

“VERILY, VERILY”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life.”

John 5:24

THE words “Verily, verily,” as they were solemnly used by our Divine Lord, indicate an utterance of special importance. If Jesus says, “Verily, verily,” there is something coming to which we should attend with all our hearts! The subject which He thus introduces is our possession of eternal life and our being delivered from condemnation by faith in Himself. Can any theme be more important? Many questions may be asked, but they can all afford to wait till we get the answer to that first enquiry, “What must I do to be saved?” What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world of knowledge and knows not the way of life? If he wins a world in this life, what will that matter to him if he misses life everlasting?

It is very considerate on our Lord’s part to call us with such great solemnity to think about our souls and eternal life. Let us attend to His appeal. Come here, dear Hearer, and bend over the words which Jesus commends to you with a double emphasis, saying, “Verily, verily.” Our Lord used this, “Verily, verily,” to denote a clear and certain Revelation. There must be an end to all doubt when Jesus says, “Verily, verily.” His ordinary word is true, for nothing but the Truth of God can come from Him who is “The Truth.” But when He uses His strongest exhortation, “Verily, verily,” then we must regard the statement with special reverence if we are, indeed, His loyal subjects.

When Jesus says, “Verily, verily,” we see two armies of truth gathered around His royal standard. His declaration is to be accepted as the indisputable, immutable, infallible Truth of God. Do you not agree to this? Carefully notice where this certainty lies—it rests solely upon the Word of Jesus—“I say unto you.” In the matter of our salvation, carnal reason never arrives at certainty. Mere argument can never bring a troubled heart to a sure anchorage. The certainty which Christ sets before us rests upon His own solemn assertion. Instead of proof, the Incarnate Son of God gives us—“Verily, verily, I say unto you.” If you are His disciples, and would enjoy the benefits of His salvation, you must accept your Lord’s statement without question. Doubts and reason must lie down at His feet and it must be enough that Jesus says it.

The ipse dixit of a mere man is not enough, but those of us who adore the Lord Jesus as the Son of God desire no better assurance than the Word of His lips! Here is our ultimate ground of faith, our main argument with mankind, our final answer to Satan and the eternal quietus of every misgiving—Jesus says it! We shall never arrive at certainty as to everlasting life except by a conviction that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is Infallible in everything that He says. I had rather have one word from Jesus than volumes of human reason, however conclusive they may appear! Our judgment has often deceived us—even our senses play us false and our emotions are no more to be depended on than the winds and waves—but here is a rocky foundation, firm as the pillars of Heaven! “Verily, verily, I say unto you.”

It is clear that the teaching of this present verse must be accepted by all Christians. They must either believe it or reject their Lord, for He does, as it were, stake His own Character for Truth upon this utterance by prefacing it with, “I say unto you.” Jesus does not leave the way of life a moot point, but decides it with all authority, states it in plain terms and sets it forth, formally, in a declaration for which He will be forever responsible. If you reject this teaching, you must reject the Teacher, Himself! Nothing of authority remains to Jesus if you take liberty to question this point, for He does not put it as a matter of report, or inference, but as a Truth of God to be accepted on His own authority—“Verily, verily, I say unto you.”

I have heard some who call themselves Christians talk about the Doctrine of Salvation through faith in Christ as if it were a mere theory of what they are pleased to call the Evangelical School—but is it so? Is it not our Lord's own teaching? Our opponents have full liberty to canvass the peculiar tenets of a party—and the more they do so the better—but this teaching is not ours! It is the teaching of Him whom these critics call Master and Lord! Is this their reverence for the Son of God? Do they challenge Him to His face and question that which He asserts with a double verily and certifies by the dignity of His Person and the veracity of His Character?

I am equally at issue with those who admit the Doctrine of Justification by Faith and then add that it is to be guardedly stated and cautiously presented! Does Jesus teach dangerous doctrine? This Truth of God is constantly assailed by the carnally wise, but is that a reason for mistrusting it when Jesus puts it forward in such a form? Understand clearly that if you reject the doctrine of life through believing, you reject the authority of Jesus! It is useless to talk about being a Christian if you are not prepared to believe what Jesus Christ asserts, for one of the first requisites for a true disciple is faith in his Master!

What kind of follower can he be who takes liberty to question when his Master stands erect in all the dignity of His glorious perfection and cries, "Verily, verily, I say unto you"? Are any of you such hypocrites as to call yourselves Christians and give Christ the lie? Dare you treat Him as if He were one of yourselves, to be disputed with and criticized at pleasure? This is not reverence, but rejection! I might justly call it blasphemy! Note well the verse which precedes the text—"That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son honors not the Father which has sent Him."

On the heels of that claim comes this assertion of everlasting life through hearing His Word and believing on Him that sent Him—as much as to say, "Believe what I am now about to say, even as if the Father spoke, for implicit faith is due to Me. If you would honor Me, believe in Me. But if you refuse what I say, you do Me the greatest dishonor." Jesus regards this point as being so vital that He pledges His own Character for veracity as a guarantee for the doctrine! He does as good as say, "If you would honor Me, believe this Truth of God which I now declare upon My own authority."

I feel, this morning, great restfulness of heart as to what I have to say. I shall not speak at haphazard upon a matter of opinion, speculation, or probability—nor shall I beg your consent and agreement as a matter of favor! I stand fair and square before you and I demand the assent of all who profess and call themselves Christians upon a point which Jesus has set at rest forever by the solemn declaration, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life." Such as are prepared to reject the authority of the Lord Jesus may do so. To them I have no message this morning. But to all such as acknowledge His Messiahship and Deity, I present the doctrine of the text as worthy of all acceptance.

May the Holy Spirit help me to set it out with clearness and enable you to receive it into your inmost souls. Our Savior is speaking of a great blessing and our first head is the person to whom this blessing comes—"He that hears My Word and believes on Him that sent Me has everlasting life." We shall speak, secondly, upon the blessing itself—"He has everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life." And thirdly, and this will be the point I shall lay most stress upon—the singular assurance with which it is stated, the wonderful firmness and distinctness with which it is asserted by the Master—and backed up with, "Verily, verily, I say unto you."

1. First, then, THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS BLESSING COMES. Read the passage and you notice, first, that the privileged individual is a hearer who is also a Believer. "He that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life." It does not appear, from our text, that everlasting life is communicated by drops of water, or in any other ceremonial manner—the command is, "Hear, and your soul shall live." Men are not expected to believe that which they have never heard. They are not to take the articles

of the church rolled up, as it were, into a pill, silver-coated, and to swallow them, be they what they may, without instruction.

We are to act towards saving Truth as we do in reference to other information—we are to hear it with attention—and so receive it. Those who find everlasting life, first hear of Jesus, His mission, His Person, His work, His sufferings, His offices, His power and the blessings He has come to communicate. Listening to all this, they are grateful for being permitted to hear things which kings and prophets desired to hear but heard not! Do not expect that you can be saved if you shut your ears to the Gospel! Do not reckon that the same blessing will come to you if you carelessly walk the streets on the Sabbath as might come to you if you were diligent in listening to the Word of the Redeemer! Hear what the Lord says and let your whole heart yield itself to the Truths of God!

But these people, while they are hearers to begin with, do not stop there—they become Believers. They believe that Jesus is the appointed Savior and they accept Him as such for themselves. They believe that His blood cleanses men from sin and, therefore, they trust in His blood to cleanse them and are cleansed by it. Since His righteousness justifies, they are glad to accept that righteousness and to be justified. Theirs is not a dreamy, inactive hearing—when they know the Truth, they practice what they know! They not only know that the brazen serpent will heal, but they look to it and are healed. I am talking to some of the best hearers in the world, and yet I fear that many of you come short because you are only hearers and not doers of that Word of God which says, “Believe and live.”

Note again, these favored persons are Believers who remain hearers in the fullest sense. These persons believe in God who has sent the Lord Jesus into the world and, consequently, they believe that what Jesus says must be true. And then they hear His voice with a discerning, spiritual ear. Our Lord uses the word, “hear,” in a special sense when He says, “My sheep hear My voice.” They hear their Shepherd, but they know not the voice of strangers. “Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Your Countenance.” Believers are taught of the Lord to perceive the difference between Truth and error, between the teachings of mere legalists and the voice of the Gospel of Grace! Of others it is said, “their ears are dull of hearing,” but upon these, a miracle of Grace has been worked so that they hear the voice of the Son of God!

Dear Friend, is this your case? Is the name of Jesus sweet to you? Is a promise pronounced by His voice most comforting to your soul? Then be of good cheer, for you have everlasting life and come not under condemnation! You are resting upon the faithful promise of the Father, brought to you by the Word of His own Son! And because of this, you are quickened and justified! Jesus declares it is so. Do not doubt Him, lest you do despite to that blessed, “Verily, verily,” with which He prefaces the Word of God.

The quickened ones are described in our second text as Believers in the Lord Jesus. “He that believes in Me has everlasting life.” They have a personal faith in a personal Savior. They believe that God must punish sin; that God has punished sin in the Person of Jesus and that He has, therefore, set forth His Son, Jesus Christ, to be a Propitiation for sin, that “whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” This they believe and on this they lean the full weight of their souls! Jesus says, “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And they come to Him for rest and receive rest. This is the main point in the character of those who have everlasting life—they are not here said to do anything, or achieve anything—but they believe in Jesus, the Christ!

The saved are also described as believers in Jesus because of the witness of the Father. “He that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me.” Why do I believe that Jesus Christ is my Savior? Because the Father has sent Him and borne witness to Him. I am sure that He can save me, for He is divinely commissioned, divinely furnished and the pleasure of the Lord must prosper in His hands. I believe today that He who came to the waters of Jordan to be baptized was the Son of God, for the Father said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

I believe that He who went up to the mountain and was transfigured in the presence of His three disciples was the Son of God, for once again, the Father said in an audible voice, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear you Him." I believe that Jesus Christ can save me, for when He prayed, a voice was heard from Heaven bearing witness that He was heard of the Father. The people that stood by knew not the meaning, but said that it thundered—yet there were some that heard that voice and knew it to be the witness of the Lord! Those who have everlasting life believe in Jesus as the Christ of God because the Father has given witness to Him in many ways—by an audible voice, by miracles, by the gift of the Holy Spirit and by constantly fulfilling, in the ministry of Christ's Word, the promises which He made unto us in connection therewith. This faith in God our Father and in our Lord Jesus Christ saves the soul!

But notice that our Lord has spoken these words of every such Believer—"He that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life." Whatever else he may have or may not have, this is the vital point. "But, Lord, he is full of fault and imperfection." There is no exception made on that grounds, for, "by Him all that believe are justified from all things." "But the believing man makes many mistakes in points of theology." Nothing is said in the text as to errors upon other points, but the text positively says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life." If there is genuine faith in Jesus, there will be a sincere desire to understand all His teachings and a readiness to believe them. But as for ignorance and mistakes, they are covered with all our other sins by the great Atonement which is received by faith!

"But, Lord, he is, himself, afraid that he has not attained to everlasting life. He trembles lest he should be found lacking when put into the balances." No exception is made on account of timidity and diffidence! If any man believes in Christ Jesus, the statement is made absolutely of him and of everyone like he, that he "has everlasting life." Old or young, rich or poor, learned or illiterate, talented or obscure, there is no difference! All Believers have everlasting life! But, mark you, there is no statement made as to the salvation of any other sort of person! Nothing is said about the baptized person who is not a Believer.

He has been made a member of Christ, an heir of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven in Baptism, according to the Prayer Book—but is it true? Our text says nothing about the baptized, confirmed and sacramental unbeliever having everlasting life! There is not a word that says it from Genesis to Revelation! Other books may say what they will, but this Book of God makes no account of any man who is devoid of faith. Did you tell me that such a one has been a professor of religion for many years and his outward life has been most commendable? So far, so good! But that is not all. Indeed, it is beside the mark as to the teaching now before us, for the text says absolutely nothing about outward morality and correctness of conduct!

These things are sure to be found where faith is found, but alone and by themselves, they answer not to the qualification laid down by our Lord. If a man believe not on Christ there is no cheering word for him, be he what he may. No one is left without eternal life that believes in Jesus—and no unbeliever is blessed with that life. What says the Scriptures? "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him." We now know the persons to whom the blessings of salvation have come. I hope that many of us are numbered with them.

II. Very briefly let us notice THE BLESSINGS WHICH BELONG TO BELIEVING. First, our Lord asserts that the Believer "has everlasting life." He was condemned to die and reckoned as a dead man, but he is now acquitted and his life is granted him. He was spiritually dead, but the fact that he believes in Jesus is sufficient evidence that he has received spiritual life. John tells us in his Epistle, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life."

This spiritual life is not a thing of time only—it is expressly called "everlasting." Those who in these days make out that "everlasting" does not mean unending, will, I dare say, squeeze the life-blood out of our text. But the most of us take the word to mean what it says and to signify life which will never end. If I have received life in Jesus Christ, I have received a life which will endure

as long as the Everlasting Covenant, as long as everlasting love, as long as the Everlasting God! According to a certain theology, a man may have life in Christ one day and lose it the next—how, then, is it everlasting life? If a man has lost his life, that life could not have been everlasting—that is clear. That which comes to an end could not have been everlasting.

But we teach with the authority of Christ that the man that believes on Christ has, at this moment, within him a life that can never expire! The man may die after the flesh, but he can never die after the Spirit. There is for him no second death possible, unless the Bible expression is a mere trifling with language. The Believer has within him a life which is derived from Christ Himself—“I in them”—and this life depends upon the life of Christ, even as He has put it, “Because I live, you shall live also.” The Believer has this everlasting life now, for it is not said, “shall have,” but, “has everlasting life.” What a gift this is! To be born in the image of God! To be a partaker of His Nature! To be placed beyond all reach of the second death! Glory be to God for this!

Notice, next, that the Believer is in a condition of non-condemnation. He “shall not come into condemnation.” The translation would be more accurate if it were put, “and comes not into judgment”—that is to say, as soon as a man has believed in Christ he receives the benefit of Christ’s Substitution and is no longer under judgment, much less condemnation. In Christ, the Believer has been judged, condemned and punished and is, therefore, clear of the Law and all its penalties. If we have, by our Surety, answered all the demands of Justice, what has the Law to do with us? How can it bring us into judgment? How can it cause us to know condemnation? But will not the righteous be present in the judgment of the Last Day? Undoubtedly we shall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ—but the judgment of that day will not be a judgment to us in the dreadful sense of the term.

When a man is perfectly clear and called into court on purpose to be publicly acquitted, it is no judgment to him! “The Lord shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.” And this is our joy, that our God shall come and shall not keep silent.“ It will be no penalty, but a great delight, to stand before the great King and hear Him say, “Come, you blessed of My Father, enter the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Our text has another sentence of privilege—he “has passed from death unto life.” Notice where judgment is. Look, here is death! Yonder is life and resurrection! Judgment, as it were, stands between the two. We have passed from death to life and so we have passed by the judgment! There is a doctrinal error which cannot be too much condemned, that the resurrection is already past—but there is a blessed spiritual Truth of God that cannot be too firmly grasped—that Believers are already the children of the resurrection by having received quickening as to their spirits. In regeneration lies the essence and major portion of resurrection! We have already passed from the kingdom of Death into the kingdom of Life and so have passed by the judgment, since Jesus was judged for us, condemned for us and made to die in our place.

Abraham was called a Hebrew, or passer-over, and we, too, are Hebrews, having passed from one kingdom to another, being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son! Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us and through Him we live. If Christ has suffered in our place, we cannot suffer for sin! Justice demands that we go free. What a miracle of mercy is this, that everyone that has believed in Jesus has left death behind him, never to return to it! He has entered the realm of life, never to be banished from it! And he has, on the road, passed under the rod of judgment and the sword of condemnation so that neither of these can further afflict him in time or in eternity!

Did I hear someone object, “You make too much of so small a matter as believing. You make out that simply by trusting in Jesus Christ there is a difference made between one man and another of a most extraordinary kind—and that it is made at once”? Yes, I do say that! Exactly that and, as far as I am concerned, I do not care how much you quarrel with it, I shall not tone down the statement—“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.” I hear you mutter, “I think you are very uncharitable.” Say so if you please. I shall prove my charitableness by bearing it.

But look! Here is a person standing right in the middle of a railway track and I say to him, "My dear Fellow, if you do not come off that track, you will be smashed to atoms within the next five minutes, for an express train is thundering along the line." He laughs and answers, "Do you mean to say that my shifting the position of my body a couple of feet will make all that difference? Do you tell me that if I move, I shall be safe, and that if I stand here I shall be cut to pieces?" "Yes, I do say it and say it with tears, begging you to believe me and get off the track." "Then," he says, "you are very uncharitable." "Yes," I reply, "and you are very insane!" What more can I say? It is never uncharitable to speak the truth for the good of the person concerned. A small matter may suffice to shape the destiny of an immortal soul!

In those evil times, when there were slaves across the Atlantic, a lady went down to one of our ships, accompanied by her Negro servant. The lady remarked to the captain that if she were to go to England and take this black woman with her, she would become free as soon as she landed. The captain replied, "Madam, she is free already. The moment she came on board a British vessel she was free." When the Negro woman knew this, do you think she went on shore with her mistress? By no means! She chose to keep her liberty. But what made her rise from a slave to a free woman? Why, only a few inches of separation from the shore!

I do not know how far the ship was from land—the distance may have been very little—still it made all the difference in the world! She was free on board and a slave on land. How slight the change of place, but how great the difference involved. Marvel not that faith involves such great things! I heard a grumbler say, "We do not need this doctrine. What we need is morality and honesty." Just so. You remind me of a poor little child. His father planted bulbs to come up in the spring and make the garden gay with golden flowers. But the boy said, "We don't need bulbs; we need crocus cups and daffodils." The child forgot that flowers never grow without roots. You, too, good Sir, forget that holy lives cannot grow without a cause—and faith is the root of virtue!

Flowers stuck into the ground without roots are babes' follies. And good works without faith are childish vanities. We preach faith in order that good works may follow—and they do follow—and are the fruits of that eternal life which men receive by faith. Are you not willing to get the flowers through the roots? Go, silly children, and grow wiser!

III. I close with my last head, which is THE ASSURANCE WITH WHICH THIS DOCTRINE IS STATED in my text. It was that which attracted me to it. First, the doctrine of this text is certified to us by the terms in which our Lord utters it. I have already told you this, but I mean to go over it again. Our Lord Jesus, whose name is Faithful and True, here pledges His honor as God, His veracity as Man, upon the certainty of this doctrine. He says, "Verily, verily." These two words sound to me like great guns leveled against unbelief! Like the two brazen pillars called Joachim and Boaz, these two verities stand in the porch of Mercy's temple and show us where there is establishment and strength in the Word of the Son of Man!

Our Lord then adds, "I say unto you." Then it must be so, or else the Lord speaks in error—and none think that for a moment, for He is Wisdom itself! Is He not the only wise God, our Savior? Do you dream that these words may mean less than they say? That were to charge the Lord with insincerity, mocking poor souls with great words and small meanings! No, you would count it profane to imagine such a thing! "He that believes in Me has everlasting life" must, then, mean what it says. Christ knows what is everlasting life and who has it, for there is no eye like His that can discern life, wherever it may be, and discriminate between the false and the true. Others might be mistaken and deceived, but Christ knows what is the true life, being, Himself, the living and true God.

Jesus also knows whether we shall be judged and condemned or not, for He is, Himself, the Judge. The Father has committed all judgment unto the Son and if your Judge, Himself, says that we shall never come into condemnation, we can have no cause for fear. Who is he that condemns? Christ that died, who, sitting at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us? Impossible! Our Lord Jesus also knows the future—it is before Him as if it were present. He foresees everything that can possibly happen and so if He testifies of yon Believer, "he shall never come into condemnation," then depend upon it, the fact is sure! If a Prophet speaks, you believe

him—shall you not much more believe the Son of God? The Believer has everlasting life—it is true—it is most surely true!

The question may be raised, Why does our Lord like to put it so very, very positively? Did I hear any of you grumbling in your hearts, just now, at my going over the same ground? I did it on purpose because it is with such great difficulty that you can get men to accept this humbling Truth of God. Human nature revolts against it. As for the unconverted, even when they begin to feel their need of a Savior they cannot think it true that by believing in Jesus Christ they will pass from death to life! Salvation must be by faith that it may be of Grace—and it must be of Grace or not at all! But proud souls will not have it so. A man must be driven to self-despair before he will agree to be saved by faith in Christ.

You who deal much with souls know how they try to escape their own mercy and avoid the loving kindness of the Lord. Even you that have believed and are saved are not half as sure as you ought to be. Are there not times with you when you say, “I do not feel as I wish and, therefore, I am not saved”? What argument is there in that? Can your feelings make Christ a liar? Remember, the evidence of yours being saved as a Believer lies wholly in that, “I say unto you.” Perhaps you are not sure that you have everlasting life and yet you are sure that you are a Believer in Jesus. How is this? This is questioning Christ’s veracity! His strongest affirmation is, “Verily, verily.” Is He not to be believed on this? You, as His dear disciple, lover and friend, would be very indignant if anyone cast a suspicion upon His truthfulness—why will you do it yourself? Accept the truth heartily! Never doubt it, but let it stand as a fact most sure and steadfast that your faith has saved you!

It is, then, if you are a Believer, absolutely certain that you shall never be condemned, but have passed from death unto life—the Lord puts it so positively that we may be right positive about it. Why are you not, as a Believer, absolutely certain of yours possession of eternal life? The Master, who knew our unbelief, has put the matter so straight and plain that nobody can get over it without rejecting His Word. It is certain that he that believes in Him has everlasting life—certain, then, that we are saved if we are Believers. We must not be afraid to believe this with great confidence and to rejoice because of it! Someone says, “Ah, but it might be presumption.” Presumption to believe that Jesus speaks the Truth? I will tell you what is presumption—to question anything that our Lord has said! Is He your Master and Lord? If He is not, say so! But if He is, will you venture to sit upon the throne and judge the sayings of yours own Lord and say, “This may be true and that may be false”?

Another objector cries, “But I think a person may be too certain.” A person may be a great deal too certain if the argument is based upon inference. But if a statement is based upon the personal testimony of the Lord Jesus, we cannot be too certain of it! Circumstantial evidence is often very powerful and, to some minds, irresistible. Yet the inference drawn from it may be false. But your witness of a person who cannot err is worth all the circumstantial evidence in the world! Jesus Christ cannot be suspected of falsehood or error either in His Divine Character or in His perfect Human Character and, therefore, the basis of our confidence cannot be shaken. Our rest must be found entirely in that grand Word of God, “I say unto you.” The weight of yours doubt, if you have any, must fall upon His personal Character and there, also, the stress of yours faith must be fixed.

If Jesus speak the Truth of God, then the Believer has everlasting life. If the Believer questions whether he has life or not, he questions the veracity of Christ. We are bound by our discipleship to be at rest. Happiness becomes a duty and peace a matter of obligation. Happy are the men who are under bonds to be joyful! We are partakers of eternal life! We come not into condemnation! What delight, what peace flows through our spirits if it is, indeed so, that we have commenced the same life which is to be developed in eternal glory! Then what gratitude ought to fill us and how that gratitude should urge us to holiness and to perfect obedience to Him who has given us this inestimable blessing!

Come, let us not play with these things, but act as it behooves us to act, seeing that these things are, indeed, so. If they were mere myths or dreams, we might treat them carelessly. But accepting them as true, let us feel the force of their truth and let us rejoice this day in Him who has called us

with so high a calling! One thing I want you to notice, and that is that our Lord does not desire us to keep this doctrine in the background. This doctrine that, "whoever believes in Him has everlasting life," is not only for our own private comfort—it is to be proclaimed upon our housetops!

Those Jews in Christ's day were a company of cross-grained fault-finders who picked holes in Him about everything and nothing. Very harpies were they—full of spite at His excellence. They had just been finding fault with His healing a man on the Sabbath and He had answered them out straight without reserve. And when He had their ear, He told them a Truth of God which would cut them to the quick. It was not a wanton casting of pearls before swine and yet they were not worthy to hear so Divine a Truth!

Jesus tells it to them that we may tell it to all. Never let us conceal what Jesus thus unveiled. There stands the precious Master and He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, you quarrelsome Jews whose groveling minds cannot comprehend Me, that he that believes in Me has everlasting life. Your hands even now are near the ground seeking for stones to hurl at Me, but I say it to you as a thing I mean you to know, even if you gnash your teeth over it, that he that believes in Me has everlasting life." Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, let that be our answer to the present critical age! Let us turn the bulls-eye of our lantern full in its face! Let us cry again and again, "Believe in Jesus and live!"

They will reply to you with philosophical deduction and learned quibble—and they will dig all sorts of pits for you, hoping to entrap you. Never mind their pits, or their quibbles, or their deductions! Just go on telling out the Truth of God that, "whoever believes in Jesus has everlasting life." But why tell it to these Jews that were so angry with Him? Perhaps some of them would be converted by it! Tell it to all men with this view, for the Gospel often begets faith in violent opposers. But if they were not converted, they would be left without excuse and this is something. Whatever may come of it, this Truth of God is meant to be written across the brow of Heaven! It is to be published throughout all nations, that all may know it!

One of our ministers, years ago, traveling by coach, asked an erroneous preacher who was on the same coach this question—"How is a sinner justified in the sight of God?" This gentleman replied, "Ah, I know you! If I were to let you know my views, you would put them in your sermon and spread them all over England." "Ah," cried our friend, "you are ashamed of yours notions, are you? Well, I will give you the answer and I will be very glad if you will put it in all your lectures and publish it all the world over—man is justified in the sight of God by faith in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ." Our doctrine is not special truth for the elite and initiated to be dubiously taught in a backroom among a handful of students! It is the everlasting Gospel and we wish to have it proclaimed in markets and streets—before learned Brahmins and ignorant Hottentots! We would have it told out in the back slums of London and preached before lords and ladies and royalty itself! It does not matter where—salvation by faith is never out of place. This is a doctrine never to be covered up, nor veiled, nor qualified. "He that believes in Him has everlasting life!" Out with it and hesitate not!

It is a pretty thing which is told of the father of Mr. Newman Hall and the author of, "The Sinner's Friend," that his common seal that he always delighted to use was a crown with an anchor fixed into it, with just these words, "Other refuge have I none." Well, if you do not use that seal; if you do not write the words over the door of yours house, yet take care that you bear their meaning in your hearts! Have my text written in your hearts by the Spirit of God so that you are sure and certain of it beyond all doubt! And also do so glory over it that you never hesitate on any occasion to confess that you are saved by faith in Christ Jesus!

Dear Hearers, do you really know this Truth of God in your own souls? Have you believed in Jesus, or have you not? Are any of you trying to establish a righteousness of yours own? Are you laboring as in the very fire to get peace where you will never find it? Oh, come away from your ceremonies and your sacraments! Come away from your feelings! Come away, even, from your prayers and your almsgiving! Come away from everything upon which you rely and believe in Jesus, the appointed Savior! Come away, even, from your own faith, for you must not rely upon it!

Come and trust only in Jesus, who, being very God of very God, made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a Servant and in that Servant form bled, even, to the death in the sinner's place, that whoever will trust Him may be justified in the sight of God!

Rest there, one and all of you. Oh may God help you at this very moment to do so and then we will meet in Heaven, all of us! If there is no exception to the believing, there shall be no exception in the salvation, for, "He that believes in Him has everlasting life."