

REGENERATION

A Sermon

Preached on Wednesday Evening, November 21, 1849

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(Of America)

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"Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again."--John iii. 7

I propose to make some remarks to-night upon the words which I have just read. The passage in connection with which these words are found is, probably, familiar to you all; however I will read it:--"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles, that thou dost, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things.?" Are you a Jewish doctor, and do not understand the doctrine of the new birth? Have you never experienced it? A teacher in Israel, and yet ignorant of this great truth?

In speaking from the words of the text, I propose to show--

I. What the new birth is not.

II. What it is.

III. What is implied in it.

IV. That its necessity is a fact too plain to be called in question, with the least reason.

I. I begin by stating what the new birth is not, because I am well aware that many persons, who have not well considered the matter, are apt to form very false ideas concerning it.

(1.) I observe then, in the first place, that the new birth here spoken of, does not consist in the creation of any new faculty either of mind or of body. Both Christians and Sinners have the same powers and faculties both of mind and body, and therefore sinners do not need any new faculties if they would use those which they already possess, in the manner which God requires them to be used. They want no other powers of mind, and no other powers of body, than those which they have; and God requires them to have no other powers than these with which they are created: consequently, the new birth cannot consist in, or imply, the creation of any new powers of either body or mind.

(2.) Neither, secondly, does it consist in any change of the capacity or structure of any of the powers of the body or the mind. There is no change in the structure of the human faculties in regeneration, neither does God require any such change: no such thing is necessary. What change, pray, is needed in any power either of mind or body? None! Then, we say that no such change occurs in regeneration, or the new birth.

(3.) I remark again, that it does not imply any such change in the feelings of the mind as to produce through them a change in the actions of the mind; that is, a change is not introduced into the sensibilities or feelings, so that persons have new feelings spring up, constituting regeneration. To be sure, there are new feelings arise in the mind; but as I shall yet have occasion to show, these new feelings do not *constitute* regeneration, nor do they *produce* regeneration.

(4.) But again: regeneration does not consist in any change in which man is purely passive. I shall have occasion to enlarge upon this presently, but I merely suggest it here, that regeneration or the new birth does not consist in any change in which man is purely passive, in which he has no voluntary agency himself. But, this leads me to notice--

II. In the second place, in what the new birth does consist. I answer

(1.) The Scriptures everywhere represent the new birth, or regeneration, to be a *change of character*--a change from sinfulness to holiness. Now, if it be so, there must be some voluntary action on the part of the sinner, or how should there be a change of the moral character, if he is passive and not active in it! What do we mean by moral character, and how is a man's character changed? The character depends upon the will, and when a man's will is changed his character is changed. Regeneration, then, is not involuntary, but a change of *will*, and a change of *character*--a departing from a state of sinfulness to a state of holiness. How much virtue would there be in involuntary holiness, a state into which man should be brought independently of his own consent, in which he has no agency? Certainly none at all. Regeneration, then, must consist in something in which man's will is something more than passive. It is true, as I shall have occasion to remark, that in regeneration man is a recipient, and a passive recipient, if you will, in a certain sense, of the divine influence; but this divine influence, instead of superseding man's own

agency, is only employed in bringing about that change by his own agency, which constitutes regeneration.

(2.) I remark again--the Bible represents regeneration as consisting in a change of character, as the beginning of a new and holy life. It is often spoken of as a new creation, but which does not mean the creation, literally, of a new nature; but, as I have said, a change of character. It is not a change in the substance of the soul, or of the body; but only a change in the use of them. Pray how did Adam and Eve pass from a state of holiness to a state of sinfulness? It is admitted, I believe, on all hands, that Adam and Eve were holy before they sinned--that when they sinned, they passed from a state of holiness to a state of sinfulness. Now this was certainly a change of heart in them. It is impossible that they should have acted thus without their hearts being changed. It is admitted, that there was a total change of moral character. Now how was it that this change was produced? what power was it that brought them from a state of holiness to a state of sinfulness? Did their conduct imply in them a change of substance, a change of nature, or an involuntary change? The Bible gives us a very clear and plain account of it. When they were holy, they regarded God as supreme, and yielded themselves up to him in voluntary obedience. God had, for certain good reasons, prohibited their eating of a certain fruit. He had given them an appetite for fruit, and there was nothing sinful in their gratifying that appetite with fruit proper for them to eat--fruit not forbidden. They had indulged this appetite many times before with fruits which they were allowed to eat, and had not sinned in so doing. They had a constitutional desire for knowledge; and under certain circumstances and upon certain conditions, it was lawful to them to gratify this desire and to seek knowledge. Now Satan suggested to Eve that God was selfish in having prohibited them from eating of that fruit which he had forbidden: "For," said he, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." And when Eve saw that the fruit was pleasant to the eyes, and withal calculated to make one wise, she took of it and did eat, and gave also unto her husband, and he did eat. Now, by this act did they change their constitutions or their natures, or simply withdraw their allegiance from God, and despite of his requirements, give themselves up to their own appetites in a prohibited manner? Thus, laying more practical stress upon the gratification of their appetites than in obeying God, and esteeming that the highest gratification. Now, observe, their appetites were well enough in themselves; and if they had been regulated by the will of God, all would have been well. But they changed their own hearts: for, what was this but a change in relation to the disposition of their minds? Instead of preferring God's authority to their own gratification, they come to prefer their own gratification to God's authority and the interests of his kingdom. Now, let me ask, What would have been regeneration in Adam and Eve? Suppose God had come to them immediately after they had sinned, and made this requirement of them, that they must be born again. Suppose he had said, "You must be born again, or you cannot see the kingdom of God," and they had enquired, What is it to be born again? What would have been the natural answer for God to make them? That they must have some new faculty, some newly implanted appetites, and undergo a change of nature? What was the matter with their nature, pray? Just but a moment since they were living in holiness and in obedience to God--and now they had simply withdrawn their obedience to him, and yielded themselves to the obedience of their own gratification

and appetites. Now, what does God require of them? Why, that they will come back again to the state in which they had been previously--to consecrate themselves again to God. That instead of committing themselves, as they had done by this act, to their own gratification, and that in despite of the authority of God--they should reverse their state of things, and devote themselves again once and for ever to the authority and service of God. I remark, then, that regeneration must consist, doubtless, in a change of the disposition of the mind--a voluntary consecration to God. Observe, that when they withdrew allegiance from God, and committed themselves in the face of God's authority to the gratification of their appetites, this constituted a fundamental change in their characters. Observe, they could not do the thing which they did, without deliberately preferring their own gratification to obedience to God. This committing themselves to sin, then, must have constituted in them an entire change of character.

(3.) I remark, again, in other words, that regeneration consists in a change in the ultimate intention, or end of life. The mind, in regeneration, withdraws itself from seeking, as the ultimate disposition and end, the gratification of self, and choose a higher end than itself. Its disposition is changed from supreme selfishness to an entire devotion of the whole being to the great end for which God lives, and for which he made man to live. Regeneration, then, consists in ceasing to live to sin and for selfishness, and to live to and for God. I shall remark no further on this part of the subject at present, but proceed, thirdly, to notice--

III. Some things that are implied in this change.

(1.) And first, I may say in general, that in regeneration the mind receives new and more impressive views of truth. Men when they are regenerated obtain, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, a clear and vastly more impressive view of their relations to God, of the real nature of sin and of holiness, of their duty to God and the great truths that are indispensably associated with regeneration; and by the influence of the Holy Spirit, as I just remarked, they have new and more impressive perception of these truths. This, I suppose, is implied in it as a *condition of it*.

(2.) But again: new views of truth, and of religion are implied as *resulting from it*. For example, when individuals have withdrawn from devotion to themselves and selfish objects, and have devoted themselves to God, they naturally become different people. Before, they viewed everything in a selfish light, and so they acquired a liking for nothing but that which according to their own views, furthered their selfish ends. They cared not for God even, only so far as they thought he might be useful to them. All their views were selfish. If they feared God at all, it was only because they feared being made miserable by him. Or, if they obeyed him, such obedience was the result of some selfish principle--they hoped to gain some selfish gratification by it. All their views were purely selfish views. Every unregenerate man looks at all things in a selfish light, and all that he imagines will promote his interests, he seeks and loves. But, when a man is born again, he has withdrawn himself from seeking his own interests as the supreme good; he has consecrated himself to God; and, as a necessary result of this, he will sympathise with everything which is calculated to promote the interests of Jehovah's kingdom. The change

which has taken place in his mind causes him to have new views and feelings concerning his relation to God, and he now strives to promote God's glory, and extend his kingdom, by making known his will. Before, selfish interests ruled his conduct--self-gratification was his law--and nothing but self interested him. But now, he has come into an entirely different state of mind--he has devoted himself to another end--and he looks upon all things from a different point of view, and their value becomes differently estimated. Now, what constitutes the particular difference between an *un*regenerated and a regenerated man? There is no change in his physical structure, either of body or mind. So far as substance is concerned, there is no change: but the attitude of his mind is entirely and radically changed. Now this change of mind will manifest itself in his life; for the *will* controls the *action* of the body. If I *will* to move my arms they must move, unless there is some opposing force stronger than my will. A change in the will necessarily produces a change in the life.

(3.) And this leads me to say that a new life results, as a matter of course, from regeneration. A new outward life is not regeneration, but it results from it, as effect from cause. You see a man devoted to God, and now he is engaged in different pursuits to what he was before; or if engaged in the same pursuits he acts from a different spirit. Is he a merchant? when he was a sinner his ruling motive in trade was selfishness--the spirit of self-gratification was supreme in all that he did. But now, his merchandise is God's. The things that he possesses are not his own. He is God's clerk, or steward, and he will not cheat any body, for he knows that God does not want his servants to cheat. He is transacting business for God; and, as he knows in his heart that God hates cheating, he will be honest now of course. It will be natural for him to be honest. If it is not possible for him to be honest, he is not a regenerate man. If his heart is honest his life will be honest. So in everything else. Let it be understood, then, that when regeneration occurs, a man's whole life will be a law of honesty.

(4.) But let me say again--another thing implied in regeneration, is a new sort of sympathies and feelings. Before, the sympathies and feelings were all enlisted in one direction, the direction of self. You see a man in this state, and you try to excite him to the performance of some generous action, but you cannot do it unless you can employ selfish motives as a means to accomplish your object. His self-interests are easily excited. Show him how much he can get by acting in the way desired by you, and you may succeed, but not else. All appeals to higher motives will fail. It is remarkable to what an extent this feeling of selfishness will develop itself. Make an appeal to an unregenerate man's benevolence, and your appeal has no effect, because his interest, he thinks, are not concerned it; but make an appeal to his selfishness and you can excite the deepest foundation of his being. Talk to him about God and Christ, and Religion, and his relations to God, and his sensibilities are not at all excited--his sympathies do not lie in that direction at all. How unfeeling he is if you tell him of his sins; he does not feel them, and can listen to the enumeration of them without emotion. But at length his mind is changed, and he now lives for other interests; now, instead of being devoted to *self*, he is devoted to *God*, and everything relating to God and his kingdom reaches his sensibilities and stir up the fountains of feeling in him. Talk to him now about God's glory and the interests of men's souls--spread out the world before him and show him the condition of mankind,

and rely upon it you will move him! Before, if you expected to get any money from him you must show him the benefit that would in some sort accrue to himself; but now he has made God's interests his own interests, and he sympathises with God, and with Christ, and he has set his heart upon promoting those interests which shall glorify God and benefit man. Now only but show him the great field of Christian enterprise, and you fire his soul with love to men, and fill him with a desire to promote the kingdom and glory of God in the world. He has consecrated himself and all that he has to these objects. I have been struck a great many times with the beautiful process that goes on in the soul, as the Christian grows in grace. Sometimes I have looked upon an old saint, who for many years has been thinking of, and bathing his mind in, the great truths of the gospel, who has had so much communion and sympathy with God, that he has become beautifully and sweetly mellow; so delicate, so kind, and so Christ-like were the feelings he would manifest, that I have many times been charmed and cheered with the character of a fully developed Christian.

(5.) But I remark again that in regeneration a great change takes place in the joys and sorrows, and hopes and fears of the soul that has experienced the change. The joys of such a man are of a new sort. Before, he would rejoice greatly in the prospect of earthly good. Now, he rejoices chiefly in seeing and hearing that the work of God is progressing in the land. He will rejoice to be told that God is pouring out his Spirit, and that souls are brought to Christ. This to him is an entirely new sort of joy. Before, he could take up a newspaper, and if it contained any account of a revival of religion, he did not read it; but now when he finds such an article in a newspaper, instead of passing it by, he will eagerly run his eye over the page, and it will produce in him inexpressible joy and delight--his whole being will be moved. So with sorrow, new objects call it forth. He was accustomed to sorrow chiefly when some worldly loss had been sustained, because it stood closely connected with his own interests; but now let him know that some professor has become a backslider from Christ, and he is more grieved at that than all the earthly losses that he ever met with. He is now deeply sorry when he sees professors live in sin, more so than at the worldly troubles and losses that he has ever endured.

(6.) Again: of course regeneration implies repentance for past sin, and implies implicit confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. It implies also peace of mind, which cannot be obtained without repentance and faith in Christ; because the elements of discord are always stirring within the minds of the unregenerate. But when they have withdrawn from the course which their consciences disprove, and have devoted themselves to the end for which they were made, all the workings of their minds harmoniously blend together, and produce peace. There is no remonstrance of conscience against their present course; all the powers and faculties within are in harmony; and in addition, there is fellowship with God, and communion with the Holy Ghost. (You see, my dear hearers, that I can dwell but a few moments on each of these topics.)

(7.) Again, let me say, that regeneration implies a state of self-denial. Now I do not mean by self-denial, the breaking off from some outward customs and habits in which you have been accustomed to indulge--that you leave off some showy articles of dress and wear plainer attire; or that you be a little more temperate, or a good deal more temperate; for

self-denial does not belong to the outward selfish appetites. Self-denial is not a total denial of our appetites and passions, but our appetites and passions are not to be our law. It is right to eat and drink, but we are to do both to the glory of God, that we may have strength to serve him. So with respect to all our appetites and propensities, they are to be properly employed and made to serve the purposes for which they were bestowed, but we are not to make their gratification the business and end of life.

(8.) Lastly, regeneration implies that the mind is come to have new motives of action--I use the term *motive* in the sense of design or intention. This term is used in different senses. We sometimes ask what are a man's *motives* for doing such and such things, when we mean his *reasons* for doing them; and sometimes we mean by the question, to ask, what his *design* or *aim* is? In this last sense I use the term *motive*. I say, then that the regenerate man now acts from opposite motives to what he did before. This is the great radical change that has taken place, and he is now pursuing a radically different course and end. Before, his own personal gratification and interests, and the gratification and interests of those who were considered to be parts of himself, were the ends for which he lived, moved, and had his being. Whatever he did, it was with a view to this end; everything was radically wrong. Whether he went to meeting, read his Bible, or prayed, the end in view was the promotion of his own interests. No matter what he did, it was sin and only sin continually. But now he has become regenerated; the design of his mind is to promote other interests, and to pursue a radically different end: he gives himself to God, and lives, and moves, and breathes, and has his being for God and godliness. Now, I appeal to every person in this house, who knows what it is to be regenerated, whether I have not given, in substance, what regeneration is? Suppose, we should take an opposite view, and affirm that regeneration consists in a change of nature! Now, I know that the Bible sometimes speaks of regeneration as a change of nature. But we suppose that such language is figurative. We sometimes say of men, how natural it is for them to do such and such things, when we mean that the man is devoted to this end whatever it may be. Now when a man is pursuing another end, we say he is a new man--that is, his way of life is changed--his end of being is changed. But, suppose, that we should say that regeneration is a change of nature, of substance--that something new is infused into the man that becomes untied with the substance either of his mind or body, what must be the consequence? Is this a change in the moral character? If it is, something which God has created within man, and with which man has nothing to do, it cannot imply a change of character. Furthermore, does it imply the power of backsliding from God? Can a man, in such a condition, be a backslider? Can he fall from grace? I am astonished to hear men contend that individuals undergo a change of nature in regeneration, and yet say that they can alter their course, and fall from grace. How is it possible that they can fall from grace? Who has changed their nature back again? Did God or Satan change it? Now it is true, no doubt, of all sinners, that when they have once given themselves up to pursue certain ends their sympathies, feelings, and dispositions, become so corrupted, that they are naturally led to live sinful and selfish lives; and so when a man is regenerated, it becomes a kind of second nature for him to do right: but still, literally, man has not received a change of nature. I proceed to remark, in the next place,

IV. The necessity of this change. Its necessity is very strongly insisted on in the text. When Christ taught Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth, he was greatly surprised, and Christ said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." It is no new doctrine that I teach, and you ought, as a doctor in Israel, to know that it is not; no man should marvel at such a plain doctrine, and you least of all.

(1.) In considering the necessity of this change, I remark, in the first place, that the unregenerate part of mankind are all selfish. No man could practically deny this, without incurring the charge of insanity; and if he should proceed to do business upon that assumption, a commission of lunacy would no doubt be appointed to examine him, and who certainly would have no hesitation in bringing in their verdict, that he was not fit to manage his own affairs. The fact is, that all the arrangements of society proceed upon the assumption, which is a fact, that men are devoted to their own interests, and quite regardless of the interests of others. There is no plainer fact in the world than this. Now, do you ask, how it came to pass that men are selfish? Why, the principle grows up with us almost from our birth. As soon as the appetites and passions of children are sufficiently developed to come into exercise, they employ their wills to seek the gratification of their appetites and passions. Their will becomes devoted to the gratification of self. Now that God is not selfish, I suppose, will be admitted on all hands; that a selfish mind is not at rest within itself; that men were not made to be selfish, and that no man can be satisfied and happy while he is selfish--that no man can be at peace with himself while he is pursuing solely his own interest. Man is so constituted that the mind of a selfish being cannot be happy. Now, suppose that the inhabitants of heaven were selfish, all their interests would be conflicting, and laws would be needed to restrain them from encroaching upon each other's rights, because their sympathies did not blend. The same difficulties would exist there as here, only in a much higher degree. There would be striving, and crushing, and overreaching; every man would be at war with his brother. Now, such a community as that can never possess heaven. In order to be saved, then--in order to be happy in heaven, men must really experience a radical change in the end for which they live: they must renounce self-interest, and they must recognize God's authority and interests as supreme, and they must love their brother as they do themselves. They must set up a common interest, and have a common object of love. Who does not believe that heaven is a place where all is unity and harmony, and where there is no selfishness, and where God's will is the universal law, and where the interest of one is the interest of all. Now it is easy to see that this would just meet the demands of man's being when he is regenerated. Now, just look at a world of selfish beings with all the restraints of law; with ten thousand pulpits preaching against selfishness--with the press groaning with articles against selfishness, with large numbers of colporteurs running hither and thither with Bibles protesting against selfishness, and yet see the immense amount of selfishness that exists in the world, after all. And now, when men are told that they must be born again, they do but smile at it. They don't understand it, they have the gross conception of it that Nicodemus had; they do not consider, that unless there be a radical change of character, they cannot possess and enjoy heaven. Put a selfish man into heaven, and what will he do there? Why, he will ask if there is any way of making money, any way of making a speculation to his advantage? Heaven then, is no place for selfish beings. But how are men to get to heaven? You tell them of this change

of heart, and they do not deny but they may need some little change, but they do not see the necessity for a radical change of disposition and character. But it is nevertheless a great truth, that unless men cease to be selfish and become benevolent in their dispositions, there is no place for them in heaven; and, if the selfish man could get there, the holiness and benevolence of heaven would be intolerable to him; his selfish nature would cry out against it, for God is not selfish, angels are not selfish, the saints in glory are not selfish. Now, do let me ask you, dear hearers, are you selfish? Have you always lived to please yourselves? and if so, is it not the most self-evident thing in the universe, that unless a change takes place in the end for which you live, that you never can sympathise with the inhabitants of heaven? Suppose that it were possible for you, with a selfish heart, to join in the worship of heaven, to live among those that were not selfish, but perfectly benevolent; what sympathy would you have there? Would it be the delight of your heart to mingle your song with theirs? Could you mingle in their joys, and find pleasure in their pursuits? Never! Your sensibilities do not lie in that direction; your minds are not there! Your hearts are not there! Methinks that you would need to be confined there, or you would spring over the battlements of heaven, and go down to hell, in order to get out of such holy and benevolent company.

I shall now make a few remarks in closing.

(1.) First, you can see what an infinite mistake those person have made who make religion hard and grievous. It is not grievous for a man to pursue that upon which his heart is set. Yet a great many religious professors find it very hard to attend to the duties of religion. I have no heart, they say, to go to church, but I must not stay away, I must not omit this duty, and they do it, but find no relish, no satisfaction in it. Why, friends, you have made a mistake! You have attempted to serve God without giving him your heart? You have attempted to serve the Lord without consecrating yourselves to the great end for which you ought to live! Just let your heart go first, and your life will follow without all this great trouble. If your heart is right, you will not need to put a strong rein upon yourselves to keep you from cheating your neighbour. Your aim will then be to do him good; you will love him as you love yourself.

(2.) I remark again, that what individuals need to do it this--turn their minds to God, and to begin a new life; to retrace their steps, to reverse their minds completely, in respect to the great call for which they ought to live.

(3.) I remark again; those person who call in question the necessity of the change, which the Bible says is essential, are entirely unreasonable, for I aver that regeneration is as truly a doctrine of natural, as of revealed religion. Men, by rejecting the Bible, need not suppose that they can reject the doctrine of regeneration. They must either deny the natural state of man, or they must deny that the inhabitants of heaven are holy, before they can reject the doctrine of regeneration. Natural religion itself teaches that some great and radical change is needed; and hence the everlasting restlessness of man. Do we not know that all the pains that men take to engross themselves with worldly objects indicates that they are still at ease in regard to their moral character and conduct. The fact is, that they do admit the necessity of a radical change in their characters. They never can rest

where they are; and hence the Bible represents them as like "the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

(4.) I remark again; that many persons have got such ideas of regeneration, that when God calls upon them to become new creatures, they wait for God to change their hearts. They expect to have something done to them that shall act like an electric shock, and so they wait, instead of at once breaking away from their selfishness, and coming to Christ.

(5.) Again, how divine influence is communicated to men is; the context tells us, very mysterious, but the influence is felt, though not seen. Every Christian knows that he has been born again. He knows that he was thinking of certain truths and gave himself up to their influence when the Spirit began to operate upon his mind, and reveal the truth to him; and he was so influenced, that his desires and disposition were changed, and he gave himself up wholly to God.

(6.) Again; where the truth is apprehended, men have no cause to wait for anything. God requires them to act: "turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die." Now when they are waiting for something else, they overlook the fact that God is just doing the very thing that they need.

(7.) In the next place, the mind is highly intelligent in regeneration. The mind must be intelligent in regeneration, or it is not a virtuous action. After regeneration, the mind acts more intelligently than ever it did before; and it may well be so, for that act was the only truly rational of all its acts. The soul now comes to act in view of God's truth, and in harmony with God's will, his interests, and his authority. Is this regeneration, then, to be called fanaticism, mysticism; and to be branded as something unintelligible? I trust that my hearers will say, No! I will not detain you longer than to ask--If there are those in this house to-night, who have never been born again, but who see the necessity of it, I ask such, do you see that what you are to do is to cease to live for the end that you are living for, and that you are to live in future to God's glory and to recognize solely his authority, and set your heart upon him? You must not cleave for salvation to any works of your own, but when God draws you, as he is doing now, you are to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." You are to answer the invitations of God, as Paul answered, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Implying that you recognize Christ's authority, and that whatever Christ tells you to do, you will do. Now, why not make up your mind and come to God at once? There never could be a better time! Why not renounce self now, and make a new heart and a new spirit? Do you ask, can I do that? To be sure you can. Suppose Adam and Eve had asked--Can we make ourselves new hearts? Why, God might have said, Did you not just do it? But a little while ago, you had holy hearts that were consecrated to me, and you have withdrawn your allegiance from me; and have you not, by that act, just created wicked hearts? This was your own act, and I only require you to undo what you have just done. And now, my dear hearers, I may safely warrant you, that if you will consecrate yourselves to God, God will not condemn you for want of regeneration. But that if you can make up your minds to renounce all your self-interests as the end of life, and freely devote your powers to God, you are safe, you are in a state of regeneration, or call it by what name you will. Remember I am not denying that God has something to do with your regeneration and salvation. It is God that draws you, and

your duty is, when he draws, to say, Yes, Lord, I consent to take thy dear, easy yoke, and do thy will. I will do it, Lord, and do it now; I do it once for all and for ever--thy will shall be my everlasting and universal law. Amen.