

**D.L. Moody:**

If there is anything that ought to make heaven near to Christians, it is knowing that God and all their loved ones will be there. What is it that makes home so attractive? Is it because we have a beautiful home? Is it because we have beautiful lawns? Is it because we have beautiful trees around that home? Is it because we have beautiful paintings upon the walls inside? Is it because we have beautiful furniture. Is that all that makes home so attractive and so beautiful? Nay, it is the loved ones in it; it is the loved ones there.

I remember after being away from home some time, I went back to see my honored mother, and I thought in going back I would take her by surprise, and steal in unexpectedly upon her, but when I found she had gone away, the old place didn't seem like home at all. I went into one room and then into another, and I went all through the house, but I could not find that loved mother, and I said to some member of the family, "Where is mother?" and they said she had gone away. Well, home had lost its charm to me; it was that mother that made home so sweet to me, and it is the loved ones that make home so sweet to every one; it is the loved ones that are going to make heaven so sweet to all of us. Christ is there; God, the Father, is there; and many, many that were dear to us that lived on earth are there - and we shall be with them by and by.

We find clearly in the 18th chapter of Matthew, and the 10th verse, that the angels are there: Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven, their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Their angels do always behold the Father's face! We shall have good company up there; not only they that have been redeemed, but those that have never been lost; those that have never known what it is to transgress; those who have never known what it is to be disobedient; those who have obeyed Him from the very morning of creation.

It says in another place, when Gabriel came down to tell Zachariah that he was to be the father of the forerunner of Jesus Christ, Zachariah doubted him, he had never been doubted before; and that doubt is met with the declaration: "I am Gabriel, that standeth in the presence of the Almighty." What a glorious thing to be able to say!

It has been said that there will be three things which will surprise us when we get to heaven--one, to find many there that we did not expect to find there; another, to find some not there whom we had expected; a third, and perhaps the greatest wonder, will be to find ourselves there.

A poor woman once told Rowland Hill that the way to heaven was short, easy and simple; comprising only three steps--out of self, into Christ, and into glory. We have a shorter way now--out of self and into Christ, and we are there. As a dead man cannot inherit an estate, no more can a dead soul inherit heaven. The soul must be resurrected in Christ. Among the good whom we hope to meet in heaven, we are told, there will be every variety of character, taste, and disposition. There is not one mansion there; but many. There is not one gate to heaven, but many. There are not only gates on the north; but on the east three gates, and on the west three gates, and on the south three gates. From opposite quarters of the theological compass, from opposite quarters of the religious world, from opposite quarters of human life and character, through different expressions of their common faith and hope, through different modes of conversion, through different portions of the Holy Scripture, will the weary travelers enter the Heavenly City, and meet each other--"not without surprise"--on the shores of the same river of life. And on those shores they will find a tree bearing, not the same kind of fruit always and at all times, but "twelve manner of fruits," for every different turn of mind, --for the patient sufferer, for the active servant, for the holy and humble philosopher, for the spirits of just men now at last made perfect; and "the leaves of the tree shall be for the healing," not of one single church or people only, not for the Scotchman or the Englishman only, but for the "healing of the nations,"--the Frenchman, the German, the Italian, the Russian--for all those from whom it may be, in this, its fruits have been farthest removed, but who, nevertheless, have "hungered and thirsted after righteousness; and who therefore "shall be filled."

An eminent living divine says: "When I was a boy, I thought of heaven as a great, shining city, with vast walls and domes and spires, and with nobody in it except white-robed angels, who were strangers to me. By and by my little brother dies; and I thought of a great city with walls and domes and spires, and a flock of cold, unknown angels, and one little fellow that I was acquainted with. He was the only one I knew at that time. Then another brother dies; and there were two that I knew. Then my acquaintances began to die; and the flock continually grew. But it was not till I had sent one of my little children to his Heavenly Parent-God-that I began

to think I had got a little in myself. A second went, a third went; a fourth went; and by that time I had so many acquaintances in heaven, that I did not see any more walls and domes and spires. I began to think of the residents of the celestial city. And now there have so many of my acquaintances gone there, that it sometimes seems to me that I know more in heaven than I do on earth."

#### **WE WILL LIVE FOREVER**

It says in the 12th chapter of John and the 26th verse: If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be.

I cannot agree with some people, that Paul has been sleeping in the grave, and is still there, after the storms of eighteen hundred years. I cannot believe that he who loved the Master, who had such a burning zeal for Him, has been separated from Him in an unconscious state, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou has given me." This is Christ's prayer.

Now when a man believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he gets eternal life. A great many people make a mistake right there; "He that believeth on the Son hath--h-a-t-h--hath eternal life;" it does not say he shall have it when he comes to die; it is in the present tense; it is mine now--if I believe. He is the gift of God, that is enough. You can't bury the gift of God; you can't buy eternal life. All the grave-diggers in the world can't dig a grave large enough and deep enough to hold eternal life; all the coffin-makers of the world can't make a coffin large enough and deep enough to hold eternal life; that is mine; it is mine!

I believe when Paul said "To be absent from the body and present with the Lord," he meant what he said; that he was not going to be separated from Him for eighteen hundred years; that spirit that he got when he was converted he got from a new life and a new nature, and they could not lay that away in the sepulcher; they could not bury that that flew to meet its Maker. It may be he is not satisfied, and will not be until the resurrection, but Christ says: "He will see then the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Even the body shall be raised; this body, sown in dishonor, shall be raised in glory; this body which has put on corruption, shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. It is only a question of time. The great morning of the world will, by-and-by, dawn upon the earth, and the dead shall come forth and shall hear the voice of Him who is the resurrection and the life.

Paul says: If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He could take down the clay temple, and leave that, but he had a better house. He says in one place: I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for me. To me, it is a sweet thought to think that death does not separate us from the Master. A great many people are living continually in the bondage of death, but if I have eternal life, death cannot touch that; it may touch the house I live in; it may change my countenance and send my body away to the grave, but it cannot touch this new life. To me it is very sad to think that so many professed Christians look upon death as they do.

I received some time ago a letter from a friend in London, and I thought, as I read it, I would take it and read it to other people and see if I could not get them to look upon death as this friend does. He lost a loved mother. In England it is a very common thing to send out cards in memory of the departed ones, and they put upon them great borders of black-- sometimes a quarter of an inch of black border--but this friend has gone and put on gold; he did not put on black at all; she had gone to the golden city, and so he just put on a golden border; and I think it is a good deal better than black. I think when our friends die, instead of putting a great black border upon our memorials to make them look dark, it would be better for us to put on gold.

It is not death at all; it is life. Some one said to a person dying; "Well, you are in the land of the living yet." "No," said he, "I am in the land of the dying yet, but I am going to the land of the living; they live there and never die." This is the land of sin and death and tears, but up yonder they never die. It is perpetual life; it is unceasing joy.

"It is a glorious thing to die," was the testimony of Hannah More on her deathbed, though her life had been sown thick with the rarest friendships, and age had not so weakened her memory as to cause her to forget those little hamlets among the cliffs of her native hills, or the mission-schools she had with such perseverance established, and where she would be so sadly missed.

As some one has said:

"There is a soft, a down bed;

"Tis fair as breath of even;

A couch for weary mortals spread,

Where they may rest the aching head,

And find repose--in heaven!

"There is an hour of peaceful rest,

To mourning wanderers given.

There is a joy for souls distressed

A balm for every wounded breast,

"Tis found alone--in heaven!"

#### KNOWING OUR FRIENDS

Many are anxious to know if they will recognize their friends in heaven. In the 8th chapter of Matthew and the 11th verse, we read: And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

Here we find that Abraham, who lived so many hundreds of years before Christ, had not lost his identity, and Christ tells us that the time is coming when they shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. These men had not lost their identity; they were known as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And if you will turn to that wonderful scene that took place on the Mount of Transfiguration, you will find that Moses, who had been gone from the earth 1,500 years, was there; Peter, James and John saw him on the Mount of Transfiguration, they saw him as Moses; he had not lost his name. God says over here is Isaiah, "I will not blot your names out of the Lamb's Book of Life." We have names in heaven; we are going to bear our names there, we will be known.

Over in the Psalms it says: When I wake in His likeness I shall be satisfied. That is enough. Want is written on every human heart down here, but there we will be satisfied. You may hunt the world from one end to the other, and you will not find a man or woman who is satisfied; but in heaven we will want for nothing. It says in the 2nd chapter of the 1st Epistle of John, speaking to followers of Christ:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Moreover, it seems highly probable; indeed I think it is clearly taught by Scripture, that a great many careless Christians will get into heaven. There will be a great many who will get in by the skin of their teeth, or as Lot was saved from Sodom, so as by fire. They will barely get in, but there will be no crown of rejoicing. But everybody is not going to rush into heaven. There are a great many who won't be there. You know we have a class of people who tell us they are going into the kingdom of God, whether they are converted or not. They tell us that they are on their way; that they are going there. They tell us all are going there; that the good, the bad and indifferent are all going into the kingdom, and that they will all be there; that there is no difference; and, in other words--if I may be allowed to use plain language--they give God the lie. But they say, "We believe in the mercy of God;" so do I. I believe in the justice of God, too; and I think heaven would be a good deal worse than this earth if an unrenewed man were permitted to go into it. Why, if a man should live forever in this world in sin, what would become of this world? It seems as if it would be hell itself. Let your mind pass over the history of this country and think of some that have lived in it. Suppose they never should die; suppose they should live on and on forever in sin and rebellion; and do you think that God is going to take those men that have rejected His Son, that have rejected the offer of His mercy, that have rejected salvation, and have just trampled His law under their feet, and have been in rebellion against his laws down here? Do you suppose God is going to take them right into His Kingdom and let them live there forever? By no means!

#### NO SALOONS IN HEAVEN

No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. Now let those mothers that have sons who are just commencing a dissipated life, wake up; and not rest day nor night until their boys are converted by the power

of God's grace, because no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. These moderate drinkers will become drunkards; no man ever became a drunkard all at once. How the devil blinds these moderate drinkers! I do not know of any sin more binding than the sin of intemperance; the man is bound hand and foot before he knows it.

I was reading some time ago an account of snake-worshiping in India. I thought it was a horrible thing. I read of a mother who saw a snake come into her home and coil itself around her little infant only six months old, and she thought that the reptile was such a sacred thing that she did not dare to touch it; and she saw that snake destroy her child; she heard its pitiful cries, but dared not rescue it. My soul revolted as I read it. But I do not know but we have things right here in America that are just as bad as that serpent in India-- serpents that are coming into many a Christian home, and coiling around many a son and binding them hand and foot, and the fathers and mothers seem to be asleep.

O, may the Spirit of God wake us up! No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God; nor rum-seller either. Bear it in mind. "Woe be to the man that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips." I pity any professed Christians who rent their property for drinking saloons; I pity them from the depths of my heart. If you can never rent your property to better purposes you had better let it stand empty. This idea that all is going well, and that all are going into the kingdom of God, whether they repent or not, is not taught anywhere in the Scripture.

There will be no extortioners in heaven: those men that are just taking advantage of their brothers; of those men who have been unfortunate; whose families are sick; who have had to go and mortgage their property, and had snap-judgment taken against them by some man who has his hand at their throats, and takes every cent that he can get. That man is an extortioner. He shall not inherit the kingdom of God. I pity a man that gets money dishonestly. See the trouble that he has to keep it. It is sure to be scattered. If you got it dishonestly you can't keep it; your children can't keep it--they haven't got the power. You see that all over the country. A man that gets a dollar dishonestly, had better make restitution and pay it back very quick or it will burn in his pocket.

#### **SOME WON'T GET IN**

In the days of Noah we read that he waded as it were through the deluge. He was the only righteous man, but according to the theory of some people, the rest of those men who were so foul and so wicked--too wicked to live--God just took them and swept them all into heaven, and left the only righteous man to go through this trial. Drunkards, and thieves and vagabonds all went to heaven, they say. You might as well go forward and preach that you can swear as much as you like, and murder as much as you have a mind to, and it will all come out right--that God will forgive you; God is so merciful."

Suppose the Governor of a State should pardon out every person that the Courts ever convicted, and are now lying in its jails and penitentiaries; suppose he should let them all loose because he is so merciful that he could not bear to have men punished; I think he would not be Governor of that State long. These men who are talking about God being so full of mercy, that he is going to spare all, and tall all men to Heaven, would be the very men to say that such a Governor as that ought to be impeached--that he ought not to be Governor. Let us bear in mind that the Scripture says there is a certain class of people who shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Now, I will give you the sanction--I will give you the Scripture; it is a good deal better to just give the Scripture for these things, and then if you don't like it you can quarrel with Scripture, and not with me. Let no man say that I have been saying who is going to heaven and who is not; I will let the Scripture speak for itself: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?"

But the unrighteous--the adulterers, the fornicators and thieves--these men may all inherit it if they will only turn away from their sins. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;" but if the unrighteous man says: "I will not turn away from sin; I will hold on to sin and have heaven," he is deceiving himself.

A man that steals my pocket-book loses a good deal more than I do. I can afford to let him have my pocket-book a great deal better than he can afford to take it. See how much that man loses that steals my pocket-book. Perhaps he may get a few dollars; or he may steal my coat; but he does not get much. See how much he has lost. Take an inventory of what that man loses if he loses heaven. Think of it. No thief shall inherit the kingdom of God. To any thief I would say: steal no more. Let him ask God to forgive him; let him repent of his sin and turn to God. If you get eternal life it is worth more than the whole world. If you were to steal the whole world, you wouldn't get much, after all. The whole world don't amount to much, if you have not eternal life with it, to enjoy yourself in the future.