

# ***The Soul Winner***

**By**

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**Summarized for Leadership Training**

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## Chapter one: What is it to Win a Soul?

*“Soul - winning is the chief business of the Christian minister... the main pursuit of every true believer.”*

### WHAT IS IT TO WIN A SOUL?

*“... aim... at bringing souls to Christ.” It is because God blesses men through the churches that we desire to see them prosper, and not merely for the sake of the churches themselves. The increase of the kingdom is more to be desired than the growth of a clan. ...Our grand object is not the revision of opinions, but the regeneration of natures. We would bring men to Christ, and not to our own peculiar views of Christianity. Our first care must be that the sheep should be gathered to the great Shepherd; there will be time enough afterwards to secure them for our various folds. To make proselytes, is a suitable labour for Pharisees: to beget men unto God, is the honourable aim of ministers of Christ.”*

*“...do not consider soul-winning... inscribing more names upon our church-roll... By all means let us bring true converts... for it is a part of our work to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them; but still, this is to be done to disciples... **To introduce unconverted persons to the church, is to weaken and degrade it; and therefore an apparent gain may be a real loss.** It is a good thing for people to see the nakedness of the land through statistics of decrease, that they may be driven on their knees before the Lord to seek prosperity... it must be right to know our numerical condition... those who object to the process are often brethren whose unsatisfactory reports should somewhat humiliate them... if there is no increase, you may calculate with considerable accuracy that there is not much being done; and if there is a clear decrease... reckon that the prayers of the people and the preaching... are not of the most powerful kind.”*

***“It is a serious injury to a person to receive him into the number of the faithful unless there is good reason to believe that he is really regenerate.** Some of the most glaring sinners... were, as I believe, led to make a profession by undue pressure... Do not, therefore, consider that soul-winning is or can be secured by the multiplication of baptisms, and the swelling of the size of your church.”*

*“Nor is it soul-winning, dear friends, merely to create excitement.”*

*“Do not aim at sensation and “effect.”*

***“It very often happens that the converts that are born in excitement die when the excitement is over.** The utmost zeal for Christ is consistent with common-sense and reason: raving, ranting, and fanaticism are products of another zeal which is not according to knowledge”*

***“What is the real winning of a soul for God? ...what are the processes by which a soul is led to God and to salvation? ...one of its main operations consists in instructing a man that he may know the truth of God.** Teaching begins the work, and crowns it, too.”*

*“It is ours, then, to give men something worth their hearing; in fact, to instruct them. We are sent to evangelize, or to preach the gospel to every creature; and that is not done unless we teach them the great truths of revelation. The gospel is good news. ...there is information in it, there is instruction in it concerning matters which men need to know, and statements in it calculated to bless those who hear it. ...it is a revelation of facts and truths which require knowledge and belief. The gospel is a reasonable system, ...it is a matter for thought and consideration... **Hence, if we do not teach men something, we may shout,***

***'Believe! Believe! Believe!' but what are they to believe? Each exhortation requires a corresponding instruction, or it will mean nothing. 'Escape!' From what? 'Repent!' Of what? 'Be converted!' But what is it to be converted?\_The field of instruction is wide if men are to be made to know the truth which saves. 'That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good,' and it is ours... to make men so to know the truth that they may believe it, and feel its power.'***

***"Teach gospel doctrines clearly, affectionately, simply, and plainly, and especially those truths which have a present and practical bearing upon man's condition and God's grace. He who sent us to win souls neither permits us to invent falsehoods, nor to suppress truth."***

*"The preacher's work is to throw sinners down in utter helplessness, that they may be compelled to look up to Him..."*

*"The best attraction is the gospel in its purity. The weapon with which the Lord conquers men is the truth as it is in Jesus. The gospel will be found equal to every emergency; an arrow which can pierce the hardest heart, a balm which will heal the deadliest wound. **Preach it, and preach nothing else.** You need no other nets when you fish for men... Spread these nets and no others..."*

*"Secondly, to win a soul, it is necessary... to instruct our hearer... make him know the truth... to impress him so that he may feel it. A purely didactic ministry, which... should leave the emotions untouched, would certainly be a limping ministry. **It is a horrible thing for a man to be so doctrinal that he can speak coolly of the doom of the wicked, so that... it costs him no anguish of heart to think of the ruin of millions of our race. The love of God is first, but this by no means lessens the obligation of love to man..**"*

*"A sinner has a heart as well as a head; a sinner has emotions as well as thoughts; and we must appeal to both. A sinner will never be converted until his emotions are stirred. The Truth must soak into the soul, and dye it with its own colour. The Word must be like a strong wind sweeping through the whole heart, and swaying the whole man..."*

*"Natural grief is of no service in itself... it is a distraction from higher thoughts... I saw a girl... reading a book, and crying... when I glanced at the volume, I saw that it was only one of those silly yellow-covered novels... Her tears were a sheer waste of moisture, and so are those which are produced by mere pulpit tale-telling and death-bed painting."*

*"If our hearers will weep over their sins, and after Jesus, let their tears flow in rivers... There might be some virtue in making people joyful... but what is the use of creating needless misery? A true physician only makes incisions in order to effect cures, and a wise minister only excites painful emotions in men's minds with the distinct object of blessing their souls."*

*"'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' The Holy Ghost must work regeneration in the objects of our love... They must be quickened into a new life, and they must become new creatures in Christ Jesus. This might seem at first sight to put human instrumentality altogether out of the field; but on turning to the Scriptures we find nothing to justify such an inference and much of quite an opposite tendency."*

“The Holy Ghost creates in us a new, heavenly, and immortal nature... *Our theory of regeneration is that man in his fallen nature consists only of body and soul, and that when he is regenerated there is created in him a new and higher nature –‘the spirit’... Thenceforward, the man consists of three parts, body, soul, and spirit, and the spirit is the reigning power of the three. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. ...in regeneration we enter into a new condition, and we become possessors of the life-giving ‘spirit.’ Without this spirit, no man can see or enter the kingdom of heaven. It must therefore be our intense desire that the Holy Spirit should visit our hearers, and create them anew... Till this is done, they can never receive the truth, ‘for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God...’ The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.’ ...we have before us a mighty work, for which we are ourselves totally incapable. No minister living can save a soul... On the other hand, the marvels of regeneration which attend our ministry are the best seals and witnesses of our commission.”*

***“First, regeneration will be shown in conviction of sin. ...an indispensable mark of the Spirit’s work... God never clothes men until He has first stripped them... ...there must be true and deep conviction of sin, and this the preacher must labour to produce, for where this is not felt the new birth has not taken place.”***

*“Equally certain is that true conversion may be known by the exhibition of a simple faith in Jesus Christ. The production of faith is the very centre of the target at which you aim. **He either saves us once for all, or not at all.** Genuine faith trusts a whole Christ for the whole of salvation. A faulty exhibition of Christ begets a faulty faith; and... ...the preacher and possessor of a partial faith must unitedly bear the blame. **We must urge the trembling sinner to trust wholly and alone upon the Lord Jesus for ever, or we shall have him inferring that he is to begin in the Spirit and be made perfect by the flesh: he will surely walk by faith as to the past, and then by works as to the future, and this will be fatal.** the regenerated man becomes capable of virtue, and is filled with an enthusiasm for God’s glory.”*

*“Together with undivided faith in Jesus Christ there must also be unfeigned repentance of sin. Repentance is... a great and deep change –even a change of the mind itself. ...repentance... You will not find a better definition... than the one given in the children’s hymn; –*

*‘Repentance is to leave  
The sins we loved before;  
And show that we in earnest grieve,  
By doing so no more.’*

*True conversion is... attended by... a hatred of sin, which proves that its dominion is ended... **True belief and true repentance are twins: it would be idle to attempt to say which is born first. No sinner looks to the Saviour with a dry eye or a hard heart. Aim, therefore, at heart-breaking, at bringing home condemnation to the conscience, and weaning the mind from sin, and be not content till the whole mind is deeply... changed in reference to sin.”***

***“Another proof of the conquest of a soul for Christ will be found in a real change of life. If the man does not live differently from what he did before... his conversion is a fiction. Not only action and language, but spirit and temper must be changed. Hasty temper must be conquered, and the whole man must be renewed, or conversion will be questionable. Abiding under the power of any known sin is a mark of our being the servants of sin. True regeneration implants a hatred of all evil... A man need not take a dozen poisons to destroy his life, one is quite sufficient.”***

“There must be a harmony between the life and the profession. *To this practical test we must bring all our work.*”

*“...we must also see true prayer, which is the vital breath of godliness. **If there is no prayer... the soul is dead. We are not to urge men to pray as though it were the great gospel duty... It is easy to put prayer in its wrong place... but... true faith always prays..**”*

*“There must also be a willingness to obey the Lord in all His commandments. **How can a man be a disciple of Christ when he openly lives in disobedience to Him?**”*

***If... he knows his Lord’s will but does not mean to attend to it, you are not to pamper his presumption, but it is your duty to assure him that he is not saved.** Has not the Lord said, ‘He that taketh not up his cross, and cometh after Me, cannot be My disciple’? **Mistakes as to what the Lord’s will may be are to be tenderly corrected, but... willful disobedience is fatal; to tolerate it would be treason to Him that sent us. ...where there is any hesitancy about this, the foundation of godliness is not yet laid. A soul-winner can do nothing without God. Dependence upon God is our strength, and our joy...”***

*“Do not be in a hurry to count these supposed converts; do not take them into the church too soon...”*

*“I have known several... uncommonly clever fellows... at counterfeiting religion. They prayed very fluently, they tried to preach, and did it very well... Do not be in a hurry to take such people into the church; they have known no humiliation on account of sin, no brokenness of heart, no sense of divine grace. *They are a little too clever, and they are calculated to do much mischief...*”*

*“Oh! How cunningly he could act the hypocrite. ...living in open sin at the very time that he was seeking to come to the Lord’s table, ...and anxious to be a leading man in every good work. *Keep your weather eye open, brethren! ...they will be so helpful in the work! They speak so softly, and they are such perfect gentlemen! ...Judas was a man exactly of that kind, very clever at deceiving... **do not get any of these into the church. Do not... count your converts before you have tested and tried them. This process may make your work somewhat slow; but... sure.*** Do your work steadily and well, so that those who come after you may not have to say that it was far more trouble to them to clear the church of those who ought never to have been admitted. Let all your building for God be like that of the apostle Paul,... ‘...as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. ...*the fire shall try every man’s work...* If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. *If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss...*”*

## **Chapter two: Qualifications For Soul-Winning –Godward**

*“Our main business, brethren, is to win souls. We must know about souls.*

*...we need to know a great many things..*

*we must know about souls, and how to win them for God.”*

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR SOUL-WINNING...

“...those qualifications would be which God would naturally look for in His servants... to approve, and most likely to use. He speaks through the ministry of His servants, and therefore they must be fit trumpets for Him to speak through...”

“...first of all... a man who is to be a soul-winner must have holiness of character. ...think sufficiently of this! ...the Eternal would never use dirty tools... God will not go to work with instruments which would compromise His own character. He will speak through a fool if he be but a holy man.”

*“Dear brethren... attach the highest importance to your own personal holiness. Do live unto God. If you do not, your Lord will not be with you... You may preach very fine sermons, but if you are not yourselves holy, there will be **no** souls saved. ...you will blame anything except yourself... Do I not... know men of considerable ability... go without any increase in their churches? The reason is, that they are not living before God as they ought to live. Sometimes, the evil is in the family of the minister... Holiness was the preachers force...”*

“This holiness ought to show itself in communion with God. ...he delivers his Master’s message, having heard it from his Master’s lips... The greatest force of the sermon lies in what has gone before the sermon. You must get ready for the whole service by private fellowship with God, and real holiness of character.”

*“if a man is to be used as a winner of souls, he must have spiritual life to a high degree. ...life must be communicated by a living instrument and the man who is to communicate the life must have a great deal of it himself. God will not use dead tools for working living miracles... There are some men who are only about half alive; they have a living jaw, but not a living heart... May we be all alive from... head to... foot! *I know some such ministers; you cannot come into contact with them without feeling the power of the spiritual life which is in them. It is not merely while they are talking upon religious topics, but even in the commonplace things of the world... something... tells you that they are all alive unto God. Such men will be used by God for the quickening of others.*”*

*“Suppose it were possible for you to be exalted into the place of God, do you not think, next, that you would employ a man... of humble spirit? God has a predilection for those who are humble. He loatheth the proud; and whenever He sees the high and mighty, He passes them by; but whenever He finds the lowly in heart, He takes pleasure in exalting them. He delights especially in humility amongst His ministers. **It is an awful sight to see a proud minister.** Some ministers show their pride by their style in the pulpit... Others manifest it in their attire... There are two sorts of proud people... There is first... the kind... which talks about itself, and invites other people to talk about it, too... The other kind of pride is too big for that... *It is so supremely satisfied with itself that it does not stoop to consider what others think of it. ...it is the more dangerous kind of pride spiritually, but it is much the more respectable of the two. There is after all, something very noble in being too proud to be proud.* Brethren, get rid of both kinds of pride... *Never forget that you are disciples of Him who said, ‘Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.’”**

“True humility will lead you to think rightly about yourselves...”

***“...you are worthy of condemnation whenever you take to yourself the honor which belongeth unto God only.”***

*“Some men, who have not had humility, have been sent adrift from the ministry... Humility is one of the chief qualifications for usefulness... I am always very grateful for the rough treatment I received in my earlier days from all sorts of people. If I had been picked up all of a sudden, and placed where I am now, the probability is that I should have gone down again just as quickly. God is not likely to bless any man much unless he is truly humble.*

*“The next essential qualification... is a living faith. If ye will not believe, neither shall ye be used of God. ‘According to your faith be it unto you,’”*

***“You must have faith, brethren, about your call to the ministry; you must believe without question that you are really chosen of God to be ministers... If you firmly believe that God has called you to preach the gospel, you will preach it with courage and confidence... You had better not begin to preach until you are quite sure that God has called you to the work.*** If you have genuine faith in your call to the ministry, you will be ready, with Luther, to preach the gospel even while standing within the jaws of the leviathan, between his great teeth.”

***“You must also, believe that the message you have to deliver is God’s Word. Believe what you do believe, or else you will never persuade anybody else to believe it. God uses the faith of His ministers to breed faith in other people. ...souls are not saved by a minister who doubts, and the preaching of your doubts and your questions can never possibly decide a soul for Christ.”***

*“You must also believe in the power of that message to save people. I like to go to the pulpit feeling, ‘This is God’s Word that I am going to deliver in His name; it cannot return to Him void...’”*

*“...meet the people with a joyful countenance, so that they may see that you are expecting a blessing, but, at the same time, you will let them know that you will be grievously disappointed unless the Lord give you conversions.”*

***“That is the essential point, you must believe in God and in His gospel if you are to be a winner of souls... ...it does seem that the most likely instrument to do the Lord’s work is the man who expects that God will use him...”***

*“Once more, if a man is to succeed in his ministry, and win many souls, he must be characterized by thorough earnestness.”*

*“There are some ministers who... give little pastoral visitations... but there is no vehement agony for souls, no ‘Woe! woe!’ on their hearts and lips, no perfect consecration, no zeal in God’s service. **Dear brethren, do be earnest, put your whole soul into the work, or else give it up.**”*

*“Another qualification... is great simplicity of heart. You know some men, who are too wise to be just simple believers... Now God does not bless... spiritual aristocrats. ...they are not the men to do God’s work. When they select a text, they never explain its true meaning... What a shout they set up! ‘Glory! Glory! Glory! Here is a new thought!’”*

***“By simplicity of heart, I mean, that a man evidently goes into the ministry for the glory of God and the winning of souls, and nothing else. There are some men who would like to win souls and glorify God if it could be done with due regard to their own interests. ...they give God the glory after they have sucked the juice out of it...”***

***“With true simplicity of heart, we must seek to please God, whether men and women are pleased or not.***

“Lastly, there must be *a complete surrender of yourself to God... you wish to think, not your own thoughts, but God’s thoughts; ...you determine to preach, not anything of your own invention, but God’s Word; and... resolve not even to give out that truth in your own way, but in God’s way. ...if you desire to leave yourself entirely in God’s hands, it is probable that you will be led to make some very simple statement, some trite remark, something with which everyone in the congregation is familiar. If you feel moved to put that into the sermon, put it in by all means, even if you have to leave out the big words and the poetry, and the gems, for it may be that the Lord will bless that simple statement of the gospel to some poor sinner.*”

“...about some of your sermons... they are too big. *Now, brother, feel ready to say just anything that God gives you to say, irrespective of all the consequences... regardless of what anybody else will think or do.*”

***“So, when God puts His hand upon the very strings of your being, and every power within you seems to respond to the movements of His hand, you are an instrument that He can use. May you be as mobile beneath the power of God as the cork is on the surface of the sea! ...this self-surrender is one of the essential qualifications for a preacher who is to be a winner of souls.”***

### **Chapter Three: Qualifications For Soul-Winning –Manward**

#### **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUL-WINNER, MANWARD.**

“...first... *an ignoramus is not likely to be much of a soul-winner. ...being... ignorant of the things of God himself, I do not see how he can make them known to other people. The man, who is almost or altogether ignorant... must be left out of the race of great soul-winners; he is disqualified...*”

“... but supposing that you are well instructed in the best of all wisdom, what are the qualities that you must have towards men if you are to win them for the Lord? ...there must be... *an evident sincerity... It must be quite clear to your hearers that you have a firm belief in the truths that you are preaching... Unless they are convinced, beyond all question, that you do believe these truths yourselves, there will be no efficacy and no force in your preaching. ‘Why did you not profit by the sermon if what the preacher said was very good?’ ‘...because I did not believe in the man who delivered it; he was simply an actor... I did not believe that he felt what he preached, nor that he cared whether we felt or believed it or not.’*”

“As soon as a man lets his work become a matter of mere form or routine, it sinks into a performance... *I do beseech you, brethren, speak from your hearts, or else do not speak at all. If you can be silent, be silent; but if you must speak for God, be thoroughly sincere about it. It would be better for you to go back to business... or do anything rather than pretend to be ministers of the gospel unless God has called you to the work. I believe that the most damnable thing a man can do is to preach the gospel merely as an actor, and to turn the worship of God into a kind of theatrical performance.*”

*“...the next qualification, manward, for soul-winning, and that is evident earnestness. **If a man is to be a soul-winner, there must be in him intensity of emotion as well as sincerity of heart.** I have seen and heard some who were very poor preachers, who yet brought many souls to the Saviour through the earnestness with which they delivered their message. It was not what the preachers said, so much as how they said it, that carried conviction to the hearts of their hearers. Let no man despise the little bullet, for very often that is the one that kills the sin, and kills the sinner, too. ...it is not the bigness of the words you utter; it is the force with which you deliver them... ..you must... with your sermons, make them red-hot; never mind if men do say you are too enthusiastic, or even too fanatical. **We do not go out snow-balling on Sundays, we go fire-balling, we ought to hurl grenades into the enemy’s ranks.**”*

“I trust that when God gave us hearts... He gave us hearts that could feel for other people also.”

*“...next... it is necessary for a man who is to be a soul-winner, to have an evident love for his hearers.”*

“You must have a real desire for the good of the people if you are to have much influence over them.”

“You ought to have a great big heart... Do you not notice men succeed in the ministry, and win souls for Christ, just in proportion... with... hearts. I like to see a trace of humanity somewhere or other about a man, and people in general like it, too... ..human nature is a noble thing when it is united to the Lord Jesus Christ. *You must love the people, and mix with them, if you are to be of service to them. Just be men among men; keeping yourselves clear of all their faults and vices, but mingling with them in perfect love and sympathy... ..you might even say with the apostle Paul, ‘Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. ...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.’*”

*“The next qualification... is evident unselfishness. A man ceases to bring men to Christ as soon as he becomes known as a selfish man. I hope each of you, brethren, will be willing to say, ‘Well, let me have but food and raiment, and I will be therewith content.’ If you try to put the thought of money away from you, the money will often come back to you doubled. Those who are selfish in the matter of salary, will be the same in everything else... ..**the less you think of yourself, the more will people think of you; and the more you think of yourself, the less will people think of you. If any of you have any... selfishness about you... you will never be fit instruments for the winning of souls for the Lord Jesus Christ.**”*

*“another thing... in a soul-winner is holiness of character. A Christian minister must be very careful, not only to be innocent of actual wrong-doing, but not to be a cause of offence to the weak ones of the flock. ...men, they will be drawn towards holy things by our character as well as by our preaching.”*

*“I think also... to be soul-winners, there must be about us a seriousness of manner. ...some brethren who are naturally... melancholy... are always very serious; but in them it is not a sign of grace, ...an indication that their livers are out of order. They never laugh, ...they go about the world increasing the misery of human kind...”*

*“The most of us, however, are far more inclined to that laughter which doeth good like medicine, and we shall need all our cheerfulness, if we are to comfort and lift up those who are cast down; but we shall never bring many souls to Christ, if we are full of that levity which characterizes some men. People will say, ‘It is all a joke...’ There must be a prevailing seriousness about our whole lives, otherwise we cannot hope to lead other men to Christ.”*

*“Finally, ... there must be in our hearts a great deal of tenderness. When you preach, speak out straight, but be very tender about it; and if there is an unpleasant thing to be said, take care that you put it in the kindest possible form. When I spoke to him... he said, ‘...you have a way of putting an unpleasant truth so that a man cannot be offended with you however much he may dislike the message you bring to him.’ There is a way of doing such things so that the person reprovved feels positively grateful to you.”*

“I know some brethren who preach as if they were **prize-fighters**. ...calling upon someone to come up and fight them, and they are never happy except when they are pitching into somebody or other. If some men were allowed to preach in heaven, I am afraid they would set the angels fighting. He feels that he is called to the work of separating the precious from the vile... ...it is more likely that there is something wrong with his heart; ...there is an evil disease upon him... *If any of you... have even a little of this nasty, bitter spirit about you, ...get rid of it. ...do not go into churches to fight.*”

*“...no one can by a display of evil temper set right anything that is wrong in our churches. Take care always to speak the truth in love, and especially when you are rebuking sin.”*

## **Chapter 4: Sermons Likely To Win Souls**

### **THE KIND OF SERMONS THAT ARE MOST LIKELY TO CONVERT PEOPLE,**

...discourses we should deliver... Of course, the Holy Spirit alone can convert a soul...”

“Still, we may be instruments.”

“You will find that this principle of adaptation runs through the whole work of the Holy Spirit. **Paul in his place is the right man, and Peter in his place is the right man. ...in this principle... seek to adapt your means to your end. God the Holy Spirit can convert a soul by any text of Scripture... but there are certain Scripture passages, as you know, that are the best to bring before the minds of sinners...** As to which sermons are most likely to be blessed to the conversion of those to whom they are preached I should say,—“

“First, they are those sermons which are distinctly aimed at the conversion of the hearers.”

“...if you want your hearers to be converted, you must just see that your preaching aims directly at **conversion...** When that is the case, then look for souls to be saved, and look for a great number of them too. Do not be satisfied when a single soul is converted. Remember that the rule of the kingdom is, ‘According to your faith be it unto you.’”

“...if the people are to be saved, it must be by sermons that interest them. You have first to get them to come under the sound of the gospel, for there is... a great aversion to a place of worship and I am not much surprised that it is so concerning many churches and chapels. ...people do not attend such services because they do not understand the theological ‘lingo’ that is used in the pulpit... No, brethren, we must preach in... ‘market language’...”

*“Then, when they do come in, we must preach interestingly. The people will not be converted while they are asleep... We must have the minds of our hearers awake and active if we are to do them real good.”*

*“Moreover, the people must be interested to make them remember what is said. ...we must tell our hearers something they will not be likely to forget. I believe in what Father Taylor calls ‘the surprise power of a sermon’; that is, something that is not expected by those who are listening to it. Just when they reckon that you are sure to say something very precise and straight, say something awkward and crooked, because they will remember that, and you will have tied a gospel knot where it is likely to remain. I give that same advice to you preachers, always put a knot in your thread; if there is a knot in the thread, it does not come out of the material. Put a good many knots in your discourses, brethren, so that there may be all the greater probability that they will remain in your people’s memories. **I believe that a sermon, under God’s smile, is likely to be the means of conversion if it has this peculiarity about it, that it is interesting to the hearers as well as directly aimed at their salvation.**”*

*“The third thing in a sermon that is likely win souls to Christ is, it must be instructive. ...it must contain at least some measure of knowledge. There must be light as well as fire.”*

*“The sermons that are most likely to convert people seem to me to be those that are full of truth, truth about the fall, truth about the law, truth about human nature, and its alienation from God, truth about Jesus Christ, truth about the Holy Spirit, truth about the Everlasting Father, truth about the new birth, truth about obedience to God, and how we learn it, and all such great verities. ...whenever you preach, tell them something, tell them something!”*

*“Do try... to give your hearers something beside a string of pathetic anecdotes... ...preach the gospel to your hearers... for their peace.”*

*“Fourthly, the people must be impressed by our sermons, if they are to be converted. ...there is a great deal more in impressive sermons than some people think. ...remember that it must be impressed upon yourself first. You must feel it yourself, and speak as a man who feels it... Men who read borrowed sermons positively do not know anything about our troubles of mind in preparing for the pulpit, or our joy in preaching with the aid of only brief notes. ...my very soul is moved, and my very heart is stirred within me, when I think of what I shall say to my people, and afterwards when I am delivering my message...”*

*“...when it is not so much that you have got a hold of your subject, but that it has got a hold of you, and you feel its grip with a terrible reality yourself, that is the kind of sermon that is most likely to make others feel. ...mind that your sermons always have something in them, which shall really impress both yourself and the hearers...”*

*“I think also that there should be an impressive delivery of our discourses. So, there are some ministers’ voices that have only one tone, and there is no music in that one. Do try... to make the very way in which you speak to minister to the great end you have in view. Preach, for instance, as you would plead if you were standing before a judge, and begging for the life of a friend. That is the sort of earnestness you need in pleading with men as ambassadors for God. ...then you communicate to them not only the gospel, but yourself also. The kind of sermon which is likely to break the hearer’s heart is that which has first broken the preacher’s heart, and the sermon which is likely to reach the heart of the hearer is the one which has come straight from the heart of the preacher...”*

*“Fifthly, ...take out of our sermons everything that is likely to divert the hearer’s mind from the object we have in view.”*

“We are to look to all these little things as if everything depended upon us, at the same time remembering that it is the Holy Spirit alone who can make the work effectual.”

“keep to your texts, brethren. If you do not, you will be like a little boy who went out fishing, and his uncle said... ‘Have you caught any fish, Samuel?’ The boy answered, ‘...I have not caught any fish, but I have lost a lot of worms.’ I hope you will never have to say, ‘I did not win any souls for the Saviour, but I spoiled a lot of precious texts...’ ...*seek to get out of the Scriptures what the Holy Spirit has put into them.*”

*“...you should endeavor to learn all that you can, because, believe me, a want of education may hinder the work of soul-winning. ...her attention was distracted from the truth by your errors of pronunciation. ...and all sorts of grammatical blunders may do more harm than you can imagine. ...learn to speak and write correct English...”*

***“it will be a pity if their mind is taken off the solemn things which you wish them to think upon because they cannot help noticing your deficiencies of education.”***

“...by forgetting when to use the nominative or accusative case of a noun or pronoun, or by using the wrong tense of a verb, you might take off the mind of your hearer from what you are trying to bring before him...”

*“Sixthly, I believe... sermons which are fullest of Christ are the most likely to be blessed to the conversion of the hearers. Let your sermons be full of Christ, ...crammed full of the gospel. People have often asked me, ‘What is the secret of your success?’ I always answer... I have preached the gospel, –not about the gospel, but the gospel... Preach Jesus Christ, and every time you preach be sure to have much of Jesus Christ in the sermon. You remember the story of the old minister... ‘ **Whenever I get hold of a text, I say to myself, ‘There is a road from here to Jesus Christ, and I mean to keep on His track till I get to Him.’ ...we must have Christ in all our discourses, whatever else is in or not in them. There ought to be enough of the gospel in every sermon to save a soul.**”*

“I have heard of a young man asking, when he was going to preach... ‘...What do the people believe? What is their doctrinal view?’ I will tell you how to avoid... such a question as that; preach Jesus Christ to them, and if that does not suit their doctrinal views then preach Jesus Christ the next Sunday you go; ...and never preach anything else. Those who do not like Jesus Christ... they are the very people who need Him most. Recollect that all the tradesmen in the world say they can sell their goods when there is a demand for them, but *our goods create as well as supply the demand.*”

*“Seventhly, ...those sermons are most likely to convert men that really appeal to their hearts...”*

“...you must have a heart if you are to reach your brother’s heart.”

***“...one who cannot weep over sinners,–what is the good of him in the ministry? ...preachers, who have no faults, have no excellences either...”***

*“It must be heart-work with you, brethren, far more than head-work, if you are to win many souls. Amidst all your studies, mind that you never let your spiritual life get dry.”*

*“Lastly, ...sermons which have been prayed over are the most likely to convert people. ...those discourses that have had much real prayer over them, both in the preparation and the delivery, there is much so-called prayer that is only playing at praying. ...the way to make sermons is to work vital electricity into them, putting your own life and the very life of God into them by earnest prayer. **You must anoint your sermons, ...by much private communion with God.**”*

## **Chapter 5: Obstacles To Soul-Winning**

***“May you all become, in this sense, mighty hunters before the Lord, and bring many sinners to the Saviour!”***

### **THE OBSTACLES... TO WIN SOULS FOR CHRIST**

*“...the first... the indifference and lethargy of sinners. ...the people do not care enough about religion even to oppose it. They have no thought of God; they care nothing about Him... I have often noticed that any place where there is little business doing is bad for religious effort.”*

*“Now, whenever you meet with indifference, ...—what are you to do? *Well, your only hope of overcoming it is, to be doubly in earnest yourself. Keep your own zeal all alive, let it be... burning, blazing, all-consuming. Stir the people up somehow; ...and if that has no effect upon your hearers. Go elsewhere as the Lord may direct you.*”*

*“Another very great obstacle... is unbelief. This evil exists in all unregenerate hearts... Their opinion is to them more weighty, more worthy of belief, than God’s inspired declarations; they will not accept anything that is revealed in the Scriptures. These people are very hard to influence; but I would warn you not to fight them with their own weapons. The argument that convinces men of the reality of religion, is that which they gather from the holiness and earnestness of those who profess to be Christ’s followers. ...**by your belief, and your acting up to your conviction of the truth, you will do more good than by any argument... So, I advise you to fight unbelief with belief, falsehood with the truth, and never to cut and pare down the gospel to try to make it fit in with the follies and fancies of men.**”*

*“A third obstacle... is that fatal *delay*... There is nothing like pressing men for a speedy decision, and getting them to settle at once this all-important question.”*

*“...another obstacle, which is the same thing in another form, viz., is *carnal security*. Many men fancy that they are quite safe; they have not really tested the foundation on which they are building... If they are not good Christians, they can at least say that they are rather better than some who are Christians, or who call themselves by that name; and if there is anything lacking in them, they can at any time put on the finishing touch, and make themselves fit for God’s presence. Thus they have no fear... *Against these people we ought to thunder day and night. Let us plainly proclaim to them that the unbelieving sinner is ‘condemned already’, and that he is certain to perish everlastingly if he does not trust in Christ. ...we sometimes preach smooth things, too soothing and agreeable, and that we do not set before men their real danger as we should.*”*

*“Another obstacle... is despair. ...the man who yesterday had no fear, to-day has no hope. It is fatalism, not predestination, that makes men talk as if there is nothing whatever for them to do...”*

*“No doubt a great obstacle to soul-winning is the love of sin.”*

*“Another obstacle is put in our way by men’s self-righteousness. There is no room for Christ in a full heart... That is the real difficulty in many, many cases; the man does not come to Christ because he is not conscious that he is lost, he does not ask to be lifted up because he does not know that he is a fallen creature...”*

*“Once more, there are some with whom all we say has no effect because of their utter worldliness. This worldliness takes two shapes; in the poor, it is the result of grinding poverty. To a hungry man, Christ is very lovely when He has a loaf of bread in His hand. The other kind of worldliness comes of having too much of this world, or at least of making too much of this world.”*

*“Then there is another kind of man who is from morning to night grinding away... to make money. What can we do for these covetous persons? Some will even go to chapel... to gain customers by going. Judas remained unconverted even in the company of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have some people still among us in whose ears the thirty pieces of silver chink so loudly that the sound of the gospel cannot be heard by them.”*

*“I may mention one more obstacle...that is, the obstacle there is with... their habits, and resorts, and company. All the good that they receive from the hymns they heard on the Sabbath is driven away as they listen to the comic songs in the drink-shop... Hence... having a place where working-men can come and sit in safety... a gathering where it may not be all singing, nor all preaching, nor all praying, but ...something of all these things. ...everything gets better and brighter as the man has forsaken his former resorts. I think a Christian minister is quite justified in using all right and lawful means to wean the people from their evil associations... **...whatever obstacles may be in our pathway, we must seek the aid of the Holy Spirit that they may be removed.**”*

## **Chapter 6: How To Induce Our People To Win Souls**

### **HOW CAN WE INDUCE OUR PEOPLE TO BECOME SOUL-WINNERS?**

*“Let me warn you... it is the work of time. Young men... cannot speak with the authority of one who has been as a father among his people, having been with them for twenty or thirty years..”*

*“Perhaps you will try to get the principal deacon to imitate your earnestness... Perhaps next you will resolve to try some of the young people... Very likely you will have almost everything to do in connection with the work; at all events, expect that it may be so, and then you will not be disappointed if it so turns out. ...be wise if you go into the ministry expecting not to find any very great assistance from the people in the work of soul-winning. ...begin doing it alone... Yet all that is the work of time.”*

“Revivals, if they are genuine, do not always come the moment we whistle for them. ...we must pray again, and again, and again, and at last the cloud will appear... **Wait a while, work on , plod on , plead on, and in due time the blessing will be given, and you shall find that you have the church after your own ideal, but it will not come to you all at once.**”

“...I should recommend you not to go to work according to any set rule, for what would be right at one time might not be wise at another... **Sometimes, the very best plan would be to call all the members of the church together, tell them what you would like to see, and plead earnestly with them that each one should become for God a soul-winner. Say to them, ‘I do not want to be your pastor simply that I may preach to you; but I long to see souls saved, and to see those who are saved seeking to win others for the Lord Jesus Christ.’**”

“Then, If that should not succeed, God may lead you to begin with one or two. Let us try and be ourselves... to have gatherings for prayer in our own houses, and seek to get our brethren and sisters to them. When a bush is nothing but a bush, it is soon consumed when it is set on fire; but when it is a bush that burns on and is not consumed, we may know that God is there. So is it with a church that is flaming with holy zeal. Your work, brethren, is to set your church on fire somehow. You may do it by speaking to the whole... or... by speaking to the few choice spirits, but you must do it somehow. ...take time, brethren, and do not look for everything you desire to be secured all at once.”

“If you want your people as well as yourself to be soul-winners, try and keep up the prayer-meetings all you can.”

“I would make that prayer-meeting a special feature of my ministry... ...do your best to make the meeting interesting to all who are there... So, if a man will pray long, he may pray long somewhere else, but not at the meeting over which I am presiding. If the people seem dull and heavy, get them to sing...”

“Keep up the prayer-meeting, whatever else flags; it is the... best service between the Sabbaths; be you sure to make it so. If you find that your people cannot come in the evening, then try and have a prayer-meeting when they can come. Try one o'clock , or two o'clock, or three o'clock, or any hour of the day or night, so as somehow or other to get the people out to pray; and if they cannot be induced to come to the meetings, go to their house and say, ‘I am going to have a prayer-meeting in your parlour.’ If they will not come to the prayer-meeting, we must go to them; suppose that fifty of us go trudging down the street, and hold a meeting in the open-air... **If we cannot stir the people without doing extraordinary things, in the name of all that is good and great let us do extraordinary things, but somehow we must keep up the prayer-meetings, for they are at the very secret source of power with God and with men.**”

“We must always set an earnest example ourselves.”

“Then next, we want around us Christians who are willing to do all they can to help in the work of winning souls. There are numbers of people who cannot be reached by the pastor. So, try to get as close quarters with sinners; talk gently to them till you have whispered them into the kingdom... **We want, in the Church of Christ, a band of well-trained sharpshooters, who will pick the people out individually, and be always on the watch for all who come into the place, not annoying them, but making sure that they do not go away without having had a personal warning, a personal invitation, and a personal exhortation to come to Christ. We want to train all our people for this service, so as to make Salvation Armies out of them. Every man, woman, or child who is in our churches should be set to**

***work for the Lord. Then they will not relish the fine sermons that the Americans seem to delight in so much; but they will say, 'Pooh! Flummery! We don't want that kind of thing.' What do people who are at work in the harvest-field want with thunder and lightning? They want just to rest a while under a tree, to wipe the sweat from their foreheads, to refresh themselves after their toil, and then to get to work again. Our preaching ought to be like the address of a commander-in-chief to his army, 'There are the enemy...' Something short, something sweet, something that stirs and impresses them, is what our people need.***

*"We are sure to get the blessing... when the whole atmosphere in which we are living is favourable to soul-winning."*

*"Some of our brethren who are here have, I fear, a worldly, Christless people; still, I am not sure that they ought to run away from them; I think that, if possible, they should stop, and try to make them more Christlike."*

*"...once a favourable atmosphere is created, then the difficulty is to maintain it. ...we can do nothing without God, for it is He who has to do with atmospheres, He alone can create them and maintain them..."*

*"I have heard ministers say that, when they have preached... there has been something ... that has had a wonderfully powerful effect upon them. I think it is because we have good prayer-meetings, because there is an earnest spirit of prayer among the people, and because so many of them are on the watch for souls."*

*"Always have your won Bible ready, and turn to the passages you want to quote to the enquirers. You know the sort of texts I mean, just those that a seeking soul wants: – 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"*

*"Now lastly, brethren, do not be afraid when you go to a place, and find it in a very bad condition. It is a fine thing for a young man to begin with a real downright bad prospect... If there is any place where I would choose to labour, it would be just on the borders of the infernal lake, for I really believe that it would bring more glory to God to work among those who are accounted the worst of sinners. If your ministry is blessed to such people as these, they will be likely to cling to you through your whole life; but the very worst sort of people are those who have long been professing Christians, but who are destitute of grace, having a name to live, and yet being dead. It is dreadful to have dead members where every single part of the body should be instinct with divine life; yet in many cases it is so, and we are powerless to cure the evil."*

## **Chapter 7: How To Raise The Dead**

**See 2 Kings vv. 29-37...**

*"The position of Elisha in this case is exactly your position. Elisha had to deal with a dead child. May none of you fail fully to realize the state in which all human beings are naturally found! Unless you have a very clear sense of the utter ruin and spiritual death of your children, you will be incapable of being made a blessing to them. Go to them... not as to sleepers whom you can by your own power awaken from their slumber, but as to spiritual corpses who can only be quickened by a power divine..."*

***...he aimed at nothing less than the restoration of the child to life. ...may you never be content with aiming at secondary benefits... may you strive for the grandest of all ends, the salvation of immortal souls! ...your high calling is to be the means, in the hands of God, of bringing life from heaven to dead souls. Your teaching on the Lord's-day will have been a failure if your children remain dead in sin.***

***“Resurrection, then, is our aim! To raise the dead is our mission! We cannot raise the dead. We are, however, no more powerless than Elisha, for he of himself could not restore the Shunammite's son. I trust we are all of us already aware that the man who lives in the region of faith dwells in the realm of miracles. Faith trades in marvels, and her merchandise is with wonders.”***

*“And you, devoted, anxious, prayerful teacher, remain no longer a common being; you have become, in a special manner, the temple of the Holy Ghost, God dwelleth in you, and you by faith have entered upon the career of a wonder-worker. You are sent into the world not to do the things which are possible to man, but those impossibilities which God worketh by His Spirit, by the means of His believing people. You are not, therefore, to look upon the restoration of these dead children... as being a thing unlikely or difficult when you remember who it is that works by your feeble instrumentality. Unbelief will whisper to you... But your answer must be, ‘O Lord, Thou knowest.’ We confess that all quickening must be wrought by the Lord alone, and our humble petition, if the Lord will use us in connection with His miracles of grace, He would now show us what He would have us to do.”*

*“In the First Book of Kings, at the seventeenth chapter... Elijah's raising a dead child, and Elijah, the master, had left a complete example to his servant; and it was not until Elisha followed it in all respects that the miraculous power was manifested. It had been wise, I say, if Elisha had, at the outset, imitated the example of the master whose mantle he wore. ...it will be well for us if, as teachers, we imitate our Master, –if we study the modes and methods of our glorified Master, and learn at His feet the art of winning souls. Just as He came in deepest sympathy... so must we come near to the souls with whom we have to deal... weep over them with His tears. Only by imitating the spirit and manner of the Lord Jesus shall we become wise to win souls.”*

*“We take doctrinal or practical truth as Gehazi did the staff, and we lay it upon the face of the child, but we ourselves do not agonise for its soul. We try this doctrine and that truth... but so long as ever the truth which we deliver is a matter apart from ourselves, and unconnected with our innermost being, so long it will have no more effect upon a dead soul than Elisha's staff... God will not bless those teachers who do not grasp in their hearts the really fallen estate of their children.”*

*“Observe carefully what Elisha did when thus foiled in his first effort. When we fail in one attempt, we must not therefore give up our work. If you have been unsuccessful... you must not infer that you are not called to the work, any more than Elisha might have concluded that the child could not be restored. The lesson of your non-success is not—cease the work, but—change the method. If your first method has been unsuccessful, you must improve upon it.”*

*“The old proverb is, ‘Every true pulpit is set up in heaven,’ by which is meant that the true preacher is much with God. If we do not pray to God for a blessing, if the foundation of the pulpit be not laid in private prayer, our open ministry will not be a success. ...every real teacher's power must come from on high. There is much more influence in prayer privately offered with one than in prayer publicly uttered in the class,—not more influence with God, of course, but more influence with the child. ...for God may, while you are pouring*

*out your soul, make your prayer to be a hammer to break the heart which mere addresses had never touched. Pray with your children separately, and it will surely be the means of a great blessing. ...there must be prayer, much prayer, constant prayer, vehement prayer, the kind of prayer which will not take a denial... the bombarding of heaven; fervent men prevail in prayer..."*

***“Prayer and means must go together.***

***Means without prayer—presumption! Prayer without means—hypocrisy!”***

*“If you would raise that dead child, you must feel the chill and horror of that child’s death yourself. A dying man is needed to raise dying men. You must have, more or less, a distinct sense of the dreadful wrath of God and of the terrors of the judgment to come, or you will lack energy in your work, and so lack one of the essentials of success.”*

*“Thus realizing the child’s state... next strive to adapt yourself as far as possible to the nature, and habits, and temperament of the child. Your mouth must find out the child’s words, so that the child may know what you mean; you must see things with a child’s eyes; your heart must feel a child’s feelings, so as to be his companion and friend... ... for if you count anything to be a hardship, or a condescension, you have no business in the Sunday-school.”*

*“He is no fool who can talk to children... It needs our best wits, our most industrious studies, our most earnest thoughts, our ripest powers, to teach our little ones. *The wisest man will need to exercise all his abilities if he would become a successful teacher of the young.*”*

*“God will bless by His Spirit our hearty sympathy with His own truth, and make it do that which the truth alone, coldly spoken, would not accomplish. You must... feel as if the ruin of that child would be your own ruin. You must confess the child’s sins before God as if they were your own, and stand as a priest before the Lord pleading on its behalf. *Behold in this miracle the modus operandi of raising the dead; the Holy Spirit remains mysterious in His operations...*”*

***“Never be satisfied... with finding your children in a barely hopeful state. What you want... is not mere conviction, but conversion; you desire not only impression, but regeneration... nothing less must content you.”***

*“Again... watch Elisha. ‘Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro. ‘Notice the restlessness of the man of God; he cannot be easy. Paul’s expression is not to be explained in words, but you must know its meaning in your hearts; ‘I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.’”*

*“What it is well to do once, it is proper to do a second time. What is good twice, is good seven times. There must be perseverance and patience. How easy it is to pull down, on any one day, what we have built up the day before!”*

***“...any eye which God helps you to open will be a beautiful eye to you.”***

## Chapter 8: How To Win Souls For Christ

*“What is it to win a soul? I hope you believe in the old-fashioned way of saving souls. We all believe that we must go to soul-winning, desiring in God’s name to see all things made new. Jesus has come that there may be a passing away of the old things, and a making of all things new. **We drive at something more than temperance; for we believe that men must be born again.** You preach, brethren... that men may quit their sins, and fly to Christ for pardon, that by His blessed Spirit they may be renovated. You aim at a radical cure...”*

*“Our object is to turn the world upside down... We are aiming at a miracle: it is well to settle that at the commencement. Some brethren... lower their note to the spiritual ability of the hearer; but this is a mistake. ...**I command men in the name of Jesus to repent and believe the gospel, though I know they can do nothing of the kind apart from the grace of God; for I am not sent to work according to what my private reason might suggest, but according to the orders of my Lord and Master.** Dare we do this? We shall be wise to begin with the conviction that we are utterly powerless for this unless our Master has sent us, and is with us. There is no bound to what God can accomplish if He works by thy heart and voice. You are to be instruments in the hands of God; yourselves, of course, actively putting forth all your faculties and forces which the Lord has lent to you; but still never depending upon your personal power...”*

*“...for grace brings glory, but mere oratory will only create sham and shame in the long run. **Paul when he said that he would not use the wisdom of words, ‘lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.’ It is the duty of the gospel preacher... to say, ‘I can say that very prettily, but then they might notice how I said it; I will, therefore, so say it that they will only observe the intrinsic value of the truth which I would teach them.’** It is not our way of putting the gospel... which wins souls, but the gospel itself does the work in the hands of the Holy Ghost, and to Him we must look for the thorough conversion of men. If it be a miracle, God must work it, ...it is not to be accomplished by our reasoning, persuasion, or threatening, it can only come from the Lord.”*

*“A consecrated man may be charged with the divine energy to the full... They cannot tell what it is, ...but there is something about that man which is far beyond the common order of things. ...if the Lord be gone from a man, he has no power left for useful service. ...look carefully to your own condition before God. Unless your walk be close with God, you will go forth... and hasten to your work, but nothing will come of it. Let me show you some ways in which much must depend in soul-winning upon the man himself.”*

*“We win some souls to Christ by acting as witnesses. The one thing you have to do is to bear witness to the truth. If you enquire in your own mind, ‘How shall I answer this man cleverly...?’ you will not be wise. A witty answer is often a very proper thing; at the same time, a gracious answer is better. I am content to be thought a fool for Christ’s sake, and not to care about my reputation. I have to bear witness to what I know, ...boldly. To one point I will speak, and to no other.”*

*“Brethren, the witnessing man, then, must himself be saved, and he should be sure of it. Those who hear our witness say, ‘Are you sure of it?’ Sure of it? I am as sure of it as I am sure that I a living man. They call this *dogmatism*. **A man ought to know what he is preaching about, or else let him sit down. ...but I preach what I do know, and testify what I have seen. If I am mistaken, I am heartily and intensely mistaken; and I risk my soul and all its eternal interests upon the truth of what I preach. I have no private lifeboat; the ark to which I invite others holds myself and all that I have.**”*

“What we do know, and what we do not know, would make two very large books, and we may safely ask to be let alone as to the second volume.”

“*You will never feel at home with the people, until you are at home with your subject. ...but when you feel at home with your doctrine, stand up and be as bold...* Face the people feeling that you are going to tell them something worth hearing...”

“*But you are not only witnesses; you are pleaders for the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are to prevail with men, we must love them. There is a genuine love to men that some have, and there is a genuine dislike to men that others have. **To win men, you must feel: ‘I am one of them..’** To the very chief of sinners you should preach with this text before you, ‘Such were some of you.’ Grace alone makes us to differ, and that grace we preach. Genuine love to God and fervent love to man make up the great qualification for a pleader.*”

“*...the influence of fear is to be exercised over the minds of men, and... the preacher himself. ...when a man gets to fear for others... and when this fear oppresses his soul, and weighs him down, and then drives him to go out and preach with tears, oh, then he will plead with men so as to prevail! *Some have used the terrors of the Lord to terrify; but Paul used them to persuade. Something of the shadow of the last tremendous day must fall upon our spirit to give the accent of conviction to our message of mercy, or we shall miss the pleader’s true power.**”

“I often think to myself, when I am preaching, ‘Who is being converted now?’ It never occurs to me that the Word of the Lord will fail. *The fire within your hearts may dart a spark into their souls by which the flame of spiritual life shall be kindled in them.*”

“*...we have not only to be witnesses and pleaders, but we have also to be examples. ...**our example in all manner... will be the means of inducing others to enter the way of life. At the same time, our walk and conversation should be the most powerful part of our ministry. This is what is called consistent, when lips and life agree.***”

“*I have said that the working of the Holy Spirit depends largely upon the man himself, but... much will also depend upon the kind of people that are round about the preacher.* It is extremely helpful to be connected with an earnest living church which will pray for you; and if you cannot... the next best thing is to get half-a-dozen brothers or sisters who will back you up, and go out with you, and, especially, will pray with you. ***If you have a true comrade, your strength is more than doubled.*** What a blessing is a good wife! You women... can make your husbands... preach all the better! You who have such helpers ought to thank God daily for them.”

“Let us be thankful for... praying friends who bring down a blessing upon us by their intercessions.”

“***Dear brethren, if we are going to win souls, we must go in for downright labour and hard work.***”

***Keep to your preaching; and if you do anything beside, do not let it throw your preaching into the background. In the first place preach, and in the second place preach, and in the third place preach.***”

***The old hammer of the gospel will still break the rock in pieces; the ancient fire of Pentecost will still burn among the multitude.*** *Look at the power of a bad tongue, what great mischief it can do; and shall not God put more power into a good tongue, if we will but use it aright?”*

*“True-hearted... preachers will be sure to join with their preaching very much earnest private talk. What numbers of persons have been converted... by the personal conversation... ..be on the alert. We need a body of sharp-shooters to pick out their men one by one. We want loving spirits to go round, and deal with individual cases in the singular by pointed personal warnings and encouragements. **How much more good would come of preaching... if every... preacher were accompanied by a batch of persons who would drive his nails home for him by personal conversation!**”*

*“**When you know how to carry a man on your heart, and have felt the burden of his case, you will have his name engraven upon your soul.** ...this is what many regular preachers need to know more of, and then they will preach better.”*

*“When preaching and private talk are not available, you have a tract ready, and this is often an effectual method. Get good striking tracts, or none at all. But a telling, touching gospel tract may often be the seed of eternal life; therefore, do not go out without your tracts.”*

*“What a fine thing is a visit from an open-air preacher!”*

*“What power there is also in a letter to an individual! Let us save men by all the means under heaven; let us prevent men going down to hell. We are not half as earnest as we ought to be.”*

***“We do not want pranks and performances which are the mere sham of earnestness; but real white-heat earnestness is the want of the times, and where you see that, it is a pity to be too critical. You must let a great storm rage in its own way.** ...earnestness will one way or another dissolve the rocky hearts of men.”*

## **Chapter 9: The Cost Of Being A Soul-Winner**

“I want to say a word to you who are trying to bring souls to Jesus. ... do you know what this involves? Prepare yourselves, then, to see and suffer many things with which you would rather be unacquainted. Experiences which would be unnecessary to you personally will become your portion... ..even so doth Paul say, ‘Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation...’ For this cause... experiences... will surprise us.

I would go into the deeps a hundred times to cheer a downcast spirit: it is good for me to have been afflicted that I might know how to speak a word in season to one that is weary.

“Suppose that, by some painful operation, you could have your right arm made a little longer... if you foresaw that, by undergoing the pain, you would be enabled to reach and save drowning men who else would sink before your eyes, I think you would willingly bear the agony... to be thus qualified for the rescue of your fellows. *Reckon, then, that to acquire soul-winning power you will have to go through fire and water, through doubt and despair, through mental torment and soul distress. You must go into the fire if you are to pull others out of it... You cannot work a fire-escape without feeling the scorch of the conflagration, nor man a lifeboat without being covered with the waves.*”

***“Men are usually won to Christ by suitable instruments and this... often lies in the power to sympathize. A key opens a door because it fits the wards of the lock; an earnest address touches the heart because it meets the state of that heart. You and I have to be made into all sorts of shapes to suit all forms of mind and heart; just as Paul says... ‘I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.’”***

*“...no man will ever win a soul who is not prepared to suffer everything within the compass of possibility for that soul’s sake.”*

*“...fear... may drive the heart to prayer, and that alone is a great part of the necessary preparation.”*

## **Chapter 10: The Soul-Winner’s Reward**

*“...remember that there is a reward for bringing men to mercy, and that it is within our reach, and that is a practical point worthy of our notice. ...we may all rescue the perishing. ...sinners who need to be sought and saved swarm around us in every place. Yet the reward we speak of is not of debt, but of grace; and it is enjoyed... with the grateful delight of humility.”*

*“Even if the souls we seek should all persist in unbelief, ...it will be a divine work to have at least made the attempt. *If there comes no rain out to the cloud, yet it has screened off the fierce heat of the sun; all is not lost even if the greater design be not accomplished.*”*

*“I may be speaking to a few who have not succeeded: if so, I would recommend them to look steadily over their motive, their spirit, their work, and their prayer, and then begin again. ...get to work more wisely, more believingly, more humbly, and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. ...be anxious to find out the reason of failure, if there be any, ...be ready to learn from all our fellow-labourers; ...leave no stone unturned to effect the salvation of those around us.”*

*“Poor sermons of mine, ...words that I have spoken in ordinary conversation, ...have nevertheless been as winged arrows from God, ...and have pierced men’s hearts, and laid them wounded at Jesus’ feet. When we endeavor to lead men to God, we pursue a business far more profitable than... the diamond-hunter’s searching. **No pursuit of mortal men is to be compared with that of soul-winning.** ...it is a royal business, and they are true kings who follow it successfully.”*

*“Soul-winning is a service which brings great benefit to the individual who consecrates himself to it.”*

*“...those who labour for conversion believe in conversions; those who behold the process of regeneration see a miracle... *It is the most blessed exercise for a soul, it is the divinest ennobling of the heart, to spend yourself in seeking to bring another to the dear Redeemer’s feet.*”*

*“...there is a... deeper love connected with spiritual kinship, a love which lasts through life, and will continue in eternity... *If you are eager for real joy, ...no joy of any other sort can ever be compared with the rapture of saving a soul from death, and helping to restore our lost brethren...*”*

*“But the richest reward lies in *pleasing God*, ...it is marvelous that we should be employed by the Father to give to Christ the purchase of His agonies.”*

## **Chapter 11: The Soul-Winner's Life And Work**

**"We ought to regard the Christian Church, not as a luxurious hostelry where Christian gentlemen may each one dwell at his ease in his own inn, but as a barracks in which soldiers are gathered together to be drilled and trained for war. We should regard the Christian Church, not as an association for mutual admiration and comfort, but as an army with banners, marching to the fray, to achieve victories for Christ, to storm the strongholds of the foe, and to add province after province to the Redeemer's kingdom.**...soul-inspiring is the view when we regard those believers as each one likely to be made a living centre for the extension of the kingdom of Jesus... *Within a short time, a few grains of wheat would suffice to seed the whole world, and a few true saints might suffice for the conversion of all nations. View yourselves as grains of wheat predestinated to seed the world."*

**"May God grant us to feel some degree of the Holy Spirit's quickening power while we talk together, not so much about what God has done for us as about what God may do by us, and how far we may put ourselves into a right position to be used by Him!"**

*"There are two things... laid out with much distinctness... The first is the life of the believer is, or ought to be, full of soul-blessing... In the second place, the pursuit of the believer ought always to be soul-winning."*

*"...the second cannot be carried out without the first; without fullness of life within there cannot be an overflow of life to others. It is of no use for any of you to try to be soul-winners if you are not bearing fruit in your own lives. ...out of our example will spring the conversion of others."*

### **I. THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER IS FULL OF SOUL-BLESSING.**

*"...the believer's outward life comes as a matter of fruit from him. **The sincere man's religion is the man himself, and not a cloak for his concealment.**"*

"Christianity is far more a life than a creed. ...it is a divine spark of heaven's own flame which falls into the human bosom and burns within, consuming much that lies hidden in the soul, and then at last, as a heavenly life, ...to be seen and felt by those around. The God within him makes him shine... and those who look at him feel the power of his hallowed life."

"You are careful to maintain good works, not from either legal hopes or legal fears, but because there is a holy thing within you."

*"Note, next, that the fruit which comes from a Christian is fruit worthy of his character... Each tree bears its own fruit, and is known by it. ...if any man has a faith which does not produce good works, it is the faith of devils. Saving faith appropriates the finished work of the Lord Jesus... We are saved by faith without works, but... real faith that saves the soul works by love and purifies the character."*

"We can bring forth no fruit except as we abide in Christ. The righteous shall flourish as a branch, and only as a branch. ... so, though the righteous man's righteous actions are his own, yet they are always produced by the grace which is imparted to him, and he never dares to take any credit for them... If he fails, he blames himself; if he succeeds, he glorifies God."

“The main lesson of the passage is that... *this fruit of this soul, becomes a blessing to others. From the child of God there falls the fruit of holy living, ...this holy living becomes influential and produces the best results in others.* The Christian’s holiness becomes a tree of life. *Christ in the Christian produces a character which becomes a tree of life.* **There are a few good men in this world whom to know is to be rich. Such men are libraries of gospel truth; but they are better than books, for the truth in them is written on living pages.**”

“Well trained Christians become nursing fathers and nursing mothers, strengthening the weak, and binding up the wounds of the broken-hearted. ...the sanctified believer’s example acts in a healing and comforting way to his brethren...”

“Remember that the completeness and development of the holy life will be seen above. What is holiness...? What is living unto God...? What are uprightness, integrity, Christ-likeness? Have not these even more to do with heaven than harps and palms and streets of purest gold? Holiness, purity, loveliness of character, – these make a heaven within a man’s own bosom...”

## II. THE PURSUIT OF THE BELIEVER SHOULD BE SOUL-WINNING.

“For ‘he that winneth souls is wise.’ The two things are put together – the life first, the effort next...”

“It is implied in our text that there are souls, which need winning. Ah, me! all souls of men are lost by nature. But here is the mercy – these lost souls can be won.”

“What do we mean by that word win? ...love... *the sinner for Christ; that is how hearts are to be won for Him. Jesus is the Bridegroom, and we must speak for Him, and tell of His beauty, as Abraham’s servant, when he went to seek a wife for Isaac...* Have you never read the story? Then turn to it when you get home, and see how he talked about his master, and then he finished his address by urging Rebecca to go with him. *So the minister’s business is to commend his Master and his Master’s riches, and then to say to souls, ‘Will you be wedded to Christ?’*”

“We also use the term in a military fashion. We speak of winning a city, a castle, or a battle. *To win a battle, needs the best skill, the greatest endurance, and the utmost courage. ...men need to burn the midnight oil, and study well the arts of attack... all force of artillery and manhood must be brought to bear on the point assailed. To carry man’s heart, ...requires the exercise of a skill which only Christ can give. Those whose souls are as cold..., and whose energy is reduced..., are not likely to take the city... for Prince Emmanuel. ...you must throw your soul into your work, ...or victory will not be yours.*”

“We have to go in for winning souls with... concentration of our faculties...”

“Solomon in the text declares that, ‘He that winneth souls is wise,’... Let me show you why a soul-winner is wise. *First, he must be taught of God before he will attempt it.*”

“That being taken for granted, he is a wise man to select such a pursuit. Our Lord Jesus calls His ministers fishermen, and no other fishermen have such labour, such sorrow, and such delight... ***Some of you would never win souls in pulpits; it would be a great pity if you tried, but you can win souls in the workshop, and in the laundry, in the nursery, and in the drawing-room.***”

***“Further, you will have to be very wise if you succeed in it, because the souls to be won are so different in their constitutions, feelings, and conditions, and you will have to adapt yourselves to them all. ...possibly, instead of comforting them, you will need sometimes to administer a sharp word to cure the sulkiness into which they have fallen. You will have to be very wise, and become all things to all men, and your success will prove your wisdom.”***

***“True lovers of men’s souls learn the art of dealing with them, and the Holy Spirit makes them expert soul-surgeons for Jesus.”***

***“...do not grumble at a man who does one work because he cannot do another. Soul-winners have all their own ways; and if they do but win souls, they are wise.”***

***“I would sooner bring one sinner to Jesus Christ than unpick all the mysteries of the divine Word, for salvation is the thing we are to live for....we will fight the good fight of faith, but the winning of souls is the greater matter... Well, it takes a wise man to be a thorough orator; but it is better not to be an orator if fine speech prevents your being understood. Let eloquence be flung to the dogs rather than souls be lost. What we want is to win souls, and they are not to be won by flowery speeches.”***

***“Did you never win a soul for Jesus? You shall have a crown in heaven, but no jewels in it. You will go to heaven childless... We must hear the cries of those whom God has given to be born unto Himself by our means. Young men, and old men, and sisters of all ages, if you love the Lord, get a passion for souls. Oh, if you have any humanity,... if you have found the remedy, tell the diseased about it! If you have found life, proclaim it to the dead;... Do not be content when you get a congregation, but labour to win souls; and as you do this, God will bless you.”***

## **Chapter 12: Soul-Winning Explained**

***“Solomon, ...crowns with laurel only those who win souls. He does not declare that he who preaches is necessarily wise; ...there are multitudes who preach, and gain much applause and eminence, who win no souls, and who shall find it go hard with them at the last, because in all probability they have run and the Master has never sent them. Solomon does not say that he who talks about winning souls is wise, since to lay down rules for others is a very simple thing, but to carry them out one’s self is far more difficult. The great wisdom of soul-winners... is proven only by their actual success in really winning souls. To their own Master they are accountable for the ways in which they go to work, not to us. Do not let us be comparing and contrasting this minister and that. Do these workers of many sorts... win souls? Then they are wise; and you who criticise, them, being yourselves unfruitful, cannot be wise, even though you affect to be their judges.”***

***“He that winneth souls is wise...’ He must be a wise man in even ordinary respects... Great soul-winners never have been fools. A man whom God qualifies to win souls could probably do anything else which providence might allot him. He that winneth souls is usually a man who could have done anything else if God had called him to it.”***

**“If God shall bless us to the winning of souls, our work shall remain when the wood, and hay, and stubble of earth’s art and science shall have gone to the dust.”**

**“In a sinner saved, there is as much of God to be beheld as in a universe rising out of nothing...”**

*“Oh! the joy of knowing that a sinner once at enmity has been reconciled to God, by the Holy Spirit, through the words, spoken by our feeble lips.”*

“Every man, here, every woman here, every child here, whose heart is right with God may be a soul-winner. ...and what I have said of soul-winners, belongs not to the learned doctor of divinity, or to the eloquent preacher alone, but to you all who are in Christ Jesus.”

**I. First, LET US CONSIDER THE METAPHOR USED IN THE TEXT: “He that winneth souls is wise.”**

“Priestcraft, let us hope is an anachronism, and the sacramental theory out of date. Trust not in any man who pretends to priesthood. Priests are liars by trade, and deceivers by profession. We cannot save souls in their theatrical way, and do not want to do so, ...Satan will hold the best hand, and laugh at priests as he turns the cards against them at the last.”

**“Now, a true soul-winner has often to come to close quarters with the devil within men. He has to struggle with their prejudice, with their love of sin, with their unbelief, with their pride, and then again, all of a sudden, to grapple with their despair; ...with their self-righteousness, ...with their unbelief in God. Ten thousand arts are used to prevent the soul-winner from being conqueror in the encounter; but if God has sent him, he will never renounce his hold of the soul he seeks till he has given a throw to the power of sin, and won another soul for Christ.”**

*“Love is the true way of soul-winning, for when I spoke of storming the walls, and when I spoke of wrestling, those were but metaphors, but this is near the fact. We win by love. We win hearts for Jesus by love, by sympathy with their sorrow, by anxiety lest they should perish, by pleading with God for them... by pleading with them for God that, for their own sake, they would seek mercy and find grace. ...and if you would learn the way, you must ask God to give you a tender heart and a sympathising soul. I believe that much of the secret of soul-winning lies in having bowels of compassion, in having spirits that can be touched with the feeling of human infirmities. **Carve a preacher out of granite, and even if you give him an angel’s tongue, he will convert nobody. It requires a soul full of human kindness; this is the sine qua non of success. This is the chief natural qualification for a soul-winner...**”*

***“We must have our lures for souls, adapted to attract, to fascinate, to grasp. Their enemy is a fowler possessed of the basest and most astounding cunning; we must outwit him with the guile of honesty, the craft of grace.”***

“God gives to those whom He makes soul-winners a natural love to their work, and a spiritual fitness for it. There is a sympathy between those who are to be blessed and those who are to be the means of blessing...”

## II. ...SOME OF THE WAYS BY WHICH SOULS ARE TO BE WON.

*“The preacher himself wins souls best, I believe, when he believes in the reality of his work, – when he believes in instantaneous conversions. He succeeds best who expects conversion every time he preaches. **To be content without conversions, is the surest way never to have them; to drive with a single aim entirely at the saving of souls, is the surest method of usefulness.**”*

*“He will succeed best, who keeps closest to soul-saving truth. He that keeps to the simple story of the cross, tells men over and over again that whosoever believeth in Christ is not condemned, that to be saved, nothing is wanted but a simple trust in the crucified Redeemer; he whose ministry is much made up of the glorious story of the cross, the sufferings of the dying Lamb, the mercy of God, the willingness of the great Father to receive returning prodigals; he who cries, in fact, from day to day, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,’ he is likely to be a soul-winner, especially if he adds to this much prayer... and then in his private life seeks as much as in his public ministry to be telling out to others of the love of the dear Saviour of men.”*

*“...I am... talking to... you who sit in the pew... **Brothers and sisters, you have different gifts. I hope you use them all.** ...every believer has his gift, and his portion of work. What can you do to win souls?”*

*“Let me recommend... the bringing of others to hear the Word. That is a duty much neglected. Go up with the prayer that your minister’s sermon may be blessed... ...persuade your neighbors to come forth to the place of worship... I do not say, upbraid them, that does little good; but I do say, entice them, persuade them. *Get them under the Word, and who knoweth what may be the result?*”*

*“Next to that, soul-winners, try after sermon to talk to strangers. The preacher may have missed the mark, ...or the preacher may have struck the mark, and you can help to make the impression deeper by a kind word. Oh... you who love the Master, if you would all help me by speaking to your neighbors. *Never let anybody say, “I came to the Tabernacle three months, and nobody spoke to me...”*”*

*“Further, let me commend to you... the art of button-holing acquaintances and relatives. If you cannot preach to a hundred, preach to one. ...in love, quietly and prayerfully, talk to him. Your Master was not ashamed to sit on the well, and preach to one... Timidity often prevents our being useful in this direction, ...it must not be tolerated that Christ should be unknown... and sinners are unwarned through our negligence. *We must school and train ourselves to deal personally with the unconverted.* This is one of the most honorable modes of soul-winning; and if it requires more than ordinary zeal and courage, so much the more reason for our resolving to master it. ... be up and doing, and let none around you die unwarned, unwept, uncared-for. *A tract is a useful thing, but a living word is better.* Do not be so cowardly as to give a piece of paper where your own speech would be so much better.”*

*“Some of you could write letters for your Lord and Master. Some of you could live much. ...preaching with your feet, – I mean preaching by your life... ...with your holy living as the leverage, we will move the world. ...we greatly need the lives of our people to illustrate what our tongues have to say. **The gospel is something like an illustrated paper. The preacher’s words are the letterpress, but the pictures are the living men and women who form our churches; and as when people take up such a newspaper, they very often do not read the letterpress, but they always look at the pictures... If you would be soul-winners, ...see that you live the gospel.**”*

*“...the soul-winner must be a master of the art of prayer. You must get your battle-axe, and your weapons of war, from the armory of sacred communion with Christ. If you are much alone with Jesus, you will catch His Spirit... **There are some of you ... who are... in earnest for winning souls... but I fear there are others whose hands are slack, who are satisfied to let me preach, but do not themselves preach; who take these seats, and occupy these pews, and hope the cause goes well, but that is all they do.**”*

*“Are your own souls won? You cannot win others else. Are you yourselves saved? **The way to be saved is simply to trust in what the Son of man did when He became man, and suffered punishment for all those who trust Him. For all His people, Christ was a Substitute. His people are those who trust Him. If you trust Him, He was punished for your sins; and you cannot be punished for them, for God cannot punish sin twice, first in Christ, and then in you. If you trust Jesus, who now liveth at the right hand of God, you are this moment pardoned, and you shall for ever be saved.** ...for it is written, ‘He that believeth in Him is not condemned.’ ...trust Him now; and then God help you to be a soul-winner...”*

## **Chapter 13: Soul-Saving Our One Business**

*“It is a grand thing to see a man thoroughly possessed with one master-passion. ...a life with one object is like a mighty river flowing between its banks, ...and spreading fertility on either side. **Give me a man not only with a great object in his soul, but thoroughly possessed by it, his powers all concentrated, and himself on fire with vehement zeal for his supreme object, and you have put before me one of the greatest sources of power which the world can produce. Give me a man engrossed with holy love... and filled with some masterly celestial thought as to his brain, and such a man will be known wherever his lot may be cast, and... his name will be remembered long after the place of his sepulcher shall be forgotten.**”*

*“Such a man was Paul. ...we ought to be possessed by the same spirit which actuated him, and... possessed by it in the same degree. Do not tell me that the apostle was an exception, and cannot be set up as a rule or model for commoner folk, for I shall have to tell you that we must be such as Paul was if we hope to be where Paul is.”*

*“Paul’s great object in life; ...to ‘save some’... we will then look into... the great reasons which made him think it so important that some at least should be saved; ...we will indicate certain of the means which the apostle used to that end...”*

### **I. ...WHAT WAS PAUL’S GREAT OBJECT IN HIS DAILY LIFE AND MINISTRY?**

*“He says it was, to save some.”*

*“Do you above all things aim at saving souls? ...some have forgotten this grand object; ...anything short of this is unworthy to be the great end of a Christian’s life. **Paul did not lay himself out to please the public, and collect the crowd.**”*

“It seems to be the opinion of... present day that the object of Christian effort should be to educate men. ...we are promoters of knowledge, and the more... the better. But... the object of Christianity is not to educate men for their secular callings, or even to train them in the politer arts... **Jesus Christ came... to seek and to save that which was lost; and on the same errand has He sent His Church... to preach Christ and Him crucified is the only object for which she exists among the sons of men. The business of the Church is salvation. ...he is no minister of Christ if this be not the one desire of his heart. ...for we have done nothing unless some are saved.**”

“The best promoter of morality is the gospel. When a man is saved, he becomes moral; ...he becomes holy. But to aim first at morality is altogether to miss the mark... **He who wishes for perfumes must grow the flowers; he who desires to promote morality must have men saved. ...he who desires to see a rightly-ordered life should first desire an inward renewal by the Holy Spirit. We put not before the blind the things that they ought to see, but we open their eyes in the name of Jesus. We tell not the captive how free he ought to be, but we open the door, and take away his fetters. We are not content to tell men what they must be, but we show them how this character can be obtained.**”

“...for of what avail will it be to a man to be educated when he comes to be damned? **Blood red with the murder of men’s souls will be the skirts of professing Christians, unless the drift, and end, and aim of all their work has been to ‘save some.’ ...do not think that you have done anything unless the children’s souls are saved. ...this is the top and bottom of the business...**”

“What did Paul mean by saying that he desired to save some? Paul meant by that nothing less than that some should be born again... There must be a new nature implanted in us by the power of the Holy Ghost, or we cannot be saved. ‘Except a man be born again... he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ This must be the object of our teaching, and of our praying, indeed, the object of our lives...”

“No man can be saved from his sin except by the atonement. We pine to bring the prodigal’s head into the Father’s bosom, the wandering sheep to the good Shepherd’s shoulder, ...*until this is done, nothing is done, I mean, brethren, nothing spiritually...*”

“*Once more, he meant that, being regenerated, and being pardoned, they might also be purified and made holy, for a man is not saved while he lives in sin. ...he cannot be saved from sin whilst he is the slave of it.*”

“...I have kept to the simplicity of the gospel. I have sought out no fineries of speech, but have spoken plainly, and right straight at your hearts and consciences...”

“...I count nothing to be worthy of... life, and soul, and energy, but the winning of you to Christ. Nothing but your salvation can ever make me feel that my heart’s desire is granted. I ask every worker here... that he never turns aside from shooting at this target, and at the centre of this target, too, namely, that he may win souls for Christ...”

## II. THE APOSTLE HAD GREAT REASONS FOR ELECTING SUCH AN OBJECT IN LIFE

“...nothing but the gospel can sweep away the social evil.”

“Think, dear friends, also, of the extreme misery of this our human race. *The vices of the age cause three-fourths of all the poverty.*”

“...the Christian has other reasons for seeking to save some; ...because of the *terrible future of impenitent souls*. ...they are banished from the presence of God, banished to horrors... This alone is enough to cause us distress day and night. Let this... be your great, your ruling object in life, that by all means you may save some.”

“If the kingdom is ever to come to our Lord, – and come it will, – it never will come through a few ministers, missionaries, or evangelists preaching the gospel. It must come through every one of you preaching it... You must all of you be always endeavoring to ‘save some.’”

“...you who are saved, –How many others have you brought to Christ? ...how many has the Spirit of God brought by you? I pray you, wake from your slumbering, and ask the Master to make you useful.”

### III. ...THE GREAT METHODS WHICH THE APOSTLE USED.

“Why, first of all, by simply preaching the gospel of Christ. He did not attempt to create a sensation by startling statements, neither did he preach erroneous doctrine in order to obtain the assent of the multitude. **I hold that I have no right to state false doctrine, even if I knew it would save a soul.** Give the people every truth, every truth baptized in holy fire, and each truth will have its own useful effect upon the mind.”

“But the great truth is the cross... Brother, keep to that. That is the bell for you to ring. Ring it, man! Ring it! Keep on ringing it. **I have noticed that, as a general rule, wherever the new ‘thinking’ drives out the old gospel, there are more spiders than people, but where there is the simple preaching of Jesus Christ, the place is crowded to the doors.** We do not expect this preaching to be popular, but we know that God will justify it...”

“Next to this, Paul used much prayer. ...we must pray over our preaching. ...no one can use the gospel hammer well except he is much on his knees, but the gospel hammer soon splits flinty hearts when a man knows how to pray. Prevail with God, and you will prevail with men. Straight from the closet to the pulpit let us come with the anointing oil of God’s Spirit fresh upon us. **Let us never venture to speak for God to men, until we have spoken for men to God.**”

“Paul went to his work always with an intense sympathy for those he dealt with, a sympathy which made him adapt himself to each case. He was all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.”

“So let it be with you, ...*your one business in life is to lead men to believe in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and every other thing should be made subservient to this one object; if you can but get them saved, everything else will come right in due time. If we can put ourselves on a level with those whose good we seek, we shall be more likely to effect our purpose than if we remain aliens and foreigners, and then talk of love and unity. To sink myself to save others is the idea of the apostle. To throw overboard all peculiarities, and yield a thousand indifferent points, in order to bring men to Jesus, is our wisdom...*”

**When Jesus Christ was here, what did He wear? He wore the common dress of his countrymen, ...and I think he would have His ministers wear that costume which is most like the dress which their hearers wear in common, and so even in dress associate with their hearers, and be one among them. Come down to those who cannot come up to you. If you have to deal with bad characters, you must come down to them, not in their sin, but in their roughness and in their style of language, so as to get a hold of them. ...learn the sacred art of soul-winning by adaptation.**”

## **Chapter 14: Instruction In Soul-Winning**

“When Christ calls us by His grace, ...think of what He can make us. It is, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you.’ *We should repent of what we have been, but rejoice in what we may be.* You cannot make founders of churches out of peasants of Galilee. That is exactly what Christ did...”

“Note, next, that we are not made all that we shall be, nor all that we ought to desire to be, when we are ourselves fished for and caught. ...– ***If you are yourself saved, the work is but half done until you are employed to bring others to Christ. You are as yet but half formed in the image of your Lord. You have not attained to the full development of the Christ-life in you unless you have commenced in some feeble way to tell others of the grace of God...*** His word is, ‘Follow Me, not merely that you may be saved, nor even that you may be sanctified; but, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” The fact is, that every one of us must take to the business of a man-catcher. If Christ has caught us, we must catch others.”

***The times are evil. Now, if never before, every glow-worm must show its spark.*** *Oh, that the Spirit of God may make each one of you feel his personal responsibility!* You will not of yourselves grow into fishers, but that is what Jesus will do for you... He presents us with an illustration of what Christian men should be – fishers of men.”

I. **“First then, I will take it for granted that every believer here wants to be useful. Well then, if you want to be really useful, here is SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO TO THAT END: ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’”**

“What is the way to become an efficient preacher? –Follow Jesus, and He will make you fishers of men. ...*we are not only to learn of Him in study, but to follow Him in action.* “...if you would be useful, keep in My track.”

“...first, be separate unto Christ. These men were to leave their pursuits; ...to quit the world, that their one business might be, in their Master’s name, to be fishers of men. ...we are called most distinctly to come out from among the ungodly, and to be separate... Fish will not be fishers. ...***more to the point, the worldly Christian will not convert the world. I believe that one reason why the Church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the Church.*** *Your cravings show how rotten your hearts are. Worldly amusements are fit food for mere pretenders and hypocrites. If you were God’s children... your question would not be, ‘How far may we be like the world:’ but your one cry would be, ‘How far can we get away from the world?’”*

*“...the only barrier against a flood of vengeance on this world is the separation of the saint from the sinner.”*

*“In one sense, no one mixed with sinners so completely as He did when, like a physician, He went among them healing His patients; but, in another sense, there was a gulf fixed between the men of the world and the Saviour...”*

***“The first lesson which the Church has to learn is this: Follow Jesus into the separated state, and He will make you fishers of men.”***

***“A second meaning of our text... abide with Christ, and then you will be made fishers of men.”***

“...to live with Christ is the best education for usefulness. Matchless was the training of the twelve. His bodily presence is not now among us; but His spiritual power is perhaps more fully known to us than it was to the apostles in those two or three years of the Lord’s corporeal presence. *See how He does the work and so learn how to do it yourself. A Christian man should be bound apprentice to Jesus to learn the trade of a Saviour. ...but we can learn how to save men by warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and setting before them the one great effectual remedy. Live in fellowship with Christ...*”

***“A third meaning... to this ‘Follow Me,’ is this: ‘Obey Me, and then you shall know what to do to save men.’ Out of mistakes about Christian ordinances and other things, especially errors in hear and spirit, there may come evils which we never looked for.”***

***“Failure in obedience may lead to failure in success. Anything we do that grieves the Spirit of God must take away from us some part of our power for good. But we must get back to apostolic practice and to apostolic teaching; we must lay aside the commandments of men and the whimseys of our own brains, and we must do what Christ tells us, as Christ tells us, and because Christ tells us. Definitely and distinctly, we must take the place of servants; and if we will not do that, we cannot expect our Lord to work with us and by us.”***

“Many are not following Christ, but following themselves...”

***“To a great degree, I attribute the looseness of the age to the laxity of the doctrine preached by its teachers. They have given the people the name of the gospel, but the gospel itself has evaporated in their hands. Well, and what comes of it? Why, their congregations grow thinner and thinner... The Lord’s directions... It is, ‘Follow Me, follow Me. Preach My gospel. Preach what I preached. Teach what I taught, and keep to that.’ ...copy Christ even in jots and tittles. Do this, and He will make you fishers of men; but if you do not do this, you shall fish in vain.”***

“... in all points... imitate His holiness. Holiness is the most real power that can be possessed by men... We may preach orthodoxy, but we must also live orthodoxy. ...it will be all in vain, unless there is a life at the back of the testimony. In all things endeavor to think, and speak, and act as Jesus did... This will require self-denial. We must daily take up the cross. This may require willingness to give up our reputation, – readiness to be thought fools, idiots, and the like... There must be the cheerful resigning of everything that looks like honour and personal glory, in order that we may be wholly Christ’s, and glorify His name. We must live His life, and be ready to die His death, if need be. In some way or other, the Lord will make a holy life to be an influential life.”

## **II. “But, secondly... there is SOMETHING FOR THE LORD TO DO.**

“...He says, ‘I will make you fishers of men;’ ...it is He that makes us follow Him;... **‘Tis all of His Spirit.** ‘From Me is thy fruit found,’ is a text which we must not for a moment forget.”

***“But, further, if we follow Christ, He will make us fishers of men by all our experience. ...the man who is really consecrated to bless others will be helped in this by all that he feels, especially by his afflictions. I have been able to give a helpful grip to brethren...”***

...who have come into that same condition, which grip I could never have given if I had not known their deep despondency. **So I believe that the darkest and most dreadful experience of a child of God will help him to be a fisher of men if he will but follow Christ. The winds of providence will waft you where you can fish for men.** You will often be surprised to find how God has been in a house that you visit: before you get there, His hand has been at work... When you wish to speak to some particular individual, God's providence has been dealing with that individual to make him ready for just that word which you could say, but which nobody else but you could say."

**"Further,... He will make you fishers of men by distinct monitions in your heart.** There are many monitions from God's Spirit which are not noticed by Christians when they are in a callous condition; but when the heart is right with God, and living in communion with God, we feel a sacred sensitiveness, so that we do not need the Lord to shout, but His faintest whisper is heard. **Oh, how many mulish Christians there are, who must be held in with bit and bridle, and receive a cut of the whip every now and then! But the Christian who follows his Lord shall be tenderly guided. I do not say... that you will hear a word in your ear; but yet in your soul, as distinctly as the Spirit said to Philip. 'Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.'** You shall hear the Lord's will. ...the thought shall cross your mind, 'Go and speak to that person.' Every opportunity of usefulness shall be a call to you. If you are ready, the door shall open before you, and you shall hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it."

**"Then too, I believe... He would give His followers the Holy Ghost.** ...the Spirit would come upon them, and clothe them with a mysterious power. ... you know how it was fulfilled to Peter. What a host of fish he brought to land the first time he cast the net in the power of the Holy Ghost!"

**"You men and women that sit before me, you are by the shore of a great sea of human life swarming with the souls of men. You live in the midst of millions; but if you will follow Jesus, and be faithful to Him, and true to Him, and do what He bids you, He will make you fishers of men. Let your responsibilities drive you closer to your Master. By the strong and mighty impulses of the divine life within you, quickened and brought to maturity by the Spirit of God, learn this lesson from your Lord's own mouth: 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'** You are not fit for it, but He will make you fit. You cannot do it of yourselves, but He will make you do it. You do not know how to spread nets and draw shoals of fish to shore, but He will teach you. Only follow Him, and He will make you fishers of men."

**"I wish that I could somehow say this as with a voice of thunder, that the whole Church of God might hear it. 'Jesus saith, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'** If you forget the precept, the promise shall never be yours. If you follow some other track, or imitate some other leader, you shall fish in vain. God grant us to believe fully that Jesus can do great things in us, and then do great things by us for the good of our fellows!"

### III. The last point... private meditations with much profit. ...A FIGURE FULL OF INSTRUCTION

"A fisher is a person who is very dependent, and needs to be trustful. He cannot see the fish. Fishing is an act of faith. Nobody is so dependent upon God as the minister of God. Oh, this fishing from the Tabernacle pulpit! What a work of faith! ...I do believe that God will guide me in the casting of the net. *It is good to be a fool when Christ is made unto you wisdom...*

*It is a blessed thing to be weak if Christ becomes more fully your strength. Go to work, you who would be fishers of men, and yet feel your insufficiency. You that have no strength, attempt this divine work. Your Master's strength will be seen when your own has all gone. A fisherman is a dependent person, he must look up for success every time he puts the net down..."*

*"A fisherman who gets his living by it is a diligent and persevering man. May the Lord Jesus make us hard-working, persevering, unwearied fishers of men!"*

*"The fisherman in his own craft is intelligent and watchful. It looks very easy to be a fisherman, but you would find that it was no child's play if you were to take a real part in it. There is an art in it, from the mending of the net right on to the pulling it to shore. ....you and I will often have to be watching the corners of the gospel net lest sinners who are almost caught should make their escape. They are very crafty... and they use this craftiness in endeavouring to avoid salvation."*

**"The fisherman is a very laborious person. It is not at all an easy calling. He does not sit in an armchair and catch fish. He has to go out in rough weathers. If he that regardeth the clouds will not sow, I am sure that he that regardeth the clouds will never fish.** We must be always at it, until we wear ourselves out, throwing our whole soul into the work in all weathers for Christ's sake."

*"The fisherman is a daring man. A little brine in his face does not hurt him; he has been wet through a thousand times, it is nothing to him. **He never expected, ...that he was going to sleep in the lap of ease. So the true minister of Christ, who fishes for souls, will never mind a little risk. He will be bound to do or say many a thing that is very unpopular...** He must do and say that which is for the good of souls. It is not his to entertain a question as to what others will think of his doctrine or of him..."*

*"Now in the last place, the man whom Christ makes a fisher of men is successful. Well, if any person in the world said to you, "I am a fisherman, but I have never caught anything," you would wonder how he could be called a fisherman. **He that never saved a sinner after years of work is not a minister of Christ. If the result of his life-working is nil, he made a mistake when he undertook it.** Keep close to Jesus, and do as Jesus did, in His spirit, and He will make you fishers of men."*

***"Reclaimed poachers make the best gamekeepers; and saved sinners make the best preachers."***

## **Chapter 15: Encouragement To Soul-Winners**

*"James is pre-eminently practical. **...in the Holy Scriptures, we have food for all classes of believers, and employment for all the faculties of the saints.** ...the Epistles of Paul, ...feeds the soul with sacred manna. For those whose... imagination incline them to more mystic themes, John has written sentences aglow with devotion, and blazing with love. We have his simple Epistles, – Epistles which... seem in their wording to be fit for children, but when examined, their sense is seen to be too sublime to be fully grasped by the most advanced of men.*

“...James, whose main point should be to stir up... minds... and help... to persevere in the practical graces of the Holy Spirit. The whole Epistle burns, but this ascends in flames to heaven; it is the culmination as it is the conclusion of the letter. There is not a word to spare in it. Downright living for the Lord Jesus is sadly wanted in many quarters; we have enough of Christian garnishing, but solid, every-day, actual work for God is what we need.”

“I call your attention very earnestly to three matters. First... a special case dealt with: ‘If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him.’ While speaking of that special case, the apostle declares a general fact: ‘he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.’ When I have spoken of these two points, I mean thirdly, to make a particular application of the text...”

### I. First ...A SPECIAL CASE DEALT WITH.

“Read the verse and you will see... a backslider from the visible Church of God. The erring one... had followed the truth; but... had been betrayed into doctrinal error, and had erred from the truth. ...he erred in some vital doctrine, he departed from the faith in its fundamentals. There are some truths which must be believed; they are essential to salvation, and if not heartily accepted the soul will be ruined. This man... turned aside from the truth on an essential point. Now, in those days, the saints did not say, as the sham saints do now... ‘We must... leave this brother to his own opinion...’”

“I should like to ask ...modern... churchmen whether there is any doctrine... worth a man’s while to burn or to lie in prison. I do not believe they could... answer, for if their latitudinarianism be correct, the martyrs were fools of the first magnitude. ...modern thinkers treat the whole compass of revealed truth with entire indifference; ...*so large is their liberality that they are not sure enough of anything to be able to condemn the reverse of it as a deadly error. To them black and white are terms which may be applied to the same colour, as you view it from different standpoints. Their theology shifts like the Goodwin Sands, and they regard all firmness as... bigotry. Errors and truths are equally comprehensible within the circle of their charity. It was not in this way that the apostles regarded error. ...they set about the conversion of the erring brother; they treated him as a person who needed conversion; and viewed him as a man who... would suffer the death of his soul... O God, deliver us from this deceitful infidelity, which... does yet more mischief to our own hearts by teaching us that truth is unimportant, and falsehood a trifle, and so destroys our allegiance to the God of truth, and makes us traitors instead of loyal subjects to the King of kings!*”

*“It appears from our text... this man... erred in his life as well... His way went wrong after his thought had gone wrong. Suppose a man shall imbibe a doctrine which leads him to think little of Christ, he will soon have little faith in Him, and become little obedient to Him, and so will wander into self-righteousness... When truth is dominant, morality and holiness are abundant; but when error comes... godly living retreats in shame.”*

“I fear many professed Christians do not look upon backsliders... as hopeful subjects for conversion. *The object of some professors seems to be to amputate the limb rather than to heal it. Justice has reigned instead of mercy. Away with him! He is too foul to be washed, too diseased to be restored. This is not according to... Christ, nor after the model of apostolic churches.*”

*There is something very significant in that expression, 'Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth.' If he ever was a saved man, he is your brother still, and it should be your business to bring back the prodigal, and so to make glad your Father's heart. And if he be not a child of God, if his professed conversion was a mistake, or a pretence, if he only made a profession, but had not the possession of vital godliness, yet still follow him with sacred importunity of love..."*

***"The text gives... indications as to the persons who are to aim at the conversion of erring brethren. It says, 'If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him,' One what? One minister? No, any one among the brethren. Look after strangers by all means, but neglect not your brethren. So also... he with whom you have had the most acquaintance should lie nearest to your heart; and when you perceive that he has gone aside, you should, above all others, act the shepherd towards him with kindly zeal. You are... doubly bound... to those over whom you possess an influence... I beseech you, ...when ye see a brother overtaken in a fault... 'restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.'"***

*"Brethren,... the attempt to convert a man who has erred from the truth is a hopeful one... Verily, it is a great joy to capture the wild, wandering sinner; but the joy of joys is to find the lost sheep which was once really in the fold, and has sadly gone astray."*

## **II. ...we have now to dwell upon A GENERAL FACT.**

*"This general fact... is prefaced with the words, 'Let him know.'*

*"What is it that you are to know? ...he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death."*

*"Let us think what that death is. It is not non-existence; I do not know that I would lift a finger to save my fellow-creature from mere non-existence. I see no great hurt in annihilation... Just as I see no great joy in mere eternal existence if that is all that is meant by eternal life... But 'eternal life' means... existing with all the faculties developed in fullness of joy... Very wide is the difference between the two words to die and to be annihilated. ...to die the second death, is to separate the man, soul and body, from his God..."*

*"The descriptions which Holy Scripture gives of the second death are terrible to the last degree. ...there are words in Scripture which, if pondered, might make the flesh to creep, and the hair to stand on end, at the very thought of the judgment to come. Oh, the happiness of having saved a soul from death!"*

***"And... in such a case, you will have covered a multitude of sins. Now, remember that your Saviour came to this world with two objects: He came to destroy death, and to put away sin. If you convert a sinner from the error of his way, you are made like to Him in both these works..."***

*"So you and I can do nothing to convert souls till God's eternal Spirit takes us in hand; but then He can do wonders by us..."*

*"...notice particularly that all that is said by the apostle here is about the conversion of one person."*

*"God must use us... let us long to be used, pray to be used, and pine to be used! Dear brethren... let us purge ourselves of everything that would prevent our being employed by the Lord. Then let us be on the watch for opportunities of usefulness... let us not be content till we are useful... As Rachel cried, 'Give me children, or I die,' so may none of you be content to be barren in the household of God."*

**III ...I want to make A PARTICULAR APPLICATION ... to the conversion of children.**

“...do not... forget the Sabbath-school...”

“Children need to be saved... Children may be saved while they are children.”

“If God’s eternal mercy shall bless your teaching to a little prattler, how happy that boy’s life will be compared with what it might have been if he had grown up in folly, sin, and shame... **To reclaim the prodigal is well, but to save him from ever being a prodigal is better.**...hence Sabbath-school instruction stands very high...”

*“Moreover, this gives the Church the hope of being furnished with the best of men and women. The Church’s Samuels and Solomons are made wise in their youth... Trees must be planted... while they are yet young if they are to live long and to flourish well.”*

“And, ...the work of teaching the young has at this time an importance superior to any... before... ...and let them pray over the children, and never be satisfied unless the children are turned to the Lord... ...we must bring back decided, plain, simple teaching, and there must be pleading and praying for the for the immediate conversion of the children... I beseech all... to pray for Sunday-schools; I entreat all... to be very tender towards all youthful people and to pray that their hearts may be won to Jesus.”

“...if His dear wounds bought you, give yourself to Him; and if you love Him, feed His sheep and feed His lambs. He says to you, ‘Peace be unto you! As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; and this know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death...”