

more-leaves from around him, and come in all your nakedness and littleness, and receive Him joyfully.

If Christ had been one of the rabbis or great men of Jericho, and had acted thus, forgetting all the grounds on which Zaccheus was generally despised, and giving a cordial welcome to fraternity, what would have been the impression made? The impression of *kindness* and *generosity*. So, brethren, let us in our spirit imitate Christ's *kindness*. Liberal *deeds* are not always real kindness. If on your return from ministering to the troubled or the poor you meet an acquaintance whom you ought to greet, but remembering some paltry grudge, cut him with the cold shoulder of aversion, what do you suppose Christ thinks of you and of your good acts? Would He not express His thought through the mouth of His apostle, "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor and have not *CHARITY*, I am nothing." Charity ever has a heart open to forgive, and a spirit full of love, and goes upon its errand of beneficence to lift weary loads off from the bending back of weary humanity, and make him who was stricken and ready to perish, into a willing disciple and a stalwart soldier of the Captain of the world's salvation.

I fancy I hear some one saying by way of objection—"This was a special case. Did not Christ often supply the elements of a moral revolution like this, and yet the revolution never took place?" Yes, many times. And that which made it effective in the case of Zaccheus was that the flash of the Holy Spirit gave it quickening and life. We hear much of *moral suasion* and its power over hearts and wills, but no moral suasion is vitally effective without the power of the Holy Ghost. The moral suasion of the voice of Gabriel, the moral suasion of the voice of Christ Himself, must be *impartative* without the Holy Spirit. But is that a barrier to your entering upon the high privilege of Zaccheus? No. The two conditions needed are the call of Christ, and the answer of the heart. Christ is fulfilling his part now, as He calls to you, "Make haste! Come down!" Your heart will not answer without the Holy Spirit. But "if ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give His Holy Spirit to THEM THAT ASK HIM." Mark, *to them that ask Him*. Only to ask, and there are the conditions all fulfilled. Oh, are there any hearts asking for this Holy Spirit now! Go on earnestly till ye overcome, go on asking till ye receive, and your joy shall be full!

What is the effect of Christ's conduct to Zaccheus upon the crowd? They turn their contempt for Zaccheus upon Christ, as they cry out "that He is gone to be a guest with one who is a *sinner*. Mark, not a *publican*, but a *sinner*. They make the very worst of it. They stretch exaggeration to its utmost, and degrade the publican still worse by resorting to the foulest term. But while they thus degrade the publican they pay an unconscious tribute to the condescension of Christ. The worse they can say of Zaccheus the truer is their unmeant testimony to Christ. But brethren, this is a vile propensity, this making the worst of one another instead of the best. Let us hope well for all, and if a thief or a harlot is honestly wanting to return, let us not thrust them back with the cry of "thief" or "harlot," but lift them up with the strong charity which breathes in "*brother, sister*," even to the lowest fallen of the earth.

So here we have the picture before us of the scornful crowd, hounding Jesus to His self-sought lodging; the despised host beside himself with joy; and Christ, calm amidst the contempt of the one and the ecstasy of the other. And now Zaccheus begins to vindicate himself to Christ from the misconstruction of the people (verse 8). This was not a boast like the speech of the Pharisee, who spoke of how he fasted, but a *feeling* appeal against a cruel judgment and an uncharitably harsh. Zaccheus spoke with *feeling*. Feeling rests on judgment. "The love of Christ *constrains* us." Why? "Because we thus *judge*." This was a *feeling appeal*, based on judgment. It was the love of Christ which had constrained it. Zaccheus was not a man of feeling generally. Let us hope so for his own sake. Fancy a tax-collector a man of feeling! Yet this speech is from his heart. Christ has touched even the heart of a tax-gatherer. And Zaccheus feels that He has come further than his home—that He has come to his heart. He tells Christ, "The half of my goods I give to the poor." It is to the Lord he makes this statement, though it speaks of what he does for the poor. Yet we feel how appropriate it is. The poor are the vicar of Christ. "Inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these, my little ones, ye do it unto ME." The liberality of Zaccheus far overflows the letter of

the law. The law exacted one-fifth for the poor; Zaccheus gives one-half. He was just and generous; not one without the other. *Generous* he was, for he gave much to those who could not help themselves; he was also *just*, for he amply compensated all whom he had wronged. Is there no example here for Christians? Honourable men of the world who make no profession of Christianity are scrupulously just. Oh let us try ever to outline the world in justice, and not be a target for its arrows; of meanness, narrow, or close dealing. Never let it be said that a profession of religion on the part of a business man should be a reason for being on guard against dealings with him. Yet this is said, and said often with too much justice. Be like Zaccheus, brethren, as little as you like in stature, but never little in character. "If I have taken anything from any man by a false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

And now, brethren, have you, like Zaccheus, opened your doors, the doors of your *house* and *heart*, to Christ? I don't ask if He has called you. He has called you hundreds of times, and calls again now. He has asked to *abide* in your house many a time, but you have shut the door; and behold, He stands yet again at the door, and knocks. You perhaps recall the time when an appeal like this would have touched you; but you have heard it so often that it has no power now. Salvation must *seek you*; you have left off seeking it. Oh, it is seeking through the tear-filled eyes of Christ to-night; Christ goeth by once more, and calls to all who have climbed the tree of expectancy or desire. "Make haste, come down, for to-day I must abide in thy house." Oh, take that call, and ponder it. Think of just three things about it. What does Christ say? "Make haste!" Ah! there is not much time; you must not delay; you must not calculate on long life and fresh opportunities. You are older than you were once, even now, and you may grow *older* as you grow *older*. Then while the blood is a little warm, ere it grows quite stagnant, listen, and obey; and as Christ calls, do you *with haste*, "for now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Make haste for what? To *come down*. Make haste, *come down*! O, there are some in this place so insufferably proud and self-enveloped, though really far smaller than the small Zaccheus, who must come down from the pinnacle of a stupid pride ere they can come to Christ. You must come down to honour Christ, not to be honoured by Him. He honours you by drawing near you, but only in proportion as you abase yourself. To see some men and women strut into God's house, one would think that they were the patrons of a charity; and that the King of Kings was the object of their condescension. Man, you must *come down*. Woman, you must *come down*. Down from the sulks of self-absorption; down from the atmosphere of millinery and dress to the naked level of miserable sinners, ere Christ will abide in your house. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, but he that exalteth himself God is able to abase." And think of one thing more. We said at the beginning that this was the last journey Jesus took to Jerusalem, and that it was the last time He passed through Jericho. It may be Christ's last call to you. It may be His last passing by. O, brother, sister! life is short, death is capricious, cares are engrossing, and even Christ cannot always wait. He waits now, but He is *passing* by. Will you not detain Him by letting Him abide in your house? Oh let Him see the open doors of penitence and trust, and He will come in and sup with you, and you with Him. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Now, a drowning child does not need *skin*, it only needs *saving*, and it feels its need, and cries while it has voice, and stretches out its arms while it has life left. So shall the sinner who feels his sin discover that Christ has bought and found him, and will save him with an everlasting salvation. But there is a case more desperate than that of the drowning child. A child has been carried away by savages, far into a distant land. The older brother goes to *seek*, that he may save, and carries a rich ransom with him. But when he overtakes the captors, the child does not know him and will not come, though he pays the ransom down. Oh, is it so with any here? Why will you not come now that the price is paid? Do you not recognise your Deliverer? Has He come in too grand a dress? Does He dazzle you with majesty? We read in ancient story of a father coming from the war with his spiked helmet on his head and his mail shining on his breast, and holding out his arms to his child, but the child would not come. He did not know his father in that dress. But the father took the helmet from his head