

THE HOLY ROAD.

NO. 1912

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“And an highway shall be there, and away, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” —
Isaiah 35:8.

TWICE has Israel come back from captivity: once when the tribes came out of Egypt, and the Lord led them through the wilderness; and again when they returned from banishment in Babylon, and the Lord restored them to their land. A third return some of us believe still awaits the chosen people. In the day when the grace of God shall change the heart of Israel, the seed of Abraham shall again return into the land which God gave to their fathers by a covenant of salt. I think our text looks forward to a future age when the reproach shall be rolled away from Palestine, and her deserts shall be made to blossom as the rose. Of these future glories we say but little, for little is known by the most of us. The prophecy is, however, sufficiently clear to make us expect that the Lord will make a way for the return of his ancient people, and will restore unto them the joy of his salvation. I forbear all theories of prophecy just now; for I feel it more than ever necessary in this evil time to keep close to the simplicities of the gospel, following for the present distress the beaten road of the first principles of the faith. I shall not use the telescope to look into the starry future, but rather the chart and compass, wherewith to direct our present way. I shall regard the text as having received one fulfillment in the way of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. If this be not the literal fulfillment of the prophecy, yet certainly it is its spiritual fulfillment, and for the moment this is the most vital matter to

us. As the Savior spake at Nazareth, so say I now: “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Hear it, and discern its divine teaching.

As the Holy Spirit shall help me, I shall speak at this time upon the way to the heavenly Zion, and our duty with regard to that way.

1. First, then, THE WAY to the heavenly Zion, to the dwelling-place of God. Zion of old was the place of the one altar of sacrifice and the one mercy-seat where the Lord in manifest glory communed with his covenant people. Thither the tribes went up to offer their national prayer and praise to Jehovah, the God of Israel. Pilgrimage to the Holy place was an important part of Israel’s religious life. During the invasions of the land, and especially during the captivity, the solemn festivals were neglected, and there seemed to be no way up to the house of God. Then godly men sighed for the tabernacles of God, saying, “When shall I come and appear before God?” As they could not go thither in body they sent their hearts and their eyes in that direction, as, like Daniel, they prayed with their windows open towards Jerusalem. How much they longed for a highway by which they could march to Zion! We, my brethren, speak of another Jerusalem which is above, and of the throne of God the Most High, to which we are wending our way. Our desire is for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Who will bring us thither? Who will point out the road?

It is with great joy that we learn from Holy Scripture the great truth set forth in the text: that there is a way to God and heaven. “And an highway shall be there, and a way.” This way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City is still open, and still traversed by companies of pilgrims.

It is noteworthy that this road is one, a highway and a way — not two highways, nor two ways. Many roads lead to ruin, but only one to salvation. So many men, so many minds; but if we are men of God all our minds are one as to the one way which leads to God. We trust in the same Savior, and are quickened by the same Spirit, and, as a consequence, our experience has a vital unity in it. Years ago, at the University of Utrecht, several Christian students met together from various nations, and on one occasion it was agreed that four persons, representing Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, should describe the work of grace upon their hearts. The earnest brother from New England, and the friend from the Cape of Good Hope, and the missionary student from India, all found that their stories agreed with that of a young nobleman of Holland. Scenes and

circumstances widely differed, but the joys and sorrows, the struggles and the victories of each, were the same, and one hope filled every heart. It was a delightful occasion, and left upon the minds of those present a very vivid impression of the unity of the divine way, truth, and life, as these are seen in believers. We differ in the pace with which we traverse the way, but the way itself is one. To-day if believers in this audience were to rise one by one, although we are a singularly mixed assembly, our religious testimony would be one: in each case Christ would be all and in all. John Newton tells us of a meeting which he had with one Occam, an Indian preacher, who could not have borrowed his story from books; but yet, when Newton and he compared notes concerning sin and the Savior, they were the counterparts of each other. There is but one right way. Let us not be deceived about it; there are no two roads to heaven. If any tell you that there are two gospels, you may remind them of Paul's words — "another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."

What that "way" is we learn from John 14., which we have just now read in your hearing: Jesus saith, "I am the way. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Believing in Jesus, we enter upon the way; receiving his Spirit into our hearts we stand in the way; following our Redeemer's footsteps we walk in the way, and holding fast to his leadership we reach the end of the way. When we find Jesus, we find the way of truth, the way of life, the way of peace, the way of holiness. He is not only way but end to all those who put their trust in him. The only way of salvation is by the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, and all the discoveries of modern thought upon this matter are sheer delusion. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." If any take you off from the old paths, they take you off from safety. What saith the Scripture? — "Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Go ye whither else ye may, though men or angels lead you, they do but deceive you with vain words. There is but one Christ, and therefore but one way of salvation. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and those who pretend that he changes with the centuries talk as idle dreamers, knowing nothing of the matter. God has given us a way to himself in the person of his Son Jesus Christ; why should he give us another? What other can there be?

This way, you will note, is made through the wilderness: “an highway shall be there“ — through the deserts, where the sand is always shifting, where if the traveler once loses his bearings he is doomed to certain death, with the vulture’s maw as his only sepulcher. Brethren, a way is made for us through the deserts of sin, and the wildernesses of sorrow, over hills of doubt and mountains of fear. That way runs close at thy feet, poor wanderer! though thou art now lost amid the habitation of the dragons of despair. The King’s highway is made through the wilderness: every valley is exalted, and every mountain and hill is laid low. Oh, ye who are so faint that ye lie down to die in despair, lift up your eyes and see the door of hope. Ye think it not possible that there can be an open road for you to travel on to God, and peace, and heaven; but there is such a road; for our text saith, “a highway shall be there.” I am comforted concerning those who have wandered furthest into error, and vice, and hardness of heart, or into the gloomy valley of despondency; for even there this highway runs in a straight line. God, who makes rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of deserts, has built up a royal road by the which the Lord’s banished may return to himself. From death’s dark door up to heaven’s pearly gate the line is unbroken; for Jesus Christ our Savior has borne our death, and brought us life and immortality.

We might gather from our text that this way was cast up at great expense; for road-making over a long and rugged country is a costly business. It might be read, “a causeway shall be there” — it is a way thrown up and raised by art. Engineering has done much to tunnel mountains, and bridge abysses; but the greatest triumph of engineering is that which made a way from sin to holiness, from death to life, from condemnation to perfection. Who could make a road over the mountains of our iniquities but Almighty God? None but the Lord of love would have wished it; none but the God of wisdom could have devised it; none but the God of power could have carried it out. It cost the great God the Jewel of heaven: he emptied out the treasury of his own heart; for he spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all. In the life and death of the Well-beloved infinite wisdom laid a firm foundation for the road by which sinners in all ages may journey home to God. The highway of our God is such a masterpiece that even those who travel it every day often stand and wonder and ask how such a way could have been planned and constructed. Verily that prophecy is fulfilled to the letter: “I will even make a way in the wilderness, and

rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls.”

This road has lasted now these thousands of years; it is still in good travelling condition, nor will it ever be closed till all the chosen wayfarers shall have reached the many mansions of the Father’s house. Conspicuous to all beholders the everlasting causeway remains unbroken and unaltered, and fresh caravans of pilgrims continually traverse it.

This way being made by divine power, is appointed by divine authority to be the King’s highway. Whosoever travels by this road is under the protection of the King of kings. Be sure it leads to the right end, and runs in the best direction; for the Lord never made an error, and never failed in what he attempted. This is no roundabout way, nor broken route, nor blind alley. Let your faith abide in it, and it shall receive its reward. When I preach Jesus Christ as the way of life I always feel that I take no responsibility upon myself at all; I am only publishing a proclamation for which the King himself is responsible. We deliver a royal message when we teach the doctrine of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; for it is he “whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.” When we tell of the way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ we are not planning a track, or making a road, but pointing you to one which has long been used. If it were a highway of our own making you might criticize it; but as it is a way of God’s making, you are commanded to walk in it. To quit this road for another is to despise the wisdom and grace of God in Christ Jesus, and to prefer the idle inventions of man: this cannot lead to any good, either in this life or the next.

This highway has conducted many already to God. It is said to be “a highway and a way:” it is not only a highway by appointment, but it is a way by use and traffic. It is trodden hard by ten thousand times ten thousand feet, which have joyfully and safely traversed it from end to end. Behold the cloud of witnesses in glory who will all tell you that Jesus was their way to victory, their one and only way to life eternal. Thousands of us are still on the road, and we can speak well of it; yea, we can sing in the ways of the Lord. Though we at times faint in the way, we find no fault with the road. “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” It is our joy and our delight to walk where our Savior led the way, and where prophets and apostles are our fellow-travelers. We delight to look forward to its end: how glorious the prospect! but we are not

ashamed to look backward, and admire the path of grace in the years which are past. We glory in the fact that we are on our way to God, and shall soon behold him whom not having seen we love, and in whom believing, we even now rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

This, then, is the sum of what I have spoken: there is a way to God, and to heaven. Even for you who as yet have not trodden the path of peace, the way yet lies open. Will you not enter upon it at once? Let the glad tidings be reported everywhere: there is a way to God. Let no one say, "I cannot possibly reach a home with God in heaven." Wherever you may be, "an highway shall be there:" even where you now are a way is made by which you may at once proceed to reconciliation, peace, purity, salvation. Oh that you may at once ask the way to Zion with your faces thitherward!

But now, secondly, our text also tells us the name of this way: "It shall be called the way of holiness.": The way to God by Jesus Christ is the Via Sacra, the Holy Road. The way of faith is not contrary to holiness, but it is the way of holiness. There is no way to heaven but by holiness. We have need to insist much upon this in these days; for together with laxity of thought and dubiousness of doctrinal teaching, there has come into vogue great looseness of morals. I say nothing as to the outside world, but I dread this declension in the church. Professing Christians are becoming less and less strict as to their amusements. We hear of Christian ministers doing that which those who formerly occupied their pulpits never dreamed of doing themselves, nor countenancing in others. Is there to be an open door from the pulpit to the theater? Are men to go from exercising the sacred ministry to the playhouse? Time was when this would have seemed utterly incredible. God help his church when the leaders of religion come to this! As Paul says of another matter, so say we of this: "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God. "I fear that this is not a singular fault, though it is a glaring one; everywhere I see professing Christians doing what our Nonconformist ancestors would have viewed with holy indignation. In doctrine many are hastening to Socinianism, and in conduct towards worldliness, and worse. God have mercy upon us if this thing is to go much further!

The way to heaven, if it be anything, is a way of holiness: and if the way we follow be not a holy way and a separated way, it is not God's way. If we follow not the way of distinction from the world, we are not following Christ. He that is not holy on the way will not come to that holy end where

the thrice holy God reveals himself in his glory. Brethren, if you are ever in a doubt about which is the right path, remember those words of the Savior: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it. "Prefer strictness to laxity. Do not mistake me, I wish to be understood, even if I am charged with censoriousness and bigotry. We need to pull up every now and then, and say to ourselves, "Which out of these two courses is the right?" for in these times exceedingly clever men are crying up new roads and extolling them after some such fashion as this: "Here you have a road worthy of the period. None of your narrow ways. Be liberal, be broad: this is the road for the cultured and advanced." Your Savior lifts his warning hand as he cries, "Broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in there at." Be it yours and mine, even if charged with bigotry and illiberality, still to select that way which the saints of old have chosen, unpleasing to the flesh, but pleasing to God, the strait and narrow road which leadeth unto life eternal.

God's way is the way of holiness, for he has founded it upon holy truth.

He is not unholy in the saving of any sinner. No sinner is saved without justice being executed to the full in the great expiation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Eternal principles forbade a righteous God to wink at sin, and he has not done so. Justice is as much vindicated by the redemption of Christ as if it had poured all its vials of wrath upon the sinner.

Those who follow that road do so by a holy trust. If we would be saved we must have a holy faith in a holy Savior, from whom we look for holy blessings. We must not believe that Christ will save us in our sins — that would be unholy faith; but we must look to him to save us from our sins; for that is holy faith. We must trust in him that he will cast the evil out of us, and that he will purify us to himself, to be a people zealous of good works. We preach no faith without works for that is a dead faith. Although we speak the word "grace," and never stammer as we speak it, yet we also assert that the grace which does not lead to holiness is not the grace of God at all, nor do they that receive it prove themselves to be God's elect. The way of those who are saved is the way of holy trust.

It is also the way of holy living. The man who really believes in Jesus Christ will be found purging himself from the ways of sinners: he will be truly, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners: he will pant and aspire after perfect holiness, and if he does not immediately attain it, he will still groan towards it, still longing to be made like to Christ. The way to

heaven is not only a holy way, but according to the text it is to be called so by those who speak of it. The way which God hath marked out for his people to follow is a conspicuously holy and Godlike way. Let us keep to it.

Thirdly, passing on, and further dwelling on our text, this way is a select way. It is written, "The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those." The unclean are excluded. Literally this may mean, "The uncircumcised and the unclean." These were excluded from the house of the Lord, and here they are excluded from the sacred way of Israel: of this the spiritual meaning is that unless we are washed in the blood of Christ, and renewed in the spirit of our minds by the Holy Spirit, we are not in the way of God. "Alas!" saith one, "I am unclean, and therefore the text shuts me out of the way of holiness." This is true, but it does not therefore exclude you from the possibility of salvation; for there are ways by which the unclean can be made pure. You cannot enter on this way of life except by being cleansed by the atonement, and then renewed by the Holy Spirit. By the way of atonement you can pass into this way; for the Lord waiteth to be gracious to you, and to wash you clean. Pardon and regeneration are freely given to all who desire them, and you must have both of them, or you cannot tread the sacred way, for the unclean shall not pass over it.

It is a select way, for it is reserved for a select people — "it shall be for those." "Those" — who are they? Well, look backward, and you will read of some who make the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad: you read of some whose blind eyes were opened, whose deaf ears were unstopped. You read of the lame men who were made to leap as an hart, and of dumb men who began to sing. This highway is reserved for those upon whom a miracle of grace has been performed, for those on whom the Messiah has laid his healing hand, for those who love and delight in holy things. Though often of a fearful heart they are bold to hold on in the sacred way, and they shall never be driven from it. The pure in heart shall see God, and travel the way to God: "it shall be for those."

Especially at the end of our text we read that this way is for the ransomed; "the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there." If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ thou hast been redeemed with his precious blood, and the way of grace is thine. Is the blood-mark on thee? Dost thou look alone to him who poured out his soul unto death on thy behalf? If so, beloved, thou art in the way, and thou mayest walk there without any fear of ever being

driven out of it. He that once comes into this way Christ will in no wise cast him out, and he is Lord of the way. Thou shalt walk therein till thou shalt see his face with joy. This way, though open to all who come with willing hearts, is a select way which no impenitent soul can walk in.

Another fact makes it very select. You that can look in the margin of your Revised Old Testaments, or indeed in the margins of the old Bibles, will find that this clause may be read thus: — “He shall be with them:” that is, God shall be with them. This way of holiness is a way in which God walks with his people, revealing himself to them, drawing them nearer and nearer to himself, and keeping them in happy union with himself. It is a blessed thing to think of heaven at the end; but it is an almost equally blessed thing to think of God with us on the way. Do we Christian people often enough consider the blessedness of the way to heaven? Even to be on the way thither is a marvel of grace. Such stores of covenant blessings are provided and distributed by the way that even as pilgrims we are a blessed people. The presence of God with us on our journey is our choicest joy. If, after all, there should be no hereafter, my present life has been rendered happy by walking in the way of faith, and obedience to God. Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is; and that promise never fails. We have such joy and peace in walking with God, that we can bear witness that in keeping God’s commandments there is great reward.

I must pass on, for time flies so swiftly, to notice one more matter about this way, and that is, that the way which God has appointed is a plain way. We are bound to be thankful for a way which is suitable for common and unlearned people. You would think from some people’s talk, that religion is a very difficult thing, only to be understood by the cultured few. You must be a learned scientist, or a scholarly critic, before you can understand the modern gospel. It is not so with the gospel of Jesus. Oftentimes learned men miss this way altogether, while simple people perceive it and walk in it. I remember the story of a Swedish king in years gone by who, when he was ill, was greatly concerned about his eternal state. There chanced to come to the palace an old farmer, known to his majesty for his piety; the king called him to his bedside, and said, “Tell me, what is the faith that saves the soul?” The peasant explained it out of his heart in plain language, much to the king’s comfort. The king remained ill for months, and again fell into doubt and fear. Those about him urged him to send for the Archbishop of Upsala, as a learned prelate who could allay his fears. The bishop came to the royal couch, and gave his majesty a logical and

theological definition of faith in most proper terms. When he was gone the king said, "It was very learned, no doubt, and very ingenious, but there was no comfort in it for me; the peasant's faith is the faith that can save my soul." It is so. Simple truth is needful for dying men and women. I do not wonder that Dr. Guthrie, when he was nearing death, asked to have "a bairn's hymn" sung to him. The gospel which suits little children is that which saves souls: the gospel of the common people is the only gospel. The most educated must find their wisdom in the cross, or die fools. In times of trial men cannot endure speculations, mystifications, and refinings; they need sure truth and plain truth to build their hopes upon. The taste of the present period is all for that which is novel, singular, original, and pretendedly profound. Give me my daily bread, and who will may have the junkets. Give me bread such as Jesus divided among the men and women and children, and I will leave the stones of philosophy to those who care to try their teeth on them. Good Mr. Romaine, when he used to preach over yonder at St. Ann's, Blackfriars, was asked by certain of his educated hearers to introduce a little more learning into his discourses. Hearing their request, he promised to fulfill it. So on the following Sunday he read the text in Hebrew, and when he had read it he said, "I suppose very few of you now understand it, perhaps I had better quote it from the Septuagint in Greek." When he had read the Greek, he said, "Even now I fear that no great number can understand the text; it is a pity but what more should be able to receive the word, and so I will give it to you in Latin." When the Vulgate version had been heard he saw them smile, and said, "Even now I fear that hardly a score of you are much edified, and I think you all agree that, after all, we may as well drop our learning, and give you the words from our own English Bible." Brethren, had we been there we should have seen the point of the whole business, and we should have agreed with the congregation that not the most learned, but the most plain, is the best.

The gospel of God needs no wisdom of words to commend it; and therefore our apostle saith, "We use great plainness of speech." The true gospel is as plain as a pike-staff. What saith the text? "Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Nobody will err about the way to God if he really resolves to follow that way. The Spirit of God will guide those whose hearts are set upon coming to God. It is the wayfaring man who does not err: your critic will be sure to err, your trifler cannot help erring; but the true pilgrim, the wayfaring man who is actually travelling, he shall not err. If you want to go to heaven, the way is laid down in the Scriptures,

so that little children may find it; but if you only want to talk about the road, and about the stumbles of travelers in it, why then the way is difficult indeed. If you choose to puzzle yourselves about his gospel God will give you over to be puzzled. He who must needs be wiser than God shall end in being more brutish than any man. If you wish to find the way to heaven, there it is: "Behold the Lamb of God." Believe in Jesus, and be saved. That Jesus is the way to peace and holiness is as plain in Scripture as the nose on your face. What more teaching do you want? What more assurance do you require? If your heart is inclined to see, there is light enough, and the cross is clear enough; look and live. Those who will to see shall see; but those who shut their eyes do but prove the truth of the old proverb — "There are none so blind as those who do not wish to see." He who saith, "I will arise and go unto my Father" shall not miss the way. He who has from the Lord received the will shall by the Lord perceive the way. "The wayfaring man shall not err."

That wayfaring man may be a great fool in other matters, but he shall be no fool upon this matter. He may be very stupid about science, and politics, and business, but if the Lord has made him willing to be a wayfaring man, with his face to Zion, he shall not mistake in his journey along the holy way. God will instruct him in vital points. The main thing is to know the most necessary truth and practice it. Our Lord said, "One thing is needful." A gentleman riding on the box-seat of a coach that was going to Bath in the old times, asked the driver, who lived at yonder mansion?" The answer was short, if not sweet. "I don't know, sir." The gentleman traveled on a little further, and then inquired, "Where does that canal run to?" "Don't know, sir." Again the passenger sought information, and asked, "Where does Squire So-and-so live?" "I don't know, sir." "Why, good man," said the gentleman, "what do you know?" The reply was final — "I know how to drive you to Bath, sir." Surely, that was the principal business of a coachman. Even thus with regard to spiritual things, the chief thing is to know how sin is pardoned, how a sinner is justified and sanctified. There are a thousand things which a man may not know, and he may not be much the worse for not knowing them; but not to know the Lord Jesus is to be ignorant of the path of life. If a man knows the Lord Christ he knows the way to eternal happiness, and he may bless God all the day for such knowledge. Let every man gain all the instruction he can, but let him not think that mere knowledge will be of great value to him in heavenly things; for the tree of knowledge of good and evil wrought no good to our race.

How often have I wished that I could forget many things which once I thought it necessary to know! I would resolve with Paul to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. There, let the bubbles burst and the scum be blown away. Let fire consume the guilt and tinsel. What are these when weighed with one ingot of the real gold of the knowledge of him that loved us and gave himself for us? Let us choose the right way. Let us look up to God, and say, "Thou wilt show me the path of life;" then let us despise the pedantry of the age, and take to that path wherein "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err."

The last word of our text teaches us that it is a safe way. Of this I will speak more fully another time. "No lion shall be there." Plenty of lions prowl up and down the side of the road; but they cannot "go up thereon." He who keeps the crown of the causeway, though he may hear the lion roar, shall not meet it in the way. No ravenous beasts shall be found there; for the way is not to their mind. Reptiles cannot live in Ireland, nor lions on the holy way. There is one lion which those who make Jesus their way need never be afraid of: that is the lion of unpardoned sin. If you are believing in Jesus Christ, your iniquities are forgiven you for his name's sake. Another lion also roars upon us, but cannot devour us, namely, temptation: you shall not be tempted above what you are able to bear. We read of some who followed their own way, that the Lord sent lions among theft; but he drives away the lions from those who keep the right way. Lions are afraid of fire; and the Lord is a wall of fire round about his people. As for that grim lion of death of which some speak, it does not exist. This is a fabulous monster: death to a believer is rather an angel than a lion. The valley through which we are to pass is not the valley of death, but of the shadow of death. For the believer there is no substance in death; it is only a shadow. Brethren, you shall soon pass from under that temporary shade, and no ill shall come of it. The shadow of a dog cannot bite, the shadow of a sword cannot wound, and the shadow of death cannot destroy. Go you onward without fearing any evil, for the Lord is with you; his rod and his staff are your comfort. No ravenous beast can harm you; for it is written, "There shall no evil befall thee." Walk with God, and "thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." To be safe we must be holy; to be holy we must trust in Christ Jesus the Lord.

II. Only two or three minutes remain, in which I will speak of OUR DUTY IN CONNECTION WITH THIS WAY OF HOLINESS. If there be such a road, let

us not neglect it, lest we perish from the way when the king's wrath is kindled but a little.

The first thing is carefully to discriminate in these days between road and road. Beware of false prophets. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." Put on your considering caps, and when you see a road which looks broad, smooth, pleasant, and well bordered with flowers, say to yourself, "There are many ways, but since only one of them leads to eternal life, I must be careful. I will pray, 'Lord, be my guide, even unto death.'" Then make the inquiry, "Is this the way of holiness? for if it is not the holy way, it is not the road which I dare to follow." O my dear hearers, believe the truth, and follow the truth. Do not believe that sincerity is enough; you need truth as well. "If we are sincere in our religion," says one, "it will be all right with us, whatever that religion may be." Nonsense. You know better. If you sincerely mistake the road and go northward, you will not get to Brighton. If you sincerely drink poison, it will kill you: if you sincerely cut your throat, you will die. If you sincerely believe a lie, you will suffer the consequences. You must not only be sincere, but you must be right. Therefore, submit your judgment to the Word of the Lord. This infallible Book is given to you, and the infallible Spirit waits to instruct you as to its meaning. Cry unto the Wise One for wisdom. Yield your minds to the teaching of him who is the way, the truth, and the life; so shall you not be deceived, but shall attain unto holiness and bliss.

The next thing is, that when you know the road, you should scrupulously keep in it, for many ways branch from it. Let no man draw you aside from it. It is one straight line. Keep you to it, even as the stars keep in their courses. Gird up the loins of your mind; be sober and hope to the end. May the Holy Ghost so rest upon you that you may have no wish to leave the strait and narrow way; no desire to start aside from it, even for a moment. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. Temporizers who begin for a little season and run well, and then are hindered, what shall become of them? Why this: that it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to turn from it after they have known it. To the end! To the end, man! Hold on and hold out, or thy faith will prove to be a thing of nought.

Once more: are we in the way? Then let us be very earnest in telling other people of it. Travelling the other day by a country road the traveler wished to know the way to a certain spot. He inquired of one who sat by the

roadside, but all the answer he got from him was a vacant stare, and a shake of the head. A little time after he found that the poor man was deaf and dumb. I am afraid there are many such Christians nowadays: they are spiritually deaf to the woes of others, and dumb as to giving them either instruction or encouragement. All they seem to do is to shake their wise heads, as if they knew a great deal more than they meant to tell. "Oh," say you, "we are not deaf and dumb." Then why do you not talk of Jesus, the way? Why do you not tell others the way to heaven? Why do you not hear the cry that is going up to God everywhere for spiritual instruction? How is it that so many Christians are content to occupy their pews, but never go forth to declare what they have found in Jesus? I'll tell you why: I fear that some professors cannot tell the way because they do not know it. I asked a person, the other day, the road to a certain place, and in the politest possible manner he answered, "I beg your pardon, but I am quite a stranger in these parts." That was a very sufficient reason for not directing me. He could not tell what he did not know. If any of you do not know the way, and are strangers in these parts, do not tell anybody; but let this mournful reflection go home to your consciences: "I cannot tell another the way to heaven because I am a stranger in these parts." God grant that we may never stretch the arm of our testimony beyond the sleeve of our experience! It shall be well for any minister if it may be written upon his tombstone, "He never preached what he did not practice." May you Christian people who are busy at Mission Rooms, and Sabbath-schools, and so forth, so live what you teach that you may teach what you live! It is a horrible thing to stand like a sign-post by the way, to point the road, but never to run in that road yourself. It would be well if we were always ready to tell the way to heaven to everybody, whether they want to know it or not. Possibly the men we are most likely to bless are those who at this present do not desire to know the gospel. If we point out the way to them, God may ordain that our describing the path may be an effectual influence for leading them into it. There are two occasions in which we ought to point out the way to all around, namely, in season and out of season. We shall be clear of the blood of men if we show them the way, and entreat them to walk in it. If we do not this they may perish for want of knowing the road, and then their blood may be required at our hands.

Finally, what ought we to do in connection with this way? I would say, beloved friend, if you are not in the road, may the Lord help you to get into it this morning. "What is to be done to reach the heavenly city?" saith one.

A notable divine once gave this direction: "The way to heaven is, turn to the right, and keep straight on." I would add, turn when you come to the cross; only one turn is needed, but that must be a thorough turn, and one in which you persevere. Keep straight on till you come to glory. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you have eternal life.

"But," saith one, "I have begun to trust Christ, but I am always afraid of myself, lest I should go back after all." This is by no means an unhealthy fear when you consider the matter in reference to your own strength; but there is another light in which to regard it. Trust in the Lord for final perseverance, and he will give it you. One thing I would earnestly recommend to you who are afraid of backsliding and apostasy: say to yourself, "Whether or no, whether I get to Canaan or not, I will never go back to Egypt. I will die with my face toward God and holiness." The soul that can keep this solemn resolve never to return to the country whence he came out will surely reach the promised rest. Your carcass will not fall in the wilderness if your face is towards the Lord Jesus, his promise, and his throne. No, never will we love this evil world, nor bow before its idols: we have lifted our hand to the Lord, and we cannot go back. If God has brought you only a little out of your sins, I pray that you may press forward but if he has clean delivered you, you must do so. Lord God, if I am cast away, if thou dost never give me joy again, yet I will never cease to look to thy mercy in Christ Jesus, for there only have I hope. By thy grace I will die with my face to the cross. Did you ever hear of anybody who perished in that posture? No, it shall never be reported in heaven above, nor in hell beneath, that a soul died in the way — Christ being that way. No soul can perish whose eyes look towards the five wounds of Jesus crucified. He is the way, the living way, the only way, the sure way: follow him. O poor sinner! do as the blind man did who followed Jesus in the way: rise this morning, for he calleth thee. Before you leave your pew, look to Jesus! Flee along this road of refuge, this way of grace. May God the Holy Spirit help you to take to the way at once, without delay! Unto you shall be salvation, and unto the Lord of the way shall be glory for ever and ever. Amen.