

SECRET SINS

"Cleanse You me from secret faults."

Psalm 19:12

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS arises partly from pride but mainly from ignorance of God's Law. It is because men know little or nothing concerning the terrible character of the Divine Law that they foolishly imagine themselves to be righteous. They are not aware of the deep spirituality and the stern severity of the Law or they would have other and wiser notions. Once let them know how strictly the Law deals with the thoughts—how it brings itself to bear upon every emotion of the inner man—and there is not one creature beneath God's Heaven who would dare to think himself selfrighteous in God's sight in virtue of his own deeds and thoughts.

Only let the Law be truly revealed to a man. Let him know how strict the Law is and how infinitely just and his selfrighteousness will shrivel into nothing—it will become a filthy rag in his sight—whereas before he thought it to be a goodly garment. David, having seen God's Law and having praised it in this Psalm, which I have read in your hearing, is brought by reflecting on its excellency, to utter this thought, "Who can understand his errors?" and then to offer this prayer, "Cleanse You me from secret faults."

In the Lateran Council of the Church of Rome a decree was passed that every true believer must confess his sins, all of them, once each year to a priest and they affixed to it this declaration—that there is no hope of pardon but in complying with that decree. What can equal the absurdity of such a decree as that? Do they suppose that they can tell their sins as easily as they can count their fingers? Why, if we could receive pardon for all our sins by telling every sin we have committed in one hour, there is not one of us who would be able to enter Heaven.

Besides the sins that are known to us and that we may be able to confess, there are a vast mass of sins which are as truly sins as those which we do observe but which are secret and come not beneath our eyes. Oh if we had eyes like those of God, we should think very differently of ourselves. The sins that we see and confess are but like the farmer's small samples which he brings to market when he has left his granary full at home. We have but a very few sins which we can observe and detect, compared with those which are hidden to ourselves and unseen by our fellow creatures.

I doubt not it is true of all of us who are here that in every hour of our existence in which we are active, we commit tens of thousands of sins for which conscience has never reproved us because we have never seen them to be wrong, seeing we have not studied God's Laws as we ought to have done. Now be it known to us all that sin is sin, whether we see it or not—that a sin secret to us is a sin as truly as if we knew it to be a sin, though not so great a sin in the sight of God as if it had been committed presumptuously, seeing that it lacks the aggravation of willfulness. Let all of us who know our sins offer this prayer after all our confessions—"Lord, I have confessed as many as I know but I must add an etcetera after them and say, 'Cleanse You me from secret faults.' "

That, however, will not be the essence of my sermon this morning. I am going after a certain class of men who have sins not unknown to themselves but secret to their fellow creatures. Every now and then we turn up a fair stone which lies upon the green sward of the professing Church, surrounded with the verdure of apparent goodness and to our astonishment we find beneath it all kinds of filthy insects and loathsome reptiles and in our disgust at such hypocrisy, we are driven to exclaim, "All men are liars. There are none in whom we can put any trust at all."

It is not fair to say so of all but really, the discoveries which are made of the insincerity of our fellow creatures are enough to make us despise our kind because they can go so far in appearances and yet have so little soundness of heart. To you, Sirs, who sin secretly and yet make

a profession—you who break God's Covenants in the dark and wear a mask of goodness in the light. To you, Sirs, who shut the doors and commit wickedness in secret—to you I shall speak this morning. O may God also be pleased to speak to you and make you pray this prayer—"Cleanse You me from secret faults."

I shall endeavor to urge upon all pretenders present to give up, to renounce, to detest, to hate, to abhor all their secret sins. And, first, I shall endeavor to show the folly of secret sins. Secondly, the misery of secret sins. Thirdly, the guilt of secret sins. Fourthly, the danger of secret sins and then I shall try to apply some words by way of remedy—that we may all of us be enabled to avoid secret sins.

1. First, then, THE FOLLY OF SECRET SINS.

Pretender, you are fair to look upon. Your conduct is outwardly upright, amiable, liberal, generous and Christian. But you indulge in some sin which the eyes of man have not yet detected. Perhaps it is private drunkenness. You do revile the drunkard when he staggers through the street. But you can yourself indulge in the same habit in private. It may be some other lust or vice. It is not for me just now to mention what it is. But, Pretender, we say unto you, you are a fool to think of harboring a secret sin and you are a fool for this one reason—that your sin is not a secret sin—it is known and shall one day be revealed. Perhaps very soon.

Your sin is not a secret. The eyes of God have seen it. You have sinned before His face. You have shut the door and drawn the curtains and kept out the eye of the sun but God's eye pierces through the darkness. The brick walls which surrounded you were as transparent as glass to the eye of the Almighty. The darkness which did gird you was as bright as the summer's noon to the eye of Him who beholds all things. Know you not, O man, that "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do?"

As the priest ran his knife into the entrails of his victim, discovered the heart and liver and what else did lie within, so are you, O man, seen by God. Cut open by the Almighty, you have no secret chamber where you can hide yourself. You have no dark cellar where you can conceal your soul. Dig deep, yes, deep as Hell but you can not find earth enough upon the globe to cover your sin. If you should heap the mountains on its grave, those mountains would tell the tale of what was buried in their bowels. If you could cast your sin into the sea, a thousand babbling waves would tell the secret out.

There is no hiding it from God. Your sin is photographed in high Heaven. The deed, when it was done, was photographed upon the sky and there it shall remain and you shall see yourself one day revealed to the gazing eyes of all men a hypocrite, a pretender, who did sin in fancied secret, observed in all your acts by the all-seeing Jehovah. O what fools men are, to think they can do anything in secret. This world is like the glass hives wherein bees sometimes work—we look down upon them and we see all the operations of the little creatures. So God looks down and sees all our eyes are weak. We cannot look through the darkness but His eye, like an orb of fire, penetrates the blackness and reads the thought of man and sees his acts when he thinks himself most concealed.

Oh, it were a thought enough to curb us from all sin, if it were truly applied to us—"You, God, see me!" Stop thief! Drop that which you have taken! God sees you! No eye of detection of earth has discovered you but God's eyes are now looking through the clouds upon you. Swearer! Though none at whom you swore heard your oath, God heard it. It entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabbath. And those who lead a filthy life and yet are respectable among men—your vices are all known.

They are written in God's book. He keeps a diary of all your acts. And what will you think on that day when a crowd shall be assembled, compared with which this immense multitude is but a drop in a bucket and God shall read out the story of your secret life and men and angels shall hear it? Certain I am there are none of us who would like to have all our secrets read, especially our secret thoughts. If I should select out of this congregation the most holy man. If I should bring him forward and say, "Now, Sir, I know all your thoughts and am about to tell them," I am sure he

would offer me the largest bribe that he could gather if I would be pleased to conceal at least some of them.

“Tell,” he would say, “of my acts—of them I am not ashamed. But do not tell my thoughts and imaginations—of them I must ever stand ashamed before God.” What, then, Sinner, will be your shame when your private lusts, your closet transgressions, your secret crimes shall be heralded from God’s Throne, proclaimed by His own mouth and with a voice louder than a thousand thunders preached in the ears of an assembled world? What will be your terror and confusion then, when all the deeds you have done shall be proclaimed in the face of the sun, in the ears of all mankind? O renounce the foolish hope of heresy, for your sin is this day recorded and shall one day be advertised upon the walls of Heaven.

II. In the next place, let us notice THE MISERY OF SECRET SINS.

Of all sinners the man who makes a profession of religion and yet lives in iniquity is the most miserable. A downright wicked man, who takes a glass in his hand and says, “I am a drunkard, I am not ashamed of it,” he shall be unutterably miserable in worlds to come. But brief though it is, he has his hour of pleasure. A man who curses and swears and says, “That is my habit, I am a profane man,” and makes a profession of it, he has, at least, some peace in his soul. But the man who walks with God’s minister, who is united with God’s Church, who comes out before God’s people and unites with them and then lives in sin—what a miserable existence he must have!

Why, he has a worse existence than the mouse that is in the parlor, running out now and then to pick up the crumbs and then back again to his hole. Such men must run out now and then to sin. And, oh, how fearful they are to be discovered! One day, perhaps, their character turns up. With wonderful cunning they manage to conceal and gloss it over but the next day something else comes and they live in constant fear, telling lie after lie, to make the last lie appear truthful—adding deception to deception—in order that they may not be discovered—

*“Oh, ‘tis a tangled web we weave,
When once we venture to deceive,”*

If I must be a wicked man give me the life of a boisterous sinner who sins before the face of day. If I must sin let me not act as a hypocrite and a coward. Let me not profess to be God’s and spend my life for the devil. That way of cheating the devil is a thing which every honest sinner will be ashamed of. He will say, “If I serve my master I will serve him out and out, I will have no sham about it. If I make a profession, I will carry it out but if I do not, if I live in sin, I am not going to gloss it over by cant and hypocrisy.” One thing which has hamstrung the Church and cut her very sinews in two has been this most damnable hypocrisy.

Oh, in how many places have we seen men whom you might praise to the very skies if you could believe their words—but whom you might cast into the nethermost pit if you could see their secret actions? God forgive any of you who are so acting! I had almost said I can scarce forgive you. I can forgive the man who riots openly and makes no profession of being better. But the man who fawns and cants and pretends and prays and then lives in sin—that man I hate—I cannot bear him. I abhor him from my very soul. If he will turn from his ways, I will love him but in his hypocrisy he is to me the most loathsome of all creatures.

‘Tis said the toad does wear a jewel in her head but the hypocrite has none but bears filthiness about him—while he pretends to be in love with righteousness. A mere profession, my Hearers, is but painted pageantry to go to Hell in. It is like the plumes upon the hearse and the trappings upon the black horses which drag men to their graves—the funeral array of dead souls. Take heed above everything of a waxen profession that will not stand the sun. Take care of all that needs to have two faces to carry it out. Be one thing, or else the other. If you make up your mind to serve Satan, do not pretend to serve God. And if you serve God, serve Him with all your heart.

“No man can serve two masters.” Do not try it, do not endeavor to do it, for no life will be more miserable than that. Above all beware of committing acts which it will be necessary to conceal. There is a singular poem by Hood, called “The Dream of Eugene Aram”—a most remarkable piece it is, indeed, illustrating the point on which I am now dwelling. Aram has murdered a man and cast his body into the river—“a sluggish water, black as ink, the depth was so extreme.”

The next morning he visited the scene of his guilt—

*“And sought the black accursed pool,
With a wild misgiving eye;
And he saw the dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.”*

Next he covered the corpse with heaps of leaves but a mighty wind swept through the wood and left the secret bare before the sun—

*“Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep.
On land or sea though it should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.”*

In plaintive notes he prophesies his own discovery. He buried his victim in a cave and trod him down with stones but when years had run their weary round the foul deed was discovered and the murderer put to death. Guilt is a “grim chamberlain,” even when fingers are not bloody red. Secret sins bring fevered eyes and sleepless nights until men burn out their consciences and become in very deed ripe for the pit. Hypocrisy is a hard game to play at, for it is one deceiver against many observers. And for certain it is a miserable trade, which will earn at last, as its certain climax, a tremendous bankruptcy.

Ah, you who have sinned without discovery, “Be sure your sin will find you out.” And remember, it may find you out before long. Sin, like murder, will come out—men will even tell tales about themselves in their dreams. God has sometimes made men so pricked in their consciences that they have been obliged to come forward and confess the crime. Secret sinner! If you want the foretaste of damnation upon earth, continue in your secret sin, for no man is more miserable than he who sins secretly and yet tries to preserve a character.

Yonder stag, followed by the hungry hounds with open mouths, is far more happy than the man who is followed by his sins. Yonder bird, taken in the fowler’s net and laboring to escape, is far more happy than he who has weaved around himself a web of deception and labors to escape from it day by day by making the toils more thick and the web more strong. Oh, the misery of secret sins! Truly, one may pray, “Cleanse You me from secret faults.”

III. But now, next, the guilt—THE SOLEMN GUILT OF SECRET SIN.

Now, John, you do not think there is any evil in a thing unless somebody sees it, do you? You feel that it is a very great sin if your master finds you out in robbing the till—but there is no sin if he should not discover it—none at all. And you, Sir, you fancy it to be very great sin to play a trick in trade, in case you should be discovered and brought before the court. But to play a trick and never be discovered, that is all fair—do not say a word about it Mr. Spurgeon, it is all business. You must not touch business—tricks that are not discovered, of course you are not to find fault with them. The common measure of sin is the notoriety of it.

But I do not believe that. A sin is a sin, whether done in private or before the whole world. It is singular how men will measure guilt. A railway servant puts up a wrong signal—there is an accident. The man is tried and severely reprimanded. The day before he put up the wrong signal but there was no accident and therefore no one cursed him for his neglect. But it was just the same, accident or no accident—the accident did not make the guilt—it was the deed which made the guilt, not the notoriety nor yet the consequence of it. It was his business to have taken care and he was as guilty the first time as he was the second, for he negligently exposed the lives of men. Do not measure sin by what other people say of it. But measure sin by what God says of it and what your own conscience says of it.

Now I hold that secret sin, if anything, is the worst sin. Because secret sin implies that the man who commits it has Atheism in his heart. You will ask how that can be? I reply, he may be a professing Christian but I shall tell him to his face that he is a practical Atheist if he labors to keep up a respectable profession before man and then secretly transgresses. Why, is he not an Atheist who will say there is a God, yet at the same time thinks more of man than he does of God? Is it not the very essence of Atheism—is it not a denial of the Divinity of the Most High when men lightly esteem Him and think more of the eye of a creature than of the observation of their Creator?

There are some who would not for the life of them say a wicked word in the presence of their minister but they can do it knowing God is looking at them. They are Atheists. There are some who would not trick in trade for all the world if they thought they would be discovered. But they can do it while God is with them, that is, they think more of the eye of man than of the eye of God. And they think it worse to be condemned by man than to be condemned by God. Call it by what name you will—the proper name of that is practical Atheism. It is dishonoring God. It is dethroning Him—putting Him down below His own creatures. And what is that but to take away His Divinity?

Brethren, do not, I beseech you, incur the fearful guilt of secret sins. No man can sin a little in secret—it will certainly engender more sin. No man can be a hypocrite and yet be moderate in guilt—he will go from bad to worse and still proceed—until when his guilt shall be published—he shall be found to be the very worst and the most hardened of men. Take heed of the guilt of secret sin. Ah, now if I could preach as Rowland Hill did, I would make some people look to themselves and tremble!

It is said that when he preached, there was not a man in the window, or standing in the crowd, or perched up anywhere but said, “There, he is preaching at me. He is telling me about my secret sins.” And when he proclaimed God’s omniscience, it is said men would almost think they saw God bodily present in the midst of them looking at them. And when he had finished his sermon, they would hear a voice in their ears, “Can any hide himself in secret places that I cannot see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill Heaven and earth? says the Lord.” I would I could do that. That I could make every man look to himself and find out his secret sin. Come my Hearer, what is it? Bring it forth to the daylight. Perhaps it will die in the light of the sun. These things love to not be discovered. Tell your own conscience, now, what it is. Look it in the face. Confess it before God and may He give you grace to remove that sin and every other and turn to Him with full purpose of heart. But know this—your guilt is guilt discovered or undiscovered and if there is any difference it is worse, because it has been secret. God save us from the guilt of secret sin! “Cleanse You me from secret faults.”

IV. And note, next, THE DANGER OF SECRET SIN. One danger is that a man cannot commit a little sin in secret without being by-and-by betrayed into a public sin. You cannot, Sir, though you may think you can, preserve a moderation in sin. If you commit one sin, it is like the melting of the lower glacier upon the Alps. The others must follow in time. As certainly as you heap one stone upon the mound today, the next day you will cast another, until the heap, reared stone by stone, shall become a very pyramid. See the coral insect at work—you cannot decree where it shall stay its work.

It will not build its rock just as high as you please. It will not stay until it shall be covered with weeds and until the weeds shall decay. And then there shall be soil upon it and an island shall be

created by tiny creatures. Sin cannot be held in with bit and bridle. "But I am going to have a little drink now and then, I am only going to be intoxicated once a week or so. Nobody will see it. I shall be in bed directly." You will be drunk in the streets soon. "I am only just going to read one lascivious book, I will put it under the sofa when anyone comes in." You will keep it in your library yet, Sir.

"I am only going into that company now and then." You will go there every day, such is the bewitching character of it. You cannot help it. You may as well ask the lion to let you put your head into his mouth. You cannot regulate his jaws—neither can you regulate sin. Once go into it, you cannot tell when you will be destroyed. You may be such a fortunate individual that like Van Amburgh you may put your head in and out a great many times. But rest assured that one of these days it will be a costly venture.

Again—you may labor to conceal your vicious habit but it will come out—you cannot help it. You keep your little pet sin at home. But mark this, when the door is ajar the dog will be out in the street. Wrap him up in your bosom, put over him fold after fold of hypocrisy to keep him secret—the wretch will be singing some day when you are in company. You cannot keep the evil bird still. Your sin will gad abroad. And what is more, you will not mind it some of these days. A man who indulges in sin privately, by degrees gets his forehead as hard as brass. The first time he sinned, the drops of sweat stood on his brow at the recollection of what he had done.

The second time, no hot sweat was on his brow—only an agitation of the muscle. The third time there was the sly, sneaky look but no agitation. The next time, he sinned a little further. And by degrees he became the bold blasphemer of his God and exclaims, "Who am I that I should fear Jehovah and who is He that I should serve Him?" Men go from bad to worse. Launch your boat in the current—it must go where the current takes it. Put yourself in the whirlwind—you are but a straw in the wind—you must go which way the wind carries you—you cannot control yourself.

The balloon can mount, but it cannot direct its course. It must go whichever way the wind blows. If you once mount into sin there is no stopping. Take heed if you would not become the worst of characters. Take heed of the little sins. They, mounting one upon another, may at last heave you from the summit and destroy your soul forever. There is a great danger in secret sins.

But I have here some true Christians who indulge in secret sins. They say it is but a little one and therefore do they spare it. Dear Brethren, I speak to you and I speak to myself, when I say this—let us destroy all our little secret sins. They are called little and if they are, let us remember that it is the foxes, even the little foxes, that spoil our vines. For our vines have tender shoots. Let us take heed of our little sins. A little sin, like a little pebble in the shoe, will make a traveler to Heaven walk very wearily.

Little sins, like little thieves, may open the door to greater ones outside. Christians, recollect that little sins will spoil your communion with Christ. Little sins, like little stains in silk, may damage the fine texture of Fellowship. Little sins, like little irregularities in the machinery, may spoil the whole fabric of your religion. The one dead fly spoils the whole pot of ointment. That one thistle may seed a continent with noxious weeds. Let us, Brethren, kill our sins as often as we can find them. One said—"The heart is full of unclean birds. It is a cage of them." "Ah but," said another Divine, "you must not make that an apology, for a Christian's business is to wring their necks."

And so it is. If there are evil things, it is our business to kill them. Christians must not tolerate secret sins. We must not harbor traitors. It is high treason against the King of Heaven. Let us drag them out to light and offer them upon the altar, giving up the dearest of our secret sins at the will and bidding of God. There is a great danger in a little secret sin. Therefore avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and shun it and God give you grace to overcome it!

1. And now I come, in finishing up, to plead with all my might with some of you whom God has pricked in your consciences. I have come to entreat you, if it is possible, even to tears, that you will give up your secret sins. I have one here for whom I bless God. I love

him, though I know him not. He is almost persuaded to be a Christian. He halts between two opinions. He intends to serve God, he strives to give up sin but he finds it a hard struggle and as yet he knows not what shall become of him. I speak to him with all love—my Friend, will you have your sin and go to Hell, or leave your sin and go to Heaven?

This is the solemn alternative—to an awakened sinner I put it—may God choose for you, otherwise I tremble as to which you may choose. The pleasures of this life are so intoxicating, the joys of it so ensnaring that did I not believe that God works in us to will and to do, I should despair of you. But I have confidence that God will decide the matter. Let me lay the alternative before you—on the one hand there is an hour's merriment—a short life of bliss and that a poor, poor bliss. On the other hand there is everlasting life and eternal glory. On the one hand, there is a transient happiness and afterwards overwhelming woe. In this case there is a solid peace and everlasting joy and after it overflowing bliss.

I shall not fear to be called an Arminian, when I say, as Elijah did, “Choose this day whom you will serve. If God is God, serve Him. If Baal be God serve him.” But, now, make your choice deliberately. And may God help you to do it! Do not say you will take up with religion, without first counting the cost of it. Remember, there is your lust to be given up and your pleasure to be renounced—can you do it for Christ's sake? Can you? I know you cannot, unless God's grace shall assist you in making such a choice.

But can you say, “Yes, by the help of God, earth's gaudy toys, its pomps, pageantries, gewgaws, all these I renounce”?—

*“These can never satisfy,
Give me Christ or else I die.”*

Sinner, you will never regret that choice, if God help you to make it. You will find yourself a happy man here and thrice happy throughout eternity.

“But,” says one, “Sir, I intend to be religious but I do not hold with your strictness.” I do not ask you to do so. I hope, however, you will hold with God's strictness and God's strictness is ten thousand times greater than mine. You may say that I am Puritanical in my preaching—God will be Puritanical in judging in that great day. I may appear severe but I can never be so severe as God will be. I may draw the harrow with sharp teeth across your conscience but God shall drag harrows of eternal fire across you one day.

I may speak thundering things! God will not speak them but hurl them from His hands. Remember, men may laugh at Hell and say there is none. But they must reject their Bibles before they can believe the lie. Men's consciences tell them that—

*“There is a dreadful Hell,
And everlasting pains.
Where sinners must with devils dwell,
In darkness, fire and chains.”*

Sirs, will you keep your secret sins and have eternal fire for them? Remember it is of no use, they must all be given up, or else you cannot be God's child. You cannot by any means have both. It cannot be God and the World. It cannot be Christ and the devil. It must be one or the other. Oh, that God would give you grace to resign all! For what are they worth? They are your deceivers now and will be your tormentors forever. Oh, that your eyes were open to see the rottenness, the emptiness and trickery of iniquity! Oh, that God would turn you to Himself! Oh, may God give you grace to cross the Rubicon of repentance at this very hour!

May He give you grace to say, "Henceforth it is war to the knife with my sins. Not one of them will I willingly keep

"The dearest idol I have known.

Whatever that idol be.

Help me to tear it from its Throne,

And worship only You."

"But oh, Sir, I cannot do it, it would be like pulling my eyes out." Yes but hear what Christ says—"It were better for you to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into Hell fire."

"But it would be like cutting my arm off." Yes and it would be better for you to enter into life crippled or maimed, than to be cast into Hell fire forever. Oh, when the sinner comes before God at last, do you think he will speak as he does now? God will reveal his secret sins—the sinner will not then say, "Lord, I thought my secret sins so sweet, I could not give them up."

I think I see how changed it will be then. "Sir," you say now, "you are too strict." Will you say that when the eyes of the Almighty are glowering on you? You say now, "Sir you are too precise." Will you say that to God Almighty's face? "Sir, I mean to keep such-and-such a sin." Can you say it at God's bar at last? You will not dare to do it then. Ah, when Christ comes a second time there will be a marvelous change in the way men talk. Methinks I see Him. There He sits upon His Throne. Now, Caiaphas, come and condemn Him now! Judas! Come and kiss Him now! What do you stick at, man? Are you afraid of Him?

Now, Barabbas! Go, See whether they will prefer you to Christ now. Swearer, now is your time. You have been a bold man—curse Him to His face now. Now drunkard—stagger up to Him now. Now infidel—tell Him there is no Christ now—now that the world is lit with lightning and the earth is shaking with thunder till the solid pillars thereof do bow themselves—tell God there is no God now! Now laugh at the Bible. Now scoff at the minister. Why Men, what is the matter with you? Why, can't you do it?

Ah, there you are, you have fled to the hills and to the rocks—"Rocks hide us! Mountains fall on us! Hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne." Ah, where are your boasts now? Alas! alas! For you, in that dread day of wonders—secret sinner—what will become of you? Go out of this place unmasked. Go out to examine yourself, go out to bend your knee, go out to weep, go out to pray. God give you grace to believe! And oh, how sweet and pleasant the thought—that this day sinners have fled to Christ and men have been born again to Jesus!

Brethren, before I finish, I repeat the words at which so many have quibbled—it is now or never, it is turn or burn. Solemnly in God's sight I say it. If it is not God's Truth I must answer for it in the great day of account. Your consciences tell you it is true. Take it home and mock me if you will. This morning I am clear of your blood—if any seek not God but live in sin, I shall be clear of your blood in that day when the Watchman shall have your souls demanded of Him. Oh, may God grant that you may be cleared in a blessed manner! When I went down these pulpit stairs a Sabbath or two ago, a friend said to me words which have been in my mind ever since—"Sir, there are nine thousand people this day without excuse in the Day of Judgment."

It is true of you this morning. If you are damned, it will be not for want of preaching to you and it shall not be for want of praying for you. God knows that if my heart could break of itself, it would, for your souls. God is my witness how earnestly I long for you in the heart of Christ Jesus. Oh, that He might touch your hearts and bring you to Him! For death is a solemn thing. Damnation is a horrible thing. To be out of Christ is a dreadful thing. To be dead in sin is a terrible thing. May God lead you to view these things as they are and save you, for His mercy's sake!

"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved."

*"Lord, search my soul, try every thought;
Though my own heart accuse me not
Of walking in a false disguise,
I beg the trial of your eyes,
Does secret mischief lurk within?
Do I indulge some unknown sin?
O turn my feet whenever I stray,
And lead me in Your perfect way."*