

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Dwight Lyman Moody's Last Sermon in London. Preached in Camberwell Hall, Sunday Evening, July 11th, 1875.

Suppose you do not want to hear a sermon (on this last night) so much as you want to know how to be saved. I want, if I can, to answer that question, "What must I do to be saved?" There is no question that can come before us in this world that is so important; and I think that there is not a man in this audience to-night who does not feel interested in it.

I heard a man, when he was going out the other night, saying: "I do not believe in sudden conversion. I do not believe what the preacher said to-night, that a man could come in here a sinner, and go out a Christian." Now, I want to say that I do not believe in any other conversion. I do not believe that there ever has been a conversion in the world that was not instantaneous, and I want you to mark this: not but what many cannot tell the day nor the hour when they were converted. I will admit that: they may not know the time; but that does not change the great fact that there was a time when they passed from death unto life; that there was a time when they were born [ABCOG: begotten] into the kingdom of God. There must have been a minute when their name was written in the Book of Life. There must have been a time when they were ere lost, and a time when they were saved; but we may not be conscious when the change takes place. I believe the conversion of some is like the rising of the sun, and of others like the flashing of a meteor. But both are instantaneous, really, in the sight of God. There must be a time when life begins to rise; when the dead soul begins to live.

Now, this evening I want to take up some of the Bible illustrations. In the first place, there is the ark. There was a minute when Noah was outside of the ark, and another minute when he was inside. And, bear in mind, it was the ark that saved Noah: it was not his righteousness; it was not his feelings; it was not his tears; it was not his prayers. It was the ark that saved him. If he had tried to make an ark of his feelings, or of his prayers, or of his life, he would have been swept away: he would have been drowned with the rest. But, you see, it was the ark that saved him.

When I was in Manchester, I went into the gallery one Sunday night to have a talk with a few inquirers; and while I was talking, a business man came in, and took his seat on the outskirts of the audience. I think, at first, he had come merely to criticize, and that he was a little skeptical. At last I saw he was in tears. I turned to him, and said, "My friend, what is your difficulty?" "Well," he said, "Mr. Moody, the fact is, I cannot tell." I said, "Do you believe you are a sinner?" He said, "Yes; I know that." I said, "Christ is able to save you"; and I used one illustration after another, but he did not see it. At last I thought of the ark, and I said: "Was it Noah's feelings that saved him? Was it Noah's righteousness that saved him, or was it the ark?" "I see it, now," said he; "I see it." He got up and shook hands with me, and said: "Good-night: I must go. I have to go away by the train to-night; but I was determined to be saved before I went. I see it now."

A few days after, he came and touched me on the shoulder, and said, "Do you know me?" I said, "I know your face, but do not remember where I have seen you." He said, "Do you not remember the illustration of the ark? I said, "Yes." "It has been all light ever

since," said he. "I understand it now. Christ is the Ark; He saves me; and I must get inside Him." When I went down to Manchester again, and talked to the young friends there, I found he was the brightest light among them.

Let me take another illustration. There was the blood in Goshen. God says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." Now He does not say, "When I see Moses' feelings, or the feelings of the people, I will pass over you"; or, "When I see you praying and weeping, I will pass over you"; but, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." It was the blood that saved them, not their righteousness. And a little child by that blood in Goshen was just as safe as Moses or Aaron or Joshua or Caleb. It was the blood that saved them. Look! there is the Jew taking the hyssop. He dips it in the blood, and strikes it on the doorpost. One minute it is not there: the next it is there. The moment the blood is there they are saved. God says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." Some people say, "If I were only as good as that minister I should feel so safe" or, "If I were only as good as that mother in Israel who has been praying fifty years for the poor and unfortunate, should I not feel very safe?" My friends, if you are behind the blood, you are as safe as any man or woman who has been praying for fifty years. It is not their righteousness and good works that are going to save them. They never saved any one. God says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." [ABCOG: Moody understands "pass over" to mean "bypass". It can also mean "hover over to protect"] And when I am sheltered behind the blood, then I am saved; and if I am not sheltered behind the blood, I am not saved. That was instantaneous, was not it? God says, "When I see the blood, it shall be a token, and I will not enter." Death came down and passed over Egypt; and where the blood was on the doorpost he passed by; but where the blood could not be found, in he went and took the victim away. The great palaces could not keep out death; wealth and position could not keep out death. He went and took the Crown Prince of Egypt; he took the richest and the poorest, the highest and the lowest. Death makes no distinction, except a man is behind the blood.

My friends, be wise to-night, and get behind the blood. The blood has been shed. The blood is on the mercy-seat; and while it is there you can be saved. God is imputing to His Son your trespasses and sins. He says, "I will look at the blood on the mercy-seat." Press in, my friends; make haste and get in tonight; for the Master of the house will rise up by-and-by and shut to the door, and then there will be no hope.

Take another case. When Israel went over Jordan, God told Joshua to have six cities of refuge; three on each side of Jordan. They were to be built on a hill, where they could be seen at a great distance, and the gates were to be kept open day and night. All obstacles were to be kept out of the way, the highway was to be kept in repair, the bridges and everything in good condition, so that nothing should hinder a poor man flying to the city of refuge. If a man killed another in those days, it was considered a great disgrace if the nearest relative did not take vengeance. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." If a man killed another, the next kinsman was bound to put him to death. But if he could escape to a city of refuge he was tried, and if it was found he had not intentionally killed the man, he might live.

Now for my illustration. Suppose I have killed a man. I am out away in the woods working, and my axe slips out of my hand, and kills the man working with me. I know that his kinsman, his brother, is not far away. The news will soon reach him that I have killed his brother. What shall I do? I start for the city of refuge, over there away on the hill, ten miles off. I run - and we are told that in those days there used to be signposts

with the word "Refuge," written in great red letters, so that a man might read as he ran; he need not stop. I have been told that there was a finger pointing towards the city, and a man who could not read might see the hand. A man does not have to learn to read before he can be saved. I see that hand; it is pointing to the city of refuge. The gate is wide open, but it is ten miles away. I leap over the highway. I do not look behind, to the right hand or to the left. I do not listen to this man or to that man, but, like John Bunyan, I put my fingers in my ears. The avenger has drawn his sword, and is on my track. I leap over into the highway; and, pretty soon, I can hear him behind me, Away I go, over that bridge, across that stream, up that mountain, along that valley, - but I can hear him coming nearer and nearer. There is the watchman; I can see him on the wall of the city. He gives notice to the inhabitants that a refugee is coming. I see the citizens on the wall of the city watching, and when I get near I hear them calling, "Run, run! Escape, escape! He is very near you! Run! escape!" I press on; leap through the gate of the city; and at last I am safe. One minute I am outside, and the next I am inside. One minute I am exposed to that sword; it may come down upon me at any minute: the next minute I am safe. Do I feel any difference? I feel I am behind the walls: that is the difference. It is a fact. There I am. The avenger can come up to the gates of the city, but he cannot come in. He cannot lay his sword upon me. The law of the land shields me now. I am under the protection of that city; I have saved my life; but I had no time for lingering.

A great many of you are trying to get into the city of refuge, and there are enemies trying to stop you, But do not listen to them. Your friends tell you to escape. Make haste! Delay not for a single moment!

In our country, before the war, when we had slavery, the slaves used to keep their eye on the north star. If a slave escaped to the Northern States, his old master could come and take him back into slavery. But there was another flag on American soil, and if they could only get under that flag they were for ever free. It is called the Union Jack. If they could only get as far north as Canada they were free; therefore they kept looking towards the north star. But they knew if they only got into the Northern States, there might be some one ready to take them back. So it is with every poor sinner who wants to come to Christ. Many men do all they can to hinder him; others will cheer him on. Let us help every man towards the north star. A man has escaped: perhaps he swims across the Mississippi river, or crosses the Ohio river in a little canoe. The master hears of it, and he takes his hounds and sets them on his track, and begins to hunt him down. The slave hears the hounds; and he knows that his master is coming to take him back to slavery. The line is a mile or two away. He escapes as fast as he can. He runs with all his might for the frontier, over hedges and ditches and rivers; away he goes for Canada. By-and-by he comes in sight of Canada. He can see that flag floating in front of him; and he knows that if he can only cross the line before his master and the hounds overtake him, he will be free for ever.

How the poor black man runs! leaping and bounding along; and at last, with one bound, he goes over the line. He is free! One minute he is a slave; the next minute he is a free man, under the flag of Queen Victoria, the British flag! (cheers [ABCOG: by British crowd]) - don't cheer, my friends, but come to Christ - and your laws say that no man under that flag shall be a slave. One minute he is a slave; the next minute he is a free man. One minute it is possible for his old master to drag him back; the next minute he shouts, "Free!"

If Christ tells us that we are free, we are free. My friends, Christ is calling to-night. Get

out of the devil's territory as quick as you can. No slave in the Southern States had so hard a master as yours, nor so mean a master as Satan. Take my advice tonight, and escape for the liberty of your soul.

I can imagine some of you saying "I do not see how a man is really going to be converted all at once." Let me give you another illustration. Look down there. There are two soldiers. Now, if you bring those soldiers up to this platform, and ask them how they became soldiers, they will tell you this - that one moment they were citizens, and the next minute soldiers. What was it that made them soldiers? It was when they took the Queen's shilling. The moment they received that shilling they ceased to be citizens, and they became soldiers. Before they received that shilling they could go where they pleased; the next minute they came under the government and under the regulations of the army, and they must go where Queen Victoria sends them. They did not have to wait for the uniform. The minute they received the shilling they became soldiers. What made them soldiers? Receiving the shilling. What makes a man a Christian? Receiving Christ. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not: but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

Now, the gift of God is eternal life. Who will have the gift to-night? When I was down in Manchester I asked that question, and a man shouted in the meeting, "I will! " Who will have it now? Is not there some man here in London, as there was in Manchester, who will say that he will have the gift? Is it not a wonder to have to plead with so many to take the gift? "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." Who will have the gift now? (Many responses of "I will"; "I will.")

I can imagine one man down there who says "How about repentance? How about getting into the ark or the city of refuge before repentance?" My friend, let me ask you what is repentance? It is right-about-face! I think these soldiers understand that expression. Some one has said that every one is born with his back to God, and that conversion turns him right round. If you want to be converted, and want to repent, I will tell you what you should do. Just get out of Satan's service, and get into the Lord's. Leave your old friends, and unite yourself with God's people.

In a few days, if nothing happens, I expect to go to Liverpool. If, when I am in the train, my friend Mr. Shipton says, "Moody, you are going in the wrong train, - that train is going to Edinburgh" - I should say, "Mr. Shipton, you have made a great mistake; somebody told me the train was going to Liverpool. You are wrong, Mr. Shipton; I am sure you are wrong." Then Mr. Shipton would say, "Moody, I have lived here forty years, and I know all about the trains. He must have been very ignorant or very vicious who told you that train goes to Liverpool." Mr. Shipton at last convinces me, and I get out of that train and get into the one going to Liverpool.

Repentance is getting out of one train and getting into the other. You are in the wrong train; you are in the broad path that takes you down to the pit of hell. Get out of it to-night. Right-about-face! Who will turn his feet towards God? "Turn ye, for why will ye die?" In the Old Testament the word is "turn." In the New Testament the word is "repent." "Turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" God does not want any man in this audience to perish, but He wants all to be saved. You can be saved now if you will.

There is another illustration I wish I had time to dwell upon and that is about looking. There is that serpent in the wilderness. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man also be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Look here! Just give me your attention for a few minutes. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." How long does it take a man to believe? Or, if you will, how long does it take a man to look? Some people say they believe in educating people to be Christians. How long do you educate children to look? You hear the

mother say, "Look," and the little child looks. It does not take a child three months to learn to look. Look and live! You need not go to college to learn how to look. There is not a child here but knows how to look. Christ says, "Look unto me; for I am [ABCOG: the way to] God, and there is none else."

There is the brazen serpent on the pole. God says to the children of Israel, who are dying of the bite of the fiery serpents - "Look, and live!"

Now, there is nothing in looking at a piece of brass which can cure the bite of a serpent. It is God who cures it, and the looking is the condition. It is obedience; and that is what God will have.

One moment the poor sufferer is dying; the next there comes a thrill of life through his veins, and he lives: he is well. My friends, look to Christ, and not to yourselves. That is what is the matter with a great many sinners; instead of looking to Christ, they are looking at the bite.

It is not looking to the wound; it is looking to the remedy. Christ is the remedy of sin. What you want is to look from the wound to the remedy - to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Who will look tonight, and live? Turn your eye to Calvary; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.