

ADVICE for SEEKERS

A decorative flourish consisting of a central loop with two smaller loops extending outwards, positioned below the horizontal line.

Charles H. Spurgeon

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A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line that curves downwards and then loops back up to meet the line, forming a stylized infinity symbol or a calligraphic flourish.

Charles H. Spurgeon

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First published in 1896 as *Words of Advice for Seekers*, this text addresses many of the stumbling blocks and hindrances seekers have in coming to Christ. From his own experiences and his years of ministry, Spurgeon shares a gentle spirit of grace through his words to comfort and encourage those desiring to know the Lord.

The term "seeker" is one still spoken of today in the manner that Spurgeon used it. There are people sincerely seeking out the truth; wanting to know more of the Lord and the Bible, though not committed as disciples yet. They are asking questions and wanting to know more before making this most serious of decisions. The seeker will find assurance within these pages, as will believers.

This unique volume was painstakingly recreated from an original book. Because of this, the language retains its original style and spelling. It is our prayer that you will be blessed as you read this uplifting work.

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CHAPTER I.

DO NOT TRY TO SAVE YOURSELF.

IF you would but think of it, God's value of heaven and yours are very different things. His salvation, when he set a price upon it, was only to be brought to men through the death of his Son, and you think that your good works—oh, what mockery to call them so!—can win the heaven which Christ, the Son of God, procured at the cost of his own blood! Would you dare to put your miserable life in comparison with the life of God's obedient Son, who gave himself even to death? Does it not strike you that you are insulting God? If there be a way to heaven by works, why did he put his dear Son to all that pain and grief? Why the scenes of Gethsemane? Why the tragedy on Golgotha, when the thing could be done so easily another way? You insult the wisdom of

God, and the love of God. There is no attribute of God which self-righteousness does not impugn. It debases the eternal perfections which the blessed Saviour magnified, in order to exalt the pretensions of the creature which the Almighty spurns as vain and worthless. The poor Indian may barter his gold for thy trinkets and glass beads, but if thou shouldst give all the substance thou hast to God it would be utterly contemned. He will bestow the milk and the honey of his mercy without money and without price, but if thou comest to him trying to bargain for it, it is all over with thee; God will not give thee choice provisions of his love that thou knowest not how to appreciate.

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You that are going to save yourselves by reforms, and by earnest tryings and endeavors, let me ask you, if a man could not perform a certain work when his arm had strength in it, how will he be able to perform it when the bone is broken? When you were young and inexperienced, you had not yet fallen into evil

habits and customs. Though there was depravity in your nature then, you had not become bound in the iron net of habit, yet even then you went astray like a lost sheep, and you followed after evil. What reason have you to suppose that you can suddenly change the bias of your heart, the course of your actions, and the tenor of your life, and become a new man? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Are there not ten thousand probabilities against one, that as you did sin before you will sin still? You found the pathway of evil to be attractive and fascinating, so that you were enticed into it, and you will still be enticed, and be drawn away from that path of integrity which you are now so firmly resolved to tread. The way up to heaven by Mount Sinai is very steep and narrow, and by one wrong step a man is dashed to pieces. Stand at the foot and look up at it if thou darest. On its brow of stone there is the black cloud, out of which leaps the live lightning; while there is the sound of the trumpet that waxes exceeding loud and long. Dost thou not see Moses tremble? and wilt thou dare to stand unabashed where Moses doth exceedingly fear and quake? Look upwards, and decline the thought of climbing those steep crags, for no man hath ever striven to clamber up there

in hope of salvation without finding destruction among the terrors of the way! Be wise, give up that deceitful hope of salvation which your pride leads you to choose, and your presumption would soon cause you to rue.

Suppose you could do some great thing, which I am sure you cannot, were it possible that you could from henceforth be perfect, and never sin again in thought, or word, or deed, still how would you be able to atone for your past delinquencies? Shall I call for a resurrection in that graveyard of your memory? Let your sins start up for a moment, and pass in review before you. Ah, they may well frighten you, the sins of your youth; those midnight sins; those midday sins, those sins against light and knowledge, those sins of body, those sins of soul! You have forgotten them, you say, but God has not. Behold the file! they are all placed there, all registered in God's day-book, not one forgotten—all to be read against you in the day of the last assize. How can future obedience make up for past transgression? The cliff has fallen, and though the wave washes up ten thousand times, it cannot set the cliff up again. The day is bright, but still there was a night, and the brightest day does not obliterate the fact that once it was dark.

The self-righteous man knows that what he is doing cannot satisfy God, for it cannot satisfy himself ; and though he may perhaps drug his conscience, there is generally enough left of the divine element within the man to make him feel and know that it is not satisfactory.

To believe that which God says, to do that which God bids, to take that salvation which God provides--this is man's highest and best wisdom. Disdain not now to begin with the alphabet, and to spell out the golden letters from this great prophetic book. It is the child's primer, the pilgrim's guide, and still it is the apocalypse of the saint in which he describes the glory yet to be revealed. This is the one message of the gospel, "Believe and live." Trust in the Incarnate Saviour, whom God appointed to stand in the stead of sinners. Trust in him, and you shall be saved.

CHAPTER II.

DESPISED ONES SEEKING JESUS.*

THE most depraved and despised classes of society formed an inner ring of hearers around our Lord. I gather from this that he was a most approachable person, that he courted human confidence and was willing that men should commune with him.

Eastern monarchs affected great seclusion, and were wont to surround themselves with impassable barriers of state. It was very difficult for even their most loyal subjects to approach them. You remember the case of Esther, who, though the monarch was her husband, yet went with her life in her hand when she ventured to present herself before the king Ahasuerus, for there was a commandment that none should come unto the king except they were called, at peril of their lives. It is not so with the King of kings. His court is far more splendid ; his person is far more

* Luke xv.

worshipful ; but you may draw near to him at all times without let or hindrance. He hath set no men-at-arms around his palace gate. The door of his house of mercy is set wide open. Over the lintel of his palace gate is written, " For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Even in our own days great men are not readily to be come at. There are so many back stairs to be climbed before you can reach the official who might have helped you, so many subalterns to be parleyed with, and servants to be passed by, that there is no coming at your object. The good men may be affable enough themselves, but they remind us of the old Russian fable of the hospitable householder in a village, who was willing enough to help all the poor who came to his door, but he kept so many big dogs loose in his yard that nobody was able to get up to the threshold, and therefore his personal affability was of no service to the wanderers. It is not so with our Master. Though he is greater than the greatest, and higher than the highest, he has been pleased to put out of the way everything which might keep the sinner from entering into his halls of gracious entertainment. From his lips we hear no threatenings against intrusion, but

hundreds of invitations to the nearest and dearest intimacy. Jesus is to be approached not now and then, but at all times, and not by some favored few, but by all in whose hearts his Holy Spirit has enkindled the desire to enter into his secret presence.

The philosophical teachers of our Lord's day affected very great seclusion. They considered their teachings to be so profound and eclectic that they were not to be uttered in the hearing of the common multitude. "Far hence, ye profane," was their scornful motto. Like Simon Stylites, they stood upon a lofty pillar of their fancied self-conceit, and dropped down now and then a stray thought upon the vulgar herd beneath, but they did not condescend to talk familiarly with them, considering it to be a dishonor to their philosophy to communicate it to the multitude. One of the greatest philosophers wrote over his door, "Let no one who is ignorant of geometry enter here;" but our Lord, compared with whom all the wise men are but fools, who is, in fact, the wisdom of God, never drove away a sinner because of his ignorance, never refused a seeker because he was not yet initiated, and had not taken the previous steps in the ladder of learning, and never permitted any thirsty spirit to be chased away from the crystal spring of truth divine.

His every word was a diamond, and his lips dropped pearls, but he was never more at home than when speaking to the common people, and teaching them concerning the kingdom of God.

Our Lord Jesus is said to be the *Mediator* between God and man. The office of Mediator implies at once that he should be approachable. A daysman, as Job says, is one who can put his hand upon both; but if Jesus will not familiarly put his hand on man, certainly he is no daysman between God and man. A mediator is not a mediator of one—he must be akin to both the parties between whom he mediates. If Jesus Christ shall be a perfect Mediator between God and man, he must be able to come to God so near that God shall call him his fellow, and then he must approach to man so closely that he shall not be ashamed to call him brother. This is precisely the case with our Lord. Do think of this, you who are afraid of Jesus. He is a Mediator, and as a Mediator you may come to him. Jacob's ladder reached from earth to heaven, but if he had cut away half-a-dozen of the bottom rounds, what would have been the good of it? Who could ascend by it into the hill of the Lord? Jesus Christ is the great conjunction between earth and heaven, but if

he will not touch the poor mortal man who comes to him, why then, of what service is he to the sons of men? You do need a mediator between your soul and God; you must not think of coming to God without a mediator; but you do not want any mediator between yourselves and Christ. There is a preparation for coming to God—you must not come to God without a perfect righteousness; but you may come to Jesus without any preparation, and without any righteousness, because as Mediator he has in himself all the righteousness and fitness that you require, and is ready to bestow them upon you. You may come boldly to him even now; he waits to reconcile you unto God by his blood.

Another of his offices is that of Priest. That word *priest* has come to smell very badly nowadays; but for all that it is a very sweet word as we find it in Holy Scripture. The word *priest* does not mean a gaudily-dressed pretender, who stands apart from other worshipers within the gate, two steps higher than the rest of the people, who professes to have power to dispense pardon for human sin, and I know not what beside. The true priest was truly the brother of all the people. There was no man in the whole camp so brotherly as Aaron. So much were Aaron and the priests

who succeeded him the first points of contact with men, on God's behalf, that when a leper had become too unclean for anybody else to draw near to him, the last man who touched him was the priest. The house might be leprous, but the priest went into it, and the man might be leprous, but he talked with him, and examined him, the last of Israel's tribes who might be familiar with the wretched outcast; and if afterwards that diseased man was cured, the first person who touched him must be a priest. "Go, show thyself to the priest," was the command, to every recovering leper; and until the priest had entered into fellowship with him, and had given him a certificate of health, he could not be received into the Jewish camp. The priest was the true brother of the people, chosen from among themselves, at all times to be approached; living in their midst, in the very center of the camp, ready to make intercession for the sinful and the sorrowful. Surely, you will never doubt that if Jesus perfectly sustains the office of Priest, as he certainly does, he must be the most approachable of beings, approachable by the poor sinner, who has given himself up to despair, whom only a sacrifice can save; approachable by the foul harlot who is put outside the camp, whom only the blood can cleanse; approach-

able by the miserable thief who has to suffer the punishment of his crimes, whom only the great High Priest can absolve. No other man may care to touch you, O trembling outcast, but Jesus will. You may be separated from all of human kind, justly and righteously, by your iniquities, but you are not separated from that great Friend of sinners who at this very time is willing that publicans and sinners should draw near unto him.

As a third office, let me mention that *the Lord Jesus is our Saviour*; but I see not how he can be a Saviour unless he can be approached by those who need to be saved. The priest and the Levite passed by on the other side when the bleeding man lay in the road to Jericho; they were not saviours, therefore, and could not be, but he was the saviour who came where the man was, stooped over him, and took wine and oil and poured them into the gaping fissures of his wounds, and lifted him up with tender love and set him on his own beast, and led him to the inn. He was the true saviour; and, O sinner, Jesus Christ will come just where you are, and your wounds of sin, even though they are putrid, shall not drive him away from you. His love shall overcome the nauseating offensiveness of your iniquity, for he is able and willing to save such

as you are. I might mention many other of the offices of Christ, but these three will suffice. Certainly if the Spirit blesses them, you will be led to see that Jesus is not hard to reach.

CHAPTER III.

SEEKERS TOUCHING CHRIST.

SOME of us have ourselves been healed, and therefore speak from assured experience. A man was secretly bowed down with despondency and depression of spirits of an unusual sort—one whose life was spent at the very gates of hell, through sorrow of heart when but a youth ; yet, in one moment was he lifted into perfect peace ; and all that by a simple looking to him who was crucified upon the cross. That one form of healing is a type of others ; for all other evils are overcome in the same manner. Jesus can heal you of your pride ; he can deliver you from anger ; he can cure you of sluggishness, he can purge you from envy, from lasciviousness, from malice, from gluttony, from every form of spiritual malady. And this he can do, not by the torturing processes of penance, or the exhausting labors of superstitious performance, or the fiery ordeals of suffering ; but the method is simply a word from him, and a look from you, and all is done.

You have but to trust in Jesus and you are saved ; made a new creature in an instant ; set on your feet again to start upon a new life, with a new power within you, which shall conquer sin. We who bear this testimony claim to be believed ; we are not liars. Not even for God's honor would we palm a pious fraud upon you. We have felt in ourself the healing power of Christ. We have seen it, and do see it every day, in the cases of others, in persons of all ranks, and of all ages. All who have obeyed the word of Jesus have been made new creatures by his power. It is not one or two of us who bear this witness, there are hundreds who certify to the self-same fact ; not of ministers alone, but of other professions and callings. There are tradesmen, there are gentlemen, there are working men, there are persons high and low, who could say, " We too are witnesses that Christ can heal the soul."

Here, then, is the marvel that those who know this do not immediately throng to Christ to obtain the self-same blessing. "'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange, 'tis wonderful!" The course of those of whom we read was a rational one. They heard that Christ had healed many, and the true practical logic was, " Let us be healed too!" Where is he? Let us reach him. Are there crowds about him? Let us

jostle one another, let us force our way into the mass until we touch him, and feel the healing virtue flowing forth from him. But men seem to have taken leave of their reason now. They know that the blessing is to be had, an eternal blessing not to be weighed with gold, nor compared with diamonds; and yet they turn their backs upon it! Selfishness usually attracts men to places where good things are to be had; but here is the chief of all good, the possession of a sound soul, the gaining of a new nature which will fit a man to be a partaker with angels of light in glory, to be had, and to be had freely, yet man, untrue to himself, not even letting a right-minded selfishness govern him, turneth away from the fountain of all goodness, and goeth his way into the wilderness to perish of eternal thirst.

The gospel is preached unto you, and God has not sent it with the intention that after you have heard it you should seek mercy and not find it. Oh! no, God does not tantalize, he does not mock the sons of men. He bids you come to him. Repent and believe, and you shall be saved. If you come with a broken heart, trusting in Christ, there is no fear that he will reject you; else he would not have sent the gospel to you. There is nothing that so delights Jesus Christ as to save sinners. I

never find that he was in a huff because they pressed about him to touch him. Nay, but it gave him divine pleasure to give forth his healing power. You who are in trade are never happier than when business is brisk; and my Lord Jesus, who follows the trade of soul-winning, is never happier than when his great business is moving on rapidly. What pleasure it gives a physician when at last he brings a person through a severe illness into health! I think the medical profession must be one of the happiest engagements in the world when a man is skilful in it. Our Lord Jesus feels a most divine pleasure as he bends over a broken heart and binds it up. It is the very heaven of Christ's soul to be doing good to the sons of men. You misjudge him if you think he wants to be argued with and persuaded to have mercy; he gives it as freely as the sun pours forth light, as the heavens drop with dew, and as clouds yield their rain. It is his honor to bless sinners; it makes him a name, and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. I know I once belied him; when I felt my sins to be a great burden, I said within myself, "I will go to Jesus, but perhaps he will reject me;" I thought I had much to feel and to do to make myself ready for him; and I therefore did this and that, but the more I did the worse I be-

came. I was like the woman who spent her money on physicians, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse. At last I found it was of no use, and when I fully understood that there was life in a look at Christ, that all which was wanted was for me simply to trust, to come as I was and put my case into his dear pierced hands, and leave it there—I could not think it *could* be so; it seemed so simple—how could it be true? Was that all? I thought when I came to him he would say to me, “Sinner, you have rejected me so long, you have mocked me by saying prayers which you did not feel; you have been a hypocrite and joined with God’s people in singing my praises when you did not praise me in your heart.” I thought he would chide me, and bring ten thousand sins to my remembrance. Instead of that, it was but a word, and it was all done. I looked to him, the burden was gone. I could have sung, “Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, with pardon in his right hand and acceptance in his left, with abundant blessings to the least deserving of the sons of men.” Now, I have to tell you that Jesus Christ abides in the same ability to save as he had in the days of his flesh. He ever liveth to make intercession for sinners, and is therefore able to save to the uttermost them that come

unto him : and it is still true that him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. There has never been an instance of a man that trusted Christ and perished, and there never shall be an instance.

Do not delay trusting Christ ; do not entertain a hope that it will ever be easier to trust Jesus than it is now ; do not think that you will ever be in a better state for coming than you are in now. The best state in all the world for washing is to be filthy ; the best state in all the world to obtain help from a physician is to be sore sick ; the best state for asking alms is to be a beggar. Do not try to patch up those rags, nor to improve your character, nor to make yourself better before you come to Christ. Come in all your poverty and vile-ness, just as you are, and say to him, "My Lord and my God, thou hast suffered as a man for all the sins of all those who trust thee : I trust thee ; accept me, give me peace and joy." And tell the world, I pray you, whether he accepts you or no. If he casts you away, you will be the very first—then let us know of it ; but if He receives you, you will be but one among ten thousand who have been thus accepted—then publish it to the confirming of our faith.

Never be content with merely pressing upon

Christ. When there is a gracious season in a church, and persons are converted, many rest satisfied because they have been in the congregation where works of mercy have been performed. It is dreadful to reflect that we have in all our assemblies men and women who are perfectly satisfied with having spent the Sunday in a place of worship. Now, suppose the case of a man having the leprosy, who goes to the place where Jesus is: he sees the people thronging to get near, and he joins in the press; he pushes on for a certain length of time, and then he comes back perfectly content because he has joined with the crowd. The next day the great Master is dispensing healing virtue right and left, and this same man joins in the throng, and once more elbows himself tolerably near to the Saviour, and then retires. "Well," he says, "I got into the crowd; I pressed and squeezed, and made my way, and so I was in the way, perhaps I might have got a blessing." Now that would be precisely similar to the condition of hundreds and thousands of people who go to a place of worship on Sunday. There is the gospel; they come to hear it; they come next Sunday, there is the gospel again; they listen to it, and they go their way each time. "Fool!" say you to the man with the leprosy, "why, you

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neath the surface of the earth : if you brought them all, what would they be to God? And if you could pile up gold reaching from the nethermost parts of the earth to the highest heavens, what would the mass be to him? How could all this enrich his coffers, or buy your salvation? Can he be affected by anything you do to augment the sum of his happiness, or to increase the glory of his kingdom? If he were hungry he would not tell you. "The cattle of ten thousand hills," saith he, "are mine." Your goodness may please your fellow-creatures, and your charity may make them grateful, but will God owe anything to you for your alms, or be beholden to you for your influence? Preposterous questions! When you have done all, what will you be but a poor, unworthy, unprofitable servant? You will not have done what you ought, much less will there be any balance in your favor to make atonement for sin, or to purchase for you an inheritance in the realms of light.

You that are going to save yourselves by reforms, and by earnest tryings and endeavors, let me ask you, if a man could not perform a certain work when his arm had strength in it, how will he be able to perform it when the bone is broken? When you were young and inexperienced, you had not yet fallen into evil

habits and customs. Though there was depravity in your nature then, you had not become bound in the iron net of habit, yet even then you went astray like a lost sheep, and you followed after evil. What reason have you to suppose that you can suddenly change the bias of your heart, the course of your actions, and the tenor of your life, and become a new man? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Are there not ten thousand probabilities against one, that as you did sin before you will sin still? You found the pathway of evil to be attractive and fascinating, so that you were enticed into it, and you will still be enticed, and be drawn away from that path of integrity which you are now so firmly resolved to tread. The way up to heaven by Mount Sinai is very steep and narrow, and by one wrong step a man is dashed to pieces. Stand at the foot and look up at it if thou darest. On its brow of stone there is the black cloud, out of which leaps the live lightning; while there is the sound of the trumpet that waxes exceeding loud and long. Dost thou not see Moses tremble? and wilt thou dare to stand unabashed where Moses doth exceedingly fear and quake? Look upwards, and decline the thought of climbing those steep crags, for no man hath ever striven to clamber up there

in hope of salvation without finding destruction among the terrors of the way! Be wise, give up that deceitful hope of salvation which your pride leads you to choose, and your presumption would soon cause you to rue.

Suppose you could do some great thing, which I am sure you cannot, were it possible that you could from henceforth be perfect, and never sin again in thought, or word, or deed, still how would you be able to atone for your past delinquencies? Shall I call for a resurrection in that graveyard of your memory? Let your sins start up for a moment, and pass in review before you. Ah, they may well frighten you, the sins of your youth; those midnight sins; those midday sins, those sins against light and knowledge, those sins of body, those sins of soul! You have forgotten them, you say, but God has not. Behold the file! they are all placed there, all registered in God's day-book, not one forgotten—all to be read against you in the day of the last assize. How can future obedience make up for past transgression? The cliff has fallen, and though the wave washes up ten thousand times, it cannot set the cliff up again. The day is bright, but still there was a night, and the brightest day does not obliterate the fact that once it was dark.

The self-righteous man knows that what he is doing cannot satisfy God, for it cannot satisfy himself ; and though he may perhaps drug his conscience, there is generally enough left of the divine element within the man to make him feel and know that it is not satisfactory.

To believe that which God says, to do that which God bids, to take that salvation which God provides--this is man's highest and best wisdom. Disdain not now to begin with the alphabet, and to spell out the golden letters from this great prophetic book. It is the child's primer, the pilgrim's guide, and still it is the apocalypse of the saint in which he describes the glory yet to be revealed. This is the one message of the gospel, "Believe and live." Trust in the Incarnate Saviour, whom God appointed to stand in the stead of sinners. Trust in him, and you shall be saved.

CHAPTER II.

DESPISED ONES SEEKING JESUS.*

THE most depraved and despised classes of society formed an inner ring of hearers around our Lord. I gather from this that he was a most approachable person, that he courted human confidence and was willing that men should commune with him.

Eastern monarchs affected great seclusion, and were wont to surround themselves with impassable barriers of state. It was very difficult for even their most loyal subjects to approach them. You remember the case of Esther, who, though the monarch was her husband, yet went with her life in her hand when she ventured to present herself before the king Ahasuerus, for there was a commandment that none should come unto the king except they were called, at peril of their lives. It is not so with the King of kings. His court is far more splendid ; his person is far more

* Luke xv.

worshipful ; but you may draw near to him at all times without let or hindrance. He hath set no men-at-arms around his palace gate. The door of his house of mercy is set wide open. Over the lintel of his palace gate is written, " For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Even in our own days great men are not readily to be come at. There are so many back stairs to be climbed before you can reach the official who might have helped you, so many subalterns to be parleyed with, and servants to be passed by, that there is no coming at your object. The good men may be affable enough themselves, but they remind us of the old Russian fable of the hospitable householder in a village, who was willing enough to help all the poor who came to his door, but he kept so many big dogs loose in his yard that nobody was able to get up to the threshold, and therefore his personal affability was of no service to the wanderers. It is not so with our Master. Though he is greater than the greatest, and higher than the highest, he has been pleased to put out of the way everything which might keep the sinner from entering into his halls of gracious entertainment. From his lips we hear no threatenings against intrusion, but

hundreds of invitations to the nearest and dearest intimacy. Jesus is to be approached not now and then, but at all times, and not by some favored few, but by all in whose hearts his Holy Spirit has enkindled the desire to enter into his secret presence.

The philosophical teachers of our Lord's day affected very great seclusion. They considered their teachings to be so profound and eclectic that they were not to be uttered in the hearing of the common multitude. "Far hence, ye profane," was their scornful motto. Like Simon Stylites, they stood upon a lofty pillar of their fancied self-conceit, and dropped down now and then a stray thought upon the vulgar herd beneath, but they did not condescend to talk familiarly with them, considering it to be a dishonor to their philosophy to communicate it to the multitude. One of the greatest philosophers wrote over his door, "Let no one who is ignorant of geometry enter here;" but our Lord, compared with whom all the wise men are but fools, who is, in fact, the wisdom of God, never drove away a sinner because of his ignorance, never refused a seeker because he was not yet initiated, and had not taken the previous steps in the ladder of learning, and never permitted any thirsty spirit to be chased away from the crystal spring of truth divine.

His every word was a diamond, and his lips dropped pearls, but he was never more at home than when speaking to the common people, and teaching them concerning the kingdom of God.

Our Lord Jesus is said to be the *Mediator* between God and man. The office of Mediator implies at once that he should be approachable. A daysman, as Job says, is one who can put his hand upon both; but if Jesus will not familiarly put his hand on man, certainly he is no daysman between God and man. A mediator is not a mediator of one—he must be akin to both the parties between whom he mediates. If Jesus Christ shall be a perfect Mediator between God and man, he must be able to come to God so near that God shall call him his fellow, and then he must approach to man so closely that he shall not be ashamed to call him brother. This is precisely the case with our Lord. Do think of this, you who are afraid of Jesus. He is a Mediator, and as a Mediator you may come to him. Jacob's ladder reached from earth to heaven, but if he had cut away half-a-dozen of the bottom rounds, what would have been the good of it? Who could ascend by it into the hill of the Lord? Jesus Christ is the great conjunction between earth and heaven, but if

he will not touch the poor mortal man who comes to him, why then, of what service is he to the sons of men? You do need a mediator between your soul and God; you must not think of coming to God without a mediator; but you do not want any mediator between yourselves and Christ. There is a preparation for coming to God—you must not come to God without a perfect righteousness; but you may come to Jesus without any preparation, and without any righteousness, because as Mediator he has in himself all the righteousness and fitness that you require, and is ready to bestow them upon you. You may come boldly to him even now; he waits to reconcile you unto God by his blood.

Another of his offices is that of Priest. That word *priest* has come to smell very badly nowadays; but for all that it is a very sweet word as we find it in Holy Scripture. The word *priest* does not mean a gaudily-dressed pretender, who stands apart from other worshipers within the gate, two steps higher than the rest of the people, who professes to have power to dispense pardon for human sin, and I know not what beside. The true priest was truly the brother of all the people. There was no man in the whole camp so brotherly as Aaron. So much were Aaron and the priests

who succeeded him the first points of contact with men, on God's behalf, that when a leper had become too unclean for anybody else to draw near to him, the last man who touched him was the priest. The house might be leprous, but the priest went into it, and the man might be leprous, but he talked with him, and examined him, the last of Israel's tribes who might be familiar with the wretched outcast; and if afterwards that diseased man was cured, the first person who touched him must be a priest. "Go, show thyself to the priest," was the command, to every recovering leper; and until the priest had entered into fellowship with him, and had given him a certificate of health, he could not be received into the Jewish camp. The priest was the true brother of the people, chosen from among themselves, at all times to be approached; living in their midst, in the very center of the camp, ready to make intercession for the sinful and the sorrowful. Surely, you will never doubt that if Jesus perfectly sustains the office of Priest, as he certainly does, he must be the most approachable of beings, approachable by the poor sinner, who has given himself up to despair, whom only a sacrifice can save; approachable by the foul harlot who is put outside the camp, whom only the blood can cleanse; approach-

able by the miserable thief who has to suffer the punishment of his crimes, whom only the great High Priest can absolve. No other man may care to touch you, O trembling outcast, but Jesus will. You may be separated from all of human kind, justly and righteously, by your iniquities, but you are not separated from that great Friend of sinners who at this very time is willing that publicans and sinners should draw near unto him.

As a third office, let me mention that *the Lord Jesus is our Saviour*; but I see not how he can be a Saviour unless he can be approached by those who need to be saved. The priest and the Levite passed by on the other side when the bleeding man lay in the road to Jericho; they were not saviours, therefore, and could not be, but he was the saviour who came where the man was, stooped over him, and took wine and oil and poured them into the gaping fissures of his wounds, and lifted him up with tender love and set him on his own beast, and led him to the inn. He was the true saviour; and, O sinner, Jesus Christ will come just where you are, and your wounds of sin, even though they are putrid, shall not drive him away from you. His love shall overcome the nauseating offensiveness of your iniquity, for he is able and willing to save such

as you are. I might mention many other of the offices of Christ, but these three will suffice. Certainly if the Spirit blesses them, you will be led to see that Jesus is not hard to reach.

CHAPTER III.

SEEKERS TOUCHING CHRIST.

SOME of us have ourselves been healed, and therefore speak from assured experience. A man was secretly bowed down with despondency and depression of spirits of an unusual sort—one whose life was spent at the very gates of hell, through sorrow of heart when but a youth ; yet, in one moment was he lifted into perfect peace ; and all that by a simple looking to him who was crucified upon the cross. That one form of healing is a type of others ; for all other evils are overcome in the same manner. Jesus can heal you of your pride ; he can deliver you from anger ; he can cure you of sluggishness, he can purge you from envy, from lasciviousness, from malice, from gluttony, from every form of spiritual malady. And this he can do, not by the torturing processes of penance, or the exhausting labors of superstitious performance, or the fiery ordeals of suffering ; but the method is simply a word from him, and a look from you, and all is done.

You have but to trust in Jesus and you are saved ; made a new creature in an instant ; set on your feet again to start upon a new life, with a new power within you, which shall conquer sin. We who bear this testimony claim to be believed ; we are not liars. Not even for God's honor would we palm a pious fraud upon you. We have felt in ourself the healing power of Christ. We have seen it, and do see it every day, in the cases of others, in persons of all ranks, and of all ages. All who have obeyed the word of Jesus have been made new creatures by his power. It is not one or two of us who bear this witness, there are hundreds who certify to the self-same fact ; not of ministers alone, but of other professions and callings. There are tradesmen, there are gentlemen, there are working men, there are persons high and low, who could say, " We too are witnesses that Christ can heal the soul."

Here, then, is the marvel that those who know this do not immediately throng to Christ to obtain the self-same blessing. "'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange, 'tis wonderful!" The course of those of whom we read was a rational one. They heard that Christ had healed many, and the true practical logic was, " Let us be healed too!" Where is he? Let us reach him. Are there crowds about him? Let us

jostle one another, let us force our way into the mass until we touch him, and feel the healing virtue flowing forth from him. But men seem to have taken leave of their reason now. They know that the blessing is to be had, an eternal blessing not to be weighed with gold, nor compared with diamonds; and yet they turn their backs upon it! Selfishness usually attracts men to places where good things are to be had; but here is the chief of all good, the possession of a sound soul, the gaining of a new nature which will fit a man to be a partaker with angels of light in glory, to be had, and to be had freely, yet man, untrue to himself, not even letting a right-minded selfishness govern him, turneth away from the fountain of all goodness, and goeth his way into the wilderness to perish of eternal thirst.

The gospel is preached unto you, and God has not sent it with the intention that after you have heard it you should seek mercy and not find it. Oh! no, God does not tantalize, he does not mock the sons of men. He bids you come to him. Repent and believe, and you shall be saved. If you come with a broken heart, trusting in Christ, there is no fear that he will reject you; else he would not have sent the gospel to you. There is nothing that so delights Jesus Christ as to save sinners. I

never find that he was in a huff because they pressed about him to touch him. Nay, but it gave him divine pleasure to give forth his healing power. You who are in trade are never happier than when business is brisk; and my Lord Jesus, who follows the trade of soul-winning, is never happier than when his great business is moving on rapidly. What pleasure it gives a physician when at last he brings a person through a severe illness into health! I think the medical profession must be one of the happiest engagements in the world when a man is skilful in it. Our Lord Jesus feels a most divine pleasure as he bends over a broken heart and binds it up. It is the very heaven of Christ's soul to be doing good to the sons of men. You misjudge him if you think he wants to be argued with and persuaded to have mercy; he gives it as freely as the sun pours forth light, as the heavens drop with dew, and as clouds yield their rain. It is his honor to bless sinners; it makes him a name, and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. I know I once belied him; when I felt my sins to be a great burden, I said within myself, "I will go to Jesus, but perhaps he will reject me;" I thought I had much to feel and to do to make myself ready for him; and I therefore did this and that, but the more I did the worse I be-

came. I was like the woman who spent her money on physicians, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse. At last I found it was of no use, and when I fully understood that there was life in a look at Christ, that all which was wanted was for me simply to trust, to come as I was and put my case into his dear pierced hands, and leave it there—I could not think it *could* be so; it seemed so simple—how could it be true? Was that all? I thought when I came to him he would say to me, “Sinner, you have rejected me so long, you have mocked me by saying prayers which you did not feel; you have been a hypocrite and joined with God’s people in singing my praises when you did not praise me in your heart.” I thought he would chide me, and bring ten thousand sins to my remembrance. Instead of that, it was but a word, and it was all done. I looked to him, the burden was gone. I could have sung, “Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, with pardon in his right hand and acceptance in his left, with abundant blessings to the least deserving of the sons of men.” Now, I have to tell you that Jesus Christ abides in the same ability to save as he had in the days of his flesh. He ever liveth to make intercession for sinners, and is therefore able to save to the uttermost them that come

unto him : and it is still true that him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. There has never been an instance of a man that trusted Christ and perished, and there never shall be an instance.

Do not delay trusting Christ ; do not entertain a hope that it will ever be easier to trust Jesus than it is now ; do not think that you will ever be in a better state for coming than you are in now. The best state in all the world for washing is to be filthy ; the best state in all the world to obtain help from a physician is to be sore sick ; the best state for asking alms is to be a beggar. Do not try to patch up those rags, nor to improve your character, nor to make yourself better before you come to Christ. Come in all your poverty and vile-ness, just as you are, and say to him, "My Lord and my God, thou hast suffered as a man for all the sins of all those who trust thee : I trust thee ; accept me, give me peace and joy." And tell the world, I pray you, whether he accepts you or no. If he casts you away, you will be the very first—then let us know of it ; but if He receives you, you will be but one among ten thousand who have been thus accepted—then publish it to the confirming of our faith.

Never be content with merely pressing upon

Christ. When there is a gracious season in a church, and persons are converted, many rest satisfied because they have been in the congregation where works of mercy have been performed. It is dreadful to reflect that we have in all our assemblies men and women who are perfectly satisfied with having spent the Sunday in a place of worship. Now, suppose the case of a man having the leprosy, who goes to the place where Jesus is: he sees the people thronging to get near, and he joins in the press; he pushes on for a certain length of time, and then he comes back perfectly content because he has joined with the crowd. The next day the great Master is dispensing healing virtue right and left, and this same man joins in the throng, and once more elbows himself tolerably near to the Saviour, and then retires. "Well," he says, "I got into the crowd; I pressed and squeezed, and made my way, and so I was in the way, perhaps I might have got a blessing." Now that would be precisely similar to the condition of hundreds and thousands of people who go to a place of worship on Sunday. There is the gospel; they come to hear it; they come next Sunday, there is the gospel again; they listen to it, and they go their way each time. "Fool!" say you to the man with the leprosy, "why, you