Printed Pamphlets

# The Family of God

*1 John 2:12-29*

W. T. Turpin

that was denied in Eden. His *power* was not called in question there; Satan never challenged the *power* of God, and the man or woman did not fail in connection with the power of God. But what was insinuated into their minds in Eden, and what has passed down to every generation of man since, is that God has not got affections or love for man or interest in him.

The Lord lead our hearts by His mighty power, and by His Spirit, to know what it is to pass through these exercises. We shall all know it some time. Perhaps I am speaking to somebody tonight who says, "I am a witness to the withering of gourds, and to the break-up of things that are round about me." If so, the Lord give you to know where there is solace, unbounded confidence and consolation.

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## *The Family of God*

### *1 John 2:12-29*

12. I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

13. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have know him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning.

I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

18. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19. They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

20. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

21. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it and that no lie is of the truth. 22. Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. 23. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; [but] *he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also*. 24. Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. 26. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

28. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

I should just like to remark, in order that it may be more simply understood in speaking of it afterwards, that the word in the latter clause of v. 13, translated "little children," should be rendered "babes." It is quite a distinct expression from "little children," in v. 12. I will explain the difference presently.

You observe there are three classes in v. 13, fathers, young men, and babes, and "little children," in v. 12, includes all of them. I do not say anything about the "fathers" now, because that is not our subject. I will only speak of the two classes which I suppose will take in every soul in this room. I suppose every one here stands under one of these heads -- babes, or young men. Of course, I need not explain that a "young man" does not mean simply young in years, but the Spirit of God is pleased to borrow these terms from the ordinary use which we make of them, and to apply them to spiritual things. It is a "babe" and a "young man" *spiritually,* not *naturally*. And you will remember that I only speak to these tonight. I do not regard in the least the presence of any others.

Now there is one remark I desire to make at the start, one thing I have definitely upon my mind tonight, and that is, I shall seek to show you (the Lord helping) what is the foundation, the grand and blessed foundation, upon which God, in His mercy, sets us, so as to secure the practice that His own heart looks for from His children, even the very youngest, in these last times; because it is impossible to have true practice, real Christian practice, or Christian testimony, if there is not an understanding of Christian position. When I say that, I do not mean merely understanding it in your head, but in your conscience; and mark this, there is no way by which the Spirit of God imparts a divine understanding of anything, except through the conscience; and if the conscience is not reached, and is not, in the first instance, worked upon by what God is pleased to communicate to me from His word, all I may gather up is worse than useless. It is positive mischief, because there is nothing more injurious than to assent to the truth, and yet not to be affected by it. It is a total setting aside of every principle of God, if I take any portion of God's word, and study it as I study history, or an interesting book. I am studying, let me tell you, God's revelation of His mind, and my *conscience* is to be acted upon by it, and that is an all-important thing at the present moment, and for no one more than for young Christians. Oh, beloved, let me say this tonight -- do cultivate an exercised, tender conscience. It is a wonderful thing, when I read this blessed book of God, to think that *there* I have something from God that deals with my conscience, and brings me into His presence. That is the blessedness of the word of

God. The scriptures are intended by God to act thus upon us, and that is very solemn! See what a different thing that is from my mere intellect or understanding working upon certain things. I may take up the most wonderful truth of God, and my understanding may work upon it, and my mind may act upon it, and the result will be simply nothing, but if I understand truly and really what this blessed book is, that it is the veritable, positive voice of God, written down by the Holy Ghost, it brings me directly into God's presence, and then I have to deal with *God* as to what He is pleased to speak.

Now, the first thing that is spoken of here, which is true of the youngest as well as of the oldest, is, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John 2:12). That takes in all the classes, as I have already explained. There is no question, and we do not raise any question now, as to the fact of the forgiveness of our sins. I trust that is a settled question with every one of you here tonight, a distinct, settled fact and reality in your soul, that all your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. Because, remember, if you are not clear as to that, if there is the smallest lurking doubt in your soul as to that, how can you really walk as a forgiven person? It makes a vast difference. A person who really knows he is forgiven has motives, reasons, for acting, which, under other circumstances, he could not have. You cannot have really right motives, unless you know that. I am not speaking now, remember, as to the question of the happiness of your soul, but as to what is intended as a *motive* to act upon your path. That is what is before my mind, and I may say in passing, that 1 am speaking tonight a great deal with reference to what I propose to take up next week, when I intend to speak of what *is practical.* I speak tonight of what gives all its power to that which is practical, and I say, unless you know these great foundation-truths, these blessed facts of scripture, in your own soul and conscience, it will be impossible for you to have the motives that spring from them. Therefore the apostle starts with that as a settled thing, "I write unto you, little children," that is, the whole family of God, taking in fathers, young men, and babes, "because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake."

Now we come to the classes. We will begin with what scripture speaks of as the very lowest class, the first class, that is, the "babes." Mark what is said about the babes in v. 13. "I write unto you, babes, because ye have known," not the forgiveness of your sins, not because you have known your acceptance, but, "because ye have known the Father." Now, beloved friends, you may think this a very elementary thing I am pressing upon you tonight; but, oh, I know so well how very little there is known about the effect, the blessed, Wonderful power of a Father's love realized in the soul, and how few there are, alas! that really do know it. I do not raise any question about the forgiveness of your sins, I take that for granted, but do you know the Father? and have you the sense in your soul that you are a child of the Father? Not simply that you are pardoned, but that you are positively a child of the Father. I believe there are many that really do not know that; and they have not the motives which should characterize a child of the Father, because they have not the thing that gives spring and force to them. Because, supposing I do not possess the sense of the Father's love in my heart, if I am ignorant that I am a child of the Father, and that I have a Father up there whose eye is ever upon me, and to whom I am an object, well, then, I have no motive to *live* and *act* for the One to whom I am an object. That is the effect of it, and that is the reason why people go into the world. What are they looking for there? They are looking to find a satisfaction for their desolate hearts, which the knowledge of the Father would be to them, if they had it. If you had that, and knew it, you would not go into the world.

It is this that makes so many young Christians unsteady in their course, in their Christian path; what makes them dissatisfied in their hearts, is, that they have not found an object for their affections. That is the reason of it. They are not conscious that they are objects of the Father's love. It is a wonderful thing to think of. Do you mean to tell me that you would not walk about this great city in a different way, if you had the sense in your heart, "I am the Father's child, I am an object to Him, and His eye is upon me, and He is thinking of me, and caring for me, and doing His best for me"? What wonderful motives! And that is not an advanced state. Some might think it wonderfully so, but it is the *infantine* condition, the very simplest, the very first, truth that the blessed God would have known in His family, that there is not a babe there but is supposed to know the Father's love. "I write unto you, babes, because you have *known* the Father," that is, not merely the relationship, but the knowledge of it. There is all the sense that, from having been *outside* the family of God, a poor, wandering prodigal, away from His affection and His heart, He has brought me back to Himself, to know the Father's love. I ask you tonight, Have you the sense that you have been kissed? Have you the sense in your soul that you have been greeted by your Father, that He has kissed you, that you know what the affection of your Father's heart is? I do not turn to the world. Why? Because I have a Father in heaven. I do not turn to an arm of flesh. Why? Because I have a Father in heaven. Think of the wonderful, the immense motive which is connected with that. I have a Father up there, and He cares for me, and thinks of me, and I am His object. A most wonderful thing even to think of. It is the most blessed fact that could be announced, that a poor creature, a poor, weak, feeble, failing creature on this earth, could be an object of interest, and an object of affection, to the blessed God -- the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But so it is, and, beloved, it is not a mere matter of information, but a divine revelation, and it is given to us with immediate reference to the temptations of the world, as we see from a verse later on (26th), where the apostle says, "These things write I unto you concerning them that seduce you." The holy Ghost had that in His thought. He had all the seductions of the devil before His mind, and it was in view of these, as well as of the weakness and feebleness of the poor things into whom God had put this "treasure," it was in view of the dangers and of the besetments that we find ourselves confronted with at the present moment, that the Spirit of God gives us this wondrous revelation.

What is the security for a "babe"? That he has "known the Father." And in your cares, for I suppose some of you have your trials and anxieties, your moments of heaviness, your

griefs, what is your solace? Where do you go to be soothed? Where do you turn for cheer in pressure and difficulty? Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to be able to look up, and say, "There is my Father!" I could not describe to you the blessed, wonderful glory of that divine reality for a soul, "I have a *Father,* I am His *child,* I am in relationship with Him, and know His love. He is doing His best for me. There is nothing He would not give me, if it were good for me. He withholds nothing that would be for my blessing. If there was one thing that would minister to the real blessing and prosperity of His child, my Father would give it me. He keeps back nothing from me that is not according to His infinite wisdom and the love of His heart." What a thing that is! How it steadies one's heart! I am not cast down because I am in the presence of difficulty or trial, and I am not intrigued away by Satan for some wretched, miserable thing in this world. Why? Because I have my Father, and His heart, His hand, His love, His solace, His cheer, His smile, all sustain me now, and I shall be in His home above. What a blessed thing that is!

You may say, all this is very simple, but it is these simple things that souls really are ignorant of. Let me ask you, Are you clear as to your heart's acceptance of all this? Do not be disheartened because you find the little, feeble answer in your heart as to the *fact,* but allow the *fact* its due place, and your sense of it will be wonderfully increased. If you begin with *your sense* of it, you can never work yourself up to the *fact,* but begin with, the *fact* itself, and it will tell wonderfully in the way of realization in your soul. It is this fact of the Father's love, and the relationship into which He has brought me to Himself in His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that enables me to give a bold front to all Satan's opposition. God says to me that He has brought me into that relationship, and that is enough; and, remember, it is not as a *pardoned criminal.* I am pardoned, and yet I am not a *pardoned criminal.* This is the idea that people entertain, and I have no doubt there are some here tonight who have never got beyond it. They *are* pardoned, they have it free, but they are going out into the world just as a man who has been a criminal in Newgate {prison}: he has a free pardon, but if he goes out, and walks the world, *branded* as a man who has been in prison, nothing, not even his pardon, were it ever so plenary, could efface that brand. But God has not *so* pardoned us. It is true, blessed be His name, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," but the same death that atoned for the criminality, if I may so say, is the basis upon which we are taken out of the position in which we were as criminals, and brought positively into a new place, even His family; and it is on that ground that you and I tonight, yea, every babe here, is a child of God, born into His family, in relationship with Him, in the very same relationship before Him that His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is; for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our God and Father, and, I tell you more than that, loved after that measure too! Do you believe that? Oh, beloved friends, do you believe that you are positively loved after the measure of the love of God to His Son? "Hast loved them as thou hast loved me," are the words of the blessed Lord Himself. If you had the sense of that in your soul, would you condescend to take up anything out of this poor world? Tell me, would a man who was a millionaire stoop to pick up a penny off the dirty pavement? What God has done for us is this -- not only has He paid our debts -- He has done that, blessed be his name -- but by that which paid our debts we are brought into the very same position that His own Son occupies before Himself, to be the objects of His love, and loved after the measure of His love to Christ.

I say this is for a "babe." It is not an advanced state, it is the "babe's" position. It is wonderful how people think it an advanced state. The reason is, Christians have dropped so fearfully low, and so far beneath God's thoughts about these things. They think that the beginning is the finish, because they have such a feeble sense of Christianity. I know what it is myself very well. I can remember well enough what it was to me when it first burst upon me, that I was a child of the Father. And I knew many a thing before that. I knew that my sins were forgiven me, and preached it too, preached the forgiveness of sins, and never knew what it was to be a child of the Father! Never knew what it was to be in relationship with the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ; yet so it is. It is like a new day, if I may so say; and when it enters the person's soul in the power of the Spirit, it is like the dawning of the day. It is the opening of a new era to a person when first of all he gets the wonderful sense in his heart, "He is my Father, I am His child;" and we can never please Him better than when we are living out that relationship before Him, giving Him His place of Father to us, and seeking to walk as His children. You can never please the blessed God so much as when you give Him credit for being what nothing but His love could make Him be to you. This is the infantine state, this is for a "babe," for the very feeblest. Supposing you were only converted yesterday, if God, in His mercy, picked you up only an hour since, you are entitled to know not only that your sins are forgiven, but that you are a child of the Father. It is not a question of intelligence. A person may not understand the prophecies, or the dispensations of scripture, or the wonderful purposes of God that are unfolded in scripture, and yet have the conscious relationship known in the soul by the Holy Ghost. The expression of that relationship is "Abba, Father," and the manifestation of it in the path, is, "I renounce everything that is not of the Father." Thus we see there are two expressions of this infantine condition: the one is confession, "Abba, Father" -- the very language of the Lord Jesus Christ; not only the position of the Lord Jesus Christ -- "joint-heirs with him," as the apostle says in Rom. 8, but His language, "Abba, Father," His own relationship, His own expressions; and there is another testimony besides the confession of the mouth, there is the *life* testimony. And what is that? With Christ it was this, "I do *always* those things that please him." That was the expression of the life of the perfect Man in His relationship of a Son with His Father. He was, we know, from all eternity the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father, the Son of the Father before all time and worlds, but He was also Son of God, as born in time. With Him, in His blessed path, it was

always the Father. It was the delight of His heart, His life, He retreated into the Father, He walked with the Father, He lived with the Father. That is what God intends for us, beloved, in our measure.

Let me say a little about the *practice* as to this, without departing from the line we are taking this evening. A person may say, "Well, now, supposing I had the full sense of all that in my heart, how would it act upon my conduct?" I will tell you. In everything you did, in every thought, in every action, in every undertaking, you would consult your Father's pleasure. That is the way it would tell upon you. Let me be affectionately personal with you this evening; do you consult your Father's pleasure in everything? Do you raise that question with your own heart about all your undertakings, path, ways, conduct? Would you be afraid to bring everything to the test of that tonight? Is there anything in your heart inside, or your ways outside, that you would not like to bring to such a test as this: "Would it please my Father, is it after the pattern and fashion of Him who said, "I do always those things that please him?" What a solemn test that is! What a searching of hearts it raises!

How many things are laid bare by it! What a light it casts into one's inmost soul before God! Does it not search us? I feel it searches me as I speak of it. I feel my own heart searched to the very quick as I think of it. Is it my Father's pleasure, my Father's will, His way, that is before me at this hour?

The Lord help you just to apply the truth to your own hearts. That is the way to read the scriptures, to walk through this world bringing everything, the very smallest thing, into the full, searching light of the truth. Take, for instance, your relationships in life, your home. Some of you have a difficult home, and, oh, do let me say this to you, beloved friends, you have, perhaps, a home where there are many eyes upon you, and perhaps you are the only one belonging to God in that home, the only one standing outside of everything in that home. That is a critical place for any one. It is a solemn and responsible place for any child of God to be located, but let me say this, there is a divine fulness, and a divine resource, in this truth that I am pressing upon you tonight, that will meet all that. You will never fulfil your home responsibilities, or your home duties, or your home relationships, so well as when you are studying your Father's pleasure. There would be no unevenness then. I have often seen young people in whom, perhaps, there may have been a great deal of energy, and a great deal of true-hearted desire, but not inward brokenness of spirit, and very often things were done in a way that did not commend Christ. Very frequently a sort of boasted superiority, as it were, because of having the truth, and looking down upon everybody else that did not know it. There is nothing of Christ in that -- nothing of that blessed One who could go down to Nazareth, and be subject to His parents, and who knew how to discern what was due to them, as well as to His Father. What a wonderful thing it is when the heart is *with* God! You get wisdom from your Father, direction and guidance from Him, your path made clear by Him, His light shining through the whole course of it. It is, in fact, just like a child with a father. You have seen a little child coming in all the sweet consciousness of the relationship, and in all the sense of the dependence and trust that he or she may have in the parent, and leaning upon him, and there is no time that a child comes with more simplicity than when there is a difficulty. Whom should the child lean on but the father? Do it with your Father! Consult your Father, look to your Father, study Him! You will find it will save you from many a difficulty; and you know you cannot set down any given set of rules as to what is to be avoided, and what is to be practiced. That would make you really independent of God, but you must keep continually in the place of dependence, cast upon God as His child, needing Him each stage of the journey. And you never consciously wanted Him, but He is consciously beside you. The conscious want brings out the conscious presence; because He does not manifest His presence to independence, but He does manifest His wisdom and His power to dependence; that is the proper, true, natural position for a child. You will find this will tell upon many things in your daily path.

But there is another side to what I have been speaking of. I have seen some in a family who, instead of being as I have described, go to the other extreme, they surrender the truth of God. They are not valiant enough for the truth, they are compromisers. There are the two things, beloved young friends, that we must steer clear of in home relationships, *ungraciousness* and *compromise*. They are the Scylla and Charybdis, as it were, the two great dangers. What would help you in both these? Simply this -- your Father's pleasure, because that would keep you subject to Him; and, on the other hand, you could not yield, in the very smallest degree, what was for Him or for His honor.

Well, now, I pass on to the next class, where we shall find also an immensity of truth brought out. The resources of a "babe" are the Father's love and the Father's care, His heart, His hand. All these are for a "babe," therefore the apostle says, "I write unto you, babes, because you have *known* the Father." Going to the next class, we find a difference, we have a little advance, a class beyond the "babes." "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one," and then, in 1 John 2:14, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." The divine energy and power of faith characterizes a "young man." You know perfectly well the difference naturally between the babe and the young man. What the difference is naturally, so it is spiritually. I do not look for energy in a babe, I look for confidence. What marks the infantine state is *confidence,* clingingness, if I may use the word; but what marks manhood is energy, strength, power. And so it is in spiritual things; and the Holy Ghost Himself suggests the analogy. He says, You are strong, there is divine energy, divine power, divine ability; and how is that ability shown? You have mastered Satan, you have overcome the wicked one.

I should like to say a word about that. There is no way to overcome Satan, and no way in which divine ability and

power is more shown than in keeping the sentence of death upon yourself. Now I do not speak of that to "babes." What they need, and what I have been endeavoring to speak of, is that full confidence in the Father which befits a "babe." But now we have another class before us, and I have no doubt that there are many in the position of "young men" here. There are many such here tonight, perhaps more that answer to the description of "young men" than to that of "babes." Do you know what it is to keep the sentence of death -- the death of Christ -- upon yourself, to apply that death to yourself? I will try to say a little as to that, because it is important to us all.

Many, when they speak of keeping the sentence of death -- the cross -- upon themselves, think of it as if it were something that they have to die to, in their own hearts. It is not that at all. It is not *my* dying. Very often people say, "I do not feel that I have died; I have all this desire after the world, and all this longing after the things of the world; I feel all that in me. I feel I am uncommonly alive and sensitive to it, just as much as ever I was." But that is not what the Holy Ghost speaks of at all. What He is speaking of is the practical application of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ to myself; that is, everything that Christ died to is to be *disowned* by me. That is applying the sentence of death to myself. That is simple, yet solemn. Everything that He died to, I am to disown, though it be at cost and loss to myself. That is the meaning of keeping the sentence of death upon myself, disowning everything within me and outside of me that Christ died to. That is, I disallow self and sin because Christ died for me, and I disallow the world because Christ died to deliver me from it. There is a line or two in one of our hymns which expresses this:

> "From sin, the world, and Satan,
> We're ransomed by Thy blood."

Just because I *am* ransomed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ from sin, the world, and Satan, I disallow all these things. I disallow sin, although I find it here in me; I do not allow it, I am under no obligation to yield to sin, I am under every obligation *not* to yield to it. Then, as to the world, He has taken me out of it, and I am under every obligation not to yield to it. I am under no obligation to Satan, but to Him who broke the power of Satan. You constantly read the words, "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." That is, you disallow every thing that Christ died to, and you do it in faith *because* He died to it. It is not a question of *your* dying; you will never die -- that is, you will never really be out of circumstances of temptation -- until you leave this body; but you are entitled and privileged to hold yourself to be dead simply because Christ died. That is the reason, and I disallow all these things in faith, because Christ died to them.

There must be this to overcome the devil. You can never get the mastery over Satan unless you keep the sentence of death upon yourself. And remember, that this is not an act that a person jumps into once and for ever. It is a daily, hourly, momentary thing. Do you remember what the Lord said to the young man in Mark 10? He says, *"Take up* the cross, and follow me." And elsewhere we get the taking up of the cross *daily*. It is a solemn thing for us, yet blessed, seeing that we owe everything that we have, and everything that we are, and everything that we shall be, to that blessed One who died upon that cross. This is what gives the motive-power to it. I will tell you the effect of all this. When the devil meets one who keeps the cross on himself, or a dead man, he has no power, because then the platform upon which the devil acts is taken away. You cut off occasion for his acting. That is the secret of it. And, beloved, it is a wonderful thing to remember it was by *death* the Lord Jesus destroyed Satan. He broke the power of Satan in His death; He won the victory through *death*; and Satan now is become a worsted foe, a beaten enemy, and that which puts the child of God, a "young man," in the position of a conqueror of Satan is this, that he uses the cross, where his power was broken, to take away the occasion of the flesh in him for Satan to act upon. Christ broke Satan's power in death, and *that* death, when it is applied to myself, takes away occasion for Satan to deceive me, which he could otherwise do, on account of the weakness of the flesh.

There is another word here that is very important with reference to this. You can conceive how a person might imagine, "Well, if I have overcome Satan, the evil one, the wicked one, then it is all over, now I have no more to fear." But observe, to the very people that overcame the wicked one, to those who have got power over Satan, the apostle says, "Love not the world," that is one thing, "neither the things of the world," that is another. That is very solemn, beloved friends. I cannot go into it this evening, as it would be departing a little from the line I am taking. I will explain to you next week, as far as I can, what the world is, and how it affects us. I will only now just call your attention to this -- that though I have the mastery over Satan, though I have overcome the wicked one, still, I am in danger from the world. This world is a reality, with all its snares, allurements, deceits, set by Satan, of course, who is the god and prince of it, the god of it *religiously,* and the prince of it *politically*; there it is, with all those things in it which make it attractive, which Satan uses to *beguile* those who have already got the mastery over him. And therefore it is that the apostle gives this warning.

Let me ask you this, plainly and yet affectionately -- Do you love the world, or the things that are in it? Hearken to what follows: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Nothing could be more definite than that which the Spirit of God gives us here, and all this is said to a "young man," to one who has spiritual power and energy, and spiritual mastery over Satan, even to one of whom it was said, "ye have overcome the wicked one." Notwithstanding all that, he is in danger of this awful, ensnaring, entrapping world, with all those things in it that minister to the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye. I will speak of that, if the Lord will, more particularly next week. I believe many have fallen under the power of it to a very solemn extent. Young people, of course, are especially prone to it; yet not only young people, but old people as well. We are all wonderfully little sensitive as to that one thing -- the thing your eye lusts after, the thing your flesh lusts after, and

that the natural pride of your heart craves for, *it* is of the world, and not of the Father. It belongs to this evil scene, that would not have the Christ of God, nor the God that gave that Christ. So you see how solemn it is to get such a word as this from the Spirit of God.

I will only now, in finishing for this evening, press these two things upon you: first, what it is to have the Father's love, the *sense* of the Father's love; to be in the confidence of a child, to study the Father's pleasure, and to have it before you in everything, no matter how small or trifling it might be. What a different path ours would be if it were so! How different it would be with many of us tonight, if we studied our Father's will in what we did, and where we went, and what we had, and if that were the gauge of our whole conduct! Supposing that it brought us into suffering, into a little bit of self-denial, is He worthy of it? Is He worthy of any little trial of our poor hearts? He who gave up the costliest jewel of His own heart's affections, that we might be children before Him -- is He worthy? See what a wonderful motive that is for you; and it is not only that, but there is this along with it (the Lord give you to prove it), the blessed, holy joy of being *allowed* to please Him. The very thought that I am *allowed* to please my Father, contains in it that which takes away everything like the sense of loss, and, after all, what I *seem* to give up is only a miserable bit of pleasure, or folly, or pride, that I am a positive gainer in surrendering. But the greatest thing of all, is, the sense that in taking a certain course, I am of one mind with my Father. Who could ever fully tell what that is? the blessedness of being actually of one mind with our Father about things; to think that I am *allowed* to have the same mind as He about the little things that relate to me down here. I say that is compensation at once, and instead of speaking of the suffering, it is all gain, no loss at all, all real gain, gain to me to be allowed to be of the same mind, to be on terms of such wonderful intimacy with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord bring these things, in all their importance, before your hearts tonight. All I ask is, as you go to your homes, take what I have presented to you -- take it before the Lord tonight, and let your consciences and hearts be under the power of it. Do not let any one tempt you to turn off the edge of it, but let it bring you into the presence of God, there to search your own hearts as to all this blessed, wonderful reality, and as to how far you have in your soul the sense of your relationship, and whether you have walked out the sense of it in this world.

The Lord command His blessing, and thus may He secure more childlike confidence and divine energy in our hearts for Him, and for His Son, in these last times, to the praise of His glory!

## *Part 2*

We have been looking at the three classes which the Spirit of God brings before us in this chapter, passing over the first class, which does not concern our present object or purpose. We will now look a little further at what is said here about the two classes, "babes" and "young men," these terms being understood (as I explained before) spiritually, not naturally. Just as there are babes, young men, and fathers, in an earthly family, so there are in God's family. I should like, before we proceed, very briefly to bring to your remembrance the speciality of each of these two classes, and what belongs to each.

A "babe," which is the lowest class, the infantine state, "knows the Father." "I write unto you, babes, because ye have known the Father" (v. 13). It is a most important thing to be assured in our souls, no matter how feeble we may be, or how short the time since we knew the forgiveness of our sins, through faith in His blood, that the blessed work which has secured the forgiveness of our sins for us, has likewise brought us into God's family. I have a Father, and a blessed thing it is to know, to be assured of the fact, that I have One to whom I can tell my troubles, to whom I can go with my griefs, to whom I can pour out my sorrows, under whose wings I take refuge in difficulty and temptation. This is part of the blessedness of it -- the sure sense of the Father's love; and there is not merely comfort in it, but immense practical power as well. For I do not find, as a rule, that those who are ignorant of the Father's love have the security, the solace, the stay, the stability, which keeps them from the world. What can keep a "babe" from the world is the knowledge of the Father's love; and, beloved friends, let me assure you, that, if you know the Father, you do not turn to the world for help. To have some one to whom we are an object, is inseparable almost from our very nature. This is what we long for; and whoever makes an object of us, we make *our* object. The two things are closely connected together, and I doubt not, if you have not the sense in your heart that there is One up there in heaven to whom you are an object, you will be looking for some one on the earth to fill up the deficiency, the blank. Thus it is a "babe" is enticed into the world. Now the knowledge of the Father provides against that. Suppose I have difficulties, or wants, or cares, or troubles, I do not go to the world to help me out of them, or to get solace in my sorrows. I have a Father. And that is the simplest thing the soul knows. I have a Father who knows all about me.

Do you know in your hearts what that is? Can you who are "babes" in Christ here say, "I know the sweet, unspeakable blessedness of being able to say, My Father knows"? You will remember how the Lord Jesus speaks to His disciples; and I suppose the state in which they were at the time would correspond very much to this infantine state we are speaking of. He says to them, "Fear not, little flock." Why? "It is your Father's good pleasure" to be a Father to you, for that is the meaning of "to give you the kingdom." That is what takes the fear out of one's heart. I am not afraid of want or care. Why? Because I have my Father, and, more than that, my Father *knows*. I may not, and do not, know what is before me, but He does. People say, "If I do that, if I adopt such a narrow path as that, I do not know the difficulties I shall be in, and the troubles, and trials, and losses. How can I ever meet them all?" Just this -- "your

Father knoweth." Now that is the infantine condition.

One thing more: a person may pass from that condition of infancy into the next stage, or even into the highest condition, that of a "father." But the blessedness of the infantine state is not lost, though he may be, as I say, even a "father," though he may know "him that is from the beginning." And that is the very highest thing. The highest knowledge in the things of God is the knowledge of Christ. It is not the knowledge of things *about* Christ, but of Christ Himself. And the most excellent of all sciences is the knowledge of Christ. There is no science like it.

Well, the person who knows "Him who is from the beginning" is a "father," but such a one has not lost the sense of the Father's love. You do not lose anything that you ever learned; but it remains still true that the *characteristic* of a "babe" is confidence in the Father's love, the *characteristic* of a "father" is knowledge of "Him who is from the beginning," and the *characteristic* of a "young man" (what I shall now speak of) is divine strength, power, and vigor to overcome Satan. That is the characteristic of this second class in God's family, and perhaps represented more than any other class in this room this evening. I suppose that though there are many who come under the designation of "babes," yet there are many more who, in some little measure, answer to "young men."

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14). Note those *three* things. Now, you perceive a "babe" is not exposed to meeting the devil in this form. Such a one is sheltered in a way just as in our earthly homes. The law of love in our Father's home above is that which ought to exist in our homes on earth. The infantine state is protected by the love that occupies itself with the very infirmities and feebleness, and exposure and inability, so to speak, that are found in infancy. A little infant, in any of our families, is the object of the parents' special consideration and care. But when you come to manhood, there you have to meet and encounter the positive obstacles of life; and in God's family, the first thing that meets a person when he gets into this manhood state is the devil -- Satan.

The question of meeting Satan is a solemn one for every one of us. It is most important to look at it well, because it brings up the question of temptation. Now the great point presented here is, that "the word of God abideth in you." I do not know anything that is more important for young Christians than that -- to have the word of God abiding in them; because, let me assure you, if that is not the case, you will not be able to use that word against the devil as occasion demands.

The real secret of being able to use the word of God against the devil is this, that the word of God is keeping your own soul. If your own soul is not commanded by the word of God, if it is not abiding in you, you cannot use it *offensively* against Satan. Now, how is it with you? Does that word govern *your* ways, *your* affections, *your* hearts? Do you ever prayerfully say, "I must search and see what the word of God, as the expression of His mind, says about this or that?" If you do not, how can you meet Satan? Satan will deceive you, because he is wily. He knows exactly how to dress up counterfeits, and I will tell you one of the greatest counterfeits of the devil now. You may often hear it said, "I do not feel that so-and-so is wrong; I do not see that there is any harm in this or that." Now, where did they get that thought? What guided them as to that feeling? Where did it come from? You say, "Well, my conscience does not reprove me. Neither did Saul's conscience, when he was persecuting the church on earth, and hating Jesus in heaven. Oh, believe it, there is nothing at this present time that is a greater counterfeit, and a more dangerous power of Satan than this, that he makes what people call their conscience the guide of their actions. If you make conscience the *umpire* to which everything is subjected as to your ways, you will fall into the snare of the devil. There is nothing that can pilot us according to the mind of God, except this blessed book, which is the revelation of His mind: conscience is a witness, that which keeps the record, so to speak, as to how far this word acts on me. It is a witness; a true witness, if it is divinely informed, a false witness if it is not. It is thus all the more dangerous. Why is that? Because, to speak of a person's conscience not condemning this or that, *sounds* exceedingly fair and good, and it is because of this it is to be so carefully guarded and watched. There is nothing so dangerous now as the thing that wears the appearance of truth, but is not the truth; because Satan knows quite well that it is by that saints are most easily caught -- the perversion of that which is right in its place. And I say it is a thorough perversion of conscience, and of the place God intended it to occupy, to make it the standard of my actions.

It is this word that is to be the guide in everything; and I commend it to you tonight, and I can speak of it, thank God, as knowing a little of the blessedness of it for myself. And that, you know, is the only ground upon which we ought to speak, "I believe, and therefore have I spoken." David said of Saul's armor, that he had not "proved" it, and so he had it taken off him. It is the thing you have proved that you can speak of for a certainty; and how blessed it is that when you come to divine things, it is," we *know,"* "we *believe,* and we *know."* The one is the objective power of faith, and the other the conscious knowledge in the soul by the Spirit.

But, as I was saying, there is nothing like making that word the test of everything, subjecting all to that word. It does not matter what it is: my position in this world, my occupation, in fact everything. And the question is not what I *may* do, or *may not* do, but, "What saith the scripture?" Because the scripture is the embodiment in writing of the mind of God. If the word of God abide in you, you are strong; there is the energy of faith, and you have overcome the wicked one.

Now, beloved friends, I trust you see the blessedness of the word abiding in us, it makes us *subject to God;* and when the devil meets a person that is subject, he meets a person that he has no power over. The secret of getting power over Satan, of overcoming Satan, is, that we are, in all our affec-

tions and ways, governed by the word, *subject* to it. You have a perfect instance of it in the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, there was nothing in Him that answered to the temptations of Satan outwardly, as there is in us, because we have a fallen nature, but see how He acted with Satan. Satan came and said, "If you are the Son of God, and have power as the Son of God, take yourself, by the exercise of that power, out of the place of dependence." You see Satan allowed a certain amount of truth for his purpose. But the Lord Jesus Christ *kept* the word, and He used it: "It is written"; and we can never use it, unless we *keep* it. I think we often forget these two things in the account of the temptation. It was not only that our Lord used the word against the devil, but he *kept* it. There is immense power, beloved friends, in using the word against Satan, when that word is kept in our own souls, *abiding* there, and deciding for us as to everything that God would wish us to be and to do.

What is Satan's great power now? Have you ever thought what the peculiar characteristic of Satanic power is now? Is it not this -- in *concealing* himself, and acting in such a way that you do not know he is present? If he can persuade you, by keeping behind, so that you do not see that it *is* Satan, he will get the mastery over you. The power of a saint -- of a "young man" -- over Satan now, is being able to say, through this word abiding in him, "That is the devil." The moment you are able to say, "That is Satan," you have the victory, you have mastered him; but until you can say that, you are in danger. That is the character of the warfare at this moment. I note it for you, because it is important. Supposing a person is tempted; well, if his *conscience* says, "I do not disapprove of that, I do not think there is any great harm in keeping that company, or going to that place, I do not see what harm that can do to me"; that is the devil, beloved friends, concealing himself, and working through that which makes something of *you,* because it exalts your conscience. That is a terrible wile, it exalts something in you, putting your *conscience* in the place that the word of God ought to have over your soul; and the consequence is, you fall under the snare. I know many who have fallen in that way. They have made *their* good, *their* prosperity, the touchstone of their conduct, and their conscience the guide of their ways, consequently they have fallen.

Now, what scripture proposes, in contradistinction to this, is, the pleasure of *Christ*, the touchstone of what we ought to call for, and the word of God the chart to guide us along. Those are the two things. If I say, "I think this will do me no harm," I make *myself* the measure of my conduct, and my conscience the guide of what I ought to do. But it is a totally different thing if I kept this before me -- "Would this please God? Would this minister to the pleasure of Christ? Would this suit Christ? Would it give him delight? What does the word of God say?" This brings in true motives and a divine object, and, I say it distinctly tonight, our only security at this time is in having the incarnate Word as our object, and the written word as our chart. The man who has the incarnate Word as the one object of his affections, and the written word as the chart of his conduct, is able to unmask the wiles of Satan.

I shall not dwell on that longer, but I turn now to the point that I did not touch upon much last week, which is very important. As I observed then, there is another danger even to those of whom the apostle writes, that they have "overcome the wicked one." From whence is that danger? From the world. Now, what is the world? That question is constantly asked. Well, I believe it is a far more insidious, a larger, and more diversified thing than many of us have the least conception of. I will give you a general definition, as far as I understand scripture, of what the world is, and you must apply it for yourselves. I cannot give you details. "Happy is the man that feareth always"; the person who is most afraid is the person who is most safe.

The world, then, or age, as the scriptures speak of it, is that ordered system of things around us, not the *literal* world, that, of course, God made. There is a great difference between the world that God made and what He calls "the age of this world." (See Eph. 2:2). God did *not* make the world in this sense. He made the literal world; there is not a tree, or a leaf, or a creature, on the literal world that He did not make. But He did not make the *age,* that is, this ordered system that is called "the world." That is what the apostle is speaking of here. Who is the author of it? The devil is the author of this age, this "evil age." What is it made out of? This age is made out of man's rejection of God's Christ! Just as Cain went out from the presence of God, and manufactured *his* world, after he had killed Abel. There was no world of Cain until after Abel was killed; and the man that slew his brother went out from the presence of God, and became the father of every one who was prominent in the things that characterized Cain's world, and which made it comfortable, and all without God. It is just the same now. Do you know this, that Satan is "the prince of this world"? He was displayed in that character when he had driven on man to crucify Christ. Then the world was manifested as it is, and Satan was displayed as its prince. Where is Christ? Did you ever think of that? I ask you, because it is a solemn question for every one of us. How is it that He has gone out of this world? I read in the scriptures the account of His death and resurrection, and I know He died as the Lamb of God, but let us never forget that He also died as a martyr at the hands of man. He was murdered. Who murdered Him? The world, the age, and that which goes to make up this world morally is not one whit better now than the world of that day, which crucified the Lord of glory. They would crucify Him just as much now. There is just as much hatred, enmity, bitterness, dislike of Christ and God today, expressed in a different way, it may be, but the elements, the principles, the seeds of it are just the same. Now this is the world, and I ask you, is it not a solemn thing to think that we are left in this very scene, the world that hated Christ, scorned and rejected Him? What is the object of everything in it? The three things you find here -- "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." There is nothing in this world that has any other motive than one of those three things. Point out to me, if you can, one thing in this world that has any other motive. All that

which goes to make something out of man -- something to elevate man -- something to please his senses, his flesh, his pride, where does it come from? "It is not of the Father, but of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof." That is the divine answer.

Well, now, the reason why the apostle puts this in here is this -- because those who are "young men" (in God's family, I mean) are especially prone, and especially tempted in that direction, and that notwithstanding the energy, vigor, and power which they possess. And you know very well there are attractions in the world still -- I mean for young Christians. There is something about all these things which addresses, and appeals to, and suits our nature. I remember, not long ago, a person said to me, "I can go here or there, and I can listen to that, or look at that, and I can go into that scene -- but none of it addresses itself to me." Now I say that person has yet to learn what flesh is, and I say further, that person is in great danger; because there is nothing in this world that does not find an answer, and an echo, in our nature. There is a response in every one of us to those three things I mentioned just now, and in none more so than those whose energies are least crippled, least subdued, who have not been tried as others, have not gone through testings and siftings, have not learned what death is. What our Lord said to Peter illustrates it: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." A person who as yet is in unsubdued and unbroken energy -- all the freshness of youth, so to speak, without anything of ballast or balance of any kind -- is especially prone to the attacks of Satan through the medium of the world, and thus it is we get such an admonition addressed to the "young men" in this chapter. If you have escaped the *pollutions* of Satan, then take care lest you fall under the *attractions* of this world.

But many will say, "I do not love the world." Do you love anything in it? -- that is the question. Let me say a word about that. I purposely omit going very much into details about it, and I will tell you why. Because what I find, is, that souls are a great deal more alive to how a thing bears upon themselves than they are prepared to admit. They say, "Give me details about this," but all the time they know quite well how a thing bears, and their very uneasiness, the way they try to palliate, shows perfectly well that they see the bearing of the thing, but they want to turn aside the sharp edge of it. All I say is, and this especially to my younger brethren and sisters tonight, cultivate a tender conscience, not as a standard or guide, but as a witness. There is nothing more blessed than to have conscience as a witness, tender and susceptible. What I long for myself, and for you, is, to have a conscience like a sensitive plant -- you know what that is -- the least touch makes itself felt. How is that to be secured? Just in this way, living by every word of God, that word loved, looked to, trusted in, held fast. That will give you a tender conscience. The more you have Christ before you, and the more the word of God is that to which you appeal, the more your conscience gets tender. What tends to make a man's conscience *not* tender, is, making it his guide. That inevitably, sooner or later, stupefies conscience. It is marvelous what your conscience of itself, apart from the world, will let you do; but if you make Christ the touchstone, and the word of God the guide, you will have a tender conscience, and you will find that the least deviation from His pleasure and His word, will have the same effect upon you as a person's hand would have upon the leaf of a sensitive plant -- it will shrink.

There is another thing in connection with this -- we should walk in *fear*. I do not mean slavish fear, but the holy, blessed, proper, right fear which comes from the affection of the heart, "I fear to grieve the One that loves me with such a love." That is proper fear. I am afraid. Why? Because I am in the midst of a world that is full of pitfalls and snares. If you see a man walking through a place full of traps, and snares, and gins, and pitfalls, you find him walking cautiously, circumspectly: he would be alive to the dangers. We ought to walk like that, without, however, getting into any kind of bondage about it. I fear the mode in which many have been converted in these days does not secure this holy fear. I tell you why. Because deliverance from this present evil age is not preached, as well as forgiveness of sins; and the consequence is, people are not taken out of it. The character of the testimony that has reached them has not taken them *out* of the world. They have not the sense of the Father's love, and the consequence is that too many have their consciences made easy to go on with the world. I speak of it, because I have seen it. I am giving facts. I know young Christians -- I have such before my mind now -- who, whilst their consciences were not relieved, were timid, careful, watchful, vigilant, afraid lest they should be tripped up. There was in them a zeal, an earnestness, a desire to answer to the mind of God, although, as yet, in bondage. And what then? Why, a kind of testimony reached them which took their consciences out of the power of bondage, but did not bring them consciously into a new position, with a new object before them; and the consequence was, that the burden being off their consciences, without there being an object for their affections, it was an easy and natural thing to go on with the world which they were afraid of before. I know it well I have an instance before me now, and therefore I say to you tonight, that the mere fact of the forgiveness of sins, though *relief*, is not in itself *power*.

I will give an illustration of it. Suppose a man to be involved, having a large and increasing debt, or liability, hanging over him, which he cannot discharge. Some one comes in, in large-hearted benevolence, and pays the debt. That debtor is relieved from the pressure of his debt, but he has nothing to live upon. The mere fact of his having his debt paid will not keep him.

Thus you see, beloved friends, the importance of the very youngest of us knowing not only that our consciences are relieved, but that we are positively brought into a place where there are divine resources, and that we have a new object before us in that blessed Christ who has done all this for us. We have now One to please. Have you the sense of that in your heart, that you have One to please up there in heaven?

Do you say, "I have relief in my conscience, I have my sins forgiven me"? Then, I ask, what are you doing? Do you say, "God has given me everything here to enjoy, and I am enjoying myself now. I have this world, and I am to enjoy the world. I am, of course, to keep myself from the grossly evil things in it. I would not go to the theater, or to the opera, or to a hall, or a concert, or anything of that kind"? But do you think, that, because you have obsequiously abstained from all that, and have kept away from those gross things, you are out of the world? Oh, be not deceived. You may have abstained from those things because they offended your conscience, but you are not necessarily apart from the world, because *all* that is in the world, that comes under either of these three heads, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I trust you see what an important thing it is to have this brought before you, that it is Christ, and not yourselves, that you have to study. If you act upon that before God, honestly and in faith, you will find it a wonderful help for your soul in every detail. Suppose you were tempted to do something, or there were some company you would like to keep, or some association you would like to get into, and you were to sit down, and say, "Would this please Christ? would this suit Christ?" Oh, how different the result would be! Surely it is a knife that cuts all round, it cuts in a circle. "Would this please or suit Christ? He has left me here on this earth to be His representative. Would this be a representation of Him? Would this be giving a true character of Christ, a true expression of Him?" Now, beloved friends, do you know anything of such exercise of soul? Does your heart ever go through that testing process before God? That alone can keep a person from the world. That alone can give you a holy horror of this age, with all its defilements and snares. Perhaps you say, "I like to look into the shop windows as I pass along." Yes, one's nature likes it, but do you ever see anything there that makes Christ in heaven more precious to your heart? On the contrary, there is a great deal that takes your thoughts and affections away from Him. There is no use in denying it, beloved friends, there is nothing in the world *itself* that helps a person spiritually; but, on the contrary, everything tends to hinder. The things that you see as you pass along affect you in this way, if you yield to them, that you lose your taste for what is spiritual. Your taste becomes soiled. If a person lies amongst the pots, does he not get blackened? If you touch pitch, will you not be defiled? Or can you live in a place, the atmosphere of which is entirely saturated with impurity, and not suffer from it? Oh, yes, a great deal more than you think. We are not aware of the soiling influences which this world has upon us. All the things that are in it tend to drag and keep us down. They are not of the Father. The Father is against the world, the Son is against the devil, and the Holy Ghost is against the flesh.

"The world passeth away." Do you know what will become of this world? It is very solemn. This "age" will receive the devil's man. That very world that people like so much, that very world will receive Antichrist -- will welcome Antichrist. Is that the world you love? Is that the world you want to have your pleasure in, or your recreation, or your gain in -- the world that hated Christ, and that will receive Antichrist?

Now just look at 1 John 2:18, which goes further into this point. I do not offer any apology at all for specially dwelling upon this. The apostle addresses himself again to the "babes," to the infantine state, to the lowest class. "Babes, it is the last hour." Now, beloved friends, how important it is, even for the youngest, to know the time we are in! Many might say," Why do you speak to babes about that? Why do you talk to them about the character of the days?" I answer, Because God does so. He does not address Himself to "fathers"; that struck me very much when I looked at it first, or to "young men," but to "babes"; because He would have all His children, all His family, every member of it, the infant as well as the old and the middle-aged, to know that it is "the last hour." To my mind that is very solemn. Oh, eternity will never give us back this moment. You will never get in eternity the opportunity you have now. To me, when I reflect, it is a most wonderful thing, the most wonderful favor and grace conceivable, to be *allowed* to live for Christ in a day like this. You will never have it in eternity. You will never get the opportunity then of showing that your heart appreciates the love of Christ. You will never get the opportunity then of standing out in the presence of the haters of Christ, and saying, "He is my Savior and my Lord." Now this makes this hour very solemn. It is the only opportunity that God will give us of casting in our lot with His own Son, who is hated and rejected by this world. Are you casting in your lot with Him, rejected as He is? Is Christ worthy of it at your hands? Is He worthy of your life, of every power of your heart? Is He worthy of your every affection? Suppose you had a thousand worlds, and could lay them all down at His feet, would even that be an adequate expression of what He is worthy of from you? Supposing you had a thousand lives, and could spend them all for Christ, would that be an adequate expression of what He is worthy of? Oh, beloved friends, how I wish I could awaken your hearts to a sense of what it is to be *allowed* to live in such a day as this! How blessed it would be, if only one soul, as a result of these two evenings we have had together, could say, "Well, I have a greater sense of the wonderful nature of the place I am in, and what it is to live for Christ before men, and to be *for* Christ, and to study His pleasure."

Yes, *it is* "the last hour," and "it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed; the night *is* far spent." We are, as it were, in the passing of the last grains of sand out of the great hour-glass of time. We are in the last hour, and it is not the beginning of the last hour, no, nor the middle of it, but the closing seconds of it. Let me urge upon you, on the very youngest here tonight, the feeblest and most youthful, here we are, in the very close of the last days, on the very eve of the archangel's voice, and the trump of God!

One word about this, and then we separate for the present. Let me ask you, what is the state of your heart as regards the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? I ask, if you were informed by an angel from God, that before midnight the Lord Jesus would come, that He would come before midnight tonight, if such a positive, distinct intimation