

Preface

REPEATED and insistent demands for a new volume of evangelistic sermons have been coming to me from pastors, evangelists and publishers. I have felt the force of these demands and at last am yielding to them in publishing this new volume of sermons.

These sermons were, for the most part, preached to my own congregation in Los Angeles in the past few months, and God, in His wondrous condescension, has seen fit to bless them to the conversion of a good many persons, the great majority of whom have been men from the ages of twenty-five up to fifty; but there have been some men of riper years converted, even up to seventy or eighty years of age. There have also been some notable conversions among women. We have been greatly interested in the number of Jews and Roman Catholics who have recently made a public profession of accepting Christ in our after-meetings, many of whom have afterwards united with our church, the Church of the Open Door. Not a few of those converted were formerly sceptics, agnostics, infidels and atheists, and quite a number of "Christian Scientists."

The Gospel presented in these sermons is the same Gospel of a crucified Christ, a Saviour from the guilt of sin, and a risen Christ, a Saviour from the present power of sin, that we have been preaching throughout our entire ministry as pastor, and as evangelist in all parts of the world. We are certainly living in a New Day. The War and its after-results have worked a radical transformation in the ethical and religious as well as social and economic outlook of the minds of the men and women of the present day; nevertheless, we find that the same Gospel that was "the power of God unto salvation" before the War, and from the days of the Apostle Paul (Rom. 1: 16), is the Gospel that men will listen to and yield to today. All of these new gospels, "The Social Gospel" with the rest, are proving utterly ineffective in saving individual men or in lifting up communities. The Real Gospel, when preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, produces the same effects in individual lives today, and in the transformation of families and communities, that it has produced throughout all the centuries since our Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross of Calvary and rose again and ascended to the right hand of the Father and poured out His Holy Spirit upon His people. Practical results prove that that Gospel does not even need to be restated, though of course it is desirable to adapt the illustrations and method of argument to the thinking of our own day.

There seems to be a great religious awakening in Scotland and in some parts of Ireland and England, and there are indications here and there of an awakening in our own land. It cannot be denied that many pastors who are

thoroughly evangelical and many of our most intelligent laymen are tired of some of the methods of evangelism that have been in vogue in our own country during the past few years; but this does not mean for one moment that they do not believe in evangelism or in true revivals. We seem to be ripe for a revival now, and it is hoped these sermons may prove helpful in promoting that greatly longed for and earnestly prayed for genuine revival. It is hoped that they may be helpful to pastors in their desire to become their own evangelists, that they may be helpful to those evangelists whom God has chosen, and that they may be directly used to the salvation of many souls, by being put in the hands of men, women and children who are unsaved and need a Saviour. It has been a great joy to the author of this book to receive letters from different parts of the world, from all classes of people, saying that they had been led to Christ through reading printed reports of his sermons.

In our own church, we have found that it has not been necessary to introduce movies, or other sensational features, to draw the crowds. We have never had a movie, or anything of that kind in our church, and never expect to have; and yet our Sunday evening audiences at which these sermons were preached were probably larger than those of any other church in the community, even those resorting to the movies as a means of drawing a crowd; in fact, we think there is no other building used for religious services in the city that would hold the thousands of people who Sunday night after Sunday night have listened to these sermons. What the great attraction is to bring men and women to the house of God, as well as to bring them to a better life, is stated in the fifth sermon in this book.

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THE ONLY GOSPEL THAT HAS SAVING POWER.

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”—ROMANS 1:16.

“But though I, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be Anathema. As I have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you another Gospel from that which ye received, let him be Anathema.”—GALATIANS 1:8, 9.

MY subject is “The Only Gospel that has Saving Power.” I have two texts: Romans 1:16: “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Galatians 1:8, 9: “But though I, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be Anathema. As I have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you another Gospel from that which ye received, let him be Anathema.”

We hear much in these days about various Gospels. Some extol the Gospel of Social Service, others talk of the Gospel of the Universal Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of Man; and others of the Gospel of Work, others of the Social Gospel, and others of various other Gospels. But there is but one real Gospel, only one Gospel that in actual fact has saving power. That Gospel is “the Gospel of Christ,” the Gospel which Paul preached, and of which he said that if any man, or even an angel from Heaven, should preach any other Gospel, he would be accursed of God. All these Gospels have one fatal fault, they don’t save. These other Gospels may sound well, they may be described with entrancing rhetoric, they may be preached with great eloquence, with marvelous beauty of diction, with charming figures of speech, they may seem exceedingly alluring, *but they don’t save*. For all their pretenses and prettiness, instead of saving, they darken, debase and damn. They do not enlighten, elevate and save.

I. MAN’S NEED OF SALVATION.

What man needs is salvation, not mere social uplift nor mere moral improvement, not mere intellectual enlightenment. Man is lost. Every man is lost until he is definitely saved. The only thing that will save him is the Gospel that Paul preached.

1. *Every man needs salvation from the guilt of sin.* Every man and woman on this earth is a sinner. Every man and woman on this earth has been a great sinner. Every man and woman on this earth has broken the first and

greatest of God's commandments, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37, 38) and every one of us, therefore, is a guilty sinner in the sight of a Holy God, and we need salvation from the guilt of sin. That is the first need, the great need, the crying need, the fundamental need of every one of us.

2. But *every man also needs salvation from the power of sin*. Sin has a hold upon every one of us, a mastery over every one of us, that we cannot overcome in our own strength. We must find a deliverer from the power of sin. The one universal need is the need of salvation, the need of salvation from the guilt and power of sin.

3. *The Gospel has power to save*. As our text puts it, "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," and no other religion or philosophy has power to save, nothing else in all the world has power to save from the guilt and power of sin.

II. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

We come now right to the question, *What is the Gospel that has power to save?* Gospel means, as I presume you all know, "Good news" or "Glad tidings." What is the good news, or the glad tidings, that has saving power in it? Paul himself tells us what this Gospel was which he preached, and of which he said, "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." We are not left to speculate about that for Paul himself defines in the simplest and most easily understood terms exactly what the Gospel was that he preached, the Gospel that had saving power and the only Gospel that has saving power. Paul's full, and at the same time very plain, description of the Gospel which he preached, you will find in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, *by which also we are saved*, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain," and now comes the description of the Gospel, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received: *that Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures; and *that he was buried*; and *that he hath been raised* on the third day according to the Scriptures."

1. You notice first of all in regard to this Gospel that Paul preached, that *the good news is facts*, not theories, not speculations, not guesses, but solid, substantial, established, unmistakable, inescapable, absolutely sure facts. I am glad of that. Most of the gospels one hears nowadays are mere theories. The Gospel of Christ is facts.

2. The facts that constitute the good news were three:

(1) First, “*that Christ died for our sins.*” That certainly is good news. You and I are sinners. Every one of us has sinned. If any one here tonight seeks to deny that he is a sinner, his denial that he is a sinner does not make him any less a sinner; indeed, it makes him all the more a sinner; for it makes him a liar, as well as a sinner in other respects. As we read in 1 John 1:8, 10, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned we make him (God) a liar, and his word is not in us.” So, by the denial of our sin we do not make ourselves any less sinners, but we prove ourselves to be liars and make ourselves guilty of the enormous sin of making God a liar. That is what every Christian Scientist does, he makes God a liar, and that is what every one else who denies that he is a sinner does, he makes God a liar. God says that we are sinners and when we deny the fact we give the lie to God. Every man, therefore, who denies that he is a great sinner is a liar, and all liars, unless they repent, are bound for the eternal fire; for God says in Revelation 21:8, “The fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, *and all liars*, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.”

But not only are we sinners, but God is holy, infinitely holy, and cannot tolerate sin. God is “of purer eyes than to behold evil,” and He can “not look on iniquity,” and some day you and I must meet Him. We must either meet Him bearing our sin, with all our sin upon us, or else we must find some one else to bear our sin for us. If we should meet this Holy God with our sin upon us then must we be forever banished from His presence, “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God and from the glory of his power.” But the Gospel tells us that some one else has borne our sin in our place. It tells us that a competent sin-bearer has been found. It tells us that “Christ died for our sins,” that the Lord “Jesus paid our debt, all the debt we owe,” that though “sin had left a crimson stain,” “He washed it white as snow.” Even Isaiah, seven hundred years before Christ, got a glimpse of this wonderful truth of the Gospel. Speaking in the Holy Spirit, he said, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6). So if we accept the Lord Jesus who died for our sins as our substitute Saviour, then no matter how long we have sinned, no matter how greatly we have sinned, we can meet God with absolutely no sin upon us, for God Himself has put it upon Another. So the Lord Jesus, by His death, saves us completely from all the guilt of sin.

(2) The second fact that goes to make up the Gospel is that *the Lord Jesus “was buried.”* At first sight, it is not clear how this is “good news,” but

it is good news; for *the fact of His burial shows the reality of His death and the actuality and literalness of His resurrection*. The burial of Jesus Christ shows that the death of Jesus Christ was no sham death, no mere “illusion,” it was not merely “mortal thought,” as the “Christian Scientists” would have us believe. It was a *real death* and therefore it was a *real atonement*. All that “Christian Science “and various other false systems offer us is a *sham atonement for imaginary sin*, and thus they offer us only a *sham salvation*. The Gospel of Christ, the Gospel that God makes known, the Gospel that Paul preached, the Gospel of a Saviour who not only died, but was buried, offers us a *real atonement for sins* that we know are *very real and very great* and *therefore* it offers us a *real salvation* from the guilt of sin. This true Gospel says to the vilest sinner in the world, “There is perfect pardon and justification for you, for the Son of God really died, He was really buried, and there is therefore a real and perfect salvation for you from all your guilt: ‘The *blood* of Jesus his Son *cleanseth us from all sin*’” (1 John 1:7).

(3) The third fact in the good news is that *Jesus Christ rose again*, or as Paul puts it in his description of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:4, “He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” That is certainly good news, it is great news. It is good news for many reasons, but especially good news from the standpoint of salvation, because it shows that Jesus Christ can not only save from all the guilt of sin by His atoning death, but that He can also save from all the power of sin by His resurrection power. As it is put in that wonderful verse in Hebrews, “Wherefore also he is able to save *to the uttermost* them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). We need not only salvation from the guilt of sin, but we need just as much salvation from the power of sin. Supposing I were a great sinner and through faith in Christ crucified, should find salvation from all my guilt, and find perfect peace of conscience, and should go out of here tonight very happy in the thought that all my sins were blotted out. Then suppose that on the morrow the same old temptations that have overcome me in the past, for example the appetite for drink, or some form of lust or impurity, or an appetite for drugs, or an ungovernable temper, should confront me, and I had no power to resist the temptation, and down I go, how much would such a salvation be worth? But Jesus Christ not only died and was buried, He rose again, and tonight He lives and He has all power in heaven and on earth and so He can save me from my appetite for drink, or from the power of any evil desire, or from my temper, or whatever my sin may be; and however weak I may be I can begin here and now to live a clean and victorious life.

The following incident of a man who once called upon me in Chicago I

have, I believe, related before. This man sought a private interview and when we had taken our seats alone in Mr. Moody's office the man said, "I want to tell you my story," and he went on as follows: "I am a Scotchman. When I was a child of seven over in Scotland I began to read the Bible through. One day I came to a passage in Deuteronomy that told me that if I should keep the law of God a hundred years and then broke it at one point after having kept it a hundred years, I would be under the curse of the broken law of God. Was that right?" "Yes," I replied, "the Bible doesn't put it in just that way, but the Bible does say, 'Cursed is every one that confirmeth not all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.'" "That's the passage," he said, "that I found and I knew that I had already broken the law of God and therefore I knew that I was under the curse of the broken law. Though I was only seven years of age, I was in deep distress. Night after night I went to bed and wept myself to sleep, thinking how I was under the curse of the broken law of God. But I went on reading my Bible and the next year when I was eight years old I came to John 3:16, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,' and all my burden rolled away. Was I converted?"

"Well," I replied, "that sounds like a good, evangelical conversion."

"Let me tell you the rest of my story," he continued. "I grew up to manhood. I came to America, I came out here to Chicago. I found work down in the stockyards. I am living down in the stockyards. Now, the stockyards, as you know, are a hard place, and I got to drinking and every little while I go off on a drunk. What I have come to ask you is if there is any way in which I can get victory over the drink?" "You have come just to the right place," I replied. "I can answer your question. There is a way in which you can get victory over the drink. You have only believed half the Gospel, and therefore you have only got half a salvation." I said, "Let me show you the whole Gospel," and I opened to the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians and read, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand; by which also we are saved, if ye keep in memory what I have preached unto you, except ye believed in vain, for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

"Now," I went on, "You have believed the first part of this Gospel, that Christ died and was buried, and through believing that you have found pardon and peace." "Yes." "But," I continued, "that is only half the Gospel. There is another half to it, and that is *that He rose again*. Do you believe

that?" "I believe everything in the Bible," he replied. Again I asked, "Do you believe that Jesus rose again the third day?" "Yes, I do." "Very well, then, if He rose the third day, then He has all power in heaven and on earth." "Yes." "And He has power to keep you from the power of the drink, and from the power of sin. Do you believe that?" "Yes," he said, "I do." "Will you trust Him to do it?" "I will," he replied. "Let us kneel down and tell God so," I said. We knelt side by side. I prayed first and then he prayed. These were about the words he uttered. "O God, I have been believing half the Gospel and I have had half a salvation. I have believed that part of the Gospel that told me that Christ died for my sins according to the Scriptures and through believing that I have found pardon and peace; but now I have come to believe the other half of the Gospel, that Christ not only died, but that He rose again and that He has all power in heaven and on earth and that He has power to keep me from the power of the drink."

Then he changed his mode of address and commenced speaking directly to Jesus Christ. "Lord Jesus," he said, "I believe that Thou art risen from the dead and I believe that Thou hast all power in heaven and on earth. I believe that Thou hast power to save me from the drink. O Lord Jesus, save me from the power of drink right now. I ask it in Thine own name. Amen." As he still knelt there, his head bowed in prayer, I said, "Did you really trust Him to do it?" He replied, "I did." He rose, I gave him some instruction as to how to make a success of this life upon which he had entered, he left the office and I didn't hear from him for some weeks. Then I received a brief letter, but the letter was very much to the point. It ran this way: "Dear Mr. Torrey, I am so glad I came to see you. *It works.*"

Yes, thank God, it *does* work. It works with any one who really believes it. The Gospel of a Saviour who died and was buried and rose again has power to save from the guilt of sin and it also has power to save from the power of sin. It has power "to save *to the uttermost*" those who come to God through Jesus Christ. And it is the only Gospel that can do it. The Gospel of Christian Science, with a sham death and a sham resurrection, cannot do it. The Gospel of New Thought cannot do it. The Gospel of Theosophy cannot do it. The Gospel of Social Service, of which we are hearing so much in our day, cannot do it. No Gospel but the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of a Saviour who really died, who was really buried, and who really rose again, can do it. A short while ago a well known pastor in Los Angeles announced that he was going to preach a Gospel "*without an atonement of blood.*" Well, if he does he will preach a Gospel that cannot save, he will preach a Gospel that will send men to hell and not a Gospel that will ever fit men for heaven. And any one who preaches a Gospel that Christ died, but not a Gospel that He rose again, will preach a Gospel that

will not save from the power of sin. But the Gospel contained in this blessed Book of God, the Gospel that Jesus both died and rose again, will save. It will save from both the guilt and the power of sin, it will “save to the uttermost.”

III. WHOM THE GOSPEL SAVES.

But whom does the Gospel save? It does not save everybody. This Gospel has been proclaimed for more than eighteen hundred years, but it has not saved everybody, and it never will. There are many in these days who are saying, The Gospel is a failure because the great majority of men and women are not saved. They say, “Christianity is a failure, because after eighteen centuries our governments are not Christian, and wars and other damnable things are still possible.” But herein lies their mistake, God never intended the Gospel to save everybody. He never gave it to save everybody. He never expected it to save everybody. He gave it to save those who would believe it and those only. It is not Christianity that has failed, but man that has failed, by rejecting this glorious Gospel. The Gospel has not failed because it has not saved everybody any more than a perfectly good medicine that will cure anybody who takes it fails where it doesn’t cure those who don’t take it. God has told us plainly from the beginning just who the Gospel would save. Who does it save? Listen: “The Gospel . . . is the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth.*” This tells us whom the Gospel saves.

1. First of all, *it saves those who believe.* Not those who hear, but those who believe. The Gospel does not save every one who hears it. Millions of men have heard the Gospel all through their lives and died in their sins and gone to hell. There are many who fancy that merely hearing the Gospel or living in a Christian land makes them Christians. One night I approached a very intelligent looking man in Duluth, Minnesota. I said to him, “Are you a Christian?” He replied, “Certainly; do you think I am a Mohammedan?” He thought that simply because he was born and brought up in a Christian land and heard the Gospel that made him a Christian; but it does not. It is *believing* the Gospel, not merely hearing the Gospel, that saves. It is believing the Gospel and not merely hearing it that makes one a Christian. The Gospel does not even save the one who merely admires it. A man may have a great admiration for the Gospel, for the profound philosophy of the Bible, and yet be an utterly unsaved man. THE GOSPEL SAVES THE ONE WHO BELIEVES IT AND HIM ALONE. The one who believes what? *The Gospel.* Really believes it, believes it with the heart. The one who has that kind of faith that leads to action, the faith that

(1) leads you to accept Christ as your atoning Saviour and to trust God to

forgive you simply because Jesus Christ died in your place;

(2) the faith that leads you to accept Christ **as** your risen Saviour and to trust Him to deliver you from the power of sin;

(3) the faith that leads you, having accepted Him, to show the reality of your faith by an open confession of Him before the world, as it is written, “If thou shalt *confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord*, and shalt *believe in thy heart* that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*” (Rom. 10:9, 10).

2. But it not only saves those who believe. It saves “*every one* that believeth.” As it is put in our text, “The Gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth*.” There is not a man or woman in this room tonight whom the Gospel cannot save. There is not a man or woman in the world so sunken in sin, so lost to all that is good and true and pure, that the Gospel cannot save, *if they will only believe*. There is not a man or woman so utterly weak and helpless in sin that the Gospel will not save them, *if they believe it*. Why then is there a man or woman in the world who is not saved? Why is there a man or woman in the world who is not saved from the guilt and power of sin? *Simply because you will not believe*. Let me illustrate. Here is a great Mogul engine on the track. It is coaled and has water in the boiler, there is fire underneath the boiler, the steam is up, there is a full head of steam, there is power in that locomotive to draw a heavily loaded freight train up the steepest grade, and now that locomotive backs down to the train and now the engineer reverses the lever and the locomotive starts up the grade, but not a car moves. Why not? Was it because there was not power in the locomotive to draw the train? No, there was plenty of power for that. What was the trouble? The brakeman had not put in the coupling pin. And now the locomotive backs down again and backs up to the train of cars. The brakeman goes in between the tender of the locomotive and the train, and drops in a little coupling pin and now the engineer reverses the lever and the locomotive starts up the track again, and this time the train moves up the grade. Just so, the Gospel has power to save, *if you couple on*. The Gospel locomotive stands on the track, there is power in that locomotive to carry the train most heavily loaded with sin up the track, steam is up, it is starting up the grade to glory, it can pull you, no matter how heavily weighted you are with tons of sin, up the grade to glory. Fall in line. Couple on. Faith is the coupling pin. Just believe the Gospel. It rests with every man and woman here tonight to say whether you will be saved or not, saved right now from the guilt and power of sin. It all turns upon whether you will or will not believe the Gospel. “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to *every one that be-*

lieveth.”