

"I know that you may have heard some Christians say they *feel* they are pardoned, they *feel* they are saved; but this only tends to mislead. It did mislead me, and I have no doubt it is misleading you. These Christians may mean a right thing, but they state it wrongly. I feel happy because I *know* that my sins are pardoned; and I will shew you how I know that by and by; but I do not *feel* that my sins are pardoned. Let us suppose a case. A poor widow has no money to pay her debts. The creditor comes demanding his righteous due. A friend steps in, and says to the creditor, "I'll pay you the widow's debt;" he puts down the money, and the creditor hands him a slip of paper on which is written, "Received from Widow Blank the sum due, settled," with the creditor's signature affixed. The receipt is handed to the widow, and she feels very happy *because* she knows that her debt is paid. If you were to call that day, and say to the widow, "Do you *feel* that your debt is paid?" what would she say?"

"Feel it! What do you mean? There is the receipted account. I don't feel that it's paid, but I *feel* very happy *because it is paid.*"

"Now, do you not see the difference? The feeling is all right, but I do not feel my sin pardoned. I know it, and hence feel happy."

"But does it not say somewhere in Scripture that the Spirit beareth witness with our spirits?"

"Now from the very fact that you speak so vaguely about "somewhere in Scripture," I fear that you do not know well what Scripture is. The Bible is not a number of texts strung together at random: it is a perfectly arranged whole. Truth in a wrong connection is the worst kind of error. You find in Romans viii. 16, this most blessed and wondrous revelation from God, that "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." Mark carefully, this is not given as a ground

to know that our sins are forgiven; but comes after the whole revelation of the truth concerning what we have done, and what we are, and how our responsibilities are met. It comes after the triumphant assertion of Romans v. 1, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God," and that crowning triumph after every question has been settled against us, "There is no condemnation." (Rom. viii. 1.) At peace with God, and no condemnation, we now advance into our peculiar place among the creatures of God. Angels are at peace with God and have no condemnation, but they are only servants. Here is something additional, "We are sons of God." Being taken from the swine-troughs, and getting food and raiment, we would therewith be content, glad that we were in the house at all, even among the servants. But higher than servants are we become, even sons. We may well pause, and say, is this presumption? Dare I say that all things are mine? that I am a child, a son, an heir of God? Yes! indeed you may; the Spirit has been sent to dwell with you and to be in you, as coming from the throne, revealing to your spirit (which can now discern spiritual things) that, without presumption, you may lay claim to the title, the relationship, of son of God, heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ. That Spirit is within every believer, and seals only saved ones. He quickens the unsaved. God has sent forth this testimony, and he that is a believer has the "testimony in himself" (1 John, v. 10). The important point I wish you to see is this, that the Holy Ghost is never said to bear witness to me, by any internal feeling, that I am at peace with God. It is after a man knows he is a saved man that then there is a step further shown him—namely, that he is a son. He is not only out of prison: he is set at the table of the King whom he calls "Abba," that is, Father."

"I quite understand the distinction, but I never saw it before; but if I could