a moment, but God has been searching for you. When the father got to San Francisco, he got permission to preach; and he had a notice put in the papers, in the hope that it might reach the mining districts, trusting that if his son were there it might reach him. He preached a sermon on the Sunday, and when he pronounced the benediction, the audience went away. But he

saw in a corner one who remained. He went up to him, and found that it was his boy. He did not reprimand him, he did not deliver judgment upon him, but put his loving arms around him, drew him to his bosom, and took him back to his home. This is an illustration of what God wants to do to us, what he wants to do today. He offers us his love, and his forgiveness.

There is one peculiarity about a backslider, you must get back to him as you went away. It is you who have gone away by turning, by leaving him, not he by leaving you. And the way to get back to him is, to turn your face toward him; and he will receive you with joy and forgiveness. There will be joy in your heart, and there will be joy in heaven this afternoon, if you return to him. If you treated God as a personal friend, there would not be a backslider. A rule I have had for years is, to treat the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal friend. His is not a creed, a mere empty doctrine; but it is he himself we have. The moment we have received Christ, we should receive him as a friend. When I go away from home, I bid my wife and children good-by, I bid my friends and acquaintances good-by; but I never heard of a poor backslider going down on his knees and saying: "I have been near you for ten years; your service has become tedious and monotonous; I have come to bid you farewell; good-by, Lord Jesus Christ." I never heard of one doing this. I will tell you how they go away—they just run away. Where are you, you backslider? Just look upon your condition during the past ten years. Have they been years of happiness? Have they been years of peace? Echo answers ten thousand times, "No," Return to him at once; never mind what your past has been, he will give you salvation.

But I must hasten on to the next class—the unsaved. I will admit that professed Christians have got their failings. We are far from being what we ought to be. But is that any reason why you should not come to him? We do not preach ourselves—we do not set ourselves up as the Savior; if we did, you might make this an excuse. But we preach Christ. Now, you who are unsaved, won't you come? I do not know who you are in this audience; but if the Spirit of God is not born in you, and does not tell you you are the children of God, this is an evidence that you have not been born of God. Do you love your enemies? Do you love those who slander you? Do you love those who hate you? Have you joy, peace, long-suffering, courage, charity? If you have got the fruit of the Spirit, you have those qualities; if you have not, you have not been born of the Spirit. Now, friends, just ask yourselves this question. "Where am I?" Here in this hall today, surrounded with praying friends. It seemed, sometimes, to me, as if the words came to me and fell to the floor: and at other times, the words fell on the heart. We can feel it in this hall today, in the atmosphere. We feel its influence all around. It may be that that mother is praying for the return of an erring son. It may be that that brother has been praying all the afternoon, "O my God, may the

Spirit come to my brother!” Dear friends, let us ask each other today, “Where art thou?” Resisting earnest, trembling prayers of some loving mother, of some loving wife—trampling them under foot! .Now, be honest. Have I not been talking to many in this audience who made promises five, ten, fifteen, twenty years ago—who made a promise to serve him? Those promises have faded away; and those five, ten, fifteen, twenty years have rolled on, and you are no nearer. O sinner, where art thou? Are you making light of all offers of mercy? Are you turning your back and ridiculing him and laughing at him? If you are, may he, the God of mercy, arrest you, and have mercy on your soul and save you. The last three years have been the most solemn years of my life. A man’s life is just like going up and down a hill. If I live the allotted time, I am going down the hill. Many of you are on the top of the hill, and are not saved. Suppose you pause a moment, and look down the hill on the road from whence you came—look back toward the cradle. Don’t you remember that the sermons you heard ten or fifteen years ago moved you? You say: “When you look back at those times, we used to have good sermons, better and more earnest ministers than now.” Don’t you make any mistake. The gospel is the same as it was then, as powerful today as ever. The fault is not with the ministers of the gospel; it is with yourself—your heart has become hard. Then, as you look down into the valley, don’t you see a little mound and a tombstone? It marks the resting-place of a loving father, or a loving mother. Ten years ago, you had a praying mother. Every morning and evening, she went down on her knees in her closet and prayed for you. Her prayers are ended now—and yet you are not saved. It may be, as you look down the stream of time, you see a little grave that marks the resting-place of your child. It may be that child took you by the hand, and asked you, “Will you meet me in that land?” And you promised her that you would meet her there. As you looked down into that little grave, and heard the damp, cold earth falling down, you repeated that promise. Five, ten, fifteen years ago you promised this; have you kept it? Some of you are far down the hill, and hastening to judgment. May God open your eyes today, as you look back upon your lives, and look into the future, it may be that you will live the allotted time; but the end is soon to come. The average age is thirty-three years. There are a number of you in this hall this afternoon who will be in eternity inside of thirty days. Ask yourselves where you are—resisting the offer of mercy, turning back the offer of God. May the loving God show you the Savior standing at the door of your heart, and knocking, and telling you he wants to come in and save you.

In London, when I was there in 1867, I was told a story which made a very deep impression upon me. A young French nobleman came there to see a doctor, bringing letters from the French Emperor. The Emperor Napo-

leon III. had a great regard for this young man, and the doctor wanted to save him. He examined the young man, and saw there was something upon his mind. "Have you lost any property? What is troubling you? You have something weighing upon your mind," said the doctor. "Oh, there is nothing particular." "I know better; have you lost any relations?" asked the doctor. "No, none within the last three years." "Have you lost any reputation in your country?" "No." The doctor studied for a few minutes, and then said: "I must know what is on your mind; I must know what is troubling you." And the young man said: "My father was an infidel; my grandfather was an infidel, and I was brought up an infidel; and for the last three years these words have haunted me,. 'Eternity! and where shall it find me?'" "Ah," said the doctor; "you have come to the wrong physician." "Is there no hope for me?" cried the young man. "I walk about in the daytime; I lie down at night, and it comes upon me continually—'Eternity! and where shall I spend it?' Tell me, is there any hope for me." The doctor said: "Now, just sit down and be quiet. A few years ago I was an infidel. I did not believe in God, and was in the same condition in which you now are." The doctor took down his Bible, and turned to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and read: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." And he read on through this chapter. When he had finished, the young man said: "Do you believe this, that he voluntarily left heaven, came down to this earth, and suffered and died that we might be saved?" "Yes, I believe it. That brought me out of infidelity, out of darkness into light," and he preached Christ and his salvation and told him of heaven, and then suggested that they get down on their knees and pray. And when I went there in 1867, a letter had been received from that young nobleman, who wrote to Dr. Winslow, in London, telling him that the question of "Eternity, and where he should spend it," was settled, and troubling him no more. My friends, this question of eternity and where we are going to spend it, forces itself upon every one of us. We are staying here for a little day. Our life is but a fibre, and it will soon be snapped. I may be preaching my last sermon. Tonight may find me in eternity. By the grace of God, say that you will spend it in heaven. All the hosts of hell cannot hinder you, if you make up your mind to come to heaven; because if God says; "Let him come," Who can resist you? If that little child sitting yonder says it will enter heaven, all the hosts of hell cannot keep it out. May God help you to spend your eternity in heaven; and may you say: "By the grace of God, I accept Jesus as my Redeemer.