

## Family Circle.

### SIGNALLING FOR CHRIST.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

**W**HEN the disabled steamship "Spree" was adrift and in imminent peril of sinking, it was the alarm signal which blazed on her deck which brought the rescuing vessel. Had her officers not recognized their danger and kindled that signal, they would not have been saved in the way they were saved. There is many a soul that is drifting into this new year—and one twelve-month nearer eternity—which is as utterly disabled as was that imperilled steamer. Perhaps some of my readers may frankly acknowledge: "Yes, I am that person; I am not where I ought to be, or what I ought to be; I want to begin this new year with a changed life and a better one."

Well, my friend, it is a great point to feel compunction for the past and to desire honestly to live a different life. No sinner was ever saved until he or she truly *wants* to be saved. Don't waste any time in endeavoring to stop leaks and to patch up a new character. If you stop off one sin another will break out. The change you require is something more radical than that; you need a divine work to be wrought in you that shall make a new man or a new woman of you. "Except a man be *born anew*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And this new birth must come from some agent outside of your own self. Such eminent scientists as Spencer and Huxley admit that in the natural world, no living thing was ever self-generated, and that only life can produce life. In the spiritual world this law is even more imperative. Set it down as God's infallible truth, that unless you have this new life, you are lost; and you cannot impart it to yourself. You may be a constant church goer, but that has not saved you. Sermons have not saved you; the prayers of friends have not saved you. "There is none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved," but *Jesus Christ*. Signal for Him.

Salvation is a joint process: it is all omnipotent free grace on the side of Jesus Christ, who died to make an atonement for you; it is all free acceptance of Him and free obedience to Him on your side. If you signal for Him, He will come to your rescue. But He will consent to save you only on His own terms. He will not save you and your sins also: they must go overboard. Attempt no compromise. Half-way work makes a half Christian at best, and there is no arithmetic by which two half Christians can make a whole one. To the question, What must I do to be saved? Peter gave the prompt answer at the time of Pentecost, "Repent!" That means more than shame or sorrow for your sins; it means a turning from your sins with a full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience. This requires more than mere feeling, more than praying; it requires action. At whatever point the Holy Spirit is pressing you, at that point yield! Repentance is only proved by *acts*.

Paul did not contradict Peter when he answered the same question, "*Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*" Quitting sin and laying hold on Jesus are the two vital parts of the one process of salvation. Faith is an act also. It is the act of submitting your will to Christ's will—of joining your weakness to His strength, your ignorance to His knowledge, your guilty self to His omnipotent love. The joyful alacrity with which the sinking "Spree" threw out its steel cable to be made fast to the rescuing

steamer, "Lake Huron," is a beautiful illustration of the way that you must fasten your soul to the Almighty Redeemer. Henceforth let Him guide you, and be it your constant duty and delight to follow Him whithersoever He leadeth you. When you are fast to Jesus Christ you are safe, but not one instant sooner! Do not let any one beguile you by saying that you are very near to the kingdom. Hundreds may have been very near to Noah's ark, but the thickness of the ark door made all the difference between being safe inside, or drowning in the deluge. Don't fancy that you are "getting along very well"; you are not really doing anything for your salvation until you cut loose from your sins and make fast to your Saviour. No time is to be lost. One close hour with Jesus Christ is worth years of good sermons and all the inquiry meetings ever held. Methinks that we see the blessed Master bearing down towards some disabled and praying soul, full freighted with precious promises and holding out the offer of everlasting life. If He is answering thy signal, O reader, and if thou art ready to make fast thy soul to Him and to Him only, then this new year will be to thee the beginning of a life worth living. You will begin to be saved—saved from the waste of time and from the dominion of sin, and saved for the purpose of serving Him and blessing thy fellow-creatures. When you reach heaven, the voyage will be over and you will never need to be saved. But it may startle you even there to see how near you once were to going to the bottom!

A word now to God's people. Many churches may be recognizing their somewhat disabled condition. There is a strong temptation to resort to some new devices in order to attract a congregation, or to arouse an interest, or to keep aloft under bad leakage. Good friends, the new thing you need is a new inpouring of the Holy Spirit. If a Moody or a Mills came to you they would bring no new Gospel. One "week of prayer" is not enough; there may be some "compartmentments" in your vessel that need tightening up. All hands need to be both praying and working. If you are ready for duty, then *signal for the Master*:

### LUTHER'S TWO MIRACLES.

**W**HEN the 5th of August, 1530, an awful crisis of the Reformation, when the firmest seemed to swerve and the boldest to tremble, Luther thus wrote to Chancellor Bench: "I have recently witnessed two miracles. This is the first: As I was at my window, I saw the stars and the sky, and that vast and glorious firmament in which the Lord has placed them. I could nowhere discover the columns on which the Master has supported his immense vault, and yet the heavens did not fall. And here is the second: I beheld thick clouds hanging above us like a vast sea. I could neither perceive ground on which they reposed, nor cords by which they were suspended; and yet they did not fall upon us, but saluted us rapidly and fled away."

These miracles, as Luther called them, filled him with unconquerable trust and joy in God. Well they might. So may they us. We see them wrought before us every night and every day.

Reader, Luther's two miracles are visible. They have stood the sweep of centuries. They are God's matchless monuments. The heavens stand firm without a column on which to rest. The thick clouds, which are God's chariots, hang above us like a vast sea. Look up and behold the wonders, and Luther-like, be armed with an "unconquerable trust in God."