

THE NEW HEART.

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, SEPTEMBER 5, 1858,

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at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens.

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”—EZEKIEL, xxxvi. 26.

BEHOLD a wonder of divine love. When God maketh his creatures, one creation he regardeth as sufficient, and should they lapse from the condition in which he has created them, he suffers them, as a rule, to endure the penalty of their transgression, and to abide in the place into which they are fallen. But here he makes an exception; man, fallen man, created by his Maker, pure and holy, hath wilfully and wickedly rebelled against the Most High, and lost his first estate, but behold, he is to be the subject of a new creation through the power of God’s Holy Spirit. Behold this and wonder! What is man compared with an angel? Is he not little and insignificant? “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” God hath no mercy upon them; he made them pure and holy, and they ought to have remained so, but inasmuch as they wilfully rebelled, he cast them down from their shining seats forever; and without a single promise of mercy, he hath bound them fast in the fetters of destiny, to abide in eternal torment. But wonder, ye heavens, the God who destroyed the angels stoops from his highest throne in glory, and speaks to his creature man, and thus saith unto him—“Now, thou hast fallen from me even as the angels did; thou hast grossly erred, and gone astray from my ways—not for thy sake do I this, but for mine own name’s sake—behold I will undo the mischief which thine own hand hath done: I will take away that heart which has rebelled against me. Having made thee once, thou hast unmade thyself—I will make thee over again. I will put my hand a second time to the work; once more shalt thou revolve upon the potter’s wheel, and *I will make thee* a vessel of honour, fit for my gracious use. I will take away thy stony heart, and give thee a heart of flesh; a new heart will I give thee; a new spirit will I put within thee.” Is not this a wonder of divine sovereignty and of infinite grace, that mighty angels should be cast into the fire forever, and yet God hath made a covenant with man that he will renew and restore him?

And now, my dear friends, I shall attempt this morning, first of all, to show *the necessity for the great promise contained in my text*, that God will give us a new heart and a new spirit; and after that, I shall endeavour to show *the nature of the great work which God works in the soul, when he accomplishes this promise*; afterwards, *a few personal remarks to all my hearers*.

I. In the first place, it is my business to endeavour to show THE NECESSITY FOR THIS GREAT PROMISE. Not that it needs any showing to the quickened and enlightened Christian; but this is for the conviction of the ungodly, and for the humbling of our carnal pride. O that this morning the gracious Spirit may teach us our depravity, that we may thereby be driven to seek the fulfilment of this mercy, which is most assuredly and abundantly necessary, if we would be saved. You will notice that in my text God does not promise to us that he will improve our nature, that he will mend our broken hearts. No, the promise is that he will give us new hearts and right spirits. Human nature is too far gone ever to be mended. It is not a house that is a little out of repair, with here and there a slate blown from the roof, and here and there a piece of plaster broken down from the ceiling. No, it is rotten throughout, the very foundations have been sapped; there is not a single timber in it which has not been eaten by the worm, from its uppermost roof to its lowest foundation; there is no soundness in it; it is all rottenness and ready to fall. God doth not attempt to mend; he does not shore up the walls, and re-paint the door; he does not garnish and beautify, but he determines that the old house shall be entirely swept away, and that he will build a new one. It is too far gone, I say, to be mended. If it were only a little out of repair, it might be mended. If only a wheel or two of that great thing called “manhood” were out of repair, then he who made man might put the whole to rights; he might put a new cog where it had been broken off, and another wheel where it had gone to ruin, and the machine might work anew. But no, the whole of it is out of repair; there is not one lever which is not broken; not one axle which is not disturbed; not one of the wheels which act upon the others. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot, to the crown of the head, it is all wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. The Lord, therefore, does not attempt the repairing of this thing; but he says, “I will give you a new heart, and a right spirit will I put within you; I will take away the heart of stone, I will not try to soften it, I will let it be as stony as ever it was, but I will take it away, and I will give you a new heart, and it shall be a heart of flesh.”

Now I shall endeavour to show that God is justified in this, and that there was an abundant necessity for his resolution to do so. For in the first place, if you consider what human nature has been, and what it is, you will not be very long before you will say of it, “Ah, it is a hopeless case indeed.”

Consider, then, for a moment how bad human nature must be if we think how ill it has treated its God. I remember William Huntingdon says in his

autobiography, that one of the sharpest sensations of pain that he felt after he had been quickened by divine grace was this, “He felt such pity for God.” I do not know that I ever met with the expression elsewhere, but it is a very expressive one; although I might prefer to say sympathy with God and grief that he should be so evil entreated. Ah, my friends, there are many men that are forgotten, that are despised, and that are trampled on by their fellows; but there never was a man who was so despised as the everlasting God has been. Many a man has been slandered and abused, but never was man abused as God has been. Many have been treated cruelly and ungratefully, but never one was treated as our God has been. Let us look back upon our past lives—how ungrateful have we been to him! It was he who gave us being, and the first utterance of our lips should have been in his *praise*; and so long as we were here, it was our duty to have perpetually sung his glory; but instead of that, from our birth we spoke that which was false and untrue, and unholy; and since then we have continued to do the same. We have never returned his mercies into his bosom with gratitude and thankfulness; but we have let them lie forgotten without a single hallelujah, from our carelessness concerning the Most High, that he had entirely forgotten us, and that therefore we were trying to forget him. It is so very seldom that we think of him that one would imagine that surely he never gave us occasion to think of him. Addison said,—

“When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I’m lost
In wonder, love, and praise.”

But I think if we look back with the eye of penitence we shall be lost in wonder, shame, and grief, for our cry will be, “What! could I treat so good a friend so ill? Have I had so gracious a benefactor, and have I been so unmindful of him; and so devoted a father, and yet have I never embraced him? Have I never given him the kiss of my affectionate gratitude? Have I never studied to do something whereby I might let him know that I was conscious of his kindness, and that I felt a grateful return in my bosom for his love?”

But worse than this, we have not only been forgetful of him, but we have rebelled against him. We have assailed the Most High. If we knew that anything was God-like we hated it at once; we have despised his people, we have called them cants, and hypocrites, and Methodists. We have despised his day; he set it apart on purpose for our good, and that day we take for our own pleasure and our own labour instead of consecrating it to him. He gave us a book as a love-token, and he desired us to read it, for it was full of love to us; and we have kept it fast closed till the very spiders have spun their cobwebs over the leaves. He opened a house of prayer and bade us go there, and

there would he meet with us and speak to us from off the mercy seat; but we have often preferred the theatre to God's house, and have been found listening to any sound rather than the voice which speaketh from heaven.

Ah, my friends, I say again there never was a man treated by his fellow-creatures, even by the worst of men, so bad as God has been, and yet while men have been ill treating him, he has still continued to bless them; he has put breath into the nostrils of man, even while he has been cursing him; has given him food to eat even while he has been spending the strength of his body in warfare against the Most High; and on the very Sabbath, when you have been breaking his commandment and spending the day on your own lusts, it is he who has given light to your eyes, breath to your lungs, and strength to your nerves and sinews; blessing you even while you have been cursing him. Oh! it is a mercy that he is God, and changeth not, or else we sons of Jacob would long ago have been consumed, and justly too.

You may picture to yourselves, if you like, a poor creature dying in a ditch. I trust that such a thing never happens in this land, but such a thing might happen as a man who had been rich on a sudden becoming poor, and all his friends deserting and leaving him; he begs for bread and no man will help him, until at last, without a rag to cover him, his poor body yields up life in a ditch. This, I think, is the very extreme of human negligence to mankind; but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was treated even worse than this. It would have been a thousand mercies to him if they had permitted him to die unregarded in a ditch; but that would have been too good for human nature. He must know the very worst, and therefore God allowed human nature to take Christ and nail him to the tree. He allowed it to stand and mock his thirst and offer him vinegar, and taunt and jeer him in the extreme of his agonies; it allowed human nature to make him its jest and scorn, and stand staring with hateful and cruel eyes upon his stripped and naked body.

Oh! shame on manhood: never could there have been a creature worse than man. The very beasts are better than man, for man has all the worst attributes of the beasts and none of their best. He has the fierceness of the lion without its nobility; he has the stubbornness of an ass without its patience; he has all the devouring gluttony of the wolf, without the wisdom which bids it avoid the trap. He is a carrion vulture but he is never satisfied; he is a very serpent with the poison of asps beneath his tongue, but he spits his venom afar off as well as nigh. Ah, if you think of human nature as it acts towards God, you will say indeed it is too bad to be mended, it must be made anew.

Again, there is another aspect in which we may regard the sinfulness of human nature: that is its *pride*. It is the very worst phase of man—that he is so proud. Beloved, pride is woven into the very warp and woof of our nature, and we shall never get rid of it until we are wrapped in our winding sheet. It is astonishing, that when we are at our prayers—when we try to make use of

humble expressions, we are betrayed into pride. It was but the other day, I found myself on my knees making use of such an expression as this: "O Lord, I grieve before thee, that ever *I* should have been such a sinner as I have been. Oh that *I* should ever have revolted and rebelled as I have done." There was pride in that; for who am I? Was there any wonder in it? I ought to have known that I was myself so sinful that there was no wonder that I should have gone astray. The wonder was, that I had not been even worse, and there the credit was due to God, not to myself. So that when we are trying to be humble, we may be foolishly rushing into pride. What a strange thing it is to see a sinful, guilty wretch proud of his morality! and yet that is a thing you may see every day. A man who is an enemy to God, proud of his honesty, and yet he is robbing God; a man proud of his chastity, and yet if he knew his own thoughts, they are full of lasciviousness and uncleanness; a man proud of the praise of his fellows, while he knows himself that he has the blame of his own conscience and the blame of God Almighty. It is a wild, strange thing to think that man should be proud, when he has nothing to be proud of. A living, animated lump of clay—defiled and filthy, a living hell, and yet proud. I, a base-born son of one that robbed his Master's garden of old, and went astray and would not be obedient; of one that sunk his whole estate for the paltry bribe of a single apple! and yet proud of my ancestry! I, who am living on God's daily charity to be proud of my wealth! when I have not a single farthing with which to bless myself, unless God chooses to give it to me. I, that came naked into this world, and must go naked out of it! I, proud of my riches—what a strange thing! I, a wild ass's colt, a fool that knoweth nothing, proud of my learning! Oh, what a strange thing, that the fool called man, should call himself a doctor, and make himself a master of all arts, when he is a master of none, and is most a fool when he thinks his wisdom culminates to its highest point. And oh, strangest of all, that man who has a deceitful heart—full of all manner of evil concupiscence, and adultery, idolatry, and lust, should yet talk about being a good-hearted fellow, and should pride himself upon having at least some good points about him, which may deserve the veneration of his fellows, if not some consideration from the Most High. Ah, human nature, this is, then, thine own condemnation, that thou art insanely proud, while thou hast nothing to be proud of. Write "Ichabod" upon it. The glory has departed for ever from human nature. Let it be put away, and let God give us something new, for the old can never be made better. It is helplessly insane, decrepit, and defiled.

Furthermore, it is quite certain that human nature can not be made better, for many have tried it, but they have always failed. A man, trying to improve human nature, is like trying to change the position of a weathercock, by turning it round to the east when the wind is blowing west; he has but to take his hand off and it will be back again to its place. So have I seen a man trying to restrain nature—he is an angry bad-tempered man, and he is trying to cure

himself a bit and he does, but it comes out, and if it does not burn right out, and the sparks do not fly abroad, yet it burns within his bones till they grow white with the heat of malice and there remains within his heart a residuum of the ashes of revenge. I have seen a man trying to make himself religious, and what a monstrosity he makes himself in trying to do it, for his legs are not equal, and he goes limping along in the service of God; he is a deformed and ungainly creature, and all who look at him can very soon discover the inconsistencies of his profession. Oh! we say, it is vain for such a man to try to appear white, as well might the Ethiopian think he could make his skin appear white by applying cosmetics to it, or as well might the leopard think that his spots might be brushed away as for this man to imagine that he can conceal the baseness of his nature by any attempts at religion.

Ah, I know I tried a long time to improve myself, but I never did make much of it; I found I had a devil within me when I began, and I had ten devils when I left off. Instead of becoming better I became worse; I had now got the devil of self-righteousness, of self-trust, and self conceit, and many others had come and taken up their lodging-place. While I was busy sweeping my house, and garnishing it, behold the one that I sought to get rid of, and which had only gone for a little season, returned and brought with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they entered in and dwelt there. Ah, you may try and reform, dear friends, but you will find you can not do it, and remember even if you could, still it would not be the work which God requires; he will not have reformation, he will have renovation, he will have a new heart, and not a heart changed a little for the better.

But, once again, you will easily perceive we must have a new heart when you consider what are the employments and the enjoyments of the Christian religion. The nature that can feed on the garbage of sin, and devour the carrion of iniquity, is not the nature that ever can sing the praises of God and rejoice in his holy name. The raven yonder has been feeding on the most loathsome food, do you expect that she shall have all the kindliness of the dove and toy with the maiden in her bower. Not unless you could change the raven into a dove; for as long as it is a raven its old propensities will cling to it and it will be incapable of any thing above the raven's nature. Ye have seen the vulture gorge to his very full with the very filthiest of flesh, and do you expect to see that vulture sitting on the spray singing God's praises with its hoarse screaming and croaking throat? and do you imagine you will see it feeding like the barn-door fowl on the clean grain, unless its character and disposition be entirely changed? Impossible. Can you imagine that the lion will lie down with the ox, and eat straw like the bullock, so long as it is a lion? No; there must be a change. You may put on it the sheep's clothing but you can not make it a sheep unless the lion-like nature be taken away. Try and improve the lion as long as ye like—Van Amburgh himself, if he had improved his lions for a thousand years, could not have made them into

sheep. And you may try to improve the raven or the vulture as long as you please, but you can not improve them into a dove— there must be a total change of character, and you ask me, then, whether it can be possible for a man that has sung the lascivious song of the drunkard, and has defiled his body with uncleanness, and has cursed God, to sing the high praises of God in heaven as well as he who has long loved the ways of purity and communion with Christ? I answer, no, never, unless his nature be entirely changed. For if his nature remain what it is, improve it as you may, you can make nothing better of it. So long as his heart is what it is, you can never bring it to be capable of the high delights of the spiritual nature of the child of God. Therefore, beloved, there must assuredly be a new nature put into us.

And yet once again, and I will have concluded upon this point. God hates a depraved nature, and therefore it must be taken away, before we can be accepted in him. God does not hate our sin so much as he does our sinfulness. It is not the overflowing of the spring, it is the well itself. It is not the arrow that doth shoot from the bow of our depravity; it is the arm itself that doth hold the bow of sin, and the motive that wings the arrow against God. The Lord is angry not only against our overt acts, but against the nature which dictates the acts. God is not so short-sighted as merely to look at the surface, he looks at the source and fountain. He saith, “in vain shall it be, though thou shouldst make the fruit good, if the tree remain corrupt. In vain shalt thou attempt to sweeten the waters, so long as the fountain itself is defiled.” God is angry with man’s heart; he has a hatred against man’s depraved nature, and he will have it taken away, he will have it totally cleansed before he will admit that man into any communion with himself—and above all, into the sweet communion of Paradise. There is, therefore, a demand for a new nature, and that we must have, or otherwise we can never see his face with acceptance.

II. And now it shall be my joyful business to endeavour, in the second place, to set before you very briefly THE NATURE OF THIS GREAT CHANGE WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN US.

And, I may begin by observing, that it is a *divine* work from first to last. To give a man a new heart and a new spirit is God’s work, and the work of God alone. Arminianism falls to the ground when we come to this point. Nothing will do here but that old-fashioned truth men call Calvinism. “*Salvation is of the Lord alone;*” this truth will stand the test of ages and can never be moved, because it is the immutable truth of the living God. And all the way in salvation we have to learn this truth, but especially when we come here to this particular and indispensable part of salvation, the making of a new heart within us. That must be God’s work; man may reform himself, but how can man give himself a new heart? I need not enlarge upon the thought, it will strike you in a moment, that the very nature of the change, and the terms in which it is mentioned here, put it beyond all power of man. How

can man put into himself a new heart, for the heart being the motive power of all life, must exert itself before anything can be done? But how could the exertions of an old heart bring forth a new heart? Can you imagine for a moment a tree with a rotten heart, by its own vital energy giving to itself a new young heart? You can not suppose such a thing. If the heart were originally right, and the defects were only in some branch of the tree, you can conceive that the tree, through the vital power of its sap within its heart, might rectify the wrong. We have heard of some kind of insects that have lost their limbs, and by their vital power have been able to recover them again. But take away the seat of the vital power—the heart; lay the disease there; and what power is there that can, by any possibility, rectify it, unless it be a power from without—in fact, a power from above? Oh, beloved, there never was a man yet, that did so much as the turn of a hair towards making himself a new heart. He must lie passive there—he shall become active afterwards—but in the moment when God puts a new life into the soul, the man is passive: and if there be aught of activity, it is an active resistance against it, until God, by overcoming, victorious grace, gets the mastery over man's will.

Once, again; this is a *gracious* change. When God puts a new heart into man, it is not because man deserves a new heart—because there was any thing good in his nature, that could have prompted God to give him a new spirit. The Lord simply gives a man a new heart because he wishes to do it; that is his only reason. “But,” you say, “suppose a man cries for a new heart?” I answer, no man ever did cry for a new heart until he had got one; for the cry for a new heart proves that there is a new heart there already. But, says one, “Are we not to seek for a right spirit?” Yes, I know it is your duty—but I equally know it is a duty you will never fulfil. You are commanded to make to yourselves new hearts, but I know you will never attempt to do it, until God first of all moves you thereunto. As soon as you begin to seek a new heart, it is presumptive evidence that the new heart is there already, in its germ, for there would not be this germinating in prayer, unless the seeds were there before it.

“But,” says one, “suppose the man has not a new heart, and were earnestly to seek one, would he have it?” You must not make impossible suppositions; so long as the man's heart is depraved and vile, he never will do such a thing. I can not, therefore, tell you what might happen, if he did what he never will do. I can not answer your suppositions; if you suppose yourself into a difficulty you must suppose yourself out of it. But the fact is, that no man ever did, or ever will seek a new heart, or a right spirit, until, first of all, the grace of God begins with him. If there be a Christian here, who began with God, let him publish it to the world; let us hear for once that there was a man who was beforehand with his Maker. But I have never met with such a case; all Christian people declare that God was first with them, and they

will all sing,

“’Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced me in,
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin.”

It is a gracious change, freely given without any merit of the creature, without any desire or good-will coming beforehand. God doeth it of his own pleasure, not according to man’s will.

Once more; it is a *victorious* effort of divine grace. When God first begins the work of changing the heart, he finds man totally averse to any such a thing. Man by nature kicks and struggles against God, he will not be saved. I must confess I never would have been saved, if I could have helped it. As long as ever I could, I rebelled and revolted, and struggled against God. When he would have me pray, I would not pray: when he would have me listen to the sound of the ministry, I would not. And when I heard, and the tear rolled down my cheek, I wiped it away and defied him to melt my heart. When my heart was a little touched, I tried to divert it with sinful pleasures. And when that would not do, I tried self-righteousness, and would not then have been saved, until I was hemmed in, and then he gave me the effectual blow of grace, and there was no resisting that irresistible effort of his grace. It conquered my depraved will, and made me bow myself before the sceptre of his grace. And so it is in every case. Man revolts against his Maker and his Saviour; but where God determines to save, save he will. God will have the sinner, if he designs to have him. God never was thwarted yet in any one of his purposes. Man does resist with all his might, but all the might of man, tremendous though it be for sin, is not equal to the majestic might of the Most High, when he rideth forth in the chariot of his salvation. He doth irresistibly save and victoriously conquer man’s heart.

And furthermore, this change is *instantaneous*. To sanctify a man is the work of the whole life; but to give a man a new heart is the work of an instant. In one solitary second, swifter than the lightning flash, God can put a new heart into a man, and make him a new creature in Christ Jesus. You may be sitting where you are today, an enemy to God, with a wicked heart within, hard as a stone, and dead and cold; but if the Lord wills it, the living spark shall drop into your soul, and in that moment you will begin to tremble—begin to feel; you will confess your sin, and fly to Christ for mercy. Other parts of salvation are done gradually; but regeneration is the instantaneous work of God’s sovereign, effectual, and irresistible grace.

III. Now we have in this subject A GRAND FIELD OF HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE VERY VILEST OF SINNERS. My hearers, let me very affectionately address you, pouring out my heart before you for a moment or two.

There are some of you here present who are seeking after mercy; for many-a-day you have been in prayer in secret, till your very knees seemed sore with the oftenness of your intercession. Your cry to God has been, "Create me in a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." Let me comfort you by this reflection, that your prayer is already heard. You have a new heart and a right spirit: perhaps you will not be able to perceive the truth of this utterance for months to come, therefore continue in prayer till God shall open your eyes, so that you may see that the prayer is answered; but rest assured it is answered already. If thou hatest sin, that is not human nature; if thou longest to be a friend of God, that is not human nature; if thou desirest to be saved by Christ, it is not human nature, if thou desirest that without any stipulations of thine own, if thou art this day willing that Christ should take thee to be his own, to have and to hold, through life and through death, if thou art willing to live in his service, and if needful to die for his honour, that is not of human nature—that is the work of divine grace. There is something good in thee already; the Lord hath begun a good work in thy heart, and he will carry it on even unto the end. All these feelings of thine are more than thou ever couldst have attained of thyself. God has helped thee up this divine ladder of grace, and as sure as he has brought thee up so many staves of it, he will carry thee to the very summit, till he grasps thee in the arms of his love in glory everlasting.

There are others of you here, however, who have not proceeded so far, but you are driven to despair. The devil has told you that you can not be saved; you have been too guilty, too vile. Any other people in the world might find mercy, but not you, for you do not deserve to be saved. Hear me then, dear friend. Have I not tried to make it as plain as the sunbeam all through this service, that God never saves a man for the sake of what he is, and that he does not either begin or carry on the work in us because there is anything good in us. The greatest sinner is just as eligible for divine mercy as the very least of sinners. He who has been a ringleader in crime, I repeat, is just as eligible for God's sovereign grace, as he that has been a very paragon of morality. For God wants nothing of us. It is not as it is with the plowman; he does not desire to plow all day upon the rocks, and send his horses upon the sand; he wants a fertile soil to begin with, but God does not. He will begin with the rocky soil, and he will pound that rocky heart of yours until it turns into the rich black mould of penitential grief, and then he will scatter the living seed in that mould, till it brings forth a hundred fold. But he wants nothing of you, to begin with. He can take you, a thief, a drunkard, a harlot, or whoever you may be; he then can bring you on your knees, make you cry for mercy, and make you lead a holy life, and keep you unto the end. "Oh!" says one, "I wish he would do that to me, then." Well, soul, if that be a true wish, *he will*. If thou desirest this day that thou shouldst be saved, there never was an unwilling God where there was a willing sinner. Sinner, if thou willest to be saved, God willeth not the death of any, but rather that they should

come to repentance; and thou art freely invited this morning to turn thine eye to the cross of Christ. Jesus Christ has borne the sins of men, and carried their sorrows; thou art bidden to look there, and trust there, simply and implicitly. Then thou art saved. That very wish, if it be a sincere one, shows that God has just now been begetting thee again to a lively hope. If that sincere wish shall endure, it will be abundant evidence that the Lord hath brought thee to himself, and that thou art and shalt be his.

And now reflect every one of you—you that are not converted—that we are all this morning in the hands of God. We deserve to be damned: if God damneth us, there is not a single word that will be heard against his doing it. We can not save ourselves; we lie entirely in his hands; like a moth that lies under the finger, he can crush us now, if he pleases, or he can let us go and save us. What reflections ought to cross our mind, if we believe that. Why, we ought to cast ourselves on our faces, as soon as we reach our homes, and cry, “Great God, save me, a sinner! Save me! I renounce all merit for I have none; I deserve to be lost; Lord, save me, for Christ’s sake;” and as the Lord my God liveth, before whom I stand, there is not one of you that shall do this who shall find my God shut the gates of mercy against you. Go and try him, sinner; go and try him! Fall upon thy knees in thy chamber this day, and try my Master. See if he will not forgive you. You think too harshly of him. He is a great deal kinder than you think he is. You think he is a hard master, but he is not. I thought he was severe and angry, and when I sought him, “Surely,” I said, “if he accepteth all the world beside, he will reject me.” But I know he took me to his bosom; and when I thought he would spurn me for ever, he said, “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins,” and I wondered how it was, and I do wonder now. But it shall be so in your case. Only try him, I beseech thee. The Lord help thee to try him, and to him shall be the glory, and to thee shall be happiness and bliss, for ever and ever.