

*Minister.*—While I sympathize with you deeply, I am compelled to say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." God says, that "Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Now, I believe it, notwithstanding all you or any other mortal may say to the contrary.

*Sick man.*—Do not, I pray, get angry with me. I desire reverently to say the same thing. I do not understand how I can possibly be a "liar" for saying what I feel in my very conscience *is truth*, though I do not understand it. We are now alone—permit me to engage in a short prayer for this blessing: "O Lord, we have just been reading in thy own Word, that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved; give me, I beseech thee, every qualification of body, soul, and mind, which thou seest is requisite and necessary, in order that I may be enabled to 'call' in a way agreeable to thy will, in order that I may derive all the spiritual sweetness and strength and profit that thou didst design to flow from it, when, in infinite wisdom, thou didst most graciously put it in the Word which thou designed to be a 'lamp to our feet, and a guide to our way.'" I feel that I have now "called on the Lord" with all the praying powers with which I am endowed. Am I now saved?

*Minister.*—Well, but the Bible says further, that "none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost." If your's was *such* a "call" you are saved, and if it was *not*, you are *not*.

*Sick man.*—Do you mean to deny that I used my *best endeavor* to "call" in the way you name?

*Minister.*—No, I cannot deny that.

*Sick man.*—You are now placed in the same dilemma as I was shortly ago. While you, with me, admit that God's word *must* be true, you also admit that I am not a "liar," as you rather angrily called me a moment ago. We will, however, not waste precious time on mere argument or words. I desire God's promised blessings on God's own terms, and yet again entreat of you, as one of the ministers whom he has "called," to instruct me. How am I to reach up to, or come down to, the "only hope set before us in the gospel?"

*Minister.*—As I before said and repeat, the Holy Spirit, without which none can "come" to Christ, is most distinctly promised to those who ask. As Spurgeon says: "Take God at His word, and ask Him 'to do as He has said.'"

*Sick man.*—Excuse me, if I again engage in prayer: "O Lord, here is another promise in thy own Word, which has been pointed out

to me as the one best adapted to my case. I pray that the same may be granted me, according to thy Word, that necessary aid may be vouchsafed to me, in order that I may have 'a spiritual discernment' of spiritual things, and thus become 'taught of God.'" I feel now that I have honestly endeavored to extract the spiritual nutriment which I know is contained in this promise, but I feel, also, that the blessing has been withheld. What next am I to do or say? and how am I to do or say it?

*Minister.*—You make me tremble.

*Sick man.*—I do, too. But I would tremble still worse to state what would be untrue. I feel that there is a great disparity between my experience and God's word, and this is the very reason why I have sent for you. I know that I am *wrong*, and want you to instruct me *right*.

*Minister.*—Remember, "the heart is deceitful above all things." Examine minutely down deep into your own heart, and see if you are not claiming some degree of *merit* for all these honest, sincere endeavors of yours. I cannot sufficiently impress on your mind, that we are saved for *Christ's sake* alone.

*Sick man.*—I frankly admit what you say to be God's way of salvation. Bear with me while I yet again engage in prayer: "O Lord, thy servant has drawn my attention to another important portion of thy Word, indeed an *all-important* one, made very manifest throughout all thy Word, namely, that we are saved for thy dear Son's sake. My desire is, thou knowest, to be saved in thine own way, and I pray that whatever I may be clinging to, or resting upon—*either consciously or unconsciously*—other than thine own way, thou wilt sever and remove. Eradicate, I beseech thee, every unscriptural view that I may be now entertaining of myself as a sinner, and of thee, the sinner's only Saviour, and substitute therefor scriptural and proper views of the same, making me willing and able to accept thine own promises on thine own terms. All of which I desire to ask (so far as I understand the import and meaning) for Christ's sake." Can you suggest any other promise for which I should plead as a sinner, in order to become a Christian? or can you suggest any other way of pleading for them?

*Minister.*—You do greatly perplex me.

*Sick man.*—It is you who perplex me. You have always represented the way of salvation as so very simple, "that its simplicity was its difficulty"—*now*, it is nothing but a labyrinth of perplexing difficulties.