

A Christian

What It Means to Be One

Christianity is:

A Creed to Be Believed

A Life to Be Lived

An Experience to Be Enjoyed

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A CHRISTIAN

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by

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A CHRISTIAN

What It Means to Be One

Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian
(Acts 26:28).

Good causes often suffer more at the hands of nominal adherents who praise them faintly than at the hands of sincere opposers who condemn them fiercely. Agrippa, who was "almost persuaded," never, so far as we know, ever really became a Christian, but Saul, the persecutor, turned about and served Christ with a zeal quite as hot as that with which he formerly opposed Him.

We who have been born and bred in "Christian lands" are likely to accept Christianity as a matter of race, nation, or culture, and account ourselves as Christians only because we are not Hindus, Mohammedans, or Buddhists. Or we may account ourselves Christians because our parents were Christians before us and had us christened in our infancy. Or we may have been brought into the membership of the church in some "decision day" movement, and we continue to think of ourselves as Christians

because we are listed as church members. Or we may base our claim and rest our hope on the fact that we have been baptized with water, or that we do sometimes partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or that we take some more or less regular part in "church work."

But none of us, regardless of our standards, can deny the danger of being deceived by shadows and appearances to such a length that our Christianity will not be genuine, and will not do for us what we require to have done, that we may live as we should in this world and enjoy eternal life in the world to come.

Unthinking people sometimes list Christianity as just one of the great religions of the world, and make cold comparisons between it and others, as though they were all in the same class and on the same level. And in calling for toleration, men sometimes base their exhortations upon the idea that none of us actually knows, and that therefore we should be liberal with those who think they know. But this was not the attitude of our Master nor of His apostles. The attitude then was that Christ alone is Saviour, and that His religion is to replace all others, and that none but His is to prevail in the end.

Then there are some, even some that should know better, who would make Christianity a thing of degrees, and would deny all definite distinctions between sinners and saints. They would tell us that all men are partly bad and partly good, and that just as no one is really a sinner so no one is truly a saint, and that we must just take people as they are and try to make them all better than they now are.

It should not be necessary to use any qualifying adjectives in connection with the term Christian; but since there is no clear way to describe the stages and degrees of approach otherwise, let us come to the definite statement that there is such a being as a true Christian, and that this true Christian can be described on the side of the minimum approach. Jesus assured one man that he was not far from the kingdom of God, and King Agrippa was "almost persuaded," but we have no warrant in either case to list the man involved as saved and right with God. Being close is yet not getting in, and being almost persuaded is not being altogether persuaded. There is a line over which a man from the world must pass before he can properly be inscribed as a Christian. There is no maximum limit in sainthood; for ought we know, even in heaven there will be growth and

progress in likeness to and fellowship with our ever-adorable Lord.

Many times in pagan and heathen lands I have been called upon to explain simply and clearly what it is to be a Christian, and at such times I have found my task more difficult than I anticipated. Accustomed to depending upon my hearers to have about all the fundamental knowledge that is required of Christians, and being accustomed principally to exhorting men to do what they already know, I have found it an exacting task to tell those who do not know, just what it means to be a true Christian.

In our day we are very much given to maxims, and to sentence summaries. But there is always the danger that a partial truth may be taken for a whole truth, and in this light the partial truth becomes an untruth. You may describe a point with a word, and a line with a sentence, but if you have something with volume for your subject you will need paragraphs and even pages.

Suppose we undertake to describe a house. We shall need to approach that house from the front, from its sides, from the rear, and we shall need to go inside and examine its arrangements and its furnishings. Then we shall need to make for our-

selves a picture in which the idea suggested from the various perspectives are all included. It is like this with anything that has dimensions and possesses volume. It is like this with Christianity. You cannot describe it with a word or a sentence. You must needs give a description that involves more than one approach.

Everyone you meet is either a Christian or he is not a Christian. There is no neutral ground, and no man can serve God and not serve Him at the same time. Every person in the world is either for Christ or he is against Him. And this is not saying any more or any other than Jesus Christ and the apostles said.

We are not speaking of maximums and superlatives now; we are speaking only of minimums and positives. What is it to be a Christian? What are the factors and functions that are ever present when one is a Christian, and never all there except when he is a Christian?

In my anxiety to be both plain and instant, I am tempted to state just a condition, like faith, and let it go at that. Jesus himself stated Christianity in terms of its condition only, one time when He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." But remem-

ber, He was here simply stating conditions, and was not giving the content of results.

Perhaps we had better go back and bring up again our figure of a house. Perhaps we had better admit that we cannot describe the house which is Christianity from one approach only. Approaching it from one, the front, Christianity is a creed to be believed; approaching it from the side, Christianity is a life to be lived; entering and viewing it from within, Christianity is an experience to be enjoyed. The true Christian is a Christian in doctrine, in life, and in experience, all. If we define Christianity in terms of doctrine only, we shall define but its intellectual phase. If we define it in terms of life, we shall define it only in its practical and ethical phase. If we define it in terms of experience only, we shall still give but a partial description, and our omissions will despoil our definition of its value.

1. Christianity Is a Creed to Be Believed

Christianity is a creed to be believed, and all true Christians do believe the creed. Every intelligent man has a creed, for a man's creed is what he believes, whether what he believes is written, spo-

ken, or just held in static form in his mind. And down through the centuries Christianity has been preserved and promoted by means of its doctrines more than by all other means. Those who claim to have no creed are but testifying to their own religious indifference. Those who advertise, "No creed but Christ," are bidding for spectacular maxims which are in the end misleading. Those very people who advertise no creed but Christ will invariably be found to believe in the Father and the Holy Spirit and in some sort of future judgment and destiny. Christianity is a creed to be believed and Christians all believe the Christian creed.

In the days when Jesus was in the flesh, His apostles went out and preached that He was the Christ. After His resurrection they went out to preach "Jesus and the resurrection." In his first epistle, St. John makes belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God a test for Christians, ruling out the claims of all who do not subscribe to this fundamental tenet. And St. Paul urges upon Timothy the demand that he reject heretics after the first and second admonitions. And so strong was he on doctrine that he assured Timothy that if he would give attention to it he would save both himself and them that heard him.

When Christianity reached out into the Gentile world it soon came to grips with those who had neither knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures nor appreciation of the Hebrew authoritarian approach to truth. These men acknowledged only the light of nature, and the validity of the process of reason. Christians must needs face these critics, for their Master had sent them to convert these, as well as the others. So the doctrines of Christianity were forced into philosophical molds and worked out according to logical and systematic demands. Out of the necessities of the case, theology was born, and a summary was made of the essential teachings of the Christian faith.

But it soon became evident that the creed would grow to unwieldy limits if Christian teachers on the long line of offense and defense were left to offer tenets in refutation of all the errors they were compelled to meet. Therefore, at an early date, the Christian creed was set forth in positive rather than in negative terms, and was reduced to its simplest form and published under the name of "The Apostles' Creed." No one ever supposed that the apostles actually wrote this creed in the form in which the fathers published it, but from the beginning it was believed to be a brief and sufficient summary of

what one must believe to be a Christian, and to be the substance of what the apostles believed and taught.

The creed appeared first in Latin, and from this has been translated into all the languages used in lands where Christianity has become established. Some of the words in our English translation are used with their obsolete meaning, and we need to be reminded that "hell" means simply "the unseen world," and "catholic" means "universal," and is not identical with the Roman Catholic church. But the Apostles' Creed is a masterpiece for both clarity and sufficiency. It is almost as remarkable for what it does not say as for what it does say, and to this day it represents the minimum of faith upon which one can properly base his claim that he is a Christian.

All Protestants believe that the Bible alone is authority in matters of both faith and practice. But when the essential teachings of the Bible on matters of doctrine are boiled down to their lowest form they come within the compass of the Apostles' Creed, so that nothing of that creed can be rejected without manifestly violating or ignoring the teachings of the Bible.

For sixteen centuries the Apostles' Creed has been the accepted challenge to those who would call

themselves Christians, and there is no sufficient reason for relaxing the challenge today. Men who believe less than this creed requires may have some sort of religion, and they may deserve some sort of name, but they are not Christians. There are those who take up such items as the virgin birth of Jesus, and ask if one cannot be a Christian and reject this tenet. The answer is that this tenet is so involved in the doctrine of Christ's proper deity that it cannot be rejected and the other retained, and a man cannot be a Christian and not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. John makes that very clear. When one accepts the doctrine of the proper deity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, the spotless life, the peerless teaching, the marvelous miracles, the atoning death, the glorious resurrection, and the blessed ascension of Jesus Christ become necessarily involved and accepted. There is no place for compromise with doubt, and this is no time to liberalize the doctrinal challenges of our holy religion.

What is it to be a Christian? Well, to be a Christian in the sense of doctrine is to be able to say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,

born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen." Do you heartily believe these truths? If you answer, "I believe them with all my heart," then you are a Christian in the sense of creed; you believe what Christians believe; you believe what one must believe to be a Christian.

However, Christianity is something more than a creed to be believed; therefore, one might believe the Christian creed and yet not be a Christian. Going back to our metaphor, one might have the front wall of a house and yet not have a house. He could not have a house without a front wall, but he might have the front wall and yet not have a house. There is an intellectual factor in Christianity, and creed and doctrine represent that factor. But there are other factors, and these too must be included if one is to be not only almost but altogether a Christian.

2. Christianity Is a Life to Be Lived

Christianity is a life to be lived. There are not many "rules of thumb" in the New Testament, but the principles of proper conduct are clearly set forth. Our Master made a summary of the ethical demands which underlie the Christian life in what has come to be called "The Golden Rule"—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also even unto them." But in reality that is not a rule, but a principle out of which all rules for right living spring.

If it is claimed that other religions have statements regarding ethical conduct that parallel this statement from our Master, we raise no objection whatsoever; for, after all, Christian ethics are scientific as well as scriptural, and experience leads men to the same conclusions that revelation presents.

The Ten Commandments, especially the last six in the list, set forth in more detail the same principle as the Golden Rule, except that the Ten Commandments stop with prohibition of evil, while the Golden Rule enjoins the doing of positive good.

But to be a Christian one must not only acknowledge the standard as being correct; he must approximate it in practical living. The Christian makes the Golden Rule his standard of life both as

to words and deeds, and also to thoughts and tempers.

If a man is a genuine Christian he is an honest man. He will not steal that which is rightly his neighbor's; he will not take advantage in buying and selling; he will not accept a full day's pay for less than a day's work; he will not accept a day's work for less than a day's pay; he will not do anything that is of hurt to his neighbor's property. But more than that, the Christian will pay his debts, will co-operate for the advantage of all, and will be dependable and upright in all his business transactions.

If a man is a genuine Christian he will tell the truth. He will account his word as valid as his bond. He will do whatever he promises to do. He will keep his appointments with others to the measure of his ability. He will not slander or backbite. He will not indulge in gossip hurtful to the good name of his neighbor. His conversation is always chaste, as becometh one whose mind and heart are pure.

If a man is a genuine Christian, he will think pure thoughts and live a clean life. He will account the elder women as mothers, those of his own age as sisters, and the younger as daughters; and he will conduct himself in a manner becoming to such relations.

The Christian makes no reservation as to brotherhood, as do the Mohammedans and even certain organizations in Christian lands. These, we are told, acknowledge their obligations to be honest and truthful only to members of their specific faith or order, and the demands of purity are limited to the mothers, wives, and daughters of clan brothers. But the Christian obligations are to all, without regard to race, nation, or other incidentals of life. The Christian's field of moral obligation is as wide as the human race. "Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." The obligation is to all, with special obligation to those who may be left out of the gratuity of others on account of their membership in the Christian community.

The genuine Christian is reverent, hence does not take the name of God in vain or speak lightly of sacred things. He loves God and the people of God, hence does not profane the Lord's day or neglect attendance upon the services of the church. He is a temperate man, and thinks of his body as God's temple; hence he does not use intoxicating liquor or tobacco or in any other manner indulge in that which is hurtful to his body, mind, or morals. He is humble, and so does not yield to the tokens of

pride in either dress or behavior. He is serious, and so does not care for the theater, the ballroom, the circus, and other like places. He does not gamble or take part in games of chance. He finds no delight in the fellowship of the ungodly, and hence avoids connections that are in violation of the scriptural injunction against being yoked together with unbelievers, and having fellowship with the unrighteous (II Cor. 6: 14-17).

The genuine Christian is courteous to all men; he is industrious and economical, that he may have to give to the support of the gospel, and to those less fortunate than himself; he is forbearing in his attitude toward other Christians and toward all men; he loves God with all his heart, so that he accounts being right more important than any promotion; he is faithful in attendance upon all the "means of grace" for his own soul's good and as an example to others.

The genuine Christian seeks by all possible means to do good to the bodies and souls of men. He seeks to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, and to minister to the needy, as opportunity and ability are given.

The genuine Christian is zealous for the expansion of God's kingdom in the earth. He invites peo-

ple to the house of God, and presses home upon the unsaved the claims of the gospel and seeks by every means to encompass the salvation of the lost.

The genuine Christian is "easy to be entreated" in things relating to God and His work, and therefore he abides in hearty fellowship with the church, and is in full sympathy with the program of the gospel through the world.

3. Christianity Is an Experience to Be Enjoyed

But the house has not yet been fully described. We came up to the front of the house in the doctrinal approach. We have viewed the building from the side in thinking of ethical life and practical good conduct. But we must yet go inside and behold the arrangement and observe the furnishings before our description is complete, for Christianity is an experience to be enjoyed.

Perhaps our word experience is not quite definite enough to express the idea. Our reference is to conscious experience. In the wider sense, all life is experience, and in this sense experience may be predominantly either enjoyment or suffering. But in the narrow sense in which we speak, we mean the knowledge of God and of the realities of the spiritual

life. And in this sphere we are justified, I think, in speaking of it as all joy.

Boreham remarks that there is a wide difference between biography and autobiography. The first, he thinks, is a description of the temple from the outside, and the other a description of the same temple from the inside. He thinks, therefore, that no one should start his autobiography by saying, "I was born," for being born and living through infancy are not any part of one's conscious experience. The autobiography should begin where the recollection of conscious experience begins, and should even then have little to say about outside details. The real object of an autobiography should be to describe life in terms of the impressions it makes upon the "man on the inside." How did the matter seem to you? Autobiography is answering this question.

Some time ago a minister was appointed to write a paper on "How I Prepare to Preach." In his prelude he admitted he would much prefer to write on "How I Ought to Prepare to Preach," for, he said, he had some very definite ideas as to how this work of preparation should be carried on, but he did not have such a good testimony as to the manner in which he actually did it. Now this is the distinc-

tion we should make between doctrine and experience: doctrine describes the way to God as it is supposed to be, and no doubt it does contain a correct general description of the road. But experience is the detailed and personal result of my attempt or your attempt to travel that road.

And as to the relation between Christian life and Christian experience, the life is a result or product of the experience, if it is real; and if it is not real, then life is just an imitation of results, for the true does not actually exist. If a man lives a good life we accept him as a good man. If later it is discovered that his manners were assumed, then we revise our appraisal and conclude that he was just imitating good people and not, as we supposed, living out the principles which were ingrained in his heart. This is why we say we are not saved by good works but are saved to good works. This is in explanation of Jesus' method of making the tree good that the fruit may also be good.

Really, we have come now to the essential content in our answer to the question, What is it to be a Christian? We reject as false the saying, "No matter what a man believes, just so he is honest in it," for we know a man's doctrine springs out of the man's heart and practices and that, in turn, his

state and practice are affected by what he believes. Still, just being orthodox in doctrine does not make a man right in the inner springs of his thoughts, feelings, tempers, and ambitions. We reject the saying, "If he does right, he is right," as false also, for we know now that a man can imitate good conduct while restraining bad motives. But to be a Christian means to be sound in doctrine, commendable in conduct, and right and clean in motive.

The Pharisees were orthodox in doctrine and commendable in conduct, according to the standards of their times. But Jesus called them hypocrites. This did not mean that they were necessarily insincere, but it did mean they were confined in their righteousness to doctrine and practice. The word hypocrite was the word by which the Greeks described the actor on the stage, whose very ability to instruct and entertain depended upon his playing a part that was not his own. And Jesus said to all, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). This did not mean that there was no single individual Pharisee anywhere who was right, but it did mean that one would have to have more righteousness than the Pharisees demanded or pro-

fessed in order to be saved. The Pharisees were able to pass on doctrine and conduct, but they were void of inner conscious experience, and one must have that inner experience to be saved.

It was the same story with Nicodemus. He was an orthodox man of approved conduct. But to him Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." He was all right in mind and in expression, but he was wanting in the essential condition of his heart. He was depending on externals, but he was directed to make sure his heart was right.

It was this same way with Paul. He was a pedigreed Pharisee, and yet he was not saved until he met Christ that day on the road to Damascus and became the subject of an inner, radical change which made him instantly new. When he came to state his case before King Agrippa, he did not talk much of doctrine and commendable conduct, but hastened to his Damascus road experience, and to deductions from the change which he testified had its beginning there.

It was like this with John Bunyan, the tinker, who spent two years trying to "attain" peace with God, and then threw himself upon the mercy of God in prayer and faith and "obtained" in two seconds what he could not "attain" in two years.

It was the same way with John Wesley. He had organized his Holy Club while yet a student at Oxford, and he had spent three years trying to convert the Indians in Georgia. Then he sat in a little Moravian meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, listening to one read Luther's preface to the Book of Romans, in which the place of faith as the condition of our justification was being described. And there, about nine o'clock in the evening, Wesley suddenly felt his heart "strangely warmed," and felt that he did really trust Christ and that he did now receive grace to love Him with all his heart.

Charles H. Spurgeon, while as yet a lad, had a long, fierce struggle in his effort to become a real Christian. But he sat one damp morning in a Primitive Methodist chapel and heard a poor layman try to explain and apply the words of the prophet, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." The simplicity of the exhortation to simply "look and live" reached the heart of the earnest youth, and he did trust Christ, and went away that morning with the assurance of acceptance with God in his heart.

Although it is a far step from these notables to the humble writer of these words, I am happy to

say it was like this with me. I did not have the early Christian education that is the fortunate heritage of many. Yet the Spirit of God wrought upon my heart when I was a child of nine. At that time I prayed repeatedly, but without faith and assurance. Again when I was fifteen the Spirit came in renewed ministry to my poor, darkened heart and, in the midst of more favorable surroundings, I prayed and confessed my sins to Christ. It has often seemed to me that I stood at last on the edge of a precipice, and that I was being urged both from without and from within to step off upon the unknown. I knew that to draw back was to enter again into the meshes of menace and condemnation, but to step off seemed to me to be an unusual risk. There seemed to me to be an urge to say, "I am saved," when as yet I was not conscious of any change. But at long last, I did step out and trust Him with the challenging affirmation, "I believe He saves me now." I had feared there might be but the sustaining confidence of my own choice to assure me and bear me up. However, I found the everlasting arms were beneath me the moment I stepped off that precipice, and in the instant I had the knowledge and assurance that I was accepted of God.

I do not now speak as a novice, for more than

forty-one years have passed since that night when I looked to Christ in faith for salvation, and I sit here today a man of fifty-six, the father of seven, the grandfather of five, bereft of two children and my wife of thirty-seven years' companionship, and yet I assert and affirm that I was definitely converted to God on that night more than forty-one years ago; and, best of all, there is a present assurance of acceptance which results in inner peace.

I have been speaking of minimums all along. I well know that the true Christian grows in both grace and knowledge. Therefore, the mature Christian will have a creed much longer than the minimum statement with which he started. He will bring his life more and more into conformity with the life of Christ and the standards of approved Christian living. And likewise he will find new things in the inner experience in the things of God. I have found such things myself. Since being born of the Spirit, I have been blessedly filled with the Spirit, as an epochal experience. Upon the condition of full consecration to God, I have obtained the fullness of His love, and I am sure such an experience is the heritage of all who have been born again. Within the temple of His grace there are arrangements and furnishings in keeping with the purpose and use

of the place, so that one who has come inside the house is bound to say of this as the queen of Sheba did of Solomon's glory, "The half was not told me."

And now, being a preacher of the old school, I cannot well close without an exhortation, because the Christian doctrines are true, they welcome scrutiny. If you are unconvinced, "Come now, and let us reason together." The evidences of the truth of our holy religion, like the evidences of truth in all the realm of God's world, are of such a nature that they must be sought out to be known. But when sought out, they are convincing—not so convincing as to compel a conclusion, for salvation involves the will; but so convincing as to warrant the placing of the will over on the side of the good. And with this the balance turns in favor of faith; and faith, true faith, will bring assurance.

There is no good life but the Christian life. Those who say that goodness is an abstraction are both uninformed and inexperienced. We do not do what we know we ought to do. We do what we desire to do. Therefore, knowledge alone will not save. Education and goodness are not identical. We need grace to purify our affections, as well as light to make clear our pathway. Other religions have their commendable moral maxims. But only the gospel

of Christ gives power to do what is required to be done. Others may have light, but grace comes alone through Christ. Others may know the struggle to be delivered from the body of sin, but this deliverance comes only through the blood of Christ and by the power of His Spirit.

Telling a man to live right and yet giving him no inner power to do it is like telling a man how to get rich by the proper use of a million dollars, but suggesting no way for him to get that million dollars so he can get started. Only born again people can live the new life. The demands of the new life are unadapted to the old affections.

All through these pages we have kept the metaphor of a house before us. We have suggested that doctrine may be like the approach to the front of the building. Life and conduct we have likened to an approach from one side. Experience we have likened to the inside of the house. There is the story of a wealthy man who built a home for his family, making every appointment as complete and convenient as possible. On the day when the family came to inspect and move into the new quarters, the husband and father took his wife and children all through the house, and pointed out to them the order and purpose of all he had done. But at the

end he brought a little ark made of fine, perfumed, imported wood.

"This," said he, "represents religion, and I have not decided where to place it. I shall be glad for suggestions and advice."

"Oh," exclaimed the grown daughter, "place it in the music room. Religion is a matter for the soul and heart, and its place is in the midst of poetry and music."

"Place it in the library," said the law student son. "Religion is for the intellect, and its place is among the books."

"Find it a place in the kitchen," said the mother. "Religion is practical and its place is amidst labor and useful occupation."

The little child, a girl of three or four, was too young to make suggestions, but the father said, "I have read somewhere that 'a little child shall lead them,' so we will give the ark to the little one and let her decide where it should go."

The little one held the box for a moment and then went over and cast it into the fire on the open grate. The mother and children were horrified, but the father said, "Let it be. This was our method of deciding, and we must abide by the results." And as the ark burned on the grate its expensive wood

sent forth a sweet perfume that entered the conservatory, the library, the kitchen, and all the rooms of the house, and the father said, "That is it. Religion belongs in all the rooms. There is no place where it is to be barred out."

Our lives are that house. There is no justification for any phase of life apart from God. His presence should pervade it all.

Paul said, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." That is the only premise upon which such a conclusion can be worked out. Suppose we say, "To me to live is gain"; then surely to die is loss. If to me to live is pleasure, to die is pain. If to live is fame, to die is to perish. If to live is anything but Christ, then death will interfere. But if to live is Christ, then to die is just to go on living in circumstances better than any we have had before.

What is it to be a Christian? Why, to be a Christian is to find the purpose of life, victory in death, and abundant life forever beyond the grave. Are you a Christian? Perhaps you stop just with saying you are not opposed to Christianity. Perhaps you list yourself with King Agrippa as being "almost persuaded." But I call upon you to be altogether persuaded. I call upon you to repent and believe the gospel. I call upon you to make Jesus Christ

your Pattern and to direct your life after His example. Yea, more than even all these, I call upon you to imitate David by taking the cup of salvation and calling upon the name of the Lord. I call upon you to come to Christ today in prayer and confession and faith. I call upon you to persist in your quest until light breaks in on your darkness, and you obtain in your own heart pardon and peace and blessed assurance. There is reality in the Christian experience, and none of us should be content to stop short of it. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

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