

Well, then, what is it, my brethren and sisters, let us reason a little this morning, what is it the Gospel has to do for us? What have we calculated in our own minds it is? Has something that does not now exist to be created? Has our natural constitutional being to become changed by our becoming the recipients of salvation? Are we to be saved as we are, constituted as we are, or are we to be saved as some other kind of beings? What are we to be when we are saved? Do we suppose that we will be seen and known, that we will be recognized as the same individuals that we are now?

If we are not, I would like much to know what I would be, and who I might be, because there are somethings that, could I avoid it, I would not be. But, in fact, I do not know that there are any reasons that have ever commended themselves to my judgment, as being good ones, for me to entertain a wish to change my identity at all.

The enjoyment of salvation with me, this far, has been ever cherished and understood in connection with my own identity, that when I am saved I shall be, simply, brother Lyman saved, and nobody else; I should be, simply, brother Lyman in possession of all the knowledge requisite to salvation, and the consequent participant of all the blessings accruing from having that knowledge in possession. If I am not that, I shall be disappointed, I shall not be happy, or satisfied, unless I lose all my present expectations and faith.

Then it is, simply, we who are here today that are to be saved; and what is it all embraced in? Simply, in a change of our condition, and not of the condition of some other individual. In the place of ignorance, we will possess that principle of knowledge and comprehension that makes us free. What from? From ignorance. That is all.

Well, says one, "Are there not many other things besides ignorance?" If there are calculating men and women in this room, who can think and reflect, I wish that class particularly, if they never have done it, to make it their study, for a little time, to determine one thing for their own benefit, and for the benefit of others, as far as their influence may extend, to find out how much of the ill that afflicts mankind is not truly attributable to ignorance, to the existence of darkness that pervades the human mind, and in consequence of which they fail to comprehend the truth. By reason of it they know not God, nor understand the principles upon which He acts.

When you find out an evil that is not traceable, legitimately and truly, to this great cause—this great apparent fountain of evil and wrong that exists in the world, just mark it down, name it, and let me see it; if there is any other source for evil, I want to know it. Jesus, we understand, came into the world to save sinners; he came to save, as we say, lost and fallen man; he came to restore the sinful sons of earth to the enjoyment of the mercy, and the favor, and the blessing of heaven.

What did Jesus propose to do, any more than, simply, to save men? The Gospel that he sent into the world proposes to do no more than to save men; and it does just as much for the poorest man as for the richest, it saves them, and that is all it does do.

"But," says one, "does it not damn men also?" Do you think it does? Did you ever find anything about the Gospel that would damn any of you? "But does not the Scriptures hold out such an idea?" I do not know whether they do or not; you ought to know your own experience better than the Scriptures, because it is nearer to you, it is your own property. I would rather have my own