

soon as I get to heaven, methinks I would ask for him, because he spoke more of Jesus Christ than all the rest. I am sure I should want to find out good George Whitfield—he who so continually preached to the people, and wore himself out with a more than seraphic zeal. O yes! we shall have choice company in heaven when we get there. There will be no distinction of learned and unlearned, clergy and laity, but we shall walk freely one among another; we shall feel that we are brethren; we shall “sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” I have heard of a lady who was visited by a minister on her death-bed, and she said to him, “I want to ask you one question, now I am about to die.” “Well,” said the minister, “what is it?” “Oh!” said she, in a very affected way, “I want to know if there are two places in heaven, because I could not bear that Betsy in the kitchen should be in heaven along with me, she is so unrefined?” The minister turned round and said, “O don’t trouble yourself about that, madam. There is no fear of that; for until you get rid of your accursed pride, you will never enter heaven at all.” We must all get rid of our pride. We must come down and stand on an equality in the sight of God, and see in every man a brother, before we can hope to be found in glory. Ay, we bless God, we thank him that there will be no separate table for one and for another. The Jew and the Gentile will sit down together. The great and the small shall feed in the same pasture, and we shall “sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”

But my text hath a yet greater depth of sweetness, for it says, that “many shall come and shall sit down.” Some narrow-minded bigots think that heaven will be a very small place, where there will be a very few people, who went to their chapel, or their church. I confess, I have no wish for a very small heaven, and love to read in the Scripture that there are many mansions in my Father’s house. How often do I hear people say, “Ah! strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it. There will be very few in heaven, there will be most lost.” My friend, I differ from you. Do you think that Christ will let the devil beat him? that he will let the devil have more in hell than there will be in heaven? No: it is impossible. For then Satan would laugh at Christ. There will be more in heaven than there will be among the lost. God says, that “there will be a number that no man can number who will be saved;” but he never says that there will be a number that no man can number that will be lost. There will be a host beyond all count who will get into heaven. What glad tidings for you and for me! for if there are so many to be saved, why should not I be saved? why should not you? why should not yon man, over there in the crowd, say, “cannot I be among the multitude?” And may not that poor woman there take heart, and say, “Well if there were but half-a-dozen saved, I might fear that I should not be one; but since many are to come, why should not I also be saved?” Cheer up, disconsolate! Cheer up, son of mourning, child of sorrow, there is hope for thee still! I can never know that any man is past God’s grace. There be a few that have sinned that sin that is unto death, and God gives them up; but the vast host of mankind are yet within the reach of sovereign mercy.—“And many of them shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven.”

Look at my text again, and you will see where these people come from. They are to “come from the east and west.” The Jews said that they would come from Palestine, every one of them, every man, woman, and child; that there would not be one in heaven that was not a Jew. And the Pharisees thought that if they were not all Pharisees, they could not be saved. But Jesus Christ said, there will be many that will

come from the east and from the west. There will be a multitude from that far-off land of China; for God is doing a great work there, and we hope that the gospel will yet be victorious in that land. There will be a multitude from this western land of England, from the western country beyond the sea in America, and from the south in Australia; and from the north in Canada, Siberia, and Russia. From the uttermost parts of the earth there shall come many to sit down in the kingdom of God. But I do not think this text is to be understood so much geographically, as spiritually. When it says that they “shall come from the east and the west,” I think it does not refer to nations particularly, but to different kinds of people. Now “the east and west” signify those who are the very furthest off from religion; yet many of them will be saved, and get to heaven. There is a class of persons who will always be looked upon as hopeless. Many a time have I heard a man or woman say of such a one, “he cannot be saved: he is too abandoned. What is he good for? Ask him to go to a place of worship—he was drunk on Saturday night. What would be the use of reasoning with him? There is no hope for him. He is a hardened fellow. See what he has done these many years. What good will it be to speak to him?” Now, hear this, ye who think your fellows worse than yourselves—ye who condemn others, whereas ye are often just as gaily: Jesus Christ says, “many shall come from the east and west.” There will be many that were drunkards once. I believe among that blood-bought throng there are many who reeled in and out the tavern half their lifetime. But by the power of divine grace they were able to dash the liquor cup to the ground. They renounced the riot of intoxication—fled away from it—and served God. Yes! There will be many in heaven who were drunkards on earth. There will be many harlots: some of the most abandoned will be found there. You remember the story of Whitfield’s once saying that there would be some in heaven who were “the devil’s castaways;” some that the devil would hardly think good enough for him, and yet whom Christ would save. Lady Huntingdon once gently hinted that such language was not quite proper. But just at the time there happened to be heard a ring at the bell, and Whitfield went down stairs. Afterwards he came up and said, “your ladyship, what do you think a poor woman had to say to me just now? She was a sad profligate, and she said, ‘O, Mr. Whitfield, when you were preaching you told us that Christ would take in the devil’s castaways, and I am one of them,’ and that was the means of her salvation. Shall anybody ever check us from preaching to the lowest of the low? I have been accused of getting all the rabble of London around me. God bless the rabble! God save the rabble! then, say I. But suppose they are ‘the rabble!’ Who need the gospel more than they do? Who require to have Christ preached to them more than they do? We have lots of those who preach to ladies and gentlemen, and we want some one to preach to the rabble in these degenerate days. Oh! here is comfort for me, for many of the rabble are to come from the east and from the west. Oh! what would you think if you were to see the difference between some that are in heaven and some that shall be there! there might be found one, whose hair hangs across his eyes, his locks are matted, he looks horrible, his bloated eyes start from his face, he grins almost like an idiot, he has drunk away his very brain until life seems to have departed, so far as sense and being are concerned; yet I would tell to you, ‘that man is capable of salvation’—and in a few years I might say ‘look up yonder,’ see you that bright star? discern you that man with a crown of pure gold upon his head? do you notice that being clad in robes of sapphire and in garments of light? That is the self-same man who sat there, a poor benighted, almost idiotic being! yet sovereign

grace and mercy have saved him! There are none, except those, as I have said before, who have sinned the unpardonable sin, who are beyond God’s mercy—fetch me out the worst, and still I would preach the gospel to them; fetch me out the vilest, still I would preach to them, because I recollect my master said, “Go ye out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” “Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”

DR. GUTHRIE ON THE MINISTRY.

At this season of the year the following paragraphs from a recent speech of the Rev. Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh, will be found extensively appropriate:—

Look across the Atlantic to America, and you find that there they are complaining that all the energy, talent, and power of the rising youth of that country are going to other professions and mercantile business instead of the Church.—Look across the Irish Sea, and you will find the same in Ulster. Look to your own City of Glasgow, in which I am told, there is a singularly small number of students coming out for the ministry of the Free Church. That is to me a most melancholy fact. But I do not wonder at it; I am at liberty to devote myself to poverty, if I choose; but I don’t know that I am at liberty to devote my family to the poverty ministers must lay their account with. I do not want wealth in the Church; I do not want the Free Church to be a rich Church; I do not want the attractiveness of wealth set up; but I want the repulsiveness of poverty removed. People talk of ministers being spiritual men, but I wish to know if they think I can keep up a body of six feet two and a-half inches on air.

It is very easy to talk about ministers being men of spirituality.—I wish we were more so than we are,—but I would pray such talkers to remember that we are men of like passions with ourselves, and like infirmities too. My doctrine is,—Lord, lead us not into temptation; and I want every Christian parent to be delivered from the temptation to which I know some have yielded, of turning away the aspirations of their children from the ministry, and directing them to more lucrative occupations. And I want our young men of talent to be delivered from the temptation of seeing their brethren made comfortable in other professions while they are ground down with difficulties. And I don’t want our ministers to be doing what I know some of them are doing, maintaining themselves on their private means; on what does not belong to them, but to their children. I once entered a lovely Free Church manse. The minister, a most devoted, excellent man, who would be an honour to any church, was from home, and his lady in conversation told me she had a son who had been attending Edinburgh College. I said I would be most happy to see him, and presumed, on learning that he had not been up last session, that he was in bad health. When I sympathized with her on that understanding, a most painful expression passed over her face, and I, seeing it was a painful subject, dropped it. I thought to myself,—now that son has turned out to be a mother’s heart-break; like other sons, he has gone away with a mother’s prayers and tears on his cheek, and a father’s blessing upon his head, and has become the victim of some of the vices of our large towns. But I began to think again,—is it possible that that young man may have been kept there at home, and lost the best year of his life because of the difficulty of sending him to college. So after conducting worship at the inn where I was living, I slid the conversation on to the manse and the minister, and said, “By the bye, the minister’s son was not at the college last session, do you know the reason why?” Upon which, to the credit of the man’s