

OLD PATHS

BEING PLAIN STATEMENTS

ON SOME OF THE

WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF CHRISTIANITY

BY THE RIGHT REV.

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"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the
battle?"—1 COR. xiv. 8.

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OUR SOULS!

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”—MARK VIII. 36.

THE saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, which stands at the head of this page, ought to ring in our ears like a trumpet-blast. It concerns our highest and best interests. It concerns OUR SOULS.

What a solemn question these words of Scripture contain! What a mighty sum of profit and loss they propound to us for calculation! Where is the accountant who could reckon it up? Where is the clever arithmetician who would not be baffled by that sum?—“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

I wish to offer a few plain remarks, to enforce and illustrate the question which the Lord Jesus asks in the passage before us. I invite the serious attention of all who read this volume. May all who take it up feel more deeply than they ever yet felt the value of an immortal soul! It is the first step toward heaven to find out the true worth of our souls.

I. The FIRST remark I have to make is this. EVERY ONE OF US HAS AN UNDYING SOUL.

I am not ashamed to begin my paper with these words. I dare say that they sound strange and foolish to some readers. I dare say that some will exclaim, “Who knoweth not such things as these? Who ever thinks of doubting that we have souls?” But I cannot forget that the world is just now fixing its attention on material things to a most extravagant extent. We live in an age of progress,—an age of steam-engines and machinery, of locomotion and invention. We live in an age when the multitude are increasingly absorbed in earthly things,—in railways, and docks, and mines, and commerce, and trade, and banks, and shops, and cotton, and corn, and iron, and gold. We live in an age when there is a false glare on the things of time, and a great mist over the things of eternity. In an age like this it is the bounden duty of the ministers of Christ to fall back upon first principles. Necessity is laid upon us. Woe is unto us, if we do not press home on men our Lord’s question about the soul! Woe is unto us, if we do not cry aloud, “The world is not all. The life that we now live in the flesh is not the only life. There is a life to come. We have souls.”

Let us establish it in our minds as a great fact, that we all carry within our bosoms something that will never die. This body of ours, which takes up so

much of our thoughts and time, to warm it, dress it, feed it, and make it comfortable,—this body alone is not all the man. It is but the lodging of a noble tenant, and that tenant is the immortal soul! The death which each of us has one day to die does not make an end of the man. All is not over when the last breath is drawn, and the doctor's last visit has been paid,—when the coffin is screwed down, and the funeral preparations are made,—when “ashes to ashes and dust to dust” has been pronounced over the grave,—when our place in the world is filled up, and the gap made by our absence from society is no longer noticed. No: all is it not over then! The spirit of man still lives on. Every one has within him an undying soul.

I do not stop to prove this. It would be a mere waste of time. There is a conscience in all mankind which is worth a thousand metaphysical arguments. There is a voice within, which speaks out loudly at times, and will be heard,—a voice which tells us, whether we like it or not, that we have, every one of us, an undying soul. What though we cannot see our souls? Are there not millions of things in existence which we cannot see with the naked eye? Who that has looked through the telescope or microscope can doubt that this is the case? What though we cannot see our souls? We can feel them. When we are alone, on the bed of sickness, and the world is shut out,—when we watch by the death-bed of a friend,—when we see those whom we love lowered into the grave,—at times like these, who does not know the feelings which come across men's minds? Who does not know that in hours like these something rises in the heart, telling us that there is a life to come, and that all, from the highest to the lowest, have undying souls?

You may go all over the world, and take the evidence of every age and time. You will never receive but one answer on this subject. You will find some nations buried in degrading superstition, and mad after idols. You will find others sunk in the darkest ignorance, and utterly unacquainted with the true God. But you will not find a nation or people amongst whom there is not some consciousness that there is a life to come. The deserted temples of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, the Druidical remains of our own native land, the splendid pagodas of Hindustan, the Fetish worship of Africa, the funeral ceremonies of the New Zealand chiefs, the conjurers' tents among the North American tribes,—all, all speak with the same voice, and tell the same story. Far down in the human heart, beneath the rubbish heaped up by the Fall, there is an inscription which nothing can efface, telling us that this world is not all, and that every one of us has an undying soul.

I do not stop to prove that men have souls, but I do ask every reader of this paper to keep it ever before his mind. Perhaps your lot is cast in the midst of some busy city. You see around you an endless struggle about temporal things. Hurry, bustle, and business hem you in on every side. I can well believe you are sometimes tempted to think that this world is everything, and the body all that is worth caring for. But resist the temptation, and cast it behind you. Say to yourself every morning when you rise, and every night when you lie down, "The fashion of this world passeth away. The life that I now live is not all. There is something beside business, and money, and pleasure, and commerce, and trade. There is a life to come. We have all immortal souls."

I do not stop to prove the point, but I do ask every reader to realize the dignity and responsibility of having a soul. Yes: realize the fact, that in your soul you have the greatest talent which God has committed to your charge. Know that in your soul you have a pearl above all price, compared to which all earthly possessions are trifles light as air. The horse that wins the Derby or the St. Leger, attracts the attention of thousands: painters paint it, and engravers engrave it, and vast sums of money turn on its achievements. Yet the weakest infant in a working man's family, is far more important in God's sight than that horse. The spirit of the beast goeth downwards; but that infant has an immortal soul.—The pictures at our great exhibitions are visited by admiring crowds: people gaze on them with wonder, and talk with rapture of the "immortal works" of Rubens, Titian, and other great masters. But there is no immortality about these things. The earth, and all its works shall be burned up. The little babe that cries in a garret, and knows nothing of fine art, shall outlive all those pictures, for it has a soul which shall never die.—There shall be a time when the Pyramids and the Parthenon shall alike crumble to nothing,—when Windsor Castle and Westminster Abbey shall be cast down and pass away,—when the sun shall cease to shine, and the moon no more give her light. But the soul of the humblest labourer is of far more enduring stuff. It shall survive the crash of an expiring universe, and live on to all eternity. Realize, I say once more, the responsibility and dignity of having a never-dying soul. You may be poor in this world; but you have a soul. You may be sickly and weak in body; but you have a soul. You may not be a king, or a queen, or a duke, or an earl; yet you have a soul. The soul is the part of us which God chiefly regards. The soul is "the man."

"The guinea's worth is in the gold,
And not the stamp upon it."

The soul which is in man is the most important thing about him.

I do not stop to prove that men have souls, but I do ask all men to live as if they believed it. Live as if you really believed that we were not sent into the world merely to spin cotton, and grow corn, and hoard up gold, but to “glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.” Read your Bible, and become acquainted with its contents. Seek the Lord in prayer, and pour out your heart before Him. Go to a place of worship regularly, and hear the Gospel preached. Keep the Sabbath holy, and give God His day. And if any ask you the reason why: if wife, or child, or companion say, “What are you about?”—answer them boldly, like a man, and say, “I do these things because I have a soul”

II. The SECOND remark I have to make is this. ANY ONE MAY LOSE HIS OWN SOUL.

This is a sorrowful portion of my subject. But it is one which I dare not, cannot pass by. I have no sympathy with those who prophesy nothing but peace, and keep back from men the awful fact, that they may lose their souls. I am one of those old-fashioned ministers who believe the whole Bible,—and everything that it contains. I can find no Scriptural foundation for that smooth-spoken theology, which pleases so many in these days, and according to which everybody will get to heaven at last. I believe that there is a real devil. I believe that there is a real hell. I believe that it is not charity to keep back from men that they may be lost. Charity! shall I call it? If you saw a brother drinking poison, would you hold your peace?—Charity! shall I call it? If you saw a blind man tottering towards a precipice, would you not cry out “Stop”? Away with such false notions of charity! Let us not slander that blessed grace, by using its name in a false sense. It is the highest charity to bring the whole truth before men. It is real charity to warn them plainly when they are in danger. It is charity to impress upon them, that they may lose their own souls for ever in hell.

Man has about him a wonderful power for evil. Weak as we are in all that is good, we have a mighty power to do ourselves harm. You cannot save that soul of your’s, my brother: remember that! You cannot make your own peace with God. You cannot wipe away a single sin. You cannot blot out one of the black records which stand in the book of God against you. You cannot change your own heart. But there is one thing you can do,—you can lose your own soul.

But this is not all. Not only can we all lose our own souls, but we are all in imminent peril of doing it. Born in sin, and children of wrath, we have no natural desire to have our souls saved. Weak, corrupt, inclined to sin, we “call good evil, and evil good.” Dark and blind, and dead in trespasses, we have no eyes to see the pit which yawns beneath our feet, and no sense of our guilt and danger.

And yet our souls are all this time in awful peril! If any one were to sail for America in a leaky ship, without compass, without water, without provisions, who does not see that there would be little chance of his crossing the Atlantic in safety? If you were to place the Koh-i-noor diamond in the hands of a little child, and bid him carry it from Tower Hill to Bristol, who does not perceive the doubtfulness of that diamond arriving safely at the end of the journey? Yet these are but faint images of the immense peril in which we stand by nature of losing our souls.

But some one may ask, *How can a man lose his soul?* There are many answers to that question. Just as there are many diseases which assault and hurt the body, so there are many evils which assault and injure the soul. Yet however numerous the ways in which a man may lose his own soul, they may be classed under three general heads. Let me show briefly what they are.

For one thing, you may *murder* your soul by running into open sin, and serving lusts and pleasures. Adultery and fornication, drunkenness and revelling, blasphemy and sabbath-breaking, dishonesty and lying, are all so many short-cuts to perdition. "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Ephes. v. 6.)

For another thing, you may *poison* your own soul by taking up some false religion. You may drug it with traditions of man's invention, and a round of ceremonies and observances which never came down from heaven. You may lull it to sleep with opiates which stupefy the conscience, but do not heal the heart. Strychnine and arsenic will do their work quite as effectually as the pistol or sword, though with less noise. Let no man deceive you. "Beware of false prophets." When men commit their souls to blind leaders, both must fall into the ditch. A false religion is quite as ruinous as no religion at all.

For another thing, you may *starve* your soul to death by trifling and indecision. You may idle through life with a name upon the baptismal register, but not inscribed in the Lamb's Book of Life,—with a form of godliness, but without the power. You may trifle on year after year, taking no interest in that which is good, content to sneer at the inconsistencies of professors, and flattering yourself because you are no bigot, or party man, or professor, it will be "all right" with your soul at last. "Let no man deceive you with vain words." Indecision is just as ruinous to the soul as a false religion or no religion at all. The stream of life can never stand still. Whether you are sleeping or waking, you are floating down that stream. You are coming nearer and nearer to the rapids. You

will soon pass over the falls, and, if you die without a decided faith, be cast away to all eternity.

Such then are the three chief ways in which you can lose your soul. Does any one who is reading this paper know which of these ways he is taking? Search and look whether I have touched your own case. Find out whether or not you are losing your soul.

But does it take much trouble to ruin a soul? Oh, no! It is a down-hill journey. There is nothing required at your hands. There is no need of exertion. You have only to sit still, and do as others do in the circle in which God's providence has placed you,—to swim with the tide, to float down the stream, to go with the crowd,—and by and by the time of mercy will be past for evermore! “Wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction.”

But are there many, you will ask, who are losing their souls? Yes, indeed there are! Look not at the inscriptions and epitaphs on tombstones if you would find the true answer to that question! As Dr. Watts says, they are

“Taught to flatter and to lie.”

All men are thought respectable and “good sort of people” as soon as they are dead. But look at the Word of God, and mark well what it says. The Lord Jesus Christ declares, “Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it:—broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat.” (Matt. vii. 13, 14.)

But who is responsible for the loss of our souls? No one but ourselves. Our blood will be upon our own heads. The blame will lie at our own door. We shall have nothing to plead at the last day, when we stand before the great white throne and the books are opened. When the King comes in to see His guests, and says, “Friend, how camest thou in, not having a wedding garment?” we shall be speechless. We shall have no excuse to plead for the loss of our souls.

But where does the soul go to when lost? There is only one solemn answer to that question. There is but one place to which it can go, and that is hell. There is no such thing as annihilation. The lost soul goes to that place where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched,—where there is blackness and darkness, wretchedness and despair for ever. It goes to hell,—the only place for which it is meet,—since it is not meet for heaven. “The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God.” “The end of those things is death! “(Rom. vi. 21.)

Let me say plainly that we ministers are full of fears about many who profess and call themselves Christians. We fear lest they should lose at last their precious souls. We fear lest that arch-impostor, Satan, should cheat them out of salvation, and lead them captive at his will. We fear lest they should wake up in eternity, and find themselves lost for evermore! We fear, because we see so many living in sinful habits, so many resting in forms and ceremonies which God never commanded, so many trifling with all religion whatsoever, so many, in short, ruining their own souls. We see these things, and are afraid.

It is just because I feel that souls are in danger that I write this paper, and invite men to read it. If I thought there was no such place as hell I would not write as I do. If I thought that as a matter of course all people would go to heaven at last, I would hold my peace and leave them alone. But I dare not do so. I see danger ahead, and I would fain warn every man to flee from the wrath to come. I see peril of shipwreck, and I would light a beacon and entreat every man to seek the harbour of safety. Do not despise my warning. Examine your own heart: find out whether you are in a way to be lost or saved. Search and see how matters stand between yourself and God: do not commit the enormous folly of losing your own soul. We live in an age of great temptation. The devil is going about and is very busy. The night is far spent. The time is short. Do not lose your own soul.

III. The THIRD remark which I desire to make is this. THE LOSS OF ANY MAN'S SOUL IS THE HEAVIEST LOSS WHICH HE CAN SUFFER.

I feel unable to set forth this point as I ought. No living man can show the full extent of the loss of the soul. No one can paint that loss in its true colours. No: we shall never understand it till we have passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and wake up in another world! Never till then shall we know the value of an immortal soul.

I might say that nothing can make up for the loss of the soul in the life which now is. You may have all the riches of the world,—all the gold of Australia and of California, all the honours which your country can bestow upon you. You may be the owner of half a county. You may be one whom kings delight to honour, and nations gaze upon with admiration. But all this time, if you are losing your soul, you are a poor man in the sight of God. Your honours are but for a few years. Your riches must be left at last. “Naked came we into the world, and naked must we go out.” No light heart, no cheerful conscience, will you have in life, unless your soul is saved. Of all your money or broad acres, you will carry nothing with you when you die. A few feet of earth will suffice to

cover that body of yours when life is over. And then, if your soul be lost, you will find yourself a pauper to all eternity. Verily it shall profit a man nothing to gain the whole world if he lose his own soul.

I might say that when the soul is lost it is a loss that cannot be retrieved. Once lost, it is lost for evermore. The loss of property may be retrieved in this world. The loss of health and character are not always irreparable. But no man who has once drawn his last breath can ever retrieve his lost soul. Scripture reveals to us no purgatory beyond the grave. Scripture teaches us that, once lost, we are lost for ever. Verily a man will find that there is nothing he can give to buy back and redeem his soul.

But I feel deeply that arguments like these fall far below the level of the subject. The time is not yet come when we shall fully realize what a soul is worth. We must look far forward. We must place ourselves in imagination in a different position from that which we now occupy, before we shall form a right estimate of the thing we are considering. The blind man cannot understand beautiful scenery. The deaf man cannot appreciate fine music. The living man cannot fully realize the amazing importance of a world to come.

Does any reader of this paper wish to have some faint idea of the value of a soul? Then go and measure it by the opinions of dying people. The solemnity of the closing scene strips off the tinsel and pretence of things, and makes men see them as they really are. What would men do then for their souls? I have seen something of this, as a Christian minister. Seldom, very seldom, have I found people careless, thoughtless, and indifferent about the world to come, in the hour of death. The man who can tell good stories, and sing good songs to merry companions, turns very grave when he begins to feel that life is leaving his body. The boasting infidel at such a season has often cast aside his infidelity. Men like Paine and Voltaire have often shown that their vaunted philosophy breaks down when the grave is in sight. Tell me not what a man thinks about the soul when he is in the fulness of health; tell me rather what he thinks when the world is sinking beneath him, and death, judgment, and eternity loom in sight. The great realities of our being will then demand attention, and must be considered. The value of the soul in the light of time is one thing, but seen in the light of eternity it is quite another. Never does living man know the value of the soul so well as when he is dying, and can keep the world no longer.

Does any one wish to have a still clearer idea of the soul's value? Then go and measure it by the opinions of the dead. Read in the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. When the rich man awoke in hell and in torments, what did he say to Abraham? "Send Lazarus to my father's

house:—For I have five brethren,—that he may testify to them,—lest they also come to this place of torment.” That rich man probably thought little or nothing of the souls of others while he lived upon the earth. Once dead and in the place of torment, he sees things in their true colours. Then he thinks of his brethren, and begins to care for their salvation. Then he cries, “Send Lazarus to my father’s house. I have five brethren Let him testify unto them.” If that wonderful parable did nothing else, it would teach us what men think when they awake in the next world. It lifts a corner of the veil which hangs over the world to come, and gives us a glimpse of what dead men think of the value of the soul.

Does any one wish to have the clearest idea that can be given of the soul’s value? Then go and measure it by the price which was paid for it 1800 years ago. What an enormous and countless price it was which was paid! No gold, no silver, no diamonds were found sufficient to provide redemption: no angel in heaven was able to bring a ransom. Nothing but the blood of Christ,—nothing but the death of the eternal Son of God upon the cross, was found sufficient to buy for the soul deliverance from hell. Go to Calvary in spirit, and consider what took place there, when the Lord Jesus died. See the blessed Saviour suffering on the cross. Mark what happens there when He dies. See how there was darkness for three hours over the face of the earth. The earth quakes. The rocks are rent. The graves are opened. Listen to His dying words: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?” Then see in all that marvellous transaction something which may give you an idea of the value of the soul. In that awful scene we witness payment of the only price which was found sufficient to redeem men’s souls.

We shall all understand the value of the soul one day, if we do not understand it now. God grant that no one who reads this paper may understand it too late.—A lunatic-asylum is a pitiable sight. It wrings the heart to see in that gloomy building some man, who had once a princely fortune, but has squandered it, and brought himself to hopeless insanity by drunkenness.—A shipwreck is a pitiable sight. It makes one melancholy to see some gallant vessel, which once “walked the water like a thing of life,” stranded on a rocky shore, with a drowned crew and a scattered cargo lying round her on the beach. But of all sights that can affect the eye and grieve the heart, I know none so pitiable as the sight of a man ruining his own soul. No wonder that Jesus wept when He drew nigh unto Jerusalem for the last time. It is written, that “He beheld the city and wept over it!” (Luke xix. 41.) He knew the value of souls, if the Scribes and Pharisees did not. We may learn from those tears of His,—if from nothing

else,—the value of man’s soul, and the amount of loss which he will sustain if that soul is cast away.

I charge every reader of this paper, while it is called today, to open his eyes to the worth of his soul. Rise to a sense of the awfulness of losing a soul. Strive to know the real preciousness of that mighty treasure committed to your charge. The value of all things will change greatly one day. The hour cometh when bank-notes shall be worth no more than waste paper, and gold and diamonds shall be as the dust of the streets,—when the palace of the peer and the cottage of the peasant shall both alike fall to the ground,—when stocks and funds shall be all unsaleable, and grace and faith and good hope be no longer underrated and despised. In that hour you will find out, in a way you never found out before, the value of the immortal soul. Soul-loss will then be seen to be the greatest of losses, and soul-gain the greatest of gains. Seek to know the value of the soul now. Do not be like the Egyptian Queen, who, in foolish ostentation, took a pearl of great value, dissolved it in acid, and then drank it off. Do not, like her, cast away the “pearl of great price,” which God has committed to your charge. Once lost, no loss can compare with the loss of the soul.

IV. The FOURTH and last remark I have to make is this. ANY MAN’S SOUL MAY BE SAVED.

I bless God that the Gospel of Christ enables me to proclaim these glad tidings, and to proclaim them freely and unconditionally to every one who reads these pages. I bless God, that after all the solemn things I have been saying, I can wind up with a message of peace. I could not bear the awful responsibility of telling men that every one has a soul,—that any one may lose his soul,—that the loss of the soul is a loss for which nothing can make up,—if I could not also proclaim that any man’s soul may be saved.

I think it possible that this proclamation may sound startling to some readers of this paper. I remember the time when it would have sounded startling to me. But I am persuaded that it is neither more nor less than the voice of the everlasting Gospel, and I am not ashamed to make it known to all who have an ear to hear. I say boldly, that there is salvation in the Gospel for the chief of sinners. I say confidently, that any one and every one may have his soul saved. I know that we are all sinners by nature,—fallen, guilty, corrupt, covered with sin. I know that the God with whom we have to do is a most holy Being, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and One who cannot look upon that which is evil. I know also that the world in which our lot is cast, is a hard world for religion. It is a world full of cares and troubles, of unbelief and impurity, of opposition and

hatred to God. It is a world in which religion is like an exotic,—a world which has an atmosphere that makes religion wither away. But, notwithstanding all this, hard as this world is, holy as God is, sinful as we are by nature,—I say, that any one and every one may be saved. Any man or woman may be saved from the guilt, the power, the consequences of sin, and be found at length at the right hand of God in everlasting glory.

I fancy I hear some reader exclaim, “How can these things be?” No wonder that you ask that question. This is the great knot which heathen philosophers could never untie. This is the problem which all the sages of Greece and of Rome could not solve. This is the question which nothing can answer but the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That answer of the Gospel I now desire to place before you.

I proclaim then, with all confidence, that any one’s soul may be saved, (1) *because Christ has once died*. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has died upon the cross to make atonement for men’s sins. “Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. iii. 18.) Christ has borne our sins in His own body on the tree, and allowed the curse we all deserved to fall on His head. Christ by His death has made satisfaction to the holy law of God which we have broken. That death was no common death: it was no mere example of self-denial; it was no mere death of a martyr, such as were the deaths of a Ridley, a Latimer, or a Cranmer. The death of Christ was a sacrifice and propitiation for the sin of the whole world. It was the vicarious death of an Almighty Substitute, Surety, and Representative of the sons of men. It paid our enormous debt to God. It opened up the way to heaven to all believers. It provided a fountain for all sin and uncleanness. It enabled God to be just, and yet to be the justifier of the ungodly. It purchased reconciliation with Him. It procured perfect peace with God for all who come to Him by Jesus. The prison-doors were set open when Jesus died. Liberty was proclaimed to all who feel the bondage of sin, and desire to be free.

For whom, do you suppose, was all that suffering undergone, which Jesus endured at Calvary? Why was the holy Son of God dealt with as a malefactor, reckoned a transgressor, and condemned to so cruel a death? For whom were those hands and feet nailed to the cross? For whom was that side pierced with the spear? For whom did that precious blood flow so freely down? Wherefore was all this done? It was done for you! It was done for the sinful,—for the ungodly! It was done freely, voluntarily,—not by compulsion,—out of love to sinners, and to make atonement for sin. Surely, then, as Christ died for the ungodly, I have a right to proclaim that any one may be saved.

Furthermore, I proclaim with all confidence, that any one may be saved, (2) *because Christ still lives*. That same Jesus who once died for sinners, still lives at the right hand of God, to carry on the work of salvation which He came down from heaven to perform. He lives to receive all who come unto God by Him, and to give them power to become the sons of God. He lives to hear the confession of every heavy-laden conscience, and to grant, as an almighty High Priest, perfect absolution. He lives to pour down the Spirit of adoption on all who believe in Him, and to enable them to cry, Abba, Father He lives to be the one Mediator between God and man, the unwearied Intercessor, the kind Shepherd, the elder Brother, the prevailing Advocate, the never-failing Priest and Friend of all who come to God by Him. He lives to be wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to all His people,—to keep them in life, to support them in death, and to bring them finally to eternal glory.

For whom, do you suppose, is Jesus sitting at God's right hand? It is for the sons of men. High in heaven, and surrounded by unspeakable glory, He still cares for that mighty work which He undertook when He was born in the manger of Bethlehem. He is not one whit altered. He is always in one mind. He is the same that He was when He walked the shores of the sea of Galilee. He is the same that He was when He pardoned Saul the Pharisee, and sent him forth to preach the faith he had once destroyed. He is the same that He was when He received Mary Magdalene,—called Matthew the publican, —brought Zacchæus down from the tree, and made them examples of what His grace could do. And He is not changed. He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Surely I have a right to say that any one may be saved, since Jesus lives.

Once more I proclaim, with all confidence, that any one may be saved, (3) *because the promises of Christ's gospel are full, free, and unconditional*. "Come unto Me," says the Saviour, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—"He that believeth on the Son shall not perish, but have eternal life."—"He that believeth on Him is not condemned."—"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."—"Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him may have everlasting life."—"He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." —"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." (Matt. xi. 28; John iii. 15, 18; vi. 37, 40, 47; vii. 37; Rev. xxii. 17.)

For whom, do you suppose, were these words spoken? Were they meant for the Jews only? No: for the Gentiles also!—Were they meant for people in old times only? No: for people in every age!—Were they meant for Palestine and Syria only? No: for the whole world,—for every name and nation and people

and tongue! Were they meant for the rich only? No: for the poor as well as for the rich!—Were they meant for the very moral and correct only? No: they were meant for all,—for the chief of sinners,—for the vilest of offenders,—for all who will receive them! Surely when I call to mind these promises, I have a right to say that any one and every one may be saved. Any one who reads these words, and is not saved, can never blame the Gospel. If you are lost, it is not because you could not be saved. If you are lost, it is not because there was no pardon for sinners, no Mediator, no High Priest, no fountain open for sin and for uncleanness, no open door. It is because you would have your own way, because you would cleave to your sins, because you would not come to Christ, that in Christ you might have life.

I make no secret of my object in sending forth this volume. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is that your soul may be saved. This is the grand object for which every faithful minister is ordained. This is the end for which we preach, and speak, and write. We want souls to be saved. They know not what they say, who charge us with worldly motives, and tell us we only wish to advance our order, and promote priest-craft. We know nothing of such feelings. May God forgive those who lay these things to our charge! We labour for higher objects. We want souls to be saved! We love the Church of England: we feel deep affection for her Prayer-book, her Articles, her Homilies, her Forms for the Worship of God. But one thing we feel even more deeply,—we want souls to be saved. We desire to pluck some brands from the burning. We desire to be the honoured instruments in the hand of God of leading some souls to a knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now I will conclude this paper by three words of affectionate application, which I heartily pray God to bless to the spiritual good of many souls. I know not into whose hands these pages may fall. I draw my bow at a venture. I can only pray God that He may send an arrow home to some consciences, and that many who read this volume may lay it down smiting upon their breasts and saying, "What must I do to be saved?"

(1) My first word of application shall be a word of *affectionate warning*. That word of warning is short and simple,—Do not neglect your own soul.

I have little doubt that this volume will fall into the hands of some who are often tried with anxiety about the things of this life. You are "careful and troubled about many things." You seem to live in a constant whirl of business, hurry, and trouble. You see around you thousands who care for nothing but what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and what they shall put on. You are

often sorely tempted to think it is no use to try to have any religion. I say to you, in God's name, Resist the temptation. It comes from the devil. I say to you, Never forget the one thing needful! Never forget your immortal soul!

You may tell me, perhaps, that the times are hard. They may be hard; but it is my duty to remind you that time is short, and will be soon changed for eternity. You may tell me that you must live; but it is my duty to remind you that you must also die, and be ready to meet your God. What should we think of a man who in time of famine fed his dog and starved his child? Should we not say that he was a heartless and unnatural father? Well: take heed that you do not do something like this yourself. Do not forget your soul in your anxiety for your body. Do not, in your concern about the life that now is, forget that which is to come. Do not neglect your soul!

Whatever you may have been in time past, I beseech you for time to come to live as one who feels that he has an immortal soul! Lay down this book with a holy determination, by God's help, to "cease to do evil, and learn to do well." Do not be ashamed, from this time forward, to care about your soul's interests. Do not be ashamed to read your Bible, to pray, to keep the Sabbath holy, and to hear the Gospel preached. Of sin and ungodliness you may well be ashamed. You never need be ashamed of caring for your soul. Let others laugh if they will: they will not laugh at you one day. Take it patiently. Bear it quietly. Tell them you have made up your mind, and do not mean to alter. Tell them that you have learned one thing, if nothing else, and that is that you have a precious soul. And tell them you have resolved that, come what will, you will no longer neglect that soul.

(2) My second word of application shall be an *affectionate invitation to all who desire their souls to be saved*. I invite every reader of this paper who feels the value of his soul, and desires salvation, to come to Christ without delay, and be saved. I invite him to come to Christ by faith, and commit his soul to Him, that he may be delivered from the guilt, the power, and the consequences of sin.

My tongue is not able to tell, and my mind is too weak to explain, the whole extent of God's love towards sinners, and of Christ's willingness to receive and save souls. You are not straitened in Christ, but in yourself. You mistake greatly if you doubt Christ's readiness to save. I know there are no obstacles between that soul of yours and eternal life, except your own will. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke xv. 10.) You may have heard something of the wonders of the choruses at the Crystal Palace concerts. But what is all that burst of harmony in the "Hallelujah Chorus," to the outburst of joy which is heard in heaven when a soul turns from

darkness to light? What is it all but a mere whisper, compared to the “joy of angels” over one sinner taught to see the folly of sin, and to seek Christ? Oh, come and add to that joy without delay!

If you love life, I beseech you to lay hold on Christ at once, that your soul may be saved. Why not do it today? Why not this day join yourself to the Lord Jesus in an everlasting covenant which cannot be broken? Why not resolve, before tomorrow’s sun dawns, to turn from the service of sin, and turn to Christ? Why not go to Christ this very day, and cast your soul on Him, with all its sins and all its unbelief, with all its doubts and all its fears?—Are you poor? Seek treasure in heaven and be rich.—Are you old? Hasten, hasten to be ready for your end, and prepare to meet your God.—Are you young? Begin well, and seek in Christ a never-failing friend, who will never forsake you.—Are you in trouble, careful about this life? Seek Him who alone can help you and bear your burdens: seek Him who will never disappoint you. When others turn their backs upon you, then will Jesus Christ the Lord take you up.—Are you a sinner, a great sinner, a sinner of the worst description? It shall all be remembered no more if you only come to Christ: His blood shall cleanse all sin away. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow.

Go then, and cry to the Lord Jesus Christ. Think of the value of your soul, and think of the one way of salvation. Call on the Lord in earnest prayer. Do as the penitent thief did: pour out your heart before Him: cry, “Lord remember me, even me.” Tell him you come to Him, because you have heard that He “receives sinners,” and because you are a sinner and want to be saved. Tell Him the whole story of your past life. Tell Him, if you will, that you have been an unbeliever, a profligate, a Sabbath-breaker, a godless, reckless, ill-tempered man. He will not despise you. He will not cast you out. He will not turn His back upon you. He never breaks the bruised reed, or quenches the smoking flax. No man ever came to Him and was cast out. Oh, come to Christ, and your soul shall live!

(3) My last word of application shall be an affectionate exhortation to every reader of this paper who has found out the value of his soul, and believed in Jesus Christ. That exhortation shall be short and simple. I beseech you to cleave to the Lord with all your heart, and to press towards the mark for the prize of your high calling.

I can well conceive that you find your way very narrow. There are few with you and many against you. Your lot in life may seem hard, and your position may be difficult. But still cleave to the Lord, and He will never forsake you. Cleave to the Lord in the midst of persecution. Cleave to the Lord, though men

laugh at you and mock you, and try to make you ashamed. Cleave to the Lord, though the cross be heavy and the fight be hard. He was not ashamed of you upon the Cross of Calvary: then do not be ashamed of Him upon earth, lest He should be ashamed of you before His Father who is in heaven. Cleave to the Lord, and He will never forsake you. In this world there are plenty of disappointments,—disappointments in properties, and families, and houses, and lands, and situations. But no man ever yet was disappointed in Christ. No man ever failed to find Christ all that the Bible says He is, and a thousand times better than he had been told before.

Look forward, look onward and forward to the end! Your best things are yet to come. Time is short. The end is drawing near. The latter days of the world are upon us. Fight the good fight. Labour on. Work on. Strive on. Pray on. Read on. Labour hard for your own soul's prosperity. Labour hard for the prosperity of the souls of others. Strive to bring a few more with you to heaven, and by all means to save some. Do something, by God's help, to make heaven more full and hell more empty. Speak to that young man by your side, and to that old person who lives near to your house. Speak to that neighbour who never goes to a place of worship. Speak to that relative who never reads the Bible in private, and makes a jest of serious religion. Entreat them all to think about their souls. Beg them to go and hear something on Sundays which will be for their good unto everlasting life. Try to persuade them to live, not like the beasts which perish, but like men who desire to be saved. Great is your reward in heaven, if you try to do good to souls. Great is the reward of all who confess Christ before the sons of men. The honours of this world will soon be at an end for ever. The rewards which our gracious Queen bestows are only enjoyed for a few short years. The "Victoria Cross" will not be long worn by those brave soldiers who won it so gallantly and deserve it so richly. The place that knows them now shall soon know them no more: a few more years and they will be gathered to their fathers. But the crown which Christ gives never fades. Seek that crown, my believing reader. Labour for that crown. It will make amends for all that you have to pass through in this troublous world. The rewards of Christ's soldiers are for evermore. Their home is eternal. Their glory never comes to an end.