

A QUEST FOR SOULS

Comprising all the Sermons Preached and Prayers
Offered in a Series of Gospel Meetings, Held
In Fort Worth, Texas, June 11-24, 1917

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TWENTY-ONE

NIGHT SERVICE, JUNE 22, 1917

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

The regret in my heart is very deep, as was indicated last night, that I cannot at this time tarry beyond the coming Sunday night, in these special daily meetings. I beg you to know that I should gladly tarry for several weeks, as per the greatly appreciated invitation of the two cherished pastors, Drs. Smith and Edwards, and their noble churches, the Broadway and College Avenue, whose guest I am. I would gladly tarry for these weeks, if I could. The meetings in our cities are all too brief. We must come more and more to plan in all our cities for extended meetings, for this holiest and most important business of all - that of winning humanity to our Lord. These greatly honored pastors - and, if they and you will forgive me for saying it in their presence, I do not know two more faithful and trustworthy men of GOD within all my acquaintance of His servants - these two men and their noble congregations have been good enough to want me to come again for an extended visit, and at the earliest possible date I shall be most happy, GOD willing, to come for such visit. It would be right now, as I have said, but for an engagement next week in a distant state, that I cannot in conscience put aside.

How grateful I am for the fellowship and blessings that my own heart has experienced, these brief days of this visit! The memories of these days, with all this fellowship with these men of GOD and these two churches, and with other men and women of GOD who have come from the several churches throughout the city, shall come to me again and again, like some sweet dream of the morning. What a high and blessed thing is the fellowship of GOD's people! One of the evidences that I have that I am a Christian is the daily deepening interest my heart feels for every person in this world who accepts CHRIST as his personal Saviour, and the longing in my heart that everybody else may receive Him as Saviour and Lord before it is too late.

I beg to be indulged one other introductory word, and that is a word of deep personal appreciation, and, indeed, of deep indebtedness upon the part of us all, to *The Record and Star-Telegram*, these two great daily newspapers, that have so generously kept the meetings before

the people, inside the city and far beyond. Letters many have come to us, during these days, from the city and far beyond, that these extended and splendidly written reports of the meetings have carried a gracious blessing to those who could not come here. We are all deeply indebted to those who have written the reports, and to the forces that have seen to their setting up, and from my deepest heart I breathe a fervent prayer to GOD that He will bless these papers yet more and more, and crown them with constantly increasing usefulness.

WHY ARE YOU NOT A CHRISTIAN?

Text: "**And now, Lord. what wait I for? My hope is in Thee.**" - Psalm 39:7

As I come to speak this evening, there are two emotions in my heart, as there always are, when I approach the closing hours of some special meetings. The first emotion is the emotion of gratitude. How grateful, surely, we all are, for any and every blessing GOD has sent the people. To His name be every dust of the glory! It is all by Him, if any blessing has come, and we trust that many have been blessed. The mails to-day have told of blessings that we had not dreamed of at all, of citizens for whom you have prayed who mean to take their places with the people of GOD.. How grateful we are for the blessings which GOD has sent! How grateful for the inspiring fellowship ! How grateful we are for every Christian who has been renewed in spiritual strength, for every drifting Christian who has been arrested from such course and turned back to the right course, and for every soul that has been saved!

And I pause just there for a sentence:

Let the saved man and woman and child hasten to take their places in the church, with the people of GOD. And let the older, maturer Christians, who know about these babes in CHRIST, be certain now to speak the word of counsel and comfort to these timid Christians. I was so rejoiced to hear that quite a group thus took their place, when the opportunity was given them last Sunday morning. Oh, I trust that many will take their places the coming Sunday with the people of GOD, and on and on for weeks and months and years, may they so come because of these meetings.

There is another deep emotion in my heart as we approach the closing hour of the meetings. That is the emotion of distinct sorrow. Not all who come to a meeting are saved. I think I never saw a meeting come to its close where all the people who came, who were not Christians, were saved, and because of such fact sorrow pungent comes into one's heart. That is, indeed, a solemn Scripture where the refrain is given: "**The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.**" And especially are those two last words painfully ominous and suggestive - "**not saved,**" "**not saved.**" That means not ready to die, and even so, it means not ready to live, for one who is not a Christian is not ready for any world, to meet it like it ought to be met - not ready for time, not ready for eternity, not ready for death or life, not ready really to meet any experience properly, if one is not in right relations with GOD.

I wonder why the one before me, who has held out against CHRIST's mercy and call, has done so. I should like to ask you a question, which question shall be the theme of this evening's message: Why are you not a Christian? If I should ask if all in this presence are Christians, probably nearly all would stand or lift their hands to answer yes. Thank GOD! But not all would either lift their hand or stand. There are in this large presence men and women and boys and girls

who are not Christians, and, therefore, not saved. Now I should like to ask you the pointed question: Why are you not a Christian? That is the theme, and it is suggested by this statement in the thirty-ninth Psalm: "**And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee.**"

Here was a man who evidently had been waiting to do his full duty for quite awhile. He was meditating, when he uttered this sentence, which is our text.

He looked around him and saw how brief the earthly life is, and then how unsatisfying it is, and he commented on those two arresting facts about the earthly life. He said the earthly life was like an handbreadth, it was so brief, it went away so quickly, it was so uncertain. And we see that illustrated every day. How suddenly life is terminated! A prayer was offered from my deepest heart to-day when I noticed that one of your city to-day went away suddenly into the unseen land, and my prayer was for all his loved ones, that GOD's grace might be sufficient for them all, and that we might remember that in such an hour as we think not, the messenger of death may come for us. How brief life is! That is what this man mused and meditated upon, and then penned it here for us in this Psalm. How brief life is! How transitory! How fast passing! How uncertain! Let us wisely lay such fact to heart.

A little while ago a business man in one of our cities got up early to read the Dallas News, as was his wont, and as he was reading it, before he had yet pulled on his shoes, he said to his wife, who had not yet risen: "Wife, listen to this," and he read the account of a business friend in another community; who had the day before, while pulling on his shoes, gasped and gone away into eternity, and the man called his wife's attention, as he read, and said: "I do not expect to go like that." And in a few moments more, as she noticed him, he gasped, and though she summoned the physician, who was near by, life had fled when he came.

A judge stood up in one of our communities, some time ago, to give his charge to the jury, in an important case, and the people saw him tremble, and then sink down, and in a moment more his life had fled.

A noble preacher stood in one of our Texas pulpits, a little while ago, preaching on the text: "**Watch, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh,**" and as he was speaking upon that solemn text, summoning the people to remember it, he gasped before his audience, and life left him as he was there in his pulpit. Human life, how illusory! How transient! How fast passing! How uncertain! This man said all that in our text.

And then he said the things of human life cannot satisfy the human spirit. Whatever human life may achieve, whatever it brings, whatever it is, whatever it gives, it cannot satisfy the human spirit. JESUS told us that with the most striking illustration that was ever given. He stated a question in profit and loss, never equaled. Here it is: "**What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?**"

It is the greatest question in profit and loss ever stated for a human being. "Go," said JESUS to the man, "and get the whole world, all that it has of wealth, all that it has of honor, all that it is and has of pleasure, go get the whole world, and let it all be yours - what shall it profit you if you get it at the loss of your soul?"

Supreme things are often lost by inattention. When I was speaking in an Eastern city a little while ago, in a mission, for some days, they told me of the going away of one of the city's mighty financiers. His name is a household word in this country. He sent for one of the ministers, and when the minister went into his room and sat beside him and took his hand, the minister said to him: "What would you say to me?"

And he said: "Oh, man of GOD, sing to me, and then pray for me!"

"What shall I sing?" inquired the minister.

"Sing that old song:

Come, ye sinners. poor and needy.
Weak and wretched, sick and sore,
JESUS ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.

Sing me that."

Mighty financier though he was, his money could not avail him in that testing hour.

There is a little plant that grows in a certain section of the world, which plant is called the Nardoo plant. The naturalist tells us that the plant is delicious to the taste. Men and women may eat it and delight in it. It is exceedingly palatable to the taste. And yet, though they may eat and eat and eat of that plant, and rejoice in it like they would rejoice in the eating of some delicious berry, it is utterly impotent to suffice for hunger, for they tell us that it possesses no nutriment at all for the blood, and they tell us that we can eat of it, and eat of it, and yet die from starvation, even while we enjoy the eating of that delicious plant. That is a parable and picture of human life. Go, if you will, and drink from every spring, go and sip the aroma from every flower, go and run the whole gamut of human experience, and still will it be true:

This world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh.
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.

Just because GOD hath set eternity in the human heart, nothing temporal, therefore, can satisfy and fortify the human spirit.

Now, this man of our text found all this out, and then he turned away from it all, saying, in the language of our text: "**And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee.**"

And that suggests for us the personal theme that I am to press upon you these passing minutes: Why do you wait to be for the Lord? Why are you not a Christian? I wish I knew. If I knew why that man there, or that woman, or that child, was not a Christian, I should come right to that excuse, and seek to bring to bear the Word of GOD right at that point, to counsel you and help you.

Let me surmise the different things that keep people waiting and away from CHRIST. Let me give several conjectures, and if I do not give the right conjecture in your case, yet I pray you to face the truth, the principle that shall be discussed, and put to your heart the piercing question: Why am I not a Christian?

Let me ask you, first, is it this:. Do you say: "I am not a Christian because I do not need to be?"

Is there one in all this vast concourse of people to-night who would say: "I am not a Christian because I do not need to be?" Is there one that would make such claim as that? I do not think so, I think I need not pause at that point. I think not one in all this place would make such plea, in the face of the Bible, which says that every rational being needs GOD, needs His guidance and forgiveness and help. This Book tells us that no human being has moral resources within himself or herself sufficient to live the life he or she ought to live, and to meet the destiny out yonder that awaits us. And then you would not fly in the face of CHRIST, the Light of the world, who came among men and told us all: **"You must be born again"** - every rational human being - you must be born again, born of the Spirit of GOD, born from above, or you cannot even see the kingdom of GOD."

I do not believe, therefore, that I have a single man or woman here to-night, who would say: "I scout the teaching of the Bible and the teaching of JESUS, and I say I do not need to be a Christian at all." Oh, no, not one in this presence will say that. And so I leave that to pass to another conjecture.

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you answer: "Sir, I am not one because I cannot believe?" Now, let us pause night there, and let me ask you, when you say you cannot believe: What is it you cannot believe? Who is it that you cannot believe?

There are two pungent questions, that all rational men and women must confront.

Here they are:

"What think ye of Christ?" That is the first one.

And then the other one is: **"What shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?"**

We are everyone called to think upon CHRIST.

- Who is He?
- Where did He come from?
- What did He come for?
- What did He do for men?
- What does He propose to do?
- What can He do?
- **"What think ye of Christ?"**

And then that other big question - inescapable, inexorable, inevitable question: "**What shall I do with Christ?**"

Now, we must face those questions. So I ask you, what is there about CHRIST that troubles you? Here is a great personality that crosses every one of your paths.

- You must vote for Him or vote against Him.
- You must accept Him or reject Him.
- You must crown Him morally in your heart, or you must morally crucify Him.
- You must be for Him or against Him.
- You must be His friend or foe.

Now, which ought it to be? Which is sane and reasonable, as you face that inescapable alternative? And I beg you to remember, as you face it, that the wisest and best of earth have followed CHRIST.

The most remarkable testimony that I have heard given to CHRIST JESUS in a long time was given by our nation's chief executive, Woodrow Wilson, to-night the first citizen in the whole civilized world. The greatest tribute that I have heard paid to simple faith in CHRIST, in years and years, I heard him give a little while ago, as he stood before a group of some two thousand of the nation's thoughtful men. "Oh, men, my brothers," the greatly gifted President said, in effect, "long ago I stayed my all on CHRIST, and I could not get on without Him and His Book, and I would not be willing to try."

The wisest and the keenest and the strongest of earth have tried JESUS,

- and they have found out that He helps.
- They have found out that He saves.
- They have found out that He reinforces.

And not only the great and strong and intellectual and keen-minded have thus tried JESUS and found Him true, but those modest ones who are near and dear to you and me. A little mother, who prays, never heard of outside of her village or community, maybe, but to you the sweetest and dearest life that earth ever had, tells her child, or the little wife tells her husband, how dear CHRIST is to those who receive Him as a personal Saviour.

I was summoned to a dinner in a beautiful home some time ago, when the home was just opened, one of the most beautiful I have seen, and I said to the wife and mother in that home: "How happy you must be in such a home!" And she said: "Quite true, sir," and then she went on to say: "But, Oh, sir, I would be gladly willing to live on bread and water, if only my husband would come with me and be for CHRIST, and walk beside me, and help me by his example and precept to bring the children in the heavenly way."

Those that are nearest and dearest of all to you, come to you and tell you that CHRIST helps them, and we know it is true. So you will not be afraid to venture your all on CHRIST. He is tested, experimentally; He is tried, experimentally, and we find Him true.

I have heard Booth Tucker give his testimony to the power of GOD's grace. He was and is a mighty man of GOD, as was his heroic Father-in-law, General Booth, both working with the people down in the trenches of life, with the people who are down to hard pan. I have been glad to stand beside them both, for the saving of the very poor in one of our cities. I think nothing of that spirit that seeks to make class distinctions, either in the realm of church or of state: I think nothing of that cheap and demagogic cry that would make such class distinctions. It is a piece of cheap and wicked demagogism for which right-thinking men will have no respect. The right-thinking man is as much concerned for the best welfare of the man in the deepest depths of sin and poverty and squalor and wretchedness, as he is for the President of our whole vast country.

I heard Booth Tucker say that he preached in Chicago, one day, and out from the throng burdened toiler came and said to him, before all the audience: "Booth Tucker, you can talk like that about how CHRIST is dear to you, and helps you; but if your wife was dead, as is my wife, and you had some babies crying for their mother who would never come back, you could not say what you are saying." I was with Booth Tucker, as I have indicated to you, and just a few days after our separation, he lost his beautiful and nobly-gifted wife in a railway wreck - and the body was brought to Chicago, where Booth Tucker had thus preached, and where the toiling man had stood up and said: "You could not say that, if you were in my condition." The body was brought to Chicago and carried to the Salvation Army barracks. I pause to say that when I think of such valiant workers, I want to stand with my head uncovered, when I see how bravely they are toiling to make better the world. And great old General Booth!

I always wanted to stand in his presence with my head uncovered, because he so nobly served humanity. The body of Booth Tucker's wife, as I have just said, was brought to Chicago, and was carried to the Salvation Army barracks, for the funeral service. That same toiling man was present, who some days before had said what I have told you. And there was the casket in the chapel of the Salvation Army people of Chicago, and Booth Tucker at last stood up, after others had conducted the funeral service, and he stood there by the casket, and looked down into the face of the silent wife and mother, and said: "The other day when I was here, a man said I could not say CHRIST was sufficient, if my wife were dead, and my children were crying for their mother. If that man is here, I tell him that CHRIST is sufficient. My heart is all crushed. My heart is all bleeding. My heart is all broken. But there is a song in my heart, and CHRIST put it there, and if that man is here, I tell him that, though my wife is gone and my children are motherless, CHRIST speaks comfort to me to-day."

That man was there, and down the aisle he came, and fell down beside the casket, and said: "Verily, if CHRIST can help us like that, I will surrender to Him," and he was saved.

Oh, my brother men, JESUS can be tested! If you ask me if I have tested Him, GOD help me, I tell you yes. Better than I know anything in the wide world do I know that CHRIST helps men, for when I was on life's wild sea, without chart or compass or guide or rudder, and no human voice could suffice me, and the storm drove hither and thither my little bark, CHRIST said: "Come to me, man, and give your case to me, and I will help you, and you shall know it." I found it was so. You can try Him and prove Him, for yourself. Oh, try Him to-day!

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you say: "I am not a Christian because I have so much to give up?" Pray, tell me now, what have you to give up? - JESUS, my Saviour, and your offered Saviour, does not want you to give up anything except that which is wrong, except that which hurts you, except that which poisons you, except that which, if you do not repent of it, shall kill you. JESUS wants you to give up only that which is wrong and blighting and deadly - just that. Suppose a man had two stores, and one of those stores was a tiny confectionery store, worth one hundred dollars, and the other store was a vast department store, worth a million dollars; and suppose the man devoted nearly all of his time and thought to that little one-hundred-dollar store, and gave practically no time nor thought to that million-dollar store. You would say: "Why, that is unspeakable." And yet, Oh, soul, JESUS comes to you down here in this little space called time - thirty years, maybe, or twenty-five, or forty, or sixty, or mayhap seventy, but not many of us will live that long - very few of us will reach that period - JESUS comes to us, saying: "Don't put all your thought on that little tiny store. Give the great store the best attention. You are made to live forever. Out yonder, beyond time and the grave, is a conscious world forever. Build for that, as well as think wisely for this brief space here and now."

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you say: "I am not a Christian because I am waiting until I get good enough to be one?" Where, pray, will you get your goodness? If you may get your goodness by your own doings, then JESUS need not have come, nor would He have come. Where, pray, will you get your goodness? JESUS did not come to save good people. He himself tells us: **"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance"**; Thank GOD!

If you are a sinner, you are eligible to be saved. They are now daily asking who is eligible for our country's arms. If you are a sinner, thank GOD, you are eligible to be saved, for JESUS came to seek and to save the lost. You cannot save yourself. You cannot work up your own goodness. You must be born again, and by the power of GOD, and so your waiting, pleading that you are waiting until you get good enough to come, is utterly specious and futile and ruinous.

Do you say: "Well, that is not it," as I ask you, Why are you not a Christian?

But do you say: "I am waiting until I get the strength to live the Christian life?" Then I will pass the question to you and ask you, Where will you get that strength? JESUS not only saves us, but He helps us after He does save us. Paul, that chief apostle, said: **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."** Paul did not say that he himself was able to keep himself - never once.

Paul said: **"By the grace of God I am what I am."** He said: **"By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."**

JESUS himself says:

"You surrender to me and I will forgive and save you.

- And then I will company with you:

- I will teach you.
- I will guide you.
- I will fortify you.
- I will empower you.
- I will strengthen and keep you."

That is living the Christian life. JESUS not only starts with us, but He companies with us also as we go on the journey. Oh, I would not risk my getting to Heaven on the best five minutes or five seconds that I ever lived in my own goodness and strength. No, no. My hope is in a surer place than that.

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than JESUS' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on JESUS' name.

On CHRIST the Solid Rock. I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

I do not risk my salvation in the church, or in beautiful baptism, or in the Lord's Supper, or in all the impressive forms of religion. They all cannot save one soul. CHRIST must save. Oh, you must give up to Him! Won't you do that before it is too late?

I come to ask you again, Why are you not a Christian?

Do you answer me: "I am not a Christian because I look around me and see professed Christians, and their lives are faulty and ragged and defective, and I will therefore pass it by?" What shall I say about that? Is it true that our lives are ragged and defective and faulty? GOD forgive us, yes. I do not know any perfect people. O man, we do not plead ourselves. We plead CHRIST JESUS the Lord. He is the world's hope, and He is its righteousness. And now, come. When you have pleaded weakness in the Christians round you, and faultiness and defects and raggedness, JESUS looks at you, saying: "What has that got to do with your soul, and what has that got to do with your personal responsibility to me?"

JESUS says to you: "**Therefore, thou art inexcusable, Oh, man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself.**" You have made your case worse. Come away, I pray you, from that faulty excuse.

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you answer me: "Sir, I am not a Christian because I am waiting for the right kind of feeling?" Pray tell me, what do you know about the right kind of feeling in the matter of the Christian life? Can't you leave that with CHRIST? May I tell you that I prayed for feeling for many a long day, and at last, calm as I am right now, and calm as you are now, as you listen to the preacher to-night with such interest and deference, I said: "Lord. with or without feeling, come what may, I will surrender myself, for time and eternity, this very minute, to CHRIST."

He took care of the feeling afterward. That is His part. Never one time does He say to you: "If you feel so and so, you shall be saved." Never once. But He says: "If you will believe on CHRIST, He will save you."

- He will save you whatever your feelings.
- He will save you in spite of your feelings.
- He will save you and give you the feelings you ought to have - the feelings He wants you to have.
- You are to trust Him, and He is to save you.

Isn't it plain?

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you say: "I have waited because I could not see through it, I could not understand it?" I pray you, come away from that, for you never can understand it - never. No man is wise enough to philosophize through the mystery of what it is to be born again. Why, you cannot even understand a great human life. A great human life has about him mystery, and the more you see him the more mysterious and wonderful he is. You cannot understand the mystery of a little, laughing baby's life. There is mystery in all life, clear above your comprehension.

That strong man, Nicodemus, came to JESUS, and JESUS told him: "**You must be born again.**" He said: "**How can I be born again?**" And JESUS said: "The how belongs to GOD." Yours it is to trust CHRIST."

JESUS said: "**The wind bloweth where it pleaseth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit of God.**" Yours it is to trust, and His it is to save. There are mysteries in coming to CHRIST, but ten thousand times greater if we reject Him and go into the darkness. When Frohman was going down with the Titanic he called it "the Great Adventure."

Why are you not a Christian?

Do you say: "Well, I am waiting for somebody else to go first?" Oh, we are back again to daily, human, personal, responsible influence. Wife, art thou here this evening without CHRIST? If I were in your place, I would come, if necessary, through flame and flood. I would not wait for that strong man who holds back. Who knows but that thou must by thine own example win Him to CHRIST? I would come, Oh, friend. I would come! Who knows but that sheltering behind you is somebody that will act when you act?

I was preaching in a distant city some time ago, and one night I made a call like this, at the close of the sermon: "I wish all the men and women and boys and girls who wish to be Christians, would walk down to these three front pews, while the people sing, and then when they have thus come forward, I have two or three things to say to them in two or three or four minutes, before we pray." Numbers came to those pews, quietly and thoughtfully.

Our appeal should always be to men's judgment and conscience. CHRIST's religion does not

need any other kind of an appeal.

They came, and I noticed in the group, a girl of some fourteen or fifteen years, beautiful, and deeply serious. She kept looking back, Oh, so pitifully she kept looking back. She had come away from the side of a man, who, as we learned later, was her Father. She kept looking back, and I said: "I think now that we are ready in one moment to pray. I will wait just one moment, to see if somebody else won't come, before we pray, and sit on these pews with us, thereby saying: 'I want to be a Christian.'"

And this girl could wait no longer, and she went back down the aisle and sat down beside him, where she left him some minutes ago. I waited. It was all rather striking. I waited to see the outcome, not knowing what it meant, but they told me later what it meant. She put her arms about her Father's neck, and one sitting just behind them, heard her say: "Papa, you and I told mother we would meet her in the better world, when she left us last year, and I want to keep the promise. I want us to settle it, papa. I went forward that they might pray for me. I thought you would come. I want us to settle it to-night. Oh, papa, I want us to keep our promise to mother, but I could not stay down there without you. I have stayed with you since mother died, and we have been together. I have never left you except when I had to, papa. I cannot now go without you. I want to surrender to CHRIST to-night, but I cannot go without you, and I have come back to ask you if you won't go with me, and kneel down with me, and with me surrender to CHRIST?"

And the strong, big, trembling man - and it turned out that he was one of the judges of one of the high courts of his state - said: "Little girl, papa will go with you. You are right."

And together they came, and knelt together, and when the prayer was over, and I said: "Who has said yes to CHRIST?" he stretched out his hand and said: "I have." And the little girl said: "So have I. papa!" and she kissed him again and again.

What if he had not come? Oh, soul, wait not for somebody else, because somebody else may be influenced by you!

Why are you not a Christian?

I think you sum it up, some of you - oftentimes men sum it up and say: "Well, I am not a Christian, but I tell you, sir, I expect to be by and by. I intend to be to-morrow. I will be a little later." I suppose that is the excuse oftenest given by the human heart for not being on CHRIST's side. Men will grant their duty, and their need, and their danger, and men will confess their interest and their desire. Men will go on and declare their purpose some time to stop and surrender to CHRIST, but then they wait. They listen to a subtle voice: "A little later, by and by, to-morrow, not yet," and Satan's work is done, and the soul is enamored of the deceitful way and goes down to destruction and doom and loss.

That old-time ruler of Thebes, whose name was Archias, one night was going to a house of feasting and revelry, and one of his trusted servants intercepted him on the road, and thrust into his hands a note, and said to him: "Oh, Prince, do not go to that place - do not go." The servant said: "Serious matters await you, if you go. That note explains it. Read it. Do not go." And the prince said, as he thrust the note into his pocket: "Serious matters to-morrow, but none to-night."

Feasting to-night, revelry to-night, music to-night, laughter to-night, a good time to-night. Serious matters to-morrow!" And he refused to read the note. Oh, if he had only read the note! The note, penned by the faithful servant, told him of a plot that very night to take his life, but because he ignored the warning he went right into the trap, and that night his life was taken away.

My fellow sinner - and you are such, for I am a sinner saved by grace - my fellow sinner, let not Satan cheat you and beguile you and trick you at that point, that you have time enough. When all is at stake, your soul at stake, your life at stake, your influence at stake, your happiness at stake, your usefulness at stake, your deep joy at stake, surely you have not time enough.

Now, this man of our text faced it, and turned away and said: "I have not time enough." And then what did he say? He said what I am coming to ask you to say. He said: "Lord, what do I keep up this waiting for?" And then he turned face about and said: "Lord, my hope from this hour shall forever be in Thee."

That is the prayer I pray for you. That is the exhortation I press upon you. "Lord, what do I wait for? I desist from it. My hope from this Friday night shall be in the Lord."

Mark now his hope; mark where it was: "My hope shall be, Oh, Lord, in Thee."

Oh, I pray you, my fellow-men, do not be beguiled at this vital point.

- Salvation is by a person, and that person is the Lord JESUS CHRIST.
- Salvation is not by a church,
- Salvation is not by an ordinance,
- Salvation is not by a sacrament,
- Salvation is not by a ceremony,
- Salvation is not by a creed,
- Salvation is not even by the Bible.

The Bible is just the signboard saying to us: "This is the way."

Salvation is by CHRIST, and by none other. **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."**

JESUS himself calls to us, saying: **"I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."**

JESUS calls to us, saying: **"I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, but he that climbeth up some other way is a thief and a robber."**

Salvation is by CHRIST, the person, and you are to just surrender to Him, that He may, by your choice, become your Saviour.

Oh, I come to ask if you won't, like this man of our text, put away your waiting, and say: "I am coming right now to Him. Parent as I am, GOD help me, I am coming now, for my own sake and

my family's."

Business men, or toiling men, or professional men, whoever the man or woman or child may be, not a Christian, I am coming to press upon you the appeal: Won't you do as did this man in .the text? Won't you say: "Lord, I stop my waiting; I am coming to Thee?"

What if you should not come? What if you should wait one day, one hour, one second, too long, too late, to come? What if you should refuse and defer one second too much to come? Oh, I am asking if you won't be done with your waiting now and come?

What arguments shall I marshal to help you? What motives shall I summon for you to consider? I pray you, think of your duty, and think of your need, and think of your danger, and think of your influence, and think of your happiness, and think of your usefulness. Great arguments, mighty motives, ought to have a large place in human thought and action, and by them all I am praying you to end your waiting. Many come up to this point and take all but this last step.

- They feel.
- They see.
- They hear.
- They know.
- They concede.
- They desire.
- They say:

"Yes, that is right. A little later I will yield." They wait a little later. They come right up to Heaven's gate. and they turn away unsaved.

Yonder in the Northwest a young couple went to build their fortune, and they went out several miles from the village and took up land, and there had their little cottage, and began their work. One morning the young husband went away to the village to get supplies for the little home. He was to return that evening, but after he had been gone some time, the snow began to fall, and it fell thick and fast and piled up deeper and deeper. The day died down to night, and he had not returned, and the little wife's heart was in her throat, so anxious was she; and all night long she stood there in the cabin door, and swung the lantern, if haply he came within its radius of light he might be pointed the way home. Several feet of snow had fallen, and the morning came. The night was past, and he had not come, and with a very agony of anxiety she started toward the village. Though the snow was some three or four feet deep, she started through it, and down yonder, just a few hundred yards from the little cottage, she stumbled on his body, the body of her own husband, frozen and cold. Back he had come, in sight of his own cabin - and was dead in sight of home!

Oh soul, that is a picture of what sometimes happens in Gospel meetings. Men and women and children come and hear and feel and desire, but wait, through Satan's enticement. They come within sight of home and Heaven and eternal life, and wait too long. End your waiting, I pray you, and come this night, and make your surrender to CHRIST, this very night and this very hour. He does the saving, but you are to consent, you are to decide. Your difficulties, your sins, your doubts. your temptations, do you say they are terrible? Make them a million times worse in fancy, than they really are, and yet I tell you that CHRIST will save you in one second, if you

will honestly surrender your case to Him.

To-night will you make that surrender? These hundreds of Christian men and women want you to make that surrender to CHRIST, and they will join me in prayer for GOD to guide and help you. I will show you that they wish it. Every Christian in this presence who takes up the preacher's appeal, and would bind it on the hearts of all these that are wrong with GOD; and, further, every Christian that will join the preacher in a prayer for these that are waiting and staying away from GOD, in a prayer that they will stop their waiting and come in time; every Christian that says: "That is my wish. That is my heart. That shall be my prayer," will lift high the hand. Do you not see? I think it is a sight to stir the angels' hearts. That is sufficient. Come, now, tell me, every soul that says: "I want to be right with GOD, in GOD's own time and way!" I will not ask you to lift your hand, for many did last night. I will ask :you, if you are ready right now, to come to me and say: "My waiting is done." Let every head be bowed, while we pray GOD to guide us.

THE CLOSING PRAYER

Great is our joy, O Thou great Saviour, that so many in this great press are friends of CHRIST and His followers. We would come now to Thee with just one prayer. It is that everyone who is improperly waiting, who is away from GOD, away from right, away from duty, away from safety, away from the right use of influence and the right expenditure of life, man, woman or child, may now end the waiting, and come to CHRIST; that the duty-neglecting Christian may say: "I have neglected duty long enough. I will renew my vows this night with CHRIST;" that the backslidden Christian may say: "I will renew my vows. I will come back to the Lord. I will come back before the people. I have wandered before them, and they may know about it, but whether they know or not, GOD knows it all, and I will come back, and renew my vows to-night with Him. Tonight I will re-surrender my poor self to the forgiving Saviour."

Oh, we pray for such. And we pray for the men and for the women, the parents, the young men or women, the boys or girls, who are waiting, and the soul is more endangered every minute, and Satan gets in his work more terribly every minute. Oh, we pray that the one here waiting to-night shall say: "I stop now. Since JESUS saves, since He does it all, and since He bids me not wait until to-morrow, since He tells me, **"To-day is the day of salvation,"** since He tells me if I will just commit my case to Him, no matter what the case is, no matter how bad, how perplexing, no matter how doubting, how fearing, how puzzled, how sinful, how tempted, if I will just turn my case over to Him, He, the great Soul Physician, will do for me what He knows needs to be done, I will trust Him now, I will make my surrender to Him now. I will end my waiting, Lord JESUS, and I will surrender to Thee right now." GOD grant it by the power of His grace and spirit. for CHRIST's sake. Amen.

The people will sing that simple song: "JESUS is Calling."

"JESUS is tenderly calling Thee home,
calling to-day, calling to-day."

Sing that song, and while we sing it, let everyone tarry these closing moments. Now, here is my hand, and with it goes my heart's Godspeed to you who wish to be right with GOD. I implore

you to end your waiting.

Does the backslidden Christian here, and the duty-neglecting Christian, say: "I have had enough of my waiting, and I will renew my vows with CHRIST right now, this Friday night."

Does another say: "No, that is not my case. I am a disciple of JESUS secretly, and never made it known." Aren't you ready now to say: "To-night, I will stop my waiting, and be openly for CHRIST. I will to-night announce that I have already surrendered to the Saviour."

Does the man or woman or child say, "Not yet have you stated my case, but this is my case: To-night, I am ready, I am willing, that CHRIST shall be my Saviour. To-night, I decide for Him. To-night, I cease my delay, to-night I end my waiting, to-night I surrender to CHRIST, that He may take me and do for me what He knows needs to be done." Come, take my hand. The chord is given us, and we will sing.

(The first and second stanzas were sung - while numbers came forward.)

Did you ever before see the sight we have just seen? I never saw it before, where a son brought his own mother to CHRIST. Never have I seen that sight before - and I have seen many confess CHRIST - where a young man came with his mother, and like a little child she tells us: "I will surrender to CHRIST, and I am going with you" - brought by her own son!

Oh, you mothers who are not on CHRIST's side, end your waiting to-night, and come with the boy or without him. The probability is that you will have to bring the boy and the girl. Was there ever another next to the Lord so helpful to a human soul, as is a mother?

Oh, ye mothers, wandering, waiting, in wrong positions, come to-night and settle it with your surrender to CHRIST.

And ye Fathers and brothers, men of affairs, men of toil and work, what you need above all else is CHRIST, and if you should have all else, you would yet be utterly poverty-stricken without Him.

And the boys ought to come, and the girls, even others who are here to-night. GOD's breath from Heaven is over you, as it was last night so sensibly.

Oh, men and women and boys and girls, as they continue to sing, I pray you to say: "I am altogether persuaded to be for CHRIST."

JESUS said to one who once came near Him: "**Thou art not far from the kingdom of God**" - not far from the kingdom of GOD, but that is not enough . You want to be in His kingdom.

- To be near is not enough.
- Almost is not enough.
- To be in sight is not enough.
- Hard by the gate is not enough.
- To be interested and serious and trembling, and desirous is not enough.

Satan does not care if you tremble and are tearful and are serious, if only you will say: "I will wait." That is his Masterpiece to destroy you. Do you say: "I will not linger and listen to him. I will not farther follow Satan. GOD help me, I will come to-night, and I will stop my waiting, and I will give up to JESUS CHRIST."

Come then, and take my hand.

(The third and fourth stanzas were sung and others came forward.)

You may go in a few moments. I have a very earnest word to say to these Christians. It is this: Put your utmost of prayer and personal effort into these two waiting days, to the end that GOD may save multitudes about you.

Put your utmost into the noonday service to-morrow at the Chamber of Commerce auditorium, the mass meeting at three-thirty Sunday afternoon in the same place, and the meeting again here Sunday night. Oh, what need for prayer! You will pray much, I trust, by groups and alone. And then what need that you shall speak to the people who are without GOD, trying to help them. We have only one concern in these meetings, and that is to do the people good eternal good.

And I have this earnest word again to say to these men and women who have decided for JESUS through these days and nights: Take your place promptly with GOD's people.

Talk with some experienced Christian, if you are puzzled about any spiritual matter. Above all, talk with GOD, and set your heart to live that beautiful, obedient, Christian life, so glorious for us to live.

THE BENEDICTION

And now, we go, with gratitude on our lips, welling up from our hearts, O GOD, for thy manifest blessing upon the people here. How we bless Thee for the influence of thy spirit upon the people, and for the decisions of these who come, saying: "Our waiting stops. Our surrender is given to CHRIST JESUS." O may they all go to take their places promptly in CHRIST's army, to be His soldiers, living the Christian life in the noblest way possible. May they be cheered and counseled from thyself and from their fellow Christians, even according to their need. O Lord JESUS, send out with thine own passion in their hearts, the whole multitude of Christians, to speak to the children and to sons and daughters, to speak to friends, to loved ones, to their neighbors, to all the people, passing nobody by, to speak the right word, the GOD directed word. about personal religion, and to speak it in the hours just before us. May we wait upon GOD as never before, and call down by prayer and worthy effort GOD's gracious mercies upon this fair city!

And as the people go now, may the blessing of the triune GOD be granted to all and each, to abide with you forever. Amen.

~ end of chapter 21 ~
