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## ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Dr. Andrew Bonar (1810-1892)

Oh, how blessed to be able to point heavenward and say, "It is mine!" –to point to the Throne, and say, "He is mine who sitteth there!" –to look back and find your name in the Book of Everlasting Love! –to look forward to the opening of the Book of Life, knowing that your name is in it!

We are ever meeting (in Scripture) with such words as these, spoken in the name of all disciples, "We *know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God" (2 Cor 5:1). "We know that we have passed from death unto life" (1 Jn 3:14). "We know that we are of God" (1 Jn 5:19). "I *know* whom I have believed" (2 Tim 1:12).

I sit down and meditate on such a passage as John 3:16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life". The Spirit enables me to see in these words that God is testifying that no more is needed for my acceptance with God than what is found in Christ: and that all that Christ has done becomes mine upon my believing in him. Relying on God's testimony, I ask no questions, I wait for nothing in myself (such as love, sorrow, or other feeling), but I think on what is in Christ, as the ground of my peace. And when I so muse, the fire burns - my soul is at rest.

Suppose a nobleman condemned for high treason, and the day has come when he must die. But that morning, a document is put into his hand; it is a pardon from the king, on no other terms than that he accept it. He reads; as he reads, his countenance is flushed, his eyes glisten, and in a moment he is full of joy. What think you of anyone arresting the current of his joy by the suggestion, "Are you quite sure you are accepting the pardon? Is your act of repentance complete and thorough?" No; the man is engrossed with the *certainties* presented to his thoughts: that is, what the king freely gives to him; and these *certainties* convey their own impression to his soul, the *certainty* of his pardon.

## News of the fellowship

### 1) Spiritual Concern

We continue to look to the Lord for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Oh how much we need the Lord to intervene in this our day! To that end we encourage friends to gather with us at the prayer meeting.

Recently I was given an 1899 copy of the Christian Herald; it records C.H. Spurgeon's first impressions of the Tabernacle under the title "Let us be quiet." "When Rev.C.H.Spurgeon commenced his ministry in London, it was to a mere handful of people in a large chapel, the pulpit of which had been filled by at least two distinguished ministers- Dr.Gill and Dr.Rippon-for more than a century. The people, he would say, were a mere handful-"such a handful!" But, oh, how they could pray! The prayer meetings were so full of life and fire that it seemed as if "the Angel of the Covenant Himself were present," as doubtless He was. On one occasion among others, there was such an awe on their spirits, such solemnity, that the minister said "Let us be quiet." They sat in silence for some moments, and the Lord seemed to overshadow them and all the minister could do was to pronounce the benediction, and say, "Dear friends we have had the Holy Spirit here tonight; let us go home and not lose His blessed influence." Then came the blessing; the house was filled with hearers and many souls were saved. "I always give all the honour first to God and then to a praying people" was Mr.Spurgeon's testimony.As is well known, Mr.Spurgeon preached the Gos-

pel and the Christ of the Gospel-nothing less and nothing more."

### 2) After Church Fellowship meetings.

These are informal gatherings where we consider a theme or to listen to an historical address. On the Lord's day 28<sup>th</sup> February we considered the topic of "Our Devotions" and thought about the importance of times alone with the Lord.

In March Mr. Higham spoke on Robert Jermain Thomas the Welsh Missionary to Korea. We were moved by his zeal and dedication to the work. Churches sprung up where Bibles were there thrown.

At our April after Church fellowship we sang favourite hymns. These occasions also give us the opportunity to practice tunes with which we are unfamiliar.

### 3) Preaching engagements

On the Lord's day March 21<sup>st</sup> Pastor preached at Bethesda near Tenby and Mr.Higham preached here. On May 9<sup>th</sup> Pastor was away in Norfolk preaching at the Heathersett Reformed Baptist Church Anniversary Services. Mr.Alex Hutter, a ministerial candidate from Tabernacle Cardiff, officiated at Peniel.

### 4) A.G.M.Meeting

Our A.G.M.was held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March .We are thankful to God for the addition of our new members. There are a number of practical items that need attention.

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A) It has been proposed to replace the fence that borders the Care home with a concrete wall (about the same height as the existing one). As it is a shared boundary there must be a degree of cooperation with the home. We have not heard from them at the time of writing so this matter will be brought again to the church meeting.

B) The wall behind the electric meter needs to be replastered; this is quite a large job and will obviously involve disconnecting the electrics.

C) Work needs to be undertaken on the Manse to deal with rotting fascia boards and to remove the asbestos drain-pipe (drive side). A number of quotes have been received.

D) The notice board also needs replacing.

We will endeavour to keep you posted regarding any further work.

5) Dafydd Morris

We held special prayer meetings regarding Dafydd Morris' situation. At the last meeting (Wed 12<sup>th</sup> May) we were joined by friends from Lonlas Mission.

6) Calendar distribution

We will not be undertaking our normal large scale Calendar distribution at Christmas but we will order a smaller supply to pass on to friends and contacts. We hope very soon to commence a more systematic visitation of the area with a contact sheet containing a brief message.

7) Church Trip

Please note that the details of the Church fellowship trip to be held on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August are advertised on the church notice board; please see Mr. Edward Williams for a form.

8) Trinitarian Bible Society

We received our Annual visit from the Trinitarian Bible Society on Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> May. Mr. Cheuter shared with us something of the work. We were particularly encouraged by various reports of a desire for God's word in different countries. There appears, for instance, to be an increasing demand from Armenia. He then ministered the Word of God taking for his text Isaiah 21 verses 11 and 12. We are thankful for all who show an interest in this important ministry and who faithfully support these meetings.

9) Bereavements.

We wish to express our deepest sympathy to Don Rowlands on the death of his dear wife Beti. Our sorrow is tempered by the comfort that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. We will remember the family much in the coming days.

We would also like to extend our deepest sympathy to Sonjia Anderson and family on the very sudden death of her Step father, Joe Harris. This occurred whilst Sonjia's parents were visiting relatives in Berlin.

10) We continue to remember Mrs Rabey in Hengoed Court and Jim Cummings who rarely gets out of his home these days.

## Diary

### Lord's Days:

#### June

6th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
13th	–	Pastor		
20th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
27th	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>

#### July

4th	–	Rev. Ken Stockley		
11th	–	Pastor		
18th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
25th	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>

#### August

1st	–	Rev. A. McNabb		
8th	–	Rev. W. Hughes (Cardiff)		
15th	–	Rev. R. B. Higham	–	Communion - a.m
22nd	–	Pastor		
29th	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>

**Please note** –we seek to hold the after church fellowship hour after the evening service on the last Lords Day of the month.

### **Pastor's Engagements.**

Friday evening June 11<sup>th</sup>-Preaching at Orange Street, London

Lord's Day- July 4<sup>th</sup> Providence Chapel-Cheltenham

### **Forward Notice**

Bible League Rally Wed.9<sup>th</sup> June - Rev.J.P.Thackway (Holywell)

Friday August 27<sup>th</sup> Church Fellowship Trip

14th of August (time to be announced) Rev. R. B. Higham speaking on David Jones of Llangan - at Llangan Church. Occasion-bi-centenary of his death 1810-2010

## **A Testimony**

I felt that my Christian journey began on the 11th of August in the year 2000, I was 4. At this age I was very young but understood the meaning of a Christian relationship with God. I remember very clearly that morning my mother and I were on our way back from Nathan's eye test in Gorseinon. My grandmother was driving, and I asked my mother, how do I become a Christian? She replied saying "pray to God and ask him to cleanse your heart and that you are sorry for your sins". I then asked when I could do it. My mother said any time. I decided to do it that moment. I prayed loudly in the car and asked God to come and cleanse my heart of all my sins. Since then my faith and trust in God has grown stronger and stronger. I've been brought up in a Christian home with Christian parents and a brother, who have always been a great help to me. This is something I feel that I can thank God for. Having a family that supports you through the Christian life is something precious that no amount of money can buy. Many hymns have been a great help to me, for e.g "Here is Love vast as the ocean, loving kindness as the flood". And I like the lines "Heavens peace and perfect justice kissed a guilty world in love". These hymns showed me the deep love of Jesus towards me. These gave me assurance that one day I will be with God in heaven. A verse which has been a comfort to me is Hebrews 13 v 5 "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". When I was young I have always had the word of God read to me in the night by my mother or father or even sometimes my brother, I felt that having the word of God explained to me clearly and slowly was a great help. I feel that the Lord has tested me in many a way but He has blessed me greatly with parents, grandparents, brother and in many other ways as well.

**Esther Munday**

**“Changes and war are against me.”**  
***Job 10:17***

One of the more obvious effects of a spell of wintry weather is the tendency it has to disrupt the normal rhythm of our lives and especially our plans. We may have been intending to undertake a journey, and are required to postpone it. Events have to be rescheduled or cancelled, plans changed. Our reactions may range from relief to frustration. When the holiday which we have saved for, planned for and looked forward to is disrupted or even cancelled, we tend to resent the disturbance. On the other, if the disruption causes the cancellation of something we were not looking forward to, we may be very pleased.

The weather is not the only cause of unexpected change to our plans. Ill health may prevent us from doing what we had hoped to do, or expected to do. Then too the actions of others may intervene to bring unexpected change. And of course in a highly inter-dependent society strike action by one section of the community can impinge upon the life of others in significant ways.

In addition there sometimes come those times in our lives when we seem to know a series of changes, often most unwelcome. Job knew this to an exceptional degree. We speak of the “changes and war” (lit. “Changes and a host”) which are “against” him. Wave upon wave of troubles have come upon him - like the wave after wave of troops which come against a defending army.

One of the ways in which a Christian is able to be able to be and indeed should be different from the non-Christian is in their attitude to unlooked-for change. Let us look briefly at a few of the reasons for this.

First of all the Christian should have a deeply entrenched realisation that **everything in this life is provisional and temporary**. Our health, our plans, our very life are all subject to change. Change is part and parcel of life in a fallen world. It is an inevitable consequence of sin with all its bitter fruits. We can no more avoid change than we can escape the air we breathe. The Christian knows that the idea of “getting away from it all” is an utterly futile one.

Then too the Christian realizes that **God is the superintendent of change**. That is true in the world at large, in the nations, in the economy, in the elements, in our families and in our individual lives. While it may seem that kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, media tycoons and the “stars” of this world are the “movers and shakers” of world events, in reality we know that behind them all is the Lord who reigns. Caesar Augustus issued his decree that “all the world should be taxed”, but that decree was in truth only a subset of the greater decree of heaven’s King, who had ordained in eternity and announced seven centuries earlier that the One whose “goings forth” were “from everlasting” would enter this world in the Palestinian town of Bethlehem. Likewise in

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our technological world, every change of government, every alteration in the climate, every variation in the economy is part of God's divine will and purpose.

The same certainty governs our awareness that **every change in the experience of the Church is part of God's purposes.** The loss of a much loved pastor, the tragic lapse of an esteemed leader, the conversion of a soul, a prolonged period of spiritual barrenness, a season of great grace and blessing are all part of that great purpose of Him who is inexorably working everything out in accordance with "the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11).

And when it comes to our individual lives, how essential it is and how comforting it is to know that the most unexpected, the most perplexing, **the most mysterious changes are all accomplishing the gracious good purpose of our God.** What changes have come to some of us in the past 365 days! How little we expected many of those things which have happened! How contrary they have been to our thoughts, expectations, plans and wishes. Yet how known to God they were and how perfectly they will be found to have fitted into that glorious divine tapestry which He is weaving

Then too Christian, you have the confidence that **through change, you yourself are being changed.** As you face life's vicissitudes, you bring the promises of God's Word to bear on them, and you see that God is actually changing you into the likeness of His dear Son, who died for you, that you might share His divine, holy, loving nature. Though it be your present experience that "changes and war are against" you and though it be the case that "now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations" (1 Pet. 1:6), you can be at complete peace in the knowledge that God is not against you - rather is He using these things as His instruments to refine you, to establish you in your trust in Him.

Above all, as a Christian, you know that **your greatest change lies ahead.** That change will see you taken out of this world of sin, this body of corruption, this realm of change into that world where all is settled, holy, love-filled. There one great, last change awaits you - the most momentous of all - that instantaneous act by which the Lord God will change you, and complete your salvation by giving you a redeemed body, a fitting vehicle for eternity's work - of worshipping and enjoying and serving the triune God for ever.

How important it is that we develop a composure, a calm, which expects that great change, and looks forward to it! How vital it is for you, reader, that you face the issue of change seriously! You can only have this ability to cope with and benefit from change, if the great change which the Lord Jesus describes as the "new birth" takes place in you before you leave this world.

There may be many plans in your mind for the coming year. How many of those plans will take place, as you anticipate? How many will be subject to quite unforeseen change? How many will remain utterly unfulfilled? When the late Queen Mother died,

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her personal appointment diary came to light. In it she had many engagements which had to remain unfulfilled. So it will be for us all, whether or not we keep an appointment diary.

How ready are you to die? How prepared are you to meet your Creator and Judge? How able are you to go into tomorrow, into this new year knowing that all change is in His hands? How glad are you to leave it there?

May we all be able to say with Joseph Parker:

1. God holds the key of all unknown,  
And I am glad;  
If other hands should hold the key,  
Or if He trusted it to me,  
I might be sad.
2. What if tomorrow's cares were here,  
Without its rest?  
I'd rather He unlocked the day,  
And, as the hours swing open, say,  
My will is best.
3. The very dimness of my sight  
Makes me secure;  
For, groping in my misty way,  
I feel His hand; I hear Him say,  
My help is sure.
4. I cannot read His future plans;  
But this I know:  
I have the smiling of His face,  
And all the refuge of His grace  
While here below.
5. Enough; this covers all my wants;  
And so I rest;  
For what I cannot, He can see,  
And in His care I saved shall be,  
Forever blest.

Pastor M. Hagget, Coedpoeth Evangelical Church  
(We are happy to report that after much prayer that Mr Hagget has re-commenced his pastoral duties)

This article was written after a spell of severe winter conditions.

## **True Prayer—True Power! (Part 2)**

**By C. H. SPURGEON**

II. Having thus asked you to look at the text, I want you now to LOOK AROUND YOU.

Look around you at our prayer meetings, and look around you at your times of private prayer, and judge them both by the meaning of this text.

First, look around you at our prayer meetings.

I do honestly believe that the prayer-meetings which are usually held among us, have far less of the faults which I am about to indicate, than any others I have ever attended. But, still they have some of the faults, and I hope that what we will say will be taken to heart by every brother and sister who is in the habit of engaging publicly in prayer at the prayer-meetings.

Is it not a fact, that as soon as you enter the prayer-meeting, you feel, that many of the men who pray seem to have a good memory to remember a great many texts, which always have been quoted since the days of our grandfather's grandfather, and they are able to repeat them in a regular order. The gift to do this lies, in some other churches, especially in village churches, in having strong lungs, so as to be able to hold out, without taking a breath for 25 minutes when you are brief, and 45 minutes when you are rather drawn out. The gift lies also in being able not to ask for anything in particular, but in passing through a range of everything, making the prayer, not an arrow with a point, but rather like a nondescript machine, that has no point whatever, and yet is meant to be all point, which is aimed at everything, and consequently strikes nothing. Those brethren are often the most frequently asked to pray, who have those unusual, and perhaps, excellent gifts, although I certainly must say that I cannot obey the apostle's injunction in coveting very earnestly such gifts as these.

Now, if instead of this, some man is asked to pray, who has never prayed before in public; suppose he rises and says, "Oh Lord, I feel myself such a sinner that I can scarcely speak to you, Lord, help me to pray! O Lord, save my poor soul! O that you would save my old friends! Lord, bless our minister! Be pleased to give us a revival. O Lord, I can say no more; hear me for Jesus' sake! Amen." Well, then, you feel somehow, as if you had begun to pray yourself. You feel

an interest in that man, partly from fear lest he should stop, and also because you are sure that what he did say, he meant. And if another should get up after that, and pray in the same spirit, you go out and say, "This is real prayer." I would sooner have three minutes prayer like that, than thirty minutes of the other kind, because the one is praying, and the other is preaching.

Allow me to quote what an old preacher said on the subject of prayer, and give it to you as a little word of advice—he said, "Remember, the Lord will not hear you, because of the arithmetic of your prayers; he does not count their numbers. He will not hear you because of the rhetoric of your prayers; he does not care for the eloquent language in which they are conveyed. He will not listen to you because of the geometry of your prayers; he does not compute them by their length, or by their width. He will not regard you because of the music of your prayers; he does not care for sweet voices, nor for harmonious periods. Neither will he look at you because of the logic of your prayers; because they are well arranged and compartmentalized. But he will hear you, and he will measure the amount of the blessing he will give you, according to the divinity of your prayers. If you can plead the person of Christ, and if the Holy Spirit inspires you with zeal and earnestness, the blessings which you shall ask, will surely come to you."

Brothers and sisters, I would like to burn the whole stock of old prayers that we have been using for the past fifty years. That "oil that goes from vessel to vessel,"—that "horse that rushes into the battle,"—that misquoted mangled text, "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" [Matthew 18:20].—and all those other quotations which we have been manufactured, and dislocated, and copied from man to man. I wish we came to speak to God, just out of our own hearts. It would be a great thing for our prayer meetings; they would be better attended; and I am sure they would be more fruitful, if every man and woman would shake off that habit of formality, and talk to God as a child talks to his father; ask him for what we want and then sit down and be quiet. I say this with all Christian sincerity. Often, because I have not chosen to pray in any conventional form, people have said, "That man is not reverent!" My dear sir, you are not a judge of my reverence. To my own master, I stand or fall. I don't think that Job quoted anybody. I don't think that Jacob quoted his father Abraham. I don't find Jesus Christ quoting Scripture in prayer. They did not pray in other people's words, but they prayed in their own. God does not want you to go gathering up those excellent but very musty spices of the old sanctuary. He wants the new oil just distilled from the fresh olive of your own soul. He wants spices and frankincense, not of the old chests where they

have been lying until they have lost their savor, but he wants fresh incense, and fresh myrrh, brought from your own soul's experience. Make sure that you really pray, don't learn the language of prayer, but seek the spirit of prayer, and may God Almighty bless you, and make you more mighty in your supplications.

I have said, "Look around you." I want you to continue the work, and look around your own prayer closets.

Oh, brothers and sisters, there is no place that some of us need to be so much ashamed to look at as in our prayer closet. I cannot say the hinges are rusty; they do open and shut at their appointed times. I cannot say that the door is locked and cobwebbed. We do not neglect prayer itself; but those walls, what a tale might they tell! "Oh!" the wall might cry out, "I have heard you when you have been in such a hurry that you could scarcely spend two minutes with your God, and I have heard you, too, when you were neither asleep nor awake, and when you didn't know what you were saying." Then one wall might cry out, "I have heard you come and spend ten minutes and not ask for anything, at least your heart didn't ask. The lips moved, but the heart did not ask. The lips moved, but the heart was silent." How might another wall cry out—"Oh! I have heard you groan out your soul, but I have seen you go away distrustful, not believing your prayer was heard, quoting the promise, but not believing that God would fulfill it." Surely the four walls of the closet might come together and fall down upon us in their anger, because we have so often insulted God with our unbelief and with our hurry, and with all kinds of sins. We have insulted him even at his mercy seat, on the spot where his condescension is most fully manifested. Isn't this true with you? Must we not each confess that we are guilty? See to it then, Christian brothers and sisters, that a change is made, and God make you more mighty and more successful in your prayers than ever before.

III. But not to detain you, the last point is to look upward, LOOK ABOVE.

Look above Christian brothers and sisters, and let us weep. Oh God, you have given us a mighty weapon, and we have allowed it to rust. You have given us that which is as mighty as yourself, and we have let that power lie dormant. Wouldn't it be a vile crime if a man had an eye given him which he would not open, or a hand that he would not lift up, or a foot that grew stiff because he would not use it. And what must we say of ourselves when God has given us power in prayer, and yet that power lies still. Oh, if the universe was as still as we are, where would we be? Oh God, you give light to the sun and it shines with it. You give light even to the stars and they twinkle. To the winds you give force

and they blow. And to the air you give life and it moves, and men breathe it. But to your people you have given a gift that is better than force, and life, and light, and yet they permit it to lie still. Forgetful almost that they wield the power, seldom exercising it, though it would provide them with countless blessings. Weep, Christian. Constantine, the Emperor of Rome, saw that on the coins of the other Emperors, their images were in an erect posture—triumphing. However, he ordered that his image should be struck kneeling, for he said—“That is the way in which I have triumphed.”

We will never triumph till our image is struck kneeling. The reason why we have been defeated, and why our banners trail in the dust, is because we have not prayed. Go—go back to your God, with sorrow, confess before him, that you were armed, and carried bows, but turned your backs in the day of battle. Go to your God and tell him that if souls are not saved, it is not because he hasn't the power to save, but because you have never anguished over perishing sinners. Your heart has not cried out, neither has your spirit been moved. Wake up, wake up, You people of Israel; be astonished, You careless ones; You who have neglected prayer; You sinners that have been at ease. Wake yourselves up; wrestle and strive with your God, and then the blessing will come—the early and the latter rain of his mercy, and the earth will bring forth abundantly, and all the nations will call him blessed. Look up then, and weep.

Once more look up and rejoice. Though you have sinned against him he loves you still.

You have not prayed to him nor sought his face, but behold he cries to you still—“Seek my face;” and he does not say to you, “You seek me in vain.” You may not have gone to the fountain, but it flows as freely as before. You have not drawn near to God, but he still waits to be gracious, and is ready to hear all your petitions. Behold, he says to you, “Enquire of me concerning things to come, and concerning my sons and daughters, command me.” What a blessed thing it is that the master in heaven is always ready to listen!

Augustine has a very beautiful thought on the parable of the man who knocked at his friend's door at midnight, saying, “Friend, give me three loaves.” His paraphrase of it runs something like this—I knock at mercy's door, and it is the dead of night. “Will not some of the servants of the house come and answer me?” No; I knock, but they are asleep. Oh! You apostles of God—You glorified martyrs—You are asleep; You rest in your beds; You cannot hear my prayer. But will not the children answer? Are there not children who are ready to come

and open the door to their brother? No; they are asleep. My brethren that have departed—with whom I took sweet counsel, and who were the companions of my heart—You cannot answer me for you rest in Jesus; your works follow you, but you cannot work for me. But while the servants are asleep, and while the children cannot answer, the Master is awake—awake at midnight too. It may be midnight with my soul, but he hears me, and when I am saying “Give me three loaves,” he comes to the door and gives me as much as I need.

Christian, look up then and rejoice. There is always an open ear if you have an open mouth. There is always a ready hand if you have a ready heart. You only have to cry and the Lord hears; no, before you call he will answer, and while you are speaking he will hear. Oh! Don't be backward then in prayer. Go to him when you reach your home; no, on the very way lift up your heart silently; and whatever your petition or request may be, ask it in Jesus' name, and it will be done to you.

Yet, again, look up dear Christian, and make changes to your prayers from this time forward. Look on prayer no longer as a romantic fiction or as an strenuous duty; look at it as a real power, as a real pleasure. When philosophers discover some latent power, they seem to have a delight to put it in action. I believe there have been many great engineers, who have designed and constructed some of the most wonderful of human works, not because they would be paid a great sum of money, but simply from a love of showing their own power to accomplish wonders. To show the world what skill could do and what man could accomplish, they have tempted companies into speculations that could never repay them, so far as I could see, in order that they might have an opportunity of displaying their genius.

O Christian men and women, will a great Engineer attempt great works and display his power, and will you who have a mightier power than was ever wielded by any man apart from his God—will you let that power be hidden? No! think of some great object, strain the sinews of your supplications for it. Let every vein of your heart be full to the brim with the rich blood of desire, and struggle, and wrestle, and tug and strive with God for it, using the promises and pleading the attributes, and see if God does not give you your heart's desire. I challenge you this day to exceed in prayer so much that my Master can't meet your desires. I throw down the gauntlet to you. Believe him to be more than he is; open your mouth so wide that he cannot fill it; go to him now for more faith than the promise warrants; venture it, risk it, outdo the Eternal if it is possible; attempt it. Or as I would rather put it, take your petitions and needs and see if

he does not honor you. Test him to see if he will fulfill the promise, and richly bless you with the anointing oil of his Spirit by which you will be strong in prayer.

I cannot refrain from adding just these few syllables as you go away. I know there are some of you that never prayed in your whole life. You have said a form of prayer, perhaps, many years, but have never prayed once. Ah! poor soul, you must be born again, and until you are born again you cannot pray as I have been directing the Christian to pray. But let me say this much to you. Does your heart long after salvation? Has the Spirit whispered, "Come to Jesus, sinner, he will hear you?" Believe that whisper, for he will hear you. The prayer of the awakened sinner is acceptable to God. He hears the brokenhearted and heals them. Take your troubles and your disappointments to God and he will answer you. "Ah," but one says, "I have nothing to plead." Well, just plead as David did—"Pardon my iniquity, for it is great." You have that plea—say it for his dear sake, who shed his blood, and you will prevail, sinner.

But don't go to God, and ask for mercy with your sin in your hand. What would you think of the rebel, who appeared before the face of his sovereign and asked for pardon with the dagger sticking in his belt, and with the declaration of his rebellion on his breast? Would he deserve to be pardoned? He could not deserve it in any case, and surely he would deserve double his doom for having thus mocked his master while he pretended to be seeking mercy. If a wife had forsaken her husband do you think she would have the impudence, with brazen face, to come back and ask pardon while leaning on the arm of her new lover? No, she could not have such impudence, and yet it is so with you—perhaps asking for mercy and going on in sin—praying to be reconciled to God, and yet harboring and indulging your lust. Wake up! Wake up! and call upon your God, you sleeper. The boat is nearing the rock, perhaps tomorrow it may strike and be destroyed, and you will sink down into the unfathomable depths of everlasting woe. Call on your God, I say, and when you call upon him, cast away your sin or he cannot hear you. If you lift up your unholy hands with a lie in the right hand, a prayer is worthless on your lip. Oh, come to him, say to him, "Take away all iniquity, receive us graciously, love us freely," and he will hear you, and you will yet pray as prevailing princes, and one day will stand as more than conquerors before the starry throne of him who ever reigns God over all, blessed forevermore. Amen.

## EPILOGUE

### “A Sure and Certain Hope”

*Hector M’Phail (1716-1774) was a minister in Ross-shire, Dr. Kennedy wrote how, on his death-bed, he became very dejected and, in that state of mind, he fell asleep*

He dreamt that he was waiting, lonely and despairing, outside the walls of the New Jerusalem. Seeing the gate closed, and none near to help him, and none in sight to cry to for help, he had just lain down to die, when he heard sounds as of a company approaching the city.

Venturing to look up from the dust where he lay, he recognized Noah, Abraham, and all the patriarchs. As they drew near, the gate flew open, a glorious company from within came forth to meet them, and, in the midst of shouts of triumph, they entered. The gate again closes, and again he is left alone and helpless.

Soon he heard the noise of another company approaching. As they pass, he recognizes Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David, and all the prophets, a glorious and numerous band. Again the gate is thrown open, “an abundant entrance” given, and again he is left outside, and feels more desolate than ever.

A third company is heard approaching, composed of the Apostles and all the earliest Christians. They enter the city amidst rejoicing ilke the rest, and he, with less hope than ever, is still outside the gate.