

“COME!”

A CHRISTMAS INVITATION.

BEING THOUGHTS ON MATT. XI. 28.

BY THE

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COME!

“COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY
LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.”

MATTHEW xi. 28.

READER,

The name of the tract before you is short. But the subject which that name unfolds is deeply important. It is the first word of a text of Scripture which deserves to be written in letters of gold. I offer that text to you as a Christmas invitation. I entreat you to look at it, and ponder it well. That single text may be the salvation of your soul.

The end of another year is close at hand. Another Christmas is drawing near. Family parties are once more gathering. Friends are inviting friends to come and see them. Homes are being filled with happy faces. Surely, at a time like this, *an invitation* cannot be out of season! Listen, then, to the invitation which I bring you this day. It may be unlike any that you have yet received. But it is of unspeakable importance. It concerns the eternal happiness of your soul.

Reader, do not shrink back when you read these words. I do not want to spoil your Christmas pleasures, provided always that your pleasures are not mixed with sin. I know that there is a time to laugh, as well as a time to weep. —But I do want you to be thoughtful, as well as happy,—to consider, as well as to make mirth. There are some missing at Christmas parties this winter, who a year ago were alive and well. There are some now gathering round Christmas fire-sides, who a year hence will be lying in their graves.

Reader, how long have you yourself to live? Will another Christmas find you alive? Once more I entreat you to listen to the invitation which I bring you this day. I have a message for you from my Master. He says, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

There are four points in the text before you, to which I ask your attention. On each of these I have somewhat to say.

- I. First. Who is the Speaker of this invitation?
- II. Secondly. To whom is this invitation addressed?
- III. Thirdly. What does the Speaker ask you to do?
- IV. Lastly. What does the Speaker offer to give?

May the Holy Ghost bless the reading of this tract to your everlasting benefit! May this Christmas prove the happiest and best Christmas you have ever spent!

I. In the first place, *Who is the Speaker of the invitation which heads this tract?* Who is it that invites so freely, and offers so largely? Who is it that says to your conscience this day, “Come,—come unto me?”

Reader, you have a right to ask these questions. You live in a lying world. The earth is full of cheats, shams, deceptions, impositions and falsehoods. The value of a promissory note depends entirely on the name which is signed at the bottom. When you hear of a mighty Promiser you have a right to say, Who is this? and what is his name?

The speaker of the invitation before you is the greatest and best friend that man has ever had. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

He is One who is *almighty*. He is God the Father’s fellow and equal. He is very God of very God. By Him were all things made. In His hand are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He has all power in heaven and earth. In Him all fulness dwells. He has the keys of death and hell. He is now the appointed Mediator between God and man. He will one day be the Judge and King of all the earth. Reader, when such a One as this speaks, you may safely trust Him. What He promises He is able to perform.

He is One who is *most loving*. He loved us so that He left heaven for our sakes, and laid aside for a season the glory that he had with the Father. He loved us so that He was born of a woman for our sakes, and lived thirty-three years in this sinful world. He loved us so that He undertook to pay our mighty debt to God, and died upon the cross to make atonement for our sins. Reader, when such a One as this speaks, He deserves a hearing. When He promises a thing, you need not be afraid to trust Him.

He is one who *knows the heart of man* most thoroughly. He took on Him a body like our own, and was made like man in all things, sin only excepted. He knows by experience what man has to go through. He has tasted poverty, and weariness, and hunger, and thirst, and pain, and temptation. He is acquainted with all our condition upon earth. He has “suffered Himself, being tempted.” Reader, when such a One as this makes an offer, He makes it with perfect wisdom. He knows exactly what you and I need.

He is One who *never breaks His word*. He always fulfils His promises. He never fails to do what He undertakes. He never disappoints the soul that trusts Him. Mighty as He is, there is one thing which He cannot do. It is impossible for Him to lie. Reader, when such a One as this makes a promise, you need not doubt that He will stand to it. You may depend with confidence on His word.

Reader, you have now heard who sends you the invitation which is before you today. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. Give Him the credit due to His

name. Grant Him a full and impartial hearing. Believe that a promise from His mouth deserves your best attention. See that you refuse not Him that speaketh. It is written, "If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we refuse Him that speaketh from heaven." (Heb. xii. 25.)

II. I will now show you, in the second place, *to whom the invitation before you is addressed.*

The Lord Jesus addresses "all that labour and are heavy laden." The expression is deeply comforting and instructive. It is wide, sweeping, and comprehensive. It describes the case of millions in every part of the world.

Where are the labouring and heavy-laden? They are everywhere. They are a multitude that man can scarcely number. They are to be found in every climate, and in every country under the sun. They live in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, and in America. They dwell by the banks of the Seine, as well as the banks of the Thames,—by the banks of the Mississippi as well as the banks of the Niger. They abound under republics as well as under monarchies, —under liberal governments as well as under despotism. Everywhere you will find trouble, care, sorrow, anxiety, murmuring, discontent, and unrest. What does it mean? What does it all come to? Men are "labouring and heavy-laden."

To what class do the labouring and heavy-laden belong? They belong to every class. There is no exception. They are to be found among masters as well as among servants,—among rich as well as among poor,—among kings as well as among subjects,—among learned as among ignorant. In every class you will find trouble, care, sorrow, anxiety, murmuring, discontent, and unrest. What does it mean? What does it all come to? Men are "labouring and heavy-laden."

Reader, how shall we explain this? What is the cause of the state of things which I have just tried to describe?—Did God create man at the beginning to be unhappy? Most certainly not. —Are human governments to blame because men are not happy? At most to a very slight extent. The fault lies far too deep to be reached by human laws.—There is another cause, a cause which many unhappily refuse to see. That cause is sin.

Reader, sin and departure from God, are the true reasons why men are everywhere labouring and heavy-laden. Sin is the universal disease which infects the whole earth. Sin brought in thorns and thistles at the beginning, and obliged man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Sin is the reason why the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, and the foundations of the earth are out of course. Sin is the cause of all the burdens which now press down mankind. Most men know it not, and weary themselves in vain to explain the state of things around them. But sin is the great root and

foundation of all sorrow, whatever proud man may think. How much men ought to hate sin!

Reader, are you one of those who are labouring and heavy-laden? I think it very likely that you are. I am firmly persuaded that there are thousands of men and women in the world who are inwardly uncomfortable, and yet will not confess it. They feel a burden on their hearts, which they would gladly get rid of, and yet they do not know the way. They have a conviction that all is not right in their inward man, which they never tell to any one. Husbands do not tell it to their wives, and wives do not tell it to their husbands. Children do not tell it to their parents, and friends do not tell it to their friends. But the inward burden lies heavily on many hearts! There is far more unhappiness than the world sees. Disguise it as some will, there are multitudes uncomfortable because they know they are not prepared to meet God. And you, who are reading this tract, perhaps are one.

Reader, if you are labouring and heavy-laden, you are the very person to whom the Lord Jesus Christ sends an invitation this day. If you have an aching heart, and a sore conscience,—if you want rest for a weary soul, and know not where to find it,—if you want peace for a guilty heart, and are at a loss which way to turn, —you are the man, you are the woman,—to whom Jesus speaks today. There is hope for you. I bring you good tidings. “Come unto me,” says Jesus, “and I will give you rest. ”

You may tell me this invitation cannot be meant for you, because you are not good enough to be invited by Christ. I answer, that Jesus does not speak to the good, but to the labouring and heavy-laden. Do you know anything of this feeling? Then you are one to whom He speaks.

You may tell me that the invitation cannot be meant for you, because you are a sinner, and know nothing about religion. I answer, that it matters nothing what you are, or what you have been. Do you at this moment feel labouring and heavy-laden? Then you are one to whom Jesus speaks.

You may tell me that you cannot think the invitation is meant for you, because you are not yet converted, and have not got a new heart. I answer that Christ’s invitation is not addressed to the converted, but to the labouring and heavy-laden. Is this what you feel? Is there any burden on your heart? Then you are one of those to whom Christ speaks.

You may tell me that you have no right to accept this invitation, because you do not know that you are one of God’s elect. I answer, that you have no right to put words in Christ’s mouth, which Christ has not used. He does not say, “Come unto me, all ye that are elect. “He addresses all the labouring and heavy-laden ones without any exception. Are you one of them? Is there weight within on your soul? This is the only question you have to decide. If you are, you are one of those to whom Christ speaks.

Reader, if you are one of the labouring and heavy-laden ones, once more I entreat you not to refuse the invitation which I bring you today. Do

not forsake your own mercies. The harbour of refuge is freely before you. Do not turn away from it. The best of Friends holds out His hand to you. Let not pride, or self-righteousness, or fear of man's ridicule, make you reject His proffered love. Take Him at His word. Say to Him, "Lord Jesus Christ, I am one of those whom thine invitation suits. I am labouring and heavy-laden. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

III. I will now show you, in the third place, *what the Lord Jesus Christ asks you to do*. Three words make up the sum and substance of the invitation which He sends you today. If you are labouring and heavy-laden, Jesus says, "Come unto me."

Reader, there is a grand simplicity about the three words now before you. Short and plain as the sentence seems, it contains a mine of deep truth and solid comfort. Weigh it. Look at it. Consider it. Ponder it well. I believe that it is one half of saving Christianity to understand what Jesus means, when He says, "Come unto me."

Mark well, that the Lord Jesus does not bid the labouring and heavy-laden "go and work." Those words would carry no comfort to heavy consciences. It would be like requiring labour from an exhausted man. No! He bids them "Come."—He does not say, "Pay me what thou owest." That demand would drive a broken heart into despair. It would be like claiming a debt from a ruined bankrupt. No! He says, "Come."—He does not say, "Stand still and wait." That command would only be a mockery. It would be like promising to give medicine at the end of a week to one at the point of death. No! He says, "Come!" Today,—at once, —without any delay, "Come unto me."

But, after all, what is meant by coming to Christ? It is an expression often used, but often misunderstood. Beware that you make no mistake at this point. Here, unhappily, thousands turn aside out of the right course, and miss the truth. Beware that you do not make shipwreck at the very mouth of the harbour.

Take notice, that coming to Christ means something more than coming to church and chapel. You may fill your place regularly at a place of worship, and attend all outward means of grace, and yet not be saved. All this is not coming to Christ.

Take notice, that coming to Christ is something more than coming to the Lord's table. You may be a regular member and communicant. You may never be missing in the lists of those who eat that bread and drink that wine, which the Lord commanded to be received, and yet never be saved. All this is not coming to Christ.

Take notice, that coming to Christ is something more than coming to ministers. You may be a constant hearer of some popular preacher, and a

zealous partisan of all his opinions, and yet never be saved. All this is not coming to Christ.

Take notice, once more, that coming to Christ is something more than coming to the possession of head-knowledge about Him. You may know the whole system of evangelical doctrine, and be able to talk, argue, and dispute on every jot of it, and yet never be saved. All this is not coming to Christ.

Coming to Christ is coming to Him with the heart by simple faith. Believing on Christ is coming to Him, and coming to Christ is believing on Him. It is that act of the soul which takes place when a man, feeling his own sins, and despairing of all other hope, commits himself to Christ for salvation, ventures on Him, trusts Him, and casts himself wholly on Him.—When a man turns to Christ empty that he may be filled,—sick that he may be healed,—hungry that he may be satisfied,—thirsty that he may be refreshed,—needy that he may be enriched,—dying that he may have life, —lost that he may be saved,—guilty that he may be pardoned,—sin-defiled that he may be cleansed,—confessing that Christ alone can supply his need, — then he comes to Christ.—When he uses Christ as the Jews used the cities of refuge,—as the starving Egyptians used Joseph,—as the dying Israelites used the brazen serpent,—then he comes to Christ.—It is the empty soul's venture on a full Saviour. It is the drowning man's grasp on the hand held out to help him. It is the sick man's reception of a healing medicine. This, and nothing more than this, is coming to Christ.

Hearken, my beloved reader, whoever you may be, hearken to a word of caution. Beware of mistakes as to this matter of coming to Christ. Do not stop short in any half-way house. Do not allow the devil and the world to cheat you out of eternal life. Do not suppose that you will ever get any good from Christ, unless you go straight, direct, thoroughly, and entirely to Christ Himself. Trust not in a little outward formality. Content not yourself with a regular use of outward means. A lantern is an excellent help in a dark night, but it is not home. Means of grace are useful aids, but they are not Christ. Oh! no! Press onward, forward, upward, till you have had personal, business-like dealings with Christ Himself.

Hearken again, my beloved reader. Beware of mistakes as to the manner of coming to Christ. Dismiss from your mind for ever all idea of worthiness, merit, and fitness in yourself. Throw away all notions of goodness, righteousness, and deserts. Think not that you can bring anything to recommend you, or to make you deserving of Christ's notice. You must come to Him as a poor, guilty, undeserving sinner, or you might just as well not come at all. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) It is the peculiar mark

of the faith that justifies and saves, that it brings to Christ nothing but an empty hand.

Hearken once more, my beloved reader. Let there be no mistake in your mind as to the special character of the man who has come to Christ, and is a true Christian. He is not an angel. He is not a half-angelic being, in whom is no weakness, or blemish, or infirmity. He is nothing of the kind. He is nothing more than a sinner who has found out his sinfulness, and has learned the blessed secret of living by faith in Christ. What was the glorious company of the apostles and prophets? What was the noble army of martyrs? What were Isaiah, Daniel, Peter, James, John, Paul, Polycarp, Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, Ridley, Latimer, Bunyan, Baxter, Whitefield, Venn, Chalmers, Bickersteth, M'Cheyne? —What were they all but sinners who knew and felt their sins, and trusted only in Christ? What were they but men who accepted the invitation I bring you this day, and came to Christ by faith? By this faith they lived. In this faith they died. In themselves and their doings they saw nothing worth mentioning. But in Christ they saw all that their souls required.

Reader, the invitation of Christ is now before you. If you never listened to it before, listen to it today. Broad, full, free, wide, simple, tender, kind,—that invitation will leave you without excuse if you refuse to accept it. There are some Christmas invitations, perhaps, which it is wiser and better to decline. There is one which ought always to be accepted. That one is before you today. Jesus Christ is saying, “Come, Come unto me.”

IV. I will now show you, in the last place, *what the Lord Jesus Christ promises to give*. He does not ask the labouring and heavy-laden to come to Him for nothing. He holds out gracious inducements. He allures them by sweet offers. “Come unto me,” He says, “and I will give you rest.”

Rest is a pleasant thing. Few are the men and women in this weary world who do not know the sweetness of it. The man who has been labouring hard with his hands all the week, working in iron, or brass, or stone, or wood, or clay,—digging, lifting, hammering, cutting,—he knows the comfort of going home on Saturday night, and having one day of rest. The man who has been toiling hard with his head all day,—writing, copying, calculating, composing, scheming, planning,—he knows the comfort of laying aside his papers and having a little rest. Yes! rest is a pleasant thing.

And rest is one of the principal offers which the Gospel makes to man. Come to me, says the world, and I will give you riches and pleasure. Come with me, says the devil, and I will give you greatness, power, and wisdom. “Come unto me,” says the Lord Jesus Christ, “and I will give you rest.”

But what is the nature of that rest which the Lord Jesus promises to give? It is no mere repose of body. A man may have that and yet be miserable. You may place him in a palace, and surround him with every possible

comfort. You may give him money in abundance, and everything that money can buy. You may free him from all care about tomorrow's bodily wants, and take away the need of labouring for a single hour. All this you may do to a man, and yet not give him true rest. Thousands know this only too well by bitter experience. Their hearts are starving in the midst of worldly plenty. Their inward man is sick and weary, while their outward man is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day. Yes! a man may have houses, and lands, and money, and horses, and carriages, and soft beds, and good fare, and attentive servants, and yet not have true rest.

The rest that Christ gives is an inward thing. It is rest of heart, rest of conscience, rest of mind, rest of affection, rest of will. It is rest, from a comfortable sense of sins being all forgiven and guilt all put away. It is rest, from a solid hope of good things to come, laid up beyond the reach of disease, and death, and the grave. It is rest, from the well-grounded feeling, that the great business of life is settled, its great end provided for, that in time all is well done, and in eternity heaven will be our home.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him, by showing them His own finished work on the cross, by clothing them in His own perfect righteousness, and washing them in His own precious blood. When a man begins to see that the Son of God actually died for his sins, his soul begins to taste something of inward quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him, by revealing Himself as their ever-living High Priest in heaven, and God reconciled to them through Him. When a man begins to see that the Son of God actually lives to intercede for him, he will begin to feel something of inward quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him, by implanting His Spirit in their hearts, witnessing with their spirits that they are God's children, and that old things are passed away, and all things are become new. When a man begins to feel an inward drawing towards God as a Father, and a sense of being an adopted and forgiven child, his soul begins to feel something of quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him, by dwelling in their hearts as King, by putting all things within in order, and giving to each faculty its place and work. When a man begins to find order in his heart in place of rebellion and confusion, his soul begins to understand something of quiet and peace. There is no true inward happiness until the true King is on His throne.

Rest such as this is the privilege of all believers in Christ. Some know more of it and some less. Some feel it only at distant intervals, and some feel it almost always. Few enjoy the sense of it without many a battle with unbelief, and many a conflict with fear. But all who truly come to Christ, know something of this rest. Ask them, with all their complaints and

doubts, whether they would give up Christ and go back to the world. You will get only one answer. Weak as their sense of rest may be, they have got hold of *something* which does them good, and that *something* they cannot let go.

Rest such as this is within reach of all who are willing to seek it and receive it. The poor man is not so poor but he may have it. The ignorant man is not so ignorant but he may know it. The sick man is not so weak and helpless but he may get hold of it. Faith, simple faith, is the one thing needful in order to possess Christ's rest. Faith in Christ is the grand secret of happiness. Neither poverty, nor ignorance, nor tribulation, nor distress can prevent men and women feeling rest of soul, if they will only come to Christ and believe.

Rest such as this is the possession which makes men *independent*. Banks may break, and money make itself wings and flee away. War, pestilence, and famine may break in on a land, and the foundations of the earth be out of course. Health and vigour may depart, and the body be crushed down by loathsome disease. Death may cut down wife, and children, and friends, until he who once enjoyed them stands entirely alone. But the man who has come to Christ by faith, will still possess something which can never be taken from him. Like Paul and Silas, he will sing in prison. Like Job, bereaved of children and property, he will bless the name of the Lord. He is the truly independent man, who possesses that which nothing can take away.

Rest such as this is the possession which makes men truly *rich*. It lasts. It wears. It endures. It lightens the solitary home. It smooths down the dying pillow. It goes with men when they are placed in their coffins. It abides with them when they are laid in their graves. When friends can no longer help us, and money is no longer of use,—when doctors can no longer relieve our pain, and nurses can no longer minister to our wants,—when sense begins to fail, and eye and ear can no longer do their duty,—then, even then,, the “rest” which Christ gives will be shed abroad in the heart of the believer. The words “rich” and “poor” will change their meaning entirely one day. He is the only rich man who has come to Christ by faith, and from Christ has received rest.

Reader, this is the rest which Christ offers to give to all who are labouring and heavy-laden. This is the rest for which He invites them to come to Him. This is the rest which I want you to enjoy, and to which I bring you a Christmas invitation this day. May God grant that the invitation may not be brought to you in vain!

1. Reader, do you know anything of the “rest” of which I have been speaking? If not, what have you got from your religion? You live in a Christian land. You profess and call yourself a Christian. You have proba-

bly attended a Christian place of worship many years. You would not like to be called an infidel or a heathen. Yet all this time what benefit have you received from your Christianity? What solid advantage have you obtained from it? For anything one can see, you might just as well have been a Turk or a Jew.

Take advice this day, and resolve to possess the realities of Christianity as well as the name, and the substance as well as the form. Do not be content until you know something of the peace, and hope, and joy, and consolation which Christians enjoyed in former times. Ask yourself what is the reason that you are a stranger to the feelings which men and women experienced in the days of the apostles. Ask yourself why you do not “joy in the Lord,” and feel “peace with God,” like the Romans and Philippians, to whom St. Paul wrote. Religious feelings, no doubt, are often deceptive. But surely the religion which produces no feelings at all is not the religion of the New Testament. The religion which gives a man no inward comfort, can never be a religion from God. Reader, take heed to yourself. Never be satisfied until you know something of the “rest that is in Christ.”

2. Reader, do you desire rest of soul, and yet know not where to turn for it? Remember this day, that there is only one place where it can be found. Governments cannot give it. Education will not impart it. Worldly amusements cannot supply it. Money will not purchase it. It can only be found in the hand of Jesus Christ, and to His hand you must turn, if you would find peace within.

There is no royal road to rest of soul. Let that never be forgotten. There is only one way to the Father, Jesus Christ,—one door into heaven, Jesus Christ,—and one path to heart-peace, Jesus Christ. By that way all labouring and heavy-laden ones must go, whatever be their rank or condition. Kings in their palaces and paupers in the workhouse are all on a level in this matter. All alike must come to Christ, if they feel soul-weary and athirst. All must drink of the same fountain, if they would have their thirst relieved.

You may not believe what I am now writing. Time will show who is right and who is wrong. Go on, if you will, imagining that true happiness is to be found in the good things of this world. Seek it, if you will, in revelling and banqueting, in dancing and merrymaking, in races and theatres, in field-sports and cards. Seek it, if you will, in reading and scientific pursuits, in music and painting, in politics and business. Seek it, but you will never overtake it, unless you change your plan. Real heart-rest is never to be found except in heart-union with Jesus Christ.

The princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I., lies buried in Newport Church, in the Isle of Wight. A marble monument, erected by our gracious Queen Victoria, records in a touching way the manner of her death. She

languished in Carisbrook Castle during the unhappy Commonwealth wars, a prisoner, alone, and separate from all the companions of her youth, until death set her free. She was found dead one day with her head leaning on her Bible, and the Bible open at the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." The monument in Newport church records this fact. It consists of a female figure reclining her head on a marble book, with the text already quoted engraven on the book. Think, reader, what a sermon in stone that monument preaches! Think what a standing memorial it affords of the utter inability of rank and high birth to confer certain happiness! Think what a testimony it bears to the lesson before you this day,—the mighty lesson that there is no true rest for any one excepting in Christ! Happy will it be for your soul if that lesson is never forgotten!

3. Reader, do you desire to possess the rest that Christ alone can give, and yet feel afraid to seek it? I beseech you, as a friend to your soul, to cast this needless fear away. For what did Christ die on the cross, if not to save sinners? For what does He sit at the right hand of God, if not to receive and intercede for sinners? When Christ invites you so plainly, and promises so freely, why should you rob your own soul, and refuse to come to Him?

Who among all the readers of this tract, desires to be saved by Christ, and yet is not saved at present? Come, I beseech you, come to Christ without delay. Though you have been a great sinner, come—Though you have long resisted warnings, counsels, sermons, come—Though you have sinned against light and knowledge, against a father's advice and a mother's tears, come—Though you have plunged into every excess of wickedness, and lived without a Sabbath and without prayer, yet come—The door is not shut. The fountain is not yet closed. Jesus Christ invites you. It is enough that you feel labouring and heavy laden and desire to be saved. Come, come to Christ without delay.

Come to Him by faith and pour out your heart before Him in prayer. Tell Him the whole story of your life, and ask Him to receive you. Cry to Him as the penitent thief did, when he saw Him on the cross. Say to Him, "Lord, save me also, Lord, remember me."

Reader, if you have never come to this point yet, you must come to it at last, if you mean to be saved. You must apply to Christ as a sinner. You must have personal dealings with the great Physician, and apply to Him for a cure. Why not do it at once? Why not this very Christmas accept the great invitation? Once more, I repeat my exhortation. Come, come to Christ without delay.

4. Reader, have you found the rest which Christ gives? Have you tasted true peace by coming to Him and casting your soul on Him? Then go on to

the end of your days as you have begun, looking to Jesus and living on Him. Go on drawing daily full supplies of rest, peace, mercy, and grace, from the great fountain of rest and peace. Remember that, if you live to the age of Methuselah, you will never be anything but a poor empty sinner, owing all you have and hope for to Christ alone.

Never be ashamed of living the life of faith in Christ. Men may ridicule and mock you, and even silence you in argument. But they can never take from you the feelings which faith in Christ gives. They can never prevent you feeling, "I was weary till I found Christ, but now I have rest of conscience. I was blind, but now I see. I was dead, but I am alive again. I was lost, but I am found."

Invite all around you to come to Christ. Use every lawful effort to bring father, mother, husband, wife, children, brothers, sisters, friends, relatives, companions, fellow-workmen, servants, to bring all and every one to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Spare no pains. Speak to them about Christ: speak to Christ about them. Be instant in season, out of season. Say to them, as Moses did to Hobab, "Come with us and we will do you good." The more you work for the souls of others, the more blessing will you get for your own soul.

Last, but not least, look forward with confidence to a better rest in a world to come. Yet a little time, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. He will gather together all who have believed in Him, and take His people to a home where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at perfect rest. He shall give them a glorious body, in which they shall serve Him without distraction, and praise Him without weariness. He shall wipe away tears from all faces, and make all things new. (Isai. xxv. 8.)

There is a good time coming for all who have come to Christ and committed their souls into His keeping. They shall remember all the way by which they have been led, and see the wisdom of every step in the way. They shall wonder that they ever doubted the kindness and love of their Shepherd. Above all, they shall wonder that they could be so long without Him, and that when they heard of Him they could hesitate about coming to Him.

There is a pass in Scotland called Glencroe, which supplies a beautiful illustration of what heaven will be to the man who comes to Christ. The road through Glencroe carries the traveller up a long and steep ascent, with many a little winding and many a little turn in its course. But when the top of the pass is reached, a stone is seen by the way side, with these simple words engraven on it, "Rest and be thankful." Reader, those words describe the feelings with which every one who comes to Christ will at length enter heaven. The summit of the narrow way will be won. We shall cease from our weary journeying, and sit down in the kingdom of God. We shall look

back over all the way of life with thankfulness, and see the perfect wisdom of every little winding and turn in the steep ascent by which we were led. We shall forget the toils of the upward journey in the glorious rest. Here in this world our sense of rest in Christ at best is feeble and partial. But “when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.” Thanks be unto God, a day is coming when believers shall rest perfectly and be thankful.

Reader, the Christmas invitation is now before you. Will you accept it?

1—Long did I toil, and knew no earthly rest;
Far did I rove, and found no certain home;
At last I sought them in His sheltering breast,
Who opes His arms and bid the weary come;
In Christ I found a home, a rest divine,
And since then I am His, and He is mine.

2—Yes! He is mine! and nought of earthly things—
Not all the charms of pleasure, wealth, or power,
The fame of heroes or the pomp of kings—
Could tempt me to forego His love an hour ;
“Go, worthless world,” I cry with all that’s thine;
“Go, I my Saviour’s am, and He is mine.”

3—The good I have is from His stores supplied,
The ill is only what He deems the best;
He for my friend, I’m rich with nought beside,
And poor without Him, though of all possess:
Changes may come,—I take or I resign,
Content while I am His, and He is mine.

4—Whate’er may change, in Him no change is seen,—
A glorious sun that wanes not, nor declines;
Above the clouds and storms He walks unseen,
And sweetly on His people’s darkness shines:
All may depart,—I fret not nor repine,
While I my Saviour’s am, and He is mine.

1—Just as I am,—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd’st me come to Thee,—
O Lamb of God, I come!

2—Just as I am,—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,—
O Lamb of God, I come!

3—Just as I am,—though toss’d about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
With fears within and wars without—
O Lamb of God, I come!

4—Just as I am,—poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,—
O Lamb of God, I come!

5—Just as I am,—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,—
O Lamb of God, I come!

6—Just as I am,—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,—
O Lamb of God, I come!