

A PSALM FOR THE NEW YEAR

NO. 427

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 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“But grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 To Him be Glory both now and forever. Amen.”
 2 Peter 3:18.*

BEHOLD, Beloved, our perpetual dangers. Where can we go to escape from peril? Where shall we fly to avoid temptation? If we venture into business, worldliness is there. If we retire to our homes, trials are there. One would have imagined that in the green pastures of the Word of God there would have been perfect security for God’s sheep. Surely no lion shall be there, and no ravenous beast shall go up from there! Alas, it is not so, for even while we are reading the Bible we are still exposed to peril. Not that the Truth of God is dangerous, but that our corrupt hearts can find poison in the very flowers of Paradise! Mark what our Apostle says of the writings of St. Paul, “Wherein are some things which are hard to be understood.” And mark the danger to which we are exposed, lest we, being unlearned and unstable, should wrest even the Word of God itself to our own destruction. With the Bible before our eyes, we may still commit sin; pondering over the hallowed Words of Inspiration we may receive a deadly wound from “the error of the wicked.” Even at the horns of the altar we need that God should still cover us with the shadow of His wings. It is a very pleasing reflection that our gracious Father has provided a shield by which we may be sheltered from every evil, and in our text the evil of heterodoxy finds a suitable preventative. We are in danger, lest misinterpreting Scripture we should make God say what He does not; and lest by departing from the teaching of the Holy Spirit we should wrest the letter of the Word and lose its spirit, and from the letter draw a meaning which may be for our soul’s ruin. How shall we escape this? Peter, speaking by the Holy Spirit, has in the words before us, pointed out our safeguard! While we search the Scriptures and grow in acquaintance with them, see to it that we grow in Divine Grace; and while we desire to know the Doctrine, long above all to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and let our study of Scripture, and our growth in Divine Grace and in the knowledge of Christ, still be subservient to that higher objective, that we may live to bring Glory both now and forever to Him who has loved us and bought us with His blood! Let our hearts say evermore, “Amen” to the doxology of praise, so shall we be kept from all pestilent errors, and we shall not fall “from our own steadfastness.” It appears, then, that our text is adapted to be a heavenly remedy for certain diseases to which even students of Scripture are exposed; and I am persuaded it may also serve as a most blessed directory to us through the whole of the coming year.

I might divide my text, this morning, as good old Adams does. He says there are here two trumpets. One is blown from Heaven to earth—“Grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The other sounds from earth to Heaven—“To Him be Glory both now and forever.” Or I might quote him again. He says, here is first a point of *theology*, “Grow in Grace.” Secondly, a point of *doxology*, “To Him be Glory both now and forever.” We will take the text in the same natural divisions with other headings, and notice, first, that we have here a *Divine injunction, with a special direction*; and secondly, a *grateful doxology, with a suggestive conclusion*.

I. To begin, then, at the beginning, we have here first of all, A DIVINE INJUNCTION WITH A SPECIAL DIRECTION—“Grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

“*Grow in Grace.*” *What* is this? It must be in the outset implied that we have been quickened by Divine Grace, otherwise this text cannot apply to us at all! Dead things cannot grow. Only those who are alive unto God by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, have in them any power or capability of growth. The great Quickener must first implant the seeds of life, then afterwards those seeds can germinate and grow. To you, therefore, who are dead in trespasses and sins, this text has no application! You cannot grow in Divine Grace, because as yet you are under the curse of the Law, and the wrath of God abides on you. Tremble, repent, believe, and may God have mercy on you! But being alive from the dead, and quickened by the Spirit of God which is in you, Beloved Brothers and Sisters, *you* who are born-again

are bid to grow, for growth shall prove your life. A post planted in the earth grows not; but a tree rooted there, increases from a sapling to a forest king! Drop a pebble into the richest soil, and it will still be a pebble of the same size; put in there grain or a seed, and it will spring up and produce its stalk and its flower. You who are alive unto God, see to it that you grow in all the Divine Graces!

Grow in that root-grace, *faith*. Seek to believe the promises better than you have done. Go from that trembling faith which says, "Lord, I believe: help You my unbelief," upward to that which staggers not at the promise, but which, like Abraham, believes that He who has promised is able also to perform. Let your faith increase in extent, believing more Truths of God; let it increase in firmness, getting a tighter grip of every Truth; let it increase in constancy, not being feeble or wavering, nor always tossed about with every wind; let your faith daily increase in simplicity, resting more fully, and more entirely, and more completely upon the finished work of your Lord Jesus Christ. See to it that your *love* also grows. If you have loved with a spark, pray that the spark may become an all-consuming flame! If you have brought little to Christ, pray that you may bring your all; and may offer that all in such a fashion, that like Mary's broken alabaster box, the King, Himself, may be satisfied with the perfume. Ask that your love may become more extended—that you may have love unto all the saints; more practical, that it may move your every thought, your every word and deed; more intense, that you may become as burning and shining lights whose flame is love to God and man. Pray that you may grow in *hope*, that "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the Glory of His inheritance in the saints"—that you may be looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; that the hope not seen as yet may enable you with patience to wait for it. Pray that you may, by hope, enter into the joys of Heaven while you are on earth. Pray that hope may give you immortality while you are yet mortal—may give you resurrection before you die—may give you to see God, while as yet the glass darkly parts you from Him. Ask that you may grow in *humility*, till you can say, "I am less than the least of all the saints." Ask that you may grow in *consecration* till you can cry, "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain!" Pray that you may grow in *contentment* till you can feel, "In whatever state I am, I have learned to be content." Pray to advance in likeness to the Lord Jesus, that your very enemies may take knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus and have learned of Him! Finally, if there is any virtue, if there is any praise, if there is anything that is lovely, and of good repute, if there is anything that can increase your usefulness, that can add to your happiness, that can make you more serviceable to man, and more glorious towards God, pray to grow in it, for you have not yet attained, neither are you yet already perfect!

Following up an illustration furnished by the Holy Scriptures, let me remind you all, you faithful Believers in Christ, that you are compared to *trees*—trees of the Lord's right hand planting. Seek to grow as the tree grows. Pray that this year you may grow *downward*; that you may know more of your own vileness, more of your own nothingness; and so be rooted in humility. Pray that your roots may penetrate below the mere topsoil of the Truth of God, into the great rocks which underlie the uppermost stratum. Pray that you may get a good hold of the Doctrines of eternal love, of immutable faithfulness, of complete satisfaction, of union to Christ, of the eternal purpose of God, which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was! These deep things of God will yield a rich and abundant sap, and your roots shall drink from the hidden fountains of "the depth which lies under." This will be a growth which will not add to your fame, which will not minister to your vanity—but it will be invaluable in the hour of storm, a growth the value of which no heart can conceive when the hurricane is tearing up the hypocrite, and hurling into the sea of destruction the "trees whose fruit withers, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." As you root downward, seek to grow *upward*. Send out the top shoot of your love towards Heaven. As the trees send out their spring shoots and their midsummer shoots; and as you see upon the top of the fir that new green child of spring, the fresh shoot which lifts its hand towards the sun, so pant to have more love and greater desires after God! Seek a nearer approach towards Him in prayer, a sweeter spirit of adoption, a more intense and intimate fellowship with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ. This mounting upwards will add to your beauty and to your delight. Then pray to grow *on either side*. Stretch out your branches; let the shadow of your holy influence extend as far as God has given you opportunities. But see to it, also, that you grow in *fruitfulness*, for to increase the branch without adding to the fruit is to diminish the beauty of the tree. Labor this year, by God's Grace, to bring forth more fruit unto Him than you have ever done!

Lord, give to this congregation more of the fruits of penitence for sin, of faith in the great Sacrifice, of love to Jesus, of zeal for the conversion of souls! We would not be as the gleanings of the vintage when there is only here and there a cluster upon the uppermost branch, we would be as the valley of Eshcol, whose presses burst with new wine! This is to grow in Divine Grace—to root downward, to shoot upward, to extend your influences like far-reaching branches, and to bring forth fruit unto the Lord's Glory.

But we will borrow another figure from Scripture. Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ, we are not only compared to trees, but to *children*. Let us grow as babies do, nourished by unadulterated milk—steadily, slowly—but surely and certainly. Little each day, but much in years. Oh that we may grow as a child does in strength, till the little tottering limbs of our faith shall be firm muscular legs with which the young man may run without weariness, and feet upon which the strong man may walk without fainting! As yet our wings are immature, and we can hardly leave the nest. Lord, bid our growth proceed till we can mount as with the wings of eagles towards Yourself, surmounting clouds and storms, and dwelling in the serene Presence of the Most High! Let us grow in the development of all our powers. Let us ask that we may be no more little infants of a span long, but that many cubits may be added to our stature till we ripen to perfect men in Christ Jesus. And let us especially pray that we may grow as healthy children, uniformly. Brothers and Sisters, it is an ill sign if a child's head enlarges, but not the rest of his body, or if its arm or foot should be swollen to an ill proportion. Beauty consists in the proportion of every part. A vigorous judgment should not be yoked with a cold heart, nor clear eyes with a withered hand. A giant's head rides ill on a dwarf's shoulders. A virtue nourished at the expense of others is a fattened cannibal fed upon the flesh and blood of its murdered kinsmen; and it ill becomes a Christian to harbor such a monster. Let us pray that faith and love and every Divine Grace may be developed; that not one power of the man may be left unnurtured or ungrown, for only thus can we truly grow in Divine Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

But do you inquire *why* we should thus grow in Divine Grace? Let us say, Brothers and Sisters, that if we do not advance in Divine Grace it is a sorrowful sign. It is a mark of *sickness*! It is an unhealthy child who grows not, a cankered tree that sends forth no fresh shoots. More—it may not only be a sign of unhealthiness but of *deformity*. If a man's shoulders have come to a certain breadth, and his lower limbs refuse to lift him aloft, we call him a dwarf, and we look upon him with some degree of pity. He is ill-formed. O Lord, let us grow, for we would not be abortions, we would not be deformities. We would be children like unto God our Father—we would be comely ones, everyone of us like the sons of a king! Not to grow may be, moreover, the sign of *death*. It may say to us, "Inasmuch as you grow not, you live not; inasmuch as you do not increase in faith, and love, and Divine Grace; and inasmuch as you do not ripen towards the harvest, fear and tremble lest you should only have a name to live and be destitute of life, lest you should be the painted counterfeit; a lovely flower picture drawn by the painter's skillful hand, but without reality, without the life-power which should make it bud and germinate, and blossom and bring forth fruit." Advance in Divine Grace, because not to progress foretells many evil things, and may result in that worst of all things, the lack of spiritual life! Grow in Grace, because, Beloved, to increase in Grace is the only pathway to enduring nobility. Oh, do you not wish to stand with that noble host who have served their Master well, and have entered into their eternal rest? Who among you does not wish to have his name written with the missionaries of modern times—with Judson and with Carey, with Williams and with Moffat? Who among us is there who has no ambition to find his name written among those servants of God—Whitefield, Grimshaw, Newton, Romaine, Toplady and others who preached the Word with power?

Are there any of us who wish to go back to the vile dust from where we sprung, "unwept, unhonored, and unsung?" Then let us be as we are; let us cease our march! Meanness lies at your door, be stunted and be ignoble. But if we would be *princes* in God's Israel, if we would be mighty warriors for the Cross of Christ, let us pray this prayer, "Lord, bid us grow in Your Grace, that we may be faithful servants, and receive Your commendation at the last." But, my Brothers and Sisters, to grow is not only to be noble, it is to be happy! That man who stops growing, refuses to be blessed. With most men in business, if they do not win, they lose. With the warrior, if he gains not in the battle, his enemy is getting an advantage. That wise man who gets no wiser, grows more foolish. That Christian who does not know more of his Lord, and become more like He, knows less of his Lord, and becomes less like He! Our armor, if unused, will tarnish, and our arms, if not strengthened by effort will be weakened by indolence. Our *happiness* declines as our spirituality fades! To be happy, I say, we must go forward! Forward is the sunlight! Forward is victory! Forward is Heaven! Forward is Christ!

But here, to stand still is danger—no, it is death! O Lord, for our happiness' sake, bid us advance, and for our usefulness' sake let us ascend! Oh, if we as a congregation and as a Church grew more in Grace; if we were stronger in faith, mightier in prayer, more fervent in heart, more holy in life, who can tell how much we might effect our age? Men who walk but lightly, leave but faint steps; but men who tread with the tramp of Roman soldiers stamp their footprints on the sands of time, never to be erased! So let us live, that in our day and in later days the world may be the better, and Christ's Church the more prosperous for our having lived! For this reason, if for no other, let us grow in Divine Grace!

Oh, could I fire you with some hallowed ambition today, I would be but too happy! Could I snatch from some ancient altar a live coal such as that which fell upon the lips of Isaiah, I would say to you, Lo, this has touched your lips—go forth in the Spirit and power of God, even the Most High; and live as they lived who counted not their lives dear unto them that they might serve their Master and be found in Him! I point you to the spirits who have entered within the veil and who rest upon the couches of eternal Glory, and I say, they won the victory by Divine Grace; and growth in Divine Grace was the means of their triumph. Emulate them! Press forward as they did, and through Grace you shall inherit their rest and their triumph, and sit down with them forever!

But do you inquire *how* you shall grow in Divine Grace? The answer is simple. He who gave you Grace must give you more of it! Where you first received your Grace, there you must receive the increase of that Divine Grace. He who made the cattle and who created man, was the same who afterwards said, “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.” So He who has given you Grace must speak with the fiat of His Omnipotence in your heart and say to that Grace, “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the soul till its native emptiness shall be filled, and the natural wilderness shall rejoice and blossom like a rose.” But at the same time we would have you use the means; and those means are much prayer, a more diligent search of the sacred Scriptures, a more constant fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, greater activity in His cause, an earnest attendance upon the means of Grace, a devout reception of all revealed Truths of God, and so forth. If you do these things you shall never be stunted or dwarfed, for He who has given you life will thus enable you to fulfill the word which He spoke to you by His Apostle, “Grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

I have thus explained the Divine exhortation; but to perceive it contains a *special injunction*, upon which we must pause a moment. “And in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

My Beloved Brethren in the Lord Jesus, we must see to it that we ripen in the knowledge of *Him*. Oh, that this year we may know more of Him in His Divine Nature, and in His Human relationship to us in His finished work, in His death, in His Resurrection, in His present glorious intercession, and in His future royal advent! To know more of Christ in His work is, I think, a blessed means of enabling us to work more for Christ.

We must study to know more of Christ also in His Character—in that Divine compound of every perfection, faith, zeal, and deference to His Father's will, courage, meekness, and love. He was the lion of the tribe of Judah, and yet the Man upon whom the Dove descended in the waters of Baptism! Let us thirst to know Him of whom even His enemies said, “Never man spoke like this Man,” and His unrighteous judge said, “I find no fault in Him.”

Above all, let us long to know Christ in His Person. This year endeavor to make a better acquaintance with the Crucified One! Study His hands and His feet. Abide hard by the Cross, and let the sponge, the vinegar and the nails, be subjects of your devout attention. This year seek to penetrate into His very heart, and to search those deep far-reaching caverns of His unknown love, that love which can never find a rival, and can never know a parallel. If you can add to this, a knowledge of His sufferings, you will do well. Oh, if you can grow in the knowledge of fellowship—if you shall this year drink of His cup, and be baptized with His Baptism—if you shall this year abide in Him, and He in you—blessed shall you be! This is the only growth in Divine Grace which is true growth; and all other growth which leads us not to increase in the knowledge of Christ is but the puffing up of the flesh, not the building up of the Spirit.

Grow in the knowledge of Christ, then, my Brothers and Sisters. And do you ask me *why*? Oh, if you have ever known Him you will not ask that question! He who longs not to know more of Christ, knows nothing of Him yet! He who ever sipped this wine will thirst for more, for although Christ does satisfy, yet it is such a satisfaction, that we need to taste more, and more, and more, and more! Oh, if you know the love of Jesus, I am sure as the hart pants for the water brooks, so will you pant after Him! If you say you do not desire to know Him better, then I tell you you love Him not, for love always cries, “Nearer, nearer, nearer.” Absence from Christ is Hell; but presence with Christ is Heaven; and, as we

get nearer to Him, our Heaven becomes more heavenly, and we enjoy it more, and feel more that it is of God. Oh, may you, this year, come to the very well of Bethlehem, and not merely receive a vessel from it, as David did, at the risk of the lives of three mighty men; but may you come to the well and drink—drink from the well itself, from that bottomless spring of eternal love! Oh, this year may the secret of the Lord be with you, and may you be in the secret place of the Most High! My Master, should You permit me to ask You one thing as a special favor, it should be this, that I may “know Him and the power of His Resurrection, being made conformable to His death!” Nearer to You, blessed Lord, nearer to You—this is all our cry shall be! The Lord grant that our cry may be heard, that we may grow in the knowledge of Christ!

We wish to know Christ this year as our *Lord*—Lord of every thought and every desire, of every word and every act! And as our *Savior*, too, our Savior from every indwelling sin, our Savior from every evil past, from every trial to come. All hail, Jesus! We salute You as Lord! Teach us to feel Your Kingship over us, and to feel it every hour. All hail, You Crucified One! We acknowledge You as Savior; Help us to rejoice in Your salvation, and to feel the plenitude of that salvation in all and every part of spirit, soul, and body, being wholly saved by You!

I have thus, Brothers and Sisters, sought to expound the point of theology; I lift up my heart in prayer for you all that you may grow in Divine Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

II. In the second place, we have A GRATEFUL THANKSGIVING WITH A MOST SUGGESTIVE TERMINATION—“To Him be Glory both now and forever. Amen.”

The Apostles, we must remark, very frequently suspended their writing in order to lift up their hearts in praise. Praise is never out of season, and it is no interruption to interrupt any engagement in order to laud and magnify our God. “To Him be Glory.” Brothers and Sisters, do not let me preach now, but let me interpret your emotions. Let it be not so much my utterance, as your utterance by my lips. Let every heart joyously feel this doxology, To Him, the God who made the heavens and the earth, without whom was not anything made; to Him who in His infinite compassion became the Surety of the Covenant—to Him who became a Baby of a span long—to Him who was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief—to Him who on the bloody tree poured out His heart’s life that He might redeem His people—to *Him* who said, “I thirst,” and, “It is finished!”—to *Him* whose lifeless body slumbered in the grave—to Him be Glory! To him that burst the bonds of death—to Him who ascended on high, and led captivity captive—to Him who sits at the right hand of the Father, and who shall soon come to be our Judge—“to Him be Glory.” Yes, to Him, you atheists, who deny Him—to Him, you Socinians, who doubt His Deity—to Him, you kings, who vaunt your splendor, and will not have this Man to reign over you—to Him, you people, who stand up against Him, and you rulers who take counsel against Him—to Him, the King whom God has set upon His holy hill of Zion—to Him be Glory!

To Him be Glory as the Lord—King of kings and lords; “Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” And yet again Hosanna in the highest—Hallelujah! King of kings, and Lord of lords! To Him be Glory as *Lord*! To Him be Glory as *Savior*! He alone has redeemed us unto God by His blood; He alone has “trode the winepress,” and “comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength.” “To Him be Glory.” Hear it, you angels—“To Him be Glory.” Clap your wings. Cry “Hallelujah, to Him be Glory.” Hear it you spirits of the just made perfect; sweep the strings of your celestial harps, and say, “Hallelujah, Glory to Him who has redeemed us unto God by His own blood.” “*To Him be Glory.*” Church of God respond! Let every pious heart say “*To Him be Glory.*” Yes, unto Him be Glory, you Fiends of Hell, as you tremble at His Presence, and see the key of your prison swinging at His belt. Let Heaven and earth and Hell—let things that are, and were, and shall be, cry, “To Him be Glory.”

But the Apostle adds, “*now*”—“to Him be Glory, *now.*” O Brothers and Sisters, postpone not the day of His triumph! Put not off the hour of His Coronation. *Now, NOW*—

*“Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of All.”*

Now, now; for now, today, He has raised us up together, and made us sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God,” now are our sins forgiven; now are we robed in His righteousness; now are our feet upon a Rock, and our goings are established. Who is there among you who would defer the time of your hosannas? “To Him be

Glory *now*.” O cherubim above, “To Him be Glory now,” for you “continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.” Adore Him yet again, for, “To Him be Glory now.”

“*And forever*.” Never shall we cease our praise. Time! You shall grow old and die. Eternity! Your unnumbered years shall speed their everlasting course. But forever, forever, forever, “to Him be Glory.” Is He not a “Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek”? “To Him be Glory!” Is He not king forever?—King of kings and Lord of lords, The Everlasting Father? “To Him be Glory *forever*.” Never shall His praises cease. That which was bought with blood deserves to last while immortality endures. The Glory of the Cross must never be eclipsed; the luster of the grave, and of the Resurrection must never be dimmed. Oh, my beloved Brothers and Sisters, my spirit begins to feel the ardor of the immortals. I would anticipate the songs of Heaven! My tongue, had it but celestial liberty, would begin even now to join those thrice-melodious sonnets sung by flaming tongues above. O Jesus! You shall be praised forever! As long as immortal spirits live—as long as the Father’s Throne endures—forever, forever, forever, unto You shall be Glory!

But now, there is a conclusion to this of the most suggestive kind, “*Amen*.” Brothers and Sisters, I want to work this amen out—not as a matter of Doctrine, but as a matter of blessed transport. Come, give me your hearts again. “To Him be Glory both now and forever, *Amen*.” What does this Amen mean? Amen has four meanings in Scripture. By the way, the Puritan’s interpretation—it is a very remarkable thing—that under the old Law, there was no amen to the blessings; the only amen was to the curses! When they pronounced the curses, “All the people said Amen.” Under the Law there never was an amen to the blessing! Now, it is an equally remarkable, and more blessed thing, that under the Gospel, there is no amen to the curses—the only amen is to the blessings! “May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God our Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all, Amen.” “If any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” No amen. There is no amen to the curse under the Gospel. But “*all* the promises of God are *yes and amen*, in Christ Jesus.” Now, the “Amen”—and here I am greatly indebted to good old Thomas Adams—means four things. First, it is *the desire of the heart*, “Behold, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” We say amen at the end of the prayer, to signify, “Lord, let it be so”—it is our heart’s desire. Now, Brothers and Sisters, give me your hearts, then—for it is all a heart-matter here. “To Him be Glory both now and forever, Amen.” Is that your heart’s desire? If not, you cannot say amen to it. Does your heart long, pant, thirst, groan, and cry out after Christ, so that you *can* say, every time you bend your knee, “Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, for Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the Glory, forever and ever, Amen”? Can you say, “Amen, Lord, let Your Kingdom come”? Brothers and Sisters, if you can say it in this sense, if it is your heart’s desire that Christ’s Glory should be extended, and His Kingdom should come, say “Amen,” aloud this morning! Now join with me, for my heart glows with it. I can say it—and the Judge of All knows how my heart longs to see Jesus magnified. Join with me then, you who can do it honestly, while I repeat the doxology—“To Him be Glory both now and forever. Amen.”

[The congregation very heartily, aloud, said, “Amen!”]

So be it Lord. You hear Your Church as it cries “Amen!” Verily, it is our heart’s desire—

*“Amen, with joy Divine, let earth’s
Unnumbered myriads cry!
Amen, with joy Divine, let Heaven’s
Unnumbered choirs reply!”*

But it signifies more than this; It means *the affirmation of our faith*. We only say amen to that which we really believe to be true. We add our affidavit, as it were, to God’s promise, that we believe Him to be faithful and true. Have you any doubts but that Jesus Christ is glorious now and forever? Do you doubt His being glorified of angels, cherubim and seraphim, today? And do you not believe, my Brothers and Sisters, that they who dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and that His enemies shall lick the dust? If you so believe, if you have faith today amid the world’s obstinacy and the sinner’s pride, amid abounding superstition and dominant evil, if you still have faith to believe that Christ shall be glorious forever and ever, then join with me and again say Amen! “To Him be Glory both now and forever, Amen.” [The congregation again said “Amen!”]

Lord, You hear it, though it is a feebler cry than before, for there are more who can desire it than there are who believe it. Nevertheless, You abide faithful—

*“This little seed from Heaven
Shall soon become a tree;*

*This ever-blessed leaven
Diffused abroad must be—
Till God the Son shall come again,
It must go on. Amen! Amen!”*

But there is yet a third meaning to this amen. It often expresses *the joy of the heart*. When of old they brought forth a Jewish king, the High Priest took a horn of oil and poured it on his head; then came forward a herald, and the moment he had sounded the trumpet, one with a loud voice said, “God save the king! God save the king!” and all the people said, “Amen!” And one shout went up to Heaven, while with joy of heart they saluted the king in whom they hoped to see a prosperous ruler through whom God would bless them, and make them victorious. Now, what do you say? As you see King Jesus sitting upon Mount Zion with Death and Hell beneath His feet, as today you anticipate the Glory of His Advent, as today you are expecting the time when you shall reign with Him forever and ever, does not your heart say, “Amen!”? I can remember, in a season of the greatest darkness of mind and weakness of body, there was one text which used to cheer me beyond all measure; there was nothing in the text about myself; it was no promise to *me*, but it was something about *Him*. It was this—“Him has God highly exalted and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” Oh, it seemed so joyous that *He* was exalted! What did it matter what became of *me*? What did it matter what would become of all of us? King David is worth 10,000 of us! Let our names perish, but let His name last forever! Brothers and Sisters, this morning I bring forth the King to you. I bring Him before the eyes of your faith today; I proclaim Him king, again, and do you, if you desire Him to be king, and if you rejoice in His reign, say “Amen!”? Here, here He stands in vision before your eyes. Crown Him! Crown Him! Lo, He is today crowned afresh! “To Him be Glory both now and forever.” Joyous hearts lift up your voices, and with one accord say “Amen!” [The congregation again said “Amen!”] Amen, Lord, be You King in the midst of us all—

*“Yes, amen, let all adore You,
High on Your exalted Throne!
Savior, take Your power and Glory;
Claim the kingdoms for Your own—
O come quickly! Hallelujah, Come, Lord, come!”*

But, lastly and this is a very solemn point. Amen is sometimes used in Scripture as an amen of resolution. It means, “I, in the name of God, solemnly pledge myself that in His strength I will seek to make it so; to Him be Glory both now and forever.” Now I shall not want you to say, “Amen” to this *aloud*, but I shall pause to let you say it silently in your own souls by-and-by. I walked last week through the long galleries which vanity has dedicated to all the glories of France. You pass through room after room where especially you see the triumphs of Napoleon in writhing bodies, and in the blood, and vapor, and smoke. Surely as you walk through the pages of Scripture, you walk through a much more marvelous picture gallery, in which you see the glories of Christ! This Book contains the memorials of His honors. In another place in Paris there stands a column made with the cannons taken by the Emperor in battle. It is certainly a mighty trophy. O Jesus! You have a better than this; a trophy made of forgiven souls; of eyes which wept but whose tears have been wiped away; of broken hearts that have been healed, and of saved souls that forever more rejoice! But what trophies Christ has to make Him glorious, both now and forever; trophies of living hearts that love Him; trophies of immortal spirits who find their Heaven in gazing upon His beauties! What must the glories of Christ be forever when you and I, and all the ten thousand millions He has bought with His blood shall be in Heaven! Oh, when we have been there many a thousand years, we shall feel as fresh a rapture as when we came there! And if our spirits should be sent on any errand from our Master, and we should have to leave His Presence for a moment, oh, with what wings of a dove we will fly back to behold His face again! When we shall all surround that Throne, what songs will I, the chief of sinners, saved by blood, give Him! What hymns will you give Him, you who have had your iniquities cleansed and are today saved? What praise will all those multitudes give Him who have all been partakers of His Grace? But this has more to do with “forever.” Now, what do you say about our glorifying Him *now*? Oh, Brothers and Sisters, make it your prayer this morning, “Lord, help me to glorify You. I am poor, help me to glorify You by contentment. I am sick, help me to give You honor by patience. I have talents, help me to extol You by spending them for You. I have time, Lord, help me to redeem it, that I may serve You! I have a heart to feel, Lord, let that heart feel no love but Yours, and glow with no flame,

but affection for You. I have a head to think, Lord help me to think *of* You and *for* You! You have put me in this world for something, Lord, show me what that is, and help me to work out my life-purpose, for I do desire to say amen. I cannot do much; my amen is but a feeble one; but as the widow put in her two mites, which made a farthing, which was all her living, so, Lord, I put my time and eternity, too, into Your treasury! It is all yours, take it, and thus I say, ‘Amen’ to Peter’s doxology.”

And now, throughout this year will you go forth, my Brothers and Sisters, and say amen to this? I pray you do so. You who do not love Christ cannot say amen. Remember you are under the Law. There is an amen to all the curses for you! There is none to the blessings while you are under the Law. O poor Sinner under the Law, may this be the day when your slavery to the Law shall come to an end! “How can it be?” you ask. By faith in Christ, I answer! “He who believes on Him is not condemned.” Oh that you may believe on Him, and then your joyful heart will say amen! Then will you say, “Loudest of all the saints in Heaven, I will shout amen, when I see the royal crown brought forth, and Jesus is acknowledged Lord of All.” May God grant that this year may be the best year this Church has ever had! This year concludes eight years of my ministry among you, and seven years of Printed Sermons are now before the public. How much of blessedness God has caused to pass through our mind, and how much He has been pleased to acknowledge His Word, we cannot fully measure. But we know that He *has* been with us in deed and in truth! Now that we begin this year, may the Lord make it so that all the past shall seem to be as nothing compared with that which is to come! I bless you, my Brothers and Sisters, in the name of the Lord, and commencing this year, I beg again for renewed tokens of your affection by a renewal of your prayers. And on my part, I only trust that it may be mine through this year and as long as I live, to be giving my amen to that doxology—“To Him be Glory both now and forever. Amen.”

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