

## Pastor and People.

### WHY WITH JESUS.

#### QUESTION.

Why so oft with Jesus, Christian?  
Why so oft, as though in prayer,  
Sitting at the feet of Jesus?  
Tell me, why so often there?

#### ANSWER.

Just to see Him smile upon me,  
Just to listen to His voice;  
Just to know how much He loves me,  
Just to make His heart rejoice.  
Just to tell Him every sorrow,  
Just to whisper every care;  
Just to see Him fondly listen,  
Glad—so glad! my griefs to bear.  
Sitting at the feet of Jesus,—  
Looking up with open face,  
Gazing at His matchless glory,  
Wondering at His boundless grace;  
Filled with rapture at His beauty—  
Spell-bound, ling'ring at His feet,  
Ling'ring at this place of blessing,  
Oh! no place to me so sweet.  
"What have I to do with idols?"  
Can they give me peace like this?  
Can they fill my soul with rapture?  
Can they give eternal bliss?  
Nay! The sweet they give is bitter,  
Earth's delights but live to fade;  
All its pleasures seem, but are not;  
All its lights are dimmed with shade.  
Only at the feet of Jesus,  
Only here my soul is blest;  
All around is grief and sadness—  
Only here is perfect rest.

—Selected by Mrs. J. S. G.

### SOULS THAT SLEEP.

EVANGELISTIC ADDRESS BY REV. JOHN McNEILL.

"Awake! Arise! Awake thou that sleepest." We have this in substance and in different forms elsewhere, but in actual form here. Luther said, you remember, that certain texts were little Bibles. I think this is one; at any rate, this is a text which is a little sermon. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." That is an evangelistic address; it is put in the very form that conveys it to the people to whom you are talking. Now here is a text that is a sermon. You may forget what I say, but I want you to remember the text. There is the sinner described; there is the sinner addressed; there is the sinner pointed to the Saviour. What more would you have? "Awake, thou that sleepest." See how our life away from Christ, the life of unbelief, the life of worldliness, the life of sin that you are living, is described here as a life of sleep. The Bible often changes its figures. The man who is not converted, the soul here who is not walking in the light of Christ's grace is asleep; you are like one who at twelve o'clock in the day is still snoring on his bed. It is not a complimentary description, is it? The Bible never was complimentary to a sinner; the Bible always speaks the plain, bare truth. That is why folks don't like the Bible, and don't like the preacher. And I can imagine a man saying, "Oh, this is overdone; we must draw the line at this." But it is on the Bible—I stand on the Bible every time, and the Bible said it all to me first. I kicked against it just like my neighbours, but found it true, and I am not going to let you off. Not only does the Bible back me up, but my own experience does, and plenty of people also, who first of all were ruffled by God's Word and irritated; but by and by they found out that the Bible was a faithful friend. Because the Bible loved, it dared their rebuke, and it told them the truth. You say to me: "If you only knew the people who know me; they would tell you that I am rather wide-awake." Well, I have not denied it; in the affairs of the world, I believe you are very wide-awake. If there was anything to be got by it, you are on the right shift to make overtime. I believe you are all agog, you would turn night into day, and make Sunday into Saturday if it got you something as regards this present world.

You remember the story of the man who went to sleep, and when he awakened up, the generations meanwhile had passed away. He came to the village and noticed how everything around him

was mildewed and rusty, and nobody knew him. The only place where he felt familiar was in the graveyard, where the names of the headstones were the names of the people he had known before he fell on his sleep. Now, every unconverted man will, after his waking up, admit that he was sound asleep, and that the realities of life had never dawned upon him. Thus the text holds true, "Awake, thou that sleepest." Suffer my blunt speech. If you want to arouse a man, you have got to arouse him; you will never rouse a heavy sleeper, like some of you, by standing up and washing your hands in invisible soap and water, and whispering polite nothings. I am not here to say hard things about your natural condition, simply for the sake of saying them, or simply to show that I have the best of the argument according to the Bible, or that I have the whip by the handle, and will make you feel the supple end of it.

I am speaking in the rousing way I am doing because I am right. I will go bail for it that you come to me to-morrow night, if you take Christ to-night you will say: "Preacher, you were right. My past unconverted life was just as good as sleep, a dream, unreal, and I only woke up the realities of existence, to the realities of time and eternity some time between eight and nine o'clock last night."

Let me come to you and be the means of awakening you to concern about conversion, about your own personal interest in Christ, to personal concern about things which await you in eternity, which is always coming nearer. Believe in eternity, believe in God, believe in Christ, take the Bible view of things in regard to sin, and the Saviour, and eternity, and the blessings which come through faith in Him "Awake, thou that sleepest" to reality, to consciousness, to dim understanding at least of existence, as represented by the eternal word of the eternal God. "Awake! thou that sleepest," and thank God that the message is so plain—a trumpet call, something rolling, resounding, and no mistake about it. It is no world for sleeping in, this. But, oh, outside of Christ dare you rest? I once caught a man lying asleep—a drunken sleep—between the four-foot, as it is called, of the railway, and the midnight express coming thundering down the bank. Such is thy state, oh unconverted soul. Awake, and listen, and you will hear the far-off sound of the judgment which is coming. Get out from between the rails. Get out; shift your body. Get yourself clear. I awakened that man, didn't I? How could I pass him? And didn't I wake him rather roughly? Wouldn't I have been a fool if I had sat down and said polite things to him? "This is no time to trifle; Life is brief and sin is here; Courage is like the falling of a leaf, The dropping of a tear."

This is no place to dream away the hours, And all shall be earnest in a world like ours."

"Awake thou that sleepest and"—what? "and arise from the dead." What does that mean? First of all "awake," that's the first thing. Then the second thing is, of course, "get up, arise from the dead," for every man who awakens is not a man who is up, is he? "Oh, no, no, no! Some of us make a big difference between awakening and getting up. It is not so hard to awaken some of you, but oh, it is a job to get you over on your feet. You will awaken, and you will get on your elbow, and you will crack away with anybody for an hour like a pop-gun, you will talk and talk, and drink a cup of coffee in your bed—oh, how you like it!—yes, anything to postpone the actual having to get up and put on your clothes, and go back again to the old treadmill of world's work. Oh, some of us don't know how lazy we can be, for we have never been tried."

I awaken sometimes, I don't know whether it is the same with you? I take these homely illustrations that

cause a smile, because they are true. Now, I have awakened and got up, this was the fatal spring. I fell over again and dreamed that I was up.

Haven't you done that? I dreamed that I was up and dressed, and then afterwards woke up with a start and an awful disappointment, to find that it was all to do yet. I'm afraid there are a lot of people that way in religion. They only think.

Come, wake up, man, arise, take the step forward and outward away from sleep, away from your past, and be able to say: "I'm up, bless God, I'm up, and I know that I have left my bed by the very shivers that are going through me in the cold." Spring to your feet like a man; it is high time—it is almost past time. "What meanest thou, oh sleeper? Arise and call upon thy God." "Arise from the dead." There is the truth, too, to describe what is round about you, and the state you are in. Who would sleep in a grave yard? Who would live among bones and decay? And that is where you are living, unconverted sinner.

"There is a time, I know not when,

A point, I know not where,  
That marks the destiny of men,  
For glory or despair."

Don't live among the dying and rotten, Live! Oh come! Arise!

"Christ shall give thee light." A great offer for you, and the great danger to warn you from, the awful danger of passing away in your sleep, as we read of people doing every day, passing away in their sleep. God save us! There may be numbers of people who spiritually pass away in their sleep and have never woken. They died as they lived! A man is not comfortable when he awakens. He awakens with his face to Sinai, and there sweep through his soul these considerations: "God is holy, God is my law-giver; I have broken His laws; I was made by Him and am accountable to Him, and my life has been a transgression, a trampling under foot of His commandments and His grace and mercy." Steady your nerve a minute; you may take a wrong step now. And as you have obeyed the rest of the text you will obey this: "Christ shall give thee light." First of all, you are sleeping in the midst of your danger and distress; then when you are awakened to it all, "Christ shall give thee light." Do you ask, "Where is He?" He is beside you; He has come in; He is the brave fireman; He has come into your burning building, and has wanted to fill His arms with you. It is like this. In Edinburgh one night—and if any of you know Edinburgh you know the Register House, and you know the very high block of buildings behind the Register House—I think in West Register street yonder, just straight from the postoffice there stands a very high towering building. Some friends of mine lived in one of the "flats," as they are called. A fire broke out in the night. The people heard the noise, they heard the crackling, they heard the shouts, and they awakened the sleepers. They arouse; though alas, alas! they afterwards went wrong. They arose, gathered themselves together, they came down stairs till they came to the passage that leads out into the street. They were almost safe; but in that entry they were met by a blinding rush of smoke, and, in the terror and alarm of the moment, instead of going straight out through the smoke they turned into a door that was standing deceitfully open—a door into a chamber—and before they could recover from their mistake they were suffocated. For want of light they perished in the smoke and darkness. So need perish none who come to Christ. He is thy light.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say:

"I am this dark world's light;  
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,  
And all thy day be bright."  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
In Him my star, my sun;  
And in that Light of Life I'll walk  
Till travelling days be done." Amen.

Ram's Horn: What the world needs most, is not more preaching, but more practice.

### SAVED AS A SINNER.

There are many people who make great distinction between men of high and of low degree; between poor men and rich men, wise men and ignorant men. But in the sight of God, these differences are infinitesimal. There is doubtless a great difference between a boy who has a shilling and one who has not a penny; but to a millionaire the difference is not worth minding or mentioning. So the difference of a mile or two in locality, under certain circumstances, would be very important; but in reckoning distances by millions of miles, a mile wide would seem but a difference between those of high and low degree. The Lord, looking down from heaven on them all, says, "There is no difference," and includes them all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. It is said that when the late Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, was expressing, in the prospect of death, some concern about the state of his soul, his physician endeavoured to soothe his mind by referring to his high respectability, his honourable conduct in the distinguished situation in which Providence had placed him, when the Duke stopped him short, saying, "No; remember, if I am to be saved, it is not as a prince, but as a sinner."

It is well for both princes and people to understand that they are but men, that they are but dust, and that in the presence of God, kings and peasants, princes and paupers, millionaires and beggars, wise men and ignorant men, stand on a common footing—"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All need forgiveness, pardon and salvation; and all, if saved at all, must be saved by the mercy of Him who loved the lost, and who came into the world to save sinners. Publicans and Pharisees, wise men and ignorant, all must meet upon the same level, and cry, in the language of the publican, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." If they would go down to their houses justified.—Episcopal Recorder.

### TOO BUSY TO PRAY.

Jesus appears to have devoted himself specially to prayer, at times when His life was unusually full of work and excitement. His was a very busy life; there were nearly always "many coming and going" about Him. Sometimes, however, there was such a congestion of thronging objects that He had scarcely time to eat. But even then He found time to pray. Indeed, these appear to have been with Him seasons of more prolonged prayer than usual. Thus we read: "So much the more went there a fame abroad of Him, and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by Him of their infirmities; but He withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed."

Many in our day know what this congestion of occupation is—they are swept off their feet with their engagements, and can scarcely find time to eat. We make this a reason for not praying. Is there any doubt which is the better course? Many of the wisest have in this respect done as Jesus did. When Luther had a specially busy and exciting day, he allowed himself a longer time than usual for prayer beforehand. A wise man once said he was too busy to be in a hurry. He meant that if he allowed himself to become hurried he could not tell all he had to do. There is nothing like prayer for producing this calm self-possession. When the dust of business so fills your room that it threatens to choke you, sprinkle it with the water of prayer, and then you can cleanse it out with comfort and expedition.—Jas. Stalker.

Everyone may know that to will and not to do, when there is opportunity, is in reality not to will; and that to love what is good and not to do it, when it is possible, is in reality not to love it. Will, which stops short of action, and love, which does not do the good that is loved, is a mere thought, separate from will and love, which vanishes and comes to nothing.—Swedenborg.