

REVIVAL ADDRESSES

by

R. A. Torrey

Author of

"What the Bible Teaches,"
"How to Work for CHRIST,"
"How to Pray," etc. etc.

Copyright © 1800

by

Fleming H. Revell Company

New York

Chapter 13

ONE OF THE SADDEST UTTERANCES THAT EVER FELL FROM THE LIPS OF THE SON OF GOD

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40.

That is one of the saddest utterances that our Saviour ever spoke. I wish I could reproduce His tender tones and His loving look when He uttered the words. I believe it would break your heart. He came down from Heaven with its glory to earth with its shame, to bring life to men. He went up and down among men proclaiming that life could be obtained by simply coming to Him, but men would not come. And at last He turned round upon the men who had not come to Him, and with a heart aching with disappointment, and with tones full of yearning pity He said: **"Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."**

I. WHY ANY MAN IS LOST

Those words contain the explanation why any man is lost. If any man is lost it will be because he will not come to CHRIST. If any man or woman goes out of this hall to-night unsaved, that will be the reason. JESUS CHRIST offers life to every man and woman here on the simple condition that you come to Him, and if you go out of this hall to-night without it, it is simply because you would not come to Him.

1. No man is lost because he needs to be lost. No man needs to be lost. GOD has provided salvation for everybody. The atonement of JESUS CHRIST covers the sins of every man. He tasted death - as we are told in the Word of GOD - for every man, and the offer of salvation is made to every man. If any man does not take it, it is because he will not come and get it. No man is lost because of any purpose or decree of GOD. It is the will of GOD, we are told expressly in His word, that all men should be saved, and He **"is not willing"** -as we read in II Peter 3:9- **"that**

any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And if any man is lost, it is solely because He will not come.

2. No man is lost because he has gone down so deeply into sin. Indeed it is true that all of us have gone down into sin so deeply that we deserve to be lost. But "**this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**" - even the chief. He can do it. He is doing it every day. CHRIST did save the chief of sinners - Saul of Tarsus - and He has power to-night to save any man or woman in London. No man or woman is lost because they have gone down so deeply into sin, but simply because they will not come to that only Saviour who has power to save them from their sins.

3. No man is lost because he is too weak to lead the Christian life. It is true that every one of us is too weak to lead a true Christian life in our own strength; but, thank GOD, we have a Saviour who "**is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.**" If any man is lost, it is solely because he will not come to CHRIST. If any man or woman or person goes out of this hall to-night unsaved it is no one's fault but your own, and the whole reason will be that you will not come to CHRIST and obtain life.

II. WHY MEN WILL NOT COME TO CHRIST

But why will not men come to CHRIST? There are many things that keep them from coming.

1. The first one is sin. I believe that sin is keeping more men and women from coming to CHRIST than almost anything else. There are a great many men in this world who know their need of a Saviour, who long for a Saviour, who have a deep desire to take the Lord JESUS CHRIST, but they know if they come to Him they must leave their sins behind. A man cannot come to CHRIST and retain his sin. You have to choose between JESUS CHRIST and sin. Men know that, but they are not willing to give up their sins.

At one of Mr. Moody's services in Chicago, after he had preached on the "Prodigal Son" a fine-looking young fellow came to me and said, "That was a good sermon to-night. He pictured my case exactly. I am that prodigal son."

I said, "Don't you want to come home to the Father to-night, then?"

He said, "I do."

I said, "And the Father wants you to come."

He said, "I know it."

I said, "Will you come?"

He said, "I will not."

I asked, "Why not?"

He replied., "I am entangled in the meshes of a disgusting sin."

"Then," I said, "will you not give it up to-night?"

"No, sir," he said, "I will not."

That young man went out of that place where he had been brought face to face with GOD's love, deliberately choosing a vile sin and death instead of JESUS CHRIST and eternal life.

I dare say there are men and women who will go out of this hall to-night with a clear view of the fact that they can come to CHRIST and be pardoned, but you will not come because there is some deliberate sin in your life or heart that you are not willing to give up.

2. The love of money keeps many men from coming to CHRIST. Many a man knows that if he came to CHRIST he would lose money by it. There are things in his business that would need to be given up. But he is not willing to sacrifice the profits he gets in crooked ways. He is deliberately choosing a larger income and eternal death instead of JESUS CHRIST and eternal life.

How many a young fellow has come to me and when I have urged him to come to CHRIST he has said, "I believe it is a good thing, but I should have to give up my situation if I did." Two young ladies said to Mrs. Torrey at one of our services in Australia, when they seemed to be very near decision, "We cannot come to CHRIST. We are employed in a large shop, and our employer requires us to misrepresent the goods. We cannot do that and be Christians, can we?"

"No, you cannot " Mrs. Torrey replied; and the young ladies said, "If we don't, then we lose our positions."

GOD pity the man or the merchant who requires his employees to lie! And yet there are such who profess to be Christians. GOD have mercy on such hypocrites, who are hurrying on fast to an eternal hell - every one of them. How sad it is that those young women were ready to choose their position and small salary in the place of JESUS CHRIST and life eternal!

3. Love of pleasure, is keeping many a man and woman from coming to CHRIST. How many young men and young women there are in London who know need CHRIST and would like to be Christians, but they say if they come to CHRIST they will, have to give up this or that pleasure - the dance or the card party or the theatre. "I can never do it," they say, and they are choosing the dance or card party or theatre or some other form of worldly amusement and death instead of JESUS CHRIST and life.

Dr. John Hall, of New York City, was at one time pastor of perhaps the wealthiest church in New York City. There came to him one day a young lady who was a most beautiful waltzer and she said, "If I become a Christian will I have to give up my dancing?" He replied, "If you become a Christian and JESUS CHRIST asks you to give up your dancing, you must be ready to do it." She replied, "If I must choose between JESUS CHRIST and dancing, I will hold on to my dancing and let JESUS CHRIST go." What an awful choice!

You have not said it; perhaps you never thought it so definitely; but some of you to-night are

making that very choice. You feel you could not be a real Christian and hold on to your worldly pleasure, and you reject JESUS CHRIST rather than give up your worldly pleasure. You are saying by your action, "if I must choose between JESUS CHRIST and my dancing or card-playing or theatre, or this or that and the other thing, I will hold on to my dancing, or whatever it be, and let JESUS CHRIST go."

4. The fear of man is keeping many a man and woman in London from coming to CHRIST and obtaining eternal life. How many there are who when the invitation is given would like to stand up, but they say if I should do it my friends in business or society would hear about it, and what would they say? You keep your seat and you reject JESUS CHRIST for fear of what they would say.

In Proverbs 29:25, we read: "**The fear of man bringeth a snare.** "It is bringing a snare that is landing many in a path that leads to eternal ruin instead of to JESUS CHRIST and life eternal. I would a great deal rather that men would laugh at me down here for doing a wise thing, than that the devils in hell should laugh at me for all eternity for doing a foolish thing.

We have in our country a very foolish custom. I think you have it to a certain extent in your country also, but perhaps not to the same extent as we have it in ours. It is called "April Fools' Day."

On the first day of April all the fools in America try to make fools of all the other fools. One custom is to bore a hole in a silver coin, and after attaching a string to it, put it on the sidewalk. When any one comes along and stoops to pick it up, the coin is pulled away, and they cry "April fool." Another joke is to take a wallet and fill it with dust and dirt and chips and throw it on the sidewalk, and when an one picks it up and opens it to cry "April fool!" One day a farmer went to his bank in Baltimore and drew some money, which he put for safe-keeping into his wallet. After walking some distance, he felt in his pocket and found the wallet had gone. Retracing his steps, he had not gone many blocks when he saw a circle of people round a wallet, no one daring to touch it, thinking it was full of sawdust and shavings. When the farmer entered the circle and picked up the wallet, all cried "April fool !" but when he opened it and counted the money to see if it were all there, they felt that they were the fools.

I tell you that a day is coming for those men and women who laugh at you, because you choose CHRIST and eternal life, when they will say that you have made a wise choice and they were the fools. Don't let them laugh you out of life eternal.

At one of my missions I asked a woman how she was getting on.

She replied, "I am not getting on at all; I am perfectly miserable."

"Why is that?" I said.

"I don't know" she replied.

Another said, "I can tell you why it is, she has never told her husband she has accepted JESUS CHRIST."

"Is that so?" I asked her.

"It is," she replied.

"But you stood up in the meeting?" I said.

"Yes, but not when he was present."

"Well, you must tell him!"

"I can't tell my husband; he would laugh at me," she answered.

"Never mind how much he laughs" I said.

"I can't do it," was all she would reply.

The next Sunday night the lady and gentleman were sitting together in one of the front seats. I stopped in the midst of my address and said, "Every woman in the house who will say that from this time on my husband shall have an out-and-out Christian for his wife, please rise." This woman immediately rose to her feet. "Now," I said, "every man who will say from this time my wife shall have a true Christian man for her husband, please rise." That man was the first man in the house on his feet.

Show people the beauty and power of a living faith in JESUS CHRIST, and you will bring them with you.

5. An unforgiving spirit is another thing that is keeping men and women from coming to JESUS CHRIST. They know they cannot come, and bring a heart full of hate, and so they choose bitterness and hatred and death instead of CHRIST and life.

One afternoon at Cleveland, after Mr. Moody had been speaking, he brought me to a lady to show her the way of life. I had been speaking to her trying this and that passage to see what was in the way of her accepting CHRIST, when suddenly I turned to her and said, "Is there somebody you cannot forgive?"

She looked quickly at me, and said, "Who told you?"

I said, "Nobody told me, and I have never seen you before to-night."

That was her trouble, and that is the trouble with some of you. Some one has done you an injustice or you think they have, and you will not come to JESUS CHRIST because you want to cherish this bitter grudge in your heart.

I once talked about two hours; to a young lady, trying to lead her to CHRIST, but at last she said, "There is somebody I cannot forgive."

I told her, "You must or be lost for ever."

But she replied, "I cannot; they have done me a wrong."

I said, "If they had not done you a wrong, there would not be anything to forgive. Have they wronged you as much as you have wronged JESUS CHRIST?"

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, commencing at the twenty-third verse, we have the parable of the servant who was forgiven a large debt, and then would not forgive his fellow-servant a trifling sum. That is a picture of the unforgiving one to-day. I said to her, "Read that incident; you must forgive." But she said, "I can't."

"Are you willing," I then asked her, "that GOD should take the bitterness out of your heart?" She replied, "I am."

Then I said, "Kneel down and ask Him;" As she knelt down, and scarcely had her knees touched the floor, when she burst into tears, as she felt the feeling of hate taken away.

Are you going to reject JESUS CHRIST and eternal life for the sake of hating somebody? GOD have mercy upon you.

6. Self-will stands between many a person and CHRIST and eternal life. There are a great many people in this world who are not willing to surrender their wills to anybody, not even to GOD. They are bound to have their own way. A woman told me that on Friday night. She said, "I cannot give my will up to anybody." What foolishness! Who is this GOD to whom we ask you to surrender your will? GOD is love. Is it not wisdom to surrender our wills to infinite love and wisdom? Oh, the folly of those who will not surrender their wills to GOD and His love.

7. There is one more thing that is keeping people from coming to JESUS CHRIST, and that is pride. I believe that there are thousands and tens of thousands of people in London to-night that are kept from Him because of the pride in their hearts.

Pride manifests itself in many ways. It makes men and women, who have led moral and respectable lives, unwilling to admit that they are lost sinners, and must come into the Kingdom of GOD through the same door as the thief or the harlot or the drunkard. You will all have to get into the kingdom in that way.

Look at CHRIST's parable of the publican and sinner.

First there came the Pharisee to the temple to pray, a moral, upright, prominent citizen. But what is his prayer? It is just a parade of his own virtues. **"God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess."** Do you know what JESUS CHRIST says about him? He says that this man went down to his house unforgiven.

Then came the publican - an outcast, despised by everybody, but a man who had been brought to the consciousness of his sin. He would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, **"God be merciful to me a sinner"** - the sinner. Do you know what

JESUS CHRIST says? **"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."**

I believe that very many people are being kept from CHRIST and eternal life by the pride of their hearts.

In Chicago I was once telling the story of a woman who had been away down in sin and been saved; and afterwards a refined lady came to me and said, "You do not mean to say that that woman was saved?" The strange thing was that the lady was a Universalist, and believed that everybody could be saved. I told her "the woman was saved, and what is more, she was saved in precisely the same way that you will be saved if ever you are saved." That is GOD's truth.

Ah! but some of you people are not willing to lay your pride in the dust. You are not willing to throw your pride to the winds, and go to GOD and seek pardon through the atoning blood of the Son of GOD. You will never be saved any other way.

A lady once came to me and said, "My Christian experience is not satisfactory."

I said, "I don't think you have any Christian experience."

"Why," she said, "I have. I am the widow of a minister and a member of a church."

"Well," I responded, "I don't think that you ever were saved in your life. No, you never were, for you never saw yourself as a lost sinner in your life."

She said, "I never did, because I am not."

I replied, "Let me deal frankly with you. You are just full of conceit." Unless GOD opens your eyes to see that you are not essentially better than the vilest sinner, and unless you come to GOD and cry for mercy, through the atoning Blood of CHRIST, you will never be saved."

She said "You are cruel."

"No " I said, "I am kind. You are a physician, I believe?"

She replied, "Yes."

Then I said, "Suppose a patient had a tumor, and you cut it out to save her life. Would you call that cruel?"

"No," she said, "I should say that was the kindest thing I could do."

"Well," I said, "you have a tumor. Your pride and conceit are blinding your eyes so that you cannot see that you are a poor, vile, worthless sinner, and JESUS CHRIST died for you on the Cross."

The woman had the good sense at last to see it, but that more than some of you have. I tell you among the people who are in this hall there are a lot of people who are being kept away from CHRIST by spiritual pride.

But pride operates in another way.

Oh, that by the help of GOD I could tear these awful scales from your eyes. Pride makes people set themselves not to do certain things which they are asked to do.

"I am not coming," they say, "to the meeting," or "I am not going to the front seats," or "I am not going to the inquiry room. A person can be saved without that."

They can, beyond a doubt; but if you make it a point that you won't do something of that kind, you won't be saved until you do.

In Mr. Finney's day many people found salvation under a certain tree. One prominent man said he would not go out there. It was not necessary, of course. He did all sorts of things, but he would not do that. He got no peace however, and one day he stole out of the town the back way, and made his way to the place where the tree was, and climbed the fence around it. When he went to kneel down the wind shook a leaf and frightened him. But as soon as he knelt down and asked GOD, He saved him right there.

There are some of you men and women like that.

Do not misunderstand me. I want to make it as clear as day. It is not necessary for you to do anything except to believe in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, but if you say I won't do a thing, you will never be saved until you do. You have got to lay your pride in the dust before you can find JESUS CHRIST.

I remember the first time I went to hold a mission. The last meeting had come, and the last person had stood up, and I got up to dismiss the meeting, when a lady rose. She was the leading society woman in the town. She rose slowly to her feet and said, "Before you dismiss this meeting, may I say something?"

And then, turning round to face the audience, she said, "When Mr. Torrey came, I said he would never get me to stand up, but I now wish to most humbly take it an back, and ask you to pray for me."

The power of GOD fell on that meeting.

Some of you men and women think your position in society is too exalted for you to come up to the front with common folks and accept the Saviour just as ordinary men and women do, but if you think that, you will never be saved until you humble your pride in the dust, and are willing to go anywhere to find peace and pardon. Let us throw away everything that stands between us and JESUS CHRIST. He stands in this building to-night with outstretched hands.

Oh, see Him! Hear the tender tones that fall from His lips, the heart-breaking tones: "**Ye will not**

come to Me, that ye might have life."

The Lord JESUS CHRIST, who died on the Cross of Calvary, is standing here, with His thorn-crowned brow and pierced hands, saying, "**Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life."**

Men and women rise and say, "I will come, Lord JESUS; I come now."

~ end of chapter 13 ~
