

and shewed the dear white locks in which his child had often twined his hands in loving sport, and then the cry of joy went up, and the embrace was close and long. Even so, my brother, my sister, it is not the awful king, it is not the blazing warrior who comes to you to-night; it is the Nazarene who calls; the arms which are stretched out are those which were stretched upon the cross. Each hand is printed with a scar, and the only crown he shows you is a crown of thorns. Oh, come to those arms and be ye safe; and like a true child who loves indeed, take off the thorns and put them on your own head instead of His, until He again remove them, and ye be crowned together with a crown of life. O Jesus, blessed be Thy call which calls me. I will make haste and come down. "Other lords have had dominion over me; henceforth I will be called only by Thy name."

## THE RICH EVANGELIST AND THE PEOPLE'S DEBTS.

I HEARD of an Englishman that was converted some time ago, and when the Lord converted him he had a great desire to see every man converted; and I would not give much for that man's conversion who did not have that desire. This man Christ had such hold upon that he wanted to go out and publish the good tidings. So he went into one town and gave notice that he would preach in such a place. It got noise round that the man was rich, so a great many went to see him out of curiosity. He had a great audience the first night; but, as he was not a very eloquent man, people did not get interested. Men looked at the messenger instead of the message; but never mind the messenger. The next night hardly any one was there. Then he got out great placards, and placarded the town, and he stated that if any man in that town owed any debt, if they would come round to his office between nine and twelve o'clock on a certain day, he would pay the debt. Of course that went through the town like wild-fire. One said to the other, "John, do you believe that?" "No, I am not going to believe that any stranger is going to pay our debts." Not any one believed it, although there were a good many, no doubt, that would have liked to get their debts paid. Well, the day came, and at nine o'clock the man was there. At ten o'clock none had come. At eleven o'clock a man was seen walking up and down, looking over his shoulder, and finally he stuck his head in the door and said, "Is it true that you will pay any man's debt?" The other said, "Yes; do you owe any debt?" "Yes." "Have you brought the necessary papers?" The placard had told them what to do. "Yes." So the man drew a cheque and paid the other's debt, and he kept him and talked with him till twelve o'clock; and before twelve o'clock two other men came and got their debts paid. At twelve o'clock that man let them out, and the people outside said to them, "He paid your debts, did not he?" "Yes he did," they answered. But the people laughed and made fun of them, and would not believe it till they pulled out the cheque and said, "There it is. He has paid all the debt." And then the people said, "What fools we were we did not go in and get our debts paid!" But they could not; it was too late: the door was closed; the time was up. And then the man as before preached the Gospel, and great crowds went to hear him; and he said, "Now, my friends, that is what God wants to do; but you will not let Him do it. Christ came to pay our debts, and that is the Gospel." I could not have a better illustration of the Gospel than that. Every man owes God a debt he cannot pay. Would you insult the Almighty by offering the fruits of this frail body to atone for sin? Isaiah says, "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquity; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him: and with His stripes we are healed." Paul says, "I declare unto you the Gospel; Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." My friends, will you believe the Gospel to-night and be saved?

Do not grieve God's Spirit by refusing or neglecting the comforts He offers.

You cannot get to heaven by your works. You might as well seek to mount the stars on a tread-wheel, as to go to heaven by works; for as you get up a step you will come down as low as before. If you cannot be perfect, God will not save you by works.

## LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE.

GOD offers eternal life, and we are told just to lay hold of it. Someone has said that faith sees a thing in God's hand, and says, "I will have it"; while unbelief says, "I cannot get it, God won't let me have it; He holds on to it with a tight grasp." Faith says, "That is my gift, I see it, I will take it, I will appropriate it." Someone else has said that there are three things about faith—knowledge, assent, *laying hold*—and it is the last that saves. A man may have knowledge, he may give his assent, and say, "Yes, I believe Christ is able to save and willing to save," but that won't save anyone. The thing is to trust Him, to *lay hold*. Oh sinner, lay hold on Christ. Let go of self, let go of your good resolutions, let go of your own righteousness, and just lay hold upon the Lord Jesus to-night, and He will save you. Some time ago I read an account of an old miller who used to go down the river at midnight to relieve another miller who had charge of a mill during the first part of the night. He used to get out a few hundred yards above the dam, and hitch his little canoe or boat and walk down to the mill. His brother miller used to come out and take the boat and row back. One night the old miller fell asleep, and when he awoke he was being drawn right down towards the dam. He knew if he went over the fall it was sure death to him. He seized the oars and pulled against the current, but he found it was too strong. At last he got near the shore, and he seized a little twig; then he went to pull himself up, and it began to give way at the roots. He felt about in the darkness and tried to find another, but the rocks were so steep that he could not climb up, and could find no other twig. All he could do was just to hold on. If he pulled a little harder the twig would give way, and the current would sweep him over into the jaws of death. What did he do? Why, he just cried, "Help! help!" and there he cried for long hours. That is what the psalmist means in the 40th Psalm: "He heard my cry." The cry of distress was heard. A friend came and let a rope down from the rock (and you know, help must come from above; you cannot get it down here), and he shouted, "Lay hold of the rope!" Well, as long as he kept hold of the twig he could not be saved, but the moment he let go the twig and seized hold of the rope they pulled him out of the jaws of death.

O sinner, that is your condition. You have got hold of that twig; let it go, and lay hold of the rope; lay hold of the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will bring you up out of the horrible pit. The fact is, when Adam fell he leaped into the pit, and he took the whole human family with him, and he left all his posterity there. The Second Adam came after him, and He says, "I will bring you up out of the horrible pit, I will establish your goings, I will put a new song into your mouth, I will put your feet on the Rock of Ages." O sinner, to-night, lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's gift, and the moment you have Him, that is the incorruptible seed that cannot perish. "Christ in me, the hope of glory." —*Moody*.

## GOD WILL EXPLAIN.

WHY is it that the good have it hard and the bad have it easy? Why that the Christian mother is deprived to-day of her only child, and the household of the goddess left undisturbed? I appeal to the day of judgment. Tell me, O thou of the trumpet tongues, why these wrongs and outrages! Explain the neuralgias, and rheumatisms, and inquisitions! The world is dumb and can make no answer. I appeal to the day of judgment. Why Nero on the throne and Paul in the penitentiary? Why Nebuchadnezzar in the chariot and Daniel in the den? Why the defrauder building his villa on the Hudson River, while God's Christian sewing-women put their heads on a hard pillow in the back alley? Oh! day of judgment, explain this. On that day God will be vindicated, and men will cry out, "He is right—everlastingly right." "Thank God for those galling chains," will cry out the delivered captives. "Thank God for all those pangs," will cry out the recovered invalid. "Thank God for all those faggots," will exclaim the delivered martyr. Oh! if there were no such day promised at all, I think all the nations of earth would join in a petition to high heaven for such a day of glorious explanation. —*Talmage*.