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FREEMASONS' HALL  
ADDRESSES.

BY THE REV.  
JOSEPH DENHAM SMITH.

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NO. 4.  
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LONDON :  
S. W. PARTRIDGE, 9 PATERNOSTER-RROW.

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Price One Penny.



## FOURTH ADDRESS.

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THE Fourth Address was delivered on Tuesday evening, at seven o'clock, in Freemasons' Hall. The attendance was large, every available space being occupied.

The proceedings were commenced by singing the hymn—

“O happy day, that fix'd my choice  
On Thee, my Saviour and my God.”

Mr. SMITH then delivered the following comment on the 23rd Psalm:—

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Ver. 1.)

Allow me, beloved people, at the very outset, to ask you individually whether you can say, “The Lord is my shepherd”? In other words, can you each say, “God is my salvation”? or still further, do you know that you are saved—do you know that you have God as your portion, and Christ as your Saviour? Believe me, if you have no portion in God, no Saviour, you are at this moment in dire necessity;—you cannot say, “I shall not want.” You are at this moment a pauper; and if you were to die in this state, you would go down to eternity, an outcast, without a portion—without a friend.

One reason why we are met here again to-night, and why thousands and tens of thousands have met

on different occasions in Dublin during the last few years, is, that we may suggest questions like these—"Am I saved?" "Can I say, The Lord is my Shepherd?" "Can I say, The Lord is my salvation?" "Can I say," in the language of another portion of the Psalmist's writing, "The Lord is my light and my salvation?" "The Lord is my salvation," says the believer—"my salvation before God in heaven; for the Lord Jesus Christ is the risen and exalted Redeemer at God's right hand, in perfectness for every sinner that believeth in Him." "The Lord," says the believer, "is my light." He is his light down here in the Truth, revealing the salvation of God to his soul. In this precious *Word* of truth, the Lord is our light, to reveal to us the salvation which we have in a crucified and a risen Saviour.

Dear friends; it is well to ask the solemn questions—Is the Lord *my* salvation? Is the Lord *my* light? Is the Lord *my* Shepherd? If so, how happy is our condition! We "shall not want." Believers truly are often in necessities. They have trials and vicissitudes, like other men; but the trials are used and regulated by God in love: and, with regard to any real good, we "shall not want." We shall not want for a divine, satisfactory, and lasting portion; for we have it in God. We shall not want for sympathy; for we have it in Him who was "in all points touched with a feeling of our infirmities, yet without sin." We shall not want for society. We never can be lonely. We can never be without a friend. *We have Jesus.* We shall never want for direction; for He will guide us with His eye. We

shall not want when, in the hour of death, we go to the last and long bourne whence no traveller returns; for He says—"I will be with you; I will never leave you; I will never forsake you."

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." (Ver. 2.)

Believe me, poor sinner, if you have never said, "The Lord is my Shepherd," you have not yet known what it is to lie down in a single green pasture; you have never known what it is to rest beside the still waters. The waters of sin may *seem* calm. They lie without storms now. The mire and dirt are hidden for the present beneath the deceitful surface. Yet have you no rest, no peace. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Not that you are always wretched. There is many a reckless, godless man, who walks buoyantly along the way to hell; but it is because he is ignorant, or does not see what is before him. And yet there will be times when it is suggested to his mind, that God is not for him—that he is at enmity with God. The menacing finger of conscience *will* sometimes point to the blackening heavens and the coming storm. Oh, may God give many of you to see this to-night! You have never had the true still waters, or the true green pastures. You know not this blessed Book—the green pasture of the Word. You know not the green pasture of prayer. You know not fellowship with God's believing people—the green pasture of love and joy in the truth. You know not the still waters of the indwelling, and sealing, and

assurance, and all the other works and fruits, the consolations and comforts, of His own blessed Spirit. You can know none of these, unless you are saved.

“He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.” (Ver. 3.)

I may remark here, that when the Psalmist says, “He restoreth my soul,” the word does not relate so much to the restoring of a backsliding soul, as to the constant supply of grace and life which God gives to a confiding soul. There is a contrast in this respect between our animal and spiritual life. Up to a certain period in our animal life, the supply we receive preponderates over the waste; we grow stronger and stronger, up through childhood and youth and manhood, until, passing life's meridian, we arrive at a turning period, when waste preponderates over supply. Then we become debilitated, grow more and more feeble and infirm, until, like a leaf of autumn, hanging over the lap of winter, we drop into the grave. Not so with the soul, says the Psalmist,—“He restoreth my soul.” The supply is constant. There is no such thing in grace as want preponderating over supply; for “though the outward man decay,” and perish, “the inward man is renewed day by day.” “The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more *unto the perfect day*”—unto *its zenith*, from which it never declines. “The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree,” erect, firm, and fruitful in old age; “he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon,” green, incorruptible, and fresh, amidst the waste of years.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” (Ver. 4.)

To the believer, death is a calm, gentle walking through a deep but not a dark valley. It is only the shadow, and not the substance, of death. No valley, no mountain gorge, is ever dark when the sun shines into it. It is only doleful and desolate, when neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, appear. Then the danger is often dreadful. Death, to the sinner, is all darkness—a darkness which deepens down, down into the blackness of darkness for ever. It is the presence of Christ which makes death a lighted valley. The “I am with thee,” turns the scene into an avenue of rest and peace—a vestibule of heaven. Such is the truth here; and such is the experience of faith falling asleep in Jesus. One of our dear converts, who had been recently brought to Christ in Dublin—a young Christian, though old in years—one who died a happy death—said to me, “I am not in a dark valley, but in a green pasture; for I am going home, to die no more.” When I said to her, “I wonder that Satan does not buffet you, and tell you it is a dark valley;” she answered, “Satan has nothing to say to me.” I said, “How is that?” “Why,” said she, “because Satan has nothing to say to Christ.” Ah! beloved, can you say that? Can you say, “Jesus is mine?” Can you say, “The devil cannot touch my hope in him?” You know Christ is the believer’s hope; and if Christ is your hope, Satan cannot touch him.

“None can my hope destroy;  
Jesus is mine.”

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"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." (Ver. 5.)

In this verse all the products of the pastures are, as it were, gathered up and placed upon a table. What preparation for it from eternity! What provision! Christ is everything we need. What righteousness and rest in Him! what holiness and love! What truth in the Word!

Any table down here is in the midst of enemies. It will not be so with the prepared provision in the prepared place for us in the heavens. We are surrounded by the world, the flesh, and the devil—enemies external, internal, and infernal. Besides these—

"Danger and sorrow stand  
Round us on every hand."

Along with the *prepared* table is an anointed Head. Christ was anointed above his fellows. As the dew on Hermon fell on the mountains of Zion, so the Divine consecration of Christ is on his whole body, the Church.

With such a table, and such an anointing, no wonder the *cup runneth over*. With doubts and fears in it, the cup never runs over. Dark is it then with mere sediment. But with an assured salvation, with the Lord as our Shepherd, with Christ as our portion, the cup sparkles to its brim—is full to overflowing: and every addition of his love and grace, through the Spirit, is sure to make it "*run over*."

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days

of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."  
(Ver. 6.)

What a blessed expectation of the true believer! Not "goodness and mercy *may* follow me," but "goodness and mercy *shall* follow me all the days of my life;" not merely upon one day of life, or upon a few days, but all through the days and years of one's existence; not on bright days and joyous days only, but also on dark days and sad days; not on days of health and strength merely, but also in days of sickness and death—goodness, on the one hand, and mercy, on the other, as it were God's servants, leading the saint on and on, day by day, and night by night. "In my father's house," says Jesus, "are many mansions." Says the Psalmist, "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Now, dear people, none of these blessings can be yours unless you are saved—unless you can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

If the first figure in a sum be wrong, the total is wrong. If the first verse in this Psalm is not yours, none of it is yours. You are not in green pastures, not beside the still waters, not fearless of death, not with a full cup, not attended by goodness and mercy, not yet to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. May the Lord bless to us the reading of His holy Word!

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Several letters were then read from persons under anxiety for salvation, desiring the prayers of the meeting. Upon one of these letters, from a young man who had been committed to prison for attempting to

pick pockets at one of the services, Mr. SMITH observed, that on one occasion, at a meeting similar to the present, he had noticed a man singing with great energy, "Happy day." He ascertained that he was a detective. God had detected *him*, and brought him to Jesus. On another occasion a pickpocket himself, who had come to the meeting in pursuit of his unlawful calling, was converted before he left the room. On another, about nineteen Magdalenes were converted to Jesus. They met in a room, at twelve o'clock at night; and a policeman outside, observing a bright light in the windows, knocked at the door, supposing the house to be on fire. It was afterwards discovered that they were burning the garments, and trinkets, and shoes they had used in their crime,—“hating the garments spotted with the flesh.”

The hymn was then sung—

“Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove.”

After which several prayers were offered, in accordance with the plan observed on prior occasions.

[THE ADDRESS.]

Mr. SMITH then delivered the following Address to the saved and the unsaved portions of his audience, founding his remarks upon Romans xiii. 11:—

“It is high time to awake out of sleep.”

This language is evidently addressed to believers;

for they are told that their salvation is nearer than when they believed. Not that they could be nearer to peace—the peace of salvation; for it is the privilege of believers to say, “We have peace with God.” Not that their completeness will ever be nearer to them than now. “Ye are complete in him.” But your full and final happiness—the joy of being with your Saviour, and being like him, and seeing him as he is—the glory of the beatific vision—the attainment of the goal of your salvation—the everlasting perfectness of your whole nature—is nearer than when you first believed. Blessed be God, if converted twenty years, you are twenty years nearer heaven. If sixty years converted, you are sixty years nearer the door-way of death, which opens into that divine and glorious consummation. Thus are you nearer God, nearer rest, nearer Christ, nearer heaven, than when you first believed. We are going home to die no more, but to live with Jesus for ever and for ever.

Paul describes the goal when he says, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend and take hold of—that for which also I am apprehended—taken hold of—by Christ Jesus.” Paul’s idea is, that the consummation of his hope was nothing less than being with Christ—delighting in him—in his presence for ever and ever. The mother of Zebedee’s children wished her two sons to be, the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand in the kingdom. How like a mother was that! That was the best thing she could think of

for her sons. But with Paul, the goal of his hope and expectation was neither the right hand nor the left hand of Christ; but Christ himself.

The Apostle presents a strong incentive to you believers—"It is high time that you should awake out of sleep."

Now, there are many things, beloved brethren, concerning which we have slept. I will indicate a few of them:—

We have, many of us, *slept in regard to Divine truth*. The Bible—may I not say it?—is a repository of truth, a glorious casket, which contains inestimable treasure, invaluable jewels. It contains the thoughts, the very mind of God Himself. One can turn over these blessed pages, and say, These things have eternity on them: they were in the Divine thought for ever; or, this is the will of my Father in heaven—that is the heart, the affection of Him who is my Saviour. But how have we slept—ah! yes, *slept* over the blessed Book itself! Have not many of you risen from your couch, and gone into the world, with no communion with it? Precious is the Word to some. I might tell you, illustrative of this, of a dear young Christian, the child of Roman Catholic parents, who had a deep sense of its value to her soul. She came to know the Saviour whom the Bible reveals, and, as a consequence, her views became known. One day her spiritual adviser called at the cottage where she resided, and began interrogating the mother regarding her child. The mother said her child was devotedly attached to the Bible. Yet was the Bible taken away. The little

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disciple seemed to pine in her health under the loss. Ah, my friends, the Psalmist tells us something of what the child knew, when he says,—“It is more than my necessary food; better to me than thousands of gold and silver.” The mother said, “I fear for the health of my child, unless the Bible be restored to her.” On one condition, the Bible was restored; viz., that the knife should be freely used on all *objectionable* passages. And so all the *objectionable* passages were cut out, and the impaired Bible was brought back to the young owner. On receiving it, she grasped it fondly, but when she opened it, and turned over its pages, she said, “Oh, mother, all my favourite passages are gone out of the book.” And then the tears ran down her face. But, looking up to God, she said, “Oh, my blessed God, they are gone from Thy Book, but oh! I thank Thee, they cannot be taken out of my heart.” “Thy Word have I hid in my heart.”

Ah, beloved, how different is this from some of us! How many of us have slept, and are sleeping, over the solemn verities we professedly believe! How could I even enumerate them! We sleep regarding the very being of that God who loved us, and gave His Son to die for us. We sleep—oh! how we sleep, over that eternal, that untold love itself! We sleep over the undying love of Jesus, who gave Himself for us. How we sleep over the commission which He has given us—to go out into all the world, and tell the perishing and lost the glad tidings of salvation! We sleep over perishing souls—souls perishing for lack of know-

ledge. Yes. How we sleep in the midst of the great moral world of souls in London, in Dublin—the souls in our own families—those husbands and wives—those children who are dear to us as life itself—but who are going down to death and to hell! A friend, the other day, going up Fleet-street, met a gentleman who, though generally of a lively and happy cast of countenance, was then looking melancholy and sad. Said he, “Is there anything the matter with you to-day, that you look so sad?” “Ah!” he replied, “it is hard to be cheerful, when I have a son going to destruction as fast as time and sin can take him.” Oh, my God, awaken believers to-night! Awaken them to think of what they say they believe concerning human souls; that they are dying—dying—dying! that having no Christ, they have no hope, no heaven!

I fear some of you have Bibles which you seldom or never open. And, my unconverted hearer, if you continue to neglect the treasure you possess, it will be in hell, as one has well said, that you will see written on the dust on your Bibles, as by the finger of conscience, the letters—the awful burning letters, “Damnation! damnation!” Oh, will it not be terrible in hell to feel that you had your Bible; that it was covered over with the dust of neglect, instead of being used as unfolding the knowledge of eternal life!

If I had time I would enlarge upon another point: how we all *sleep as to our privileges*—I mean as to what we have and are in Christ before God. Oh, what a list of infinite blessings we have in Him!

loved from eternity; chosen in Him from the foundation of the world; adopted to be sons; if sons, heirs; heirs with God, and joint-heirs with Christ; called with a calling, Divine in its source, its power, and its joy; accepted in the Beloved; washed, justified, sanctified; once dead, now quickened, risen, seated; and being seated, we have communion, fellowship—fellowship with the Father, and His Son, Christ Jesus. Already saints; denizens of heaven; Christ's body; members of his flesh; his bride; the wife of the Lamb; to be glorified together with him; an habitation now of his Spirit; made meet to sit with him on his throne. Oh! say, do we not sleep regarding the blessings we now have in him, and the glories we shall have in him—the glories in reserve for us in heaven? And is it not high time to awake out of sleep?

Yet, another thing. Many of us have *our affections asleep*. You remember that remarkable picture in the Canticles, where the Church is represented as in a condition of inglorious sleep and ease.

She has gone to her couch, and does not desire that any should disturb her; but her Divine Lord, who is not willing that she should sleep, seeks to disturb her. He comes to the door to awaken her. He knocks; but the slumberer heeds him not. After knocking a little (the door in the East, being so fastened, that the visitor, if he is so minded, can put in his hand, and open it himself) he puts in his hand, and lifts the latch. But he does not do this until he has gone into King Solomon's garden, and has covered his hand with myrrh. Then he

touches the latch; and having done so, goes away. The sleeper within is aroused, and goes to the door; the moment she touches the latch, she knows who has been there, for the myrrh betrays it. Her affections are re-awakened; her soul is re-kindled; and she now goes out in quest of him; but she cannot find him. There is now a fervency and longing of the heart for him. But where is he? He *was* there; but alas! he is gone. She cannot trace him. She finds the watchmen in King Solomon's garden, but they deal hardly with her. They strip the veil from her face—in other words, they discover to her her wretchedness. God's preached truth often deals roughly with those who have been sleeping and slumbering. And now she goes hungering and thirsting after her Lord, and she never rests until she finds him whom her soul desired. Say, dear Christians, are many of you now in this condition to-night? You sleep and slumber in your affections. But, oh! when once those affections, being *divine*, are re-awakened, they are like deep rivers that rise amid distant mountains—they never rest or stay in their course, till they find the ocean. Oh! if there be a Christian here whose affections are dead or drooping—if there be one without love, or cold in love, to Jesus—if there be one in Laodicean apathy, how unworthy—how inglorious!—let me say to such, "It is high time to awake out of sleep." Let the language of Paul the Apostle be yours—"that I may know the love of Christ"—that I may know it more and more; for the day is far spent, and the night is at hand. It is time to arise, for

now indeed is your "salvation nearer than when you believed."

But now, notice again, how many believers there are who are *sleeping over others*—who are living as if those around them were to live here for ever, and as if they had nothing to do in the awakening of their dead and unconverted spirits. I will give you a remarkable circumstance that lately came under my observation.

Coming from a meeting of the Irish Church Missions, one of our nobility stepped into a private circle of friends, one of whom said to him—

"Your Lordship promised you would tell us about your son who died in Africa."

His Lordship narrated the following incident. He said:—

"Our boy was the darling of his mother, and his father's favourite child. We could not but love him. But he left us, and went to South Africa. When he left, he was unconverted, and this was our chief sorrow. He had not been long in Africa, when we received a letter to the following effect—

"My dear father,—You will be sorry to hear I have met with an accident. I am unable to write much. The doctor hopes that in a day or two I shall be better. I will let you know in a day or two, if I am able."

The father read it with a heavy heart, and scarcely dared to hand it to the mother. "Oh!" said he, "if there had only been in it one such expression as 'by God's providence,' or 'if the Lord will.' But there was no recognition of God, and the father grieved

lest his son should die in the unconverted state in which he left home. Time rolled on, and another letter came. The postmark was the same, but the handwriting was different. It turned out to be written by the physician. The substance of the letter was as follows:—

“Your Lordship will be grieved to hear that your son died by the accident to which he referred in his last. He lingered but a few days. He suffered greatly.” The physician added a word or two to the effect, that everything that could be done was done, and that respect was paid at the funeral suited to the rank of the deceased. Said the nobleman—“When I read that letter, I took it away with me, and laid it down before the Lord, and said, ‘Oh, Absalom, my son, my son! Would God that I had died for thee, my son, my son.’” He said, “I dared not hand the letter to his mother. Brokenhearted, I took it to God, and afterwards told it to his mother. But there was not a word of God, or providence, in the letter, and it was bringing my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave: I felt as if I should never lift up my head again.”

A few weeks again elapsed, when a third letter was brought, and the nobleman knew the handwriting. It so happened that there had gone from this country a gentleman whom I understand his lordship had assisted,—in fact, this gentleman was indebted to him for the position which he now occupies in Southern Africa. The nobleman opened this letter with trembling; glanced over it; saw its character; read on. It was substantially this—

“Your lordship will grieve to learn of the death of your son. The moment I heard of his illness, I resorted to his bedside, where I found him in the deepest anxiety about his soul. He was labouring under a sense of guilt—a deep load of sin. I pointed him to the dying Lamb; told him of the one Sacrifice—the one Saviour; and your lordship will be delighted to know, that on the day before his departure, light broke in upon his mind, and he died rejoicing in sin forgiven. His last words were these—‘Tell my father that I die in Jesus, and that I shall meet him in heaven,’ or words to that effect.”

Oh, fathers and mothers, are you asleep *over your children*? It may be some of you have a son, a daughter, at the antipodes, or in some distant country. Oh! pray, *pray* without ceasing, that God may touch their hearts, that God may save them, lest they die in that far-off land, without God, and without Christ.

His lordship, after telling this affecting story, wiped the tears from his aged and noble face, and, turning round to his auditory in that private circle, said—

“Can I ever doubt my God again? Can I doubt His promises? I have always believed the Saviour’s promise—‘If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it;’ and ‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.’”

Oh, mothers, fathers, friends, say we not truly, it is time to awake out of sleep, both regarding the solemnities of Divine truth, and the condition of

those who are around? Oh, awake. Awake. May God grant that you may go forth from this meeting awakened concerning *your own condition*. There are many of you who do not know that you are saved—whether, if you were to die to-night, you would have a happy entrance into the presence of Jesus, or whether you would be lost. It is a dreadful thing to be living, alternating between heaven and hell, not knowing whether you are Christ's or not. Oh, awake, awake! awake!

I would like to speak with you, professors; but I turn to the sinner. Sinner, listen to me to-night! Listen this once.

I need not say that *you* are asleep upon the verge of a lost eternity. *You* are fast asleep upon the Niagara, shall I call it, of ignorance—of moral and spiritual unconsciousness—floating down, down, down the soft stream of the world and sin, until, unless God awaken you, you will come to the dreadful abyss of hell; and it will be a dreadful thing to fall impenitent, unchanged, with all your sins upon you, into the hands of a living God. Oh! I have heard people talk of the excitement of the days in which we live; but I will put it to any sinner here to-night—if I have the darkest, the most benighted infidel in London, let me summon him as a witness—Can a religious man be too earnest, supposing all he believes to be true? Too earnest about the salvation of souls whom he believes to be going down to hell? Impossible! Impossible! Why, if I were standing by Niagara itself—if I saw a mariner in a boat, with his arms folded, and his head drooping on his chest,

fast asleep, overcome by the noontide heat—if I saw that boat drifting down, down that glassy stream, till I saw that very soon it would come to the Falls—would it be unnatural excitement, if I stood by the side of the stream, and shouted at the utmost pitch of my voice, till the woods and the waters reverberated the cry, “A—w—a—k—e! A—w—a—k—e!” Is there any being that would say this would be unnatural excitement, if it were only to awaken the mariner, and save him from that plunge of death? Ah! no, no, no. Who has not known, during a fire, when men could not get in at the door, that they would take up the very stones, and hurl them at the windows to arouse the sleepers? Ah, thou sleeping sinner, hell is beneath thee! Demons have their hands upon thee, grasping thee as their prey! Angels in heaven are looking down upon thee! God hath loved thee with a love which Calvary expounds and explains; and, oh! eternity is too short to utter half the interest connected with thine imperishable nature. Oh! then, awake, arise, thou sleeper!

“Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen.”

Oh! brethren—fathers and brethren in the ministry, if we felt all we believe, instead of putting on the silk on Sundays only, we should not be content to confine our ministrations to any pulpit, so absorbed should we be, so oppressed with the care of souls, that everywhere, in the streets and highways, we should cast the stones of awakening appeal against the windows of the spiritual slumberers. Oh, to awaken the slumberers. Oh, now to awaken the

dead! We know that when a man is awake, it is comparatively easy to put the fire-escape against the window, and rescue him from the flames. So also in the case of the man floating down the stream to the Niagara Falls—if I could only awaken him in time it would be comparatively easy for him to pull to shore. And oh, my brethren, when once souls are awakened—and it is God alone can awaken them—it is comparatively easy to direct them to salvation. May God quicken the dead among us! May God the Holy Ghost enter every heart, and speak to the slumberer, and say—“Awake, thou sleeper! Arise from the dead, thou slumberer!” My friend, there is salvation for the awakened to-night. There is salvation proclaimed in this Freemasons’ Hall to-night; salvation where thou sittest; salvation now, *now*; for “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” Not yesterday, because that is gone from thee for ever. Thou wilt never have yesterday again. All the yesterdays of thy life are gone, and gone for ever. Not to-morrow, because to-morrow thou mayest be in eternity. This night thy soul may be required of thee. God says, “To-day if ye will hear my voice”—“Now is the accepted time.” Oh! that I could burn that word of three letters right down upon thy conscience, and thine heart—“*Now—now—NOW* is the accepted time.”

God’s thought towards you was love. There is not a sinner that may not be saved—God loved the world, God gave His only-begotten Son”—mark this—*God gave Him*—“that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

How long does it take a man to believe? The twinkling of an eye. If you owed a debt, and I paid it, how long would it take you to see it and believe it? Why, the twinkling of an eye.

It was my happiness in the spring to enter one of your families here. God gave a calm, gracious awakening. One morning I saw one of the servants in the deepest anxiety about her soul. We were singing at the family service that beautiful verse—

“ Now rest, my long divided heart,  
 Fix'd on this blissful centre, rest ;  
 With ashes who would grudge to part,  
 When called on angels' food to feast ?”

I saw her soul was troubled. She felt she had not loved God enough, or prayed enough, or wept enough. I knew that she was occupying her mind about *herself*, and that she did not see what *Christ was*. I remarked that self was mere “ashes;” and asked why not part with the ashes of self, and believe in Jesus? At the close of the service, I saw her countenance so change into happiness and joy, that I thought within myself, What a revulsion is taking place in that mind! After the service was over, I wished to know for myself. So I walked from the breakfast parlour across the hall, and called her into the drawing-room. “Mary,” I said—I think that was her name—“you seem happy now.” “I am happy, sir.” “What has made you happy?” “Oh, sir, I did what you told me to do—I went and put myself down in the third chapter of John.” “What do you mean?” I inquired. “Why, sir, you know it says, ‘God so loved the world.’”

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“ Yes, Mary; and was that a world of saints?” “ No.”  
 “ Of angels?” “ No.” “ What was it then?” “ A world  
 of sinners, sir; and that is just what I did,—I put  
 myself down into that verse, and I found that God  
 loved me.” “ Well,” I said, “ what else, Mary? For  
 whom did He give His only-begotten Son?” She  
 answered, “ Oh, it was the next line that gave me  
 peace and joy—‘ that whosoever believeth, might not  
 perish.’ ” “ Well, then, you believe, Mary?” “ Yes.”  
 “ How do you know, Mary, that you are saved?”  
 “ Because God has said it.” “ Where has God said  
 it?” “ God says, that whosoever believeth, shall be  
 saved.” “ Then you know that you are saved?”  
 “ Yes.” “ How do you know it?” “ Because God  
 says it.”

Ah! dear friends, as I said at St. Alban’s last  
 night, if an angel from heaven came and told  
 me, “ Now you need not be troubled about  
 your salvation; you need have no more doubts and  
 fears; you *are saved*,” perhaps I should go to my  
 friends, and say, “ Is not this wonderful? Here is  
 Gabriel telling me that I am saved.” But at length  
 (and perhaps on my dying day) Satan comes, and  
 says, “ You saved, indeed! *That* was a dream, a  
 vision. Who would trust a vision, a dream?”  
 “ Or,” says some one, “ I know I am saved; because  
 I once *felt* I was saved, or because I have some  
*feeling* of the kind now.” “ But,” says Satan, when  
 you have no such feeling,—“ you saved!—you,  
 who have no feeling, or but little feeling!” Thus  
 may Satan tempt you.

Happy thing—blessed thing—to believe in Jesus!

Oh! come to Jesus *now!* and believe in Him to-night! Blessed Jesus! He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Oh, come, come to him now. Come just as you are. Come to Jesus.

And now, *a word or two to anxious souls.* I am perfectly certain that many a man, who is troubled about his soul, goes on in that condition, because he does not believe that, just as he is, he can be saved. How often have you sung—

" Nothing in my hands I bring ;  
Simply to thy cross I cling."

And yet you have been trying to "bring" something. You have been saying, O God, give me deeper convictions. You have been longing and waiting for more sorrow. Now, the blessedness of the Gospel and its glory is, that God comes in grace, and saves a sinner *just as he is.* I know that *in theory* you admit this; but you do not believe it. If you did believe it, you would go from this Freemasons' Hall a joyful and a happy man. You would, *indeed.* I know it from experience. I was for many years trying to make myself better; but always failed.

Now, there is one special picture of my own lost, helpless condition, and of God's coming in grace to me, which affords much rest to my soul. For I know that I am, by nature, at enmity with God—a lost, ruined, fallen being; I have no money of my own, no price of my own. That picture is the man that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell among thieves; he was plundered, and left in his blood; he was helpless!—how helpless!—he was

hopeless! Now, mark the moral order of this picture.

The priest came by, looked at him, but turned off on the other side; and it was just as well he did, for the *law* could do nothing for the man. Next, a Levite, he looked at him, and passed by, and it was just as well he did, for *ceremonies* could do nothing for him.

The law can do nothing but condemn a sinner. A sinner condemned is helpless and hopeless.

But, now look at this!—the Gospel comes; Christ, the good Samaritan, next passes that way. He came. He looked. He always sees when wretchedness is before him. Behold, he comes to his help, raises his hope. He pours in the wine and oil—the wine of his truth—the oil of his healing. He binds up the wounds. He, in fact, saves and heals. He puts the hopeless and helpless one on his own beast, and brings him to the inn. Now, do you understand that that Good Samaritan is Christ? He gives you wine—makes you glad—enables you to sing—

“Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus wash’d my sins away.”

He takes you up out of your misery, and puts you—where?—why, what love!—he changes places with you. He comes down and takes *your* place of sin and death—he bears your sin—he suffers your punishment; and he puts you in *his* place “in heavenly places.” But that is not all. He takes you to the inn, tells the innkeeper to take care of you. He places you in his Church. Ministers of the

Word are told to care for you,—to teach and comfort you. I am a sort of innkeeper—only I stay away from my own inn sometimes. The Lord Jesus tells me to take care of those fellow-sinners, who, on their way from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves. To crown all, the innkeeper has to be paid; but the man has nothing to pay—it is to him without money, and without price. Oh, infinite grace—grace just suited to his need. For, what has he? Love to God? No. Love to Christ? No. Communion with God? No. Deep feeling for his sins? No. Sorrow for the road he was on? No. He had none of these when the good Samaritan met with him. The true picture of the sinner, as grace finds him—he has nothing, but is helpless and hopeless.

But what he had not *before* the good Samaritan met with him, he soon comes to have. See him now *in the inn*—saved, recovered, happy. He wonders at the love that put him there—a love which owed him nothing—a love which was all the more remarkable as it was not even sought or known by him before. How would questions like these arise in his recovered mind!—Who *was* this Good Samaritan? Why such pity on *me*? Where can I see him? How can I testify what I owe him? Ha! he that could not love *before*, could not feel *before*, could not be grateful *before*, could not know the Samaritan *before*, possesses all now! Were the innkeeper, or the good Samaritan even, to say to him, “You have been saved, relieved, healed, and provided for by a friend; but it is all over now: discharge all remembrance of it from your mind; live,

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now, without love, without gratitude, without feeling;" he would respond, "Ah, no!—I *must* love. I *do* love. I *am* grateful. I *do* feel my obligation." Thus, dear sinner, is it with us; "we love Him, because He first loved us." God loved the world and gave His Son. Christ loved us and *gave himself*. This is the Gospel—the Spirit's testimony concerning God—"God is love;" and, concerning Christ—"Christ died for the ungodly." Oh! may that blessed Spirit reveal it all to you—may you know the love of Christ. And may you, believers, now rise, as with one heart, and sing to Him who found you in your blood, who healed your wounds, and poured in the oil and wine.

And, sinners! may you quickly haste to the same unchanging friend.

"Come, guilty souls, and flee away  
To Christ to heal your wounds;  
This is *the glorious Gospel-day*,  
*Wherein free grace abounds.*"

May God bless you. May the Lord bless you.  
May He bless you for His own name's sake! Amen,  
and Amen.