

This is the glorious doctrine that was the strength of the Apostles when they went forth to the Gentiles to preach a new religion. They began a few poor fishermen, in a despised corner of the earth. They turned the world upside down. They changed the face of the Roman empire. They emptied the heathen temples of their worshippers, and made the whole system of idolatry crumble away. And what was the weapon by which they did it all? It was *free forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ*.

This is the doctrine which brought light into Europe 300 years ago, at the time of the blessed Reformation, and enabled one solitary Monk, Martin Luther, to shake the whole church of Rome. Through his preaching and writing the scales fell from men's eyes, and the chains of their souls were loosed. And what was the lever that gave him his power? It was *free forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ*.

This is the doctrine that revived our own church in the middle of last century, when Whitefield, and the Wesleys, and Berridge, and Venn broke the wretched spirit of slumber that had come over the land, and roused men to think. They began a mighty work, with little seeming likelihood of success. They began, few in number, with small encouragement from the rich and great. But they prospered. And why?—Because they preached *free forgiveness through faith in Christ*.

This is the doctrine which is the true strength of any church on earth at this day. It is not orders, or endowments, or liturgies, or learning, that will keep a church alive. Let free forgiveness through Christ be faithfully proclaimed in her pulpits, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Let it be buried or kept back, and her candlestick shall soon be taken away. When the Saracens invaded the lands where Jerome and Athanasius, Cyprian and Augustine, once wrote and preached, they found bishops and liturgies, I make no question. But I fear they found no preaching of free forgiveness of sins, and so they swept the churches of those lands