

**N O P L A C E**

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**H I D E**

**By**

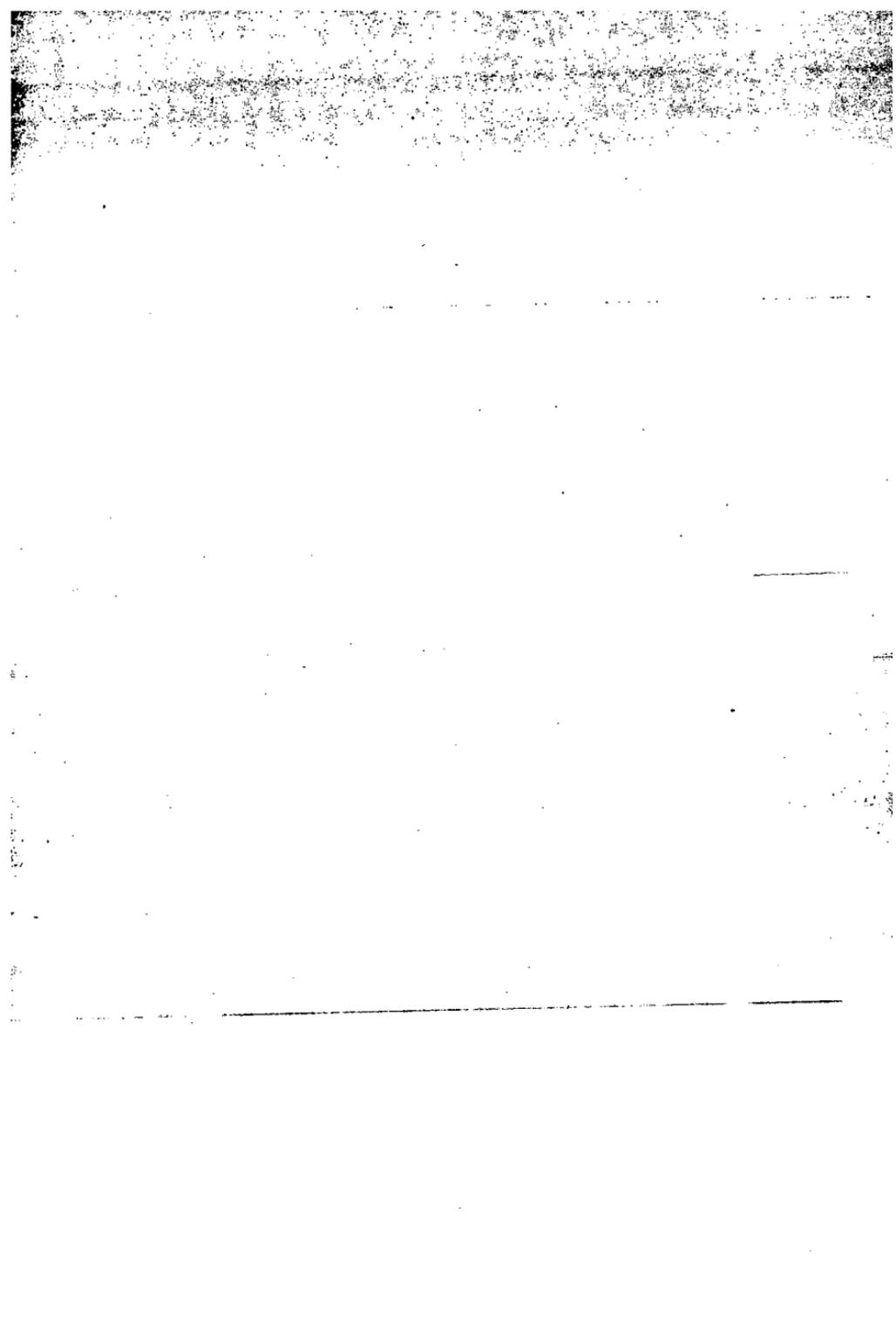
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## INTRODUCTION

*I wish to begin by citing the following verses -- the first is Isaiah 28:17. Here the Word of God says: "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies." To that verse I want to add a portion of Scripture from the 142nd Psalm, verses 4 and 5, in which the Psalmist said: "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion."*

*That peerless preacher of yesteryear, Dr. R. A. Torrey, delivered a great sermon on the subject, "Refuge of Lies," in which he applied four tests to the refuges behind which men hide. Later on that great Southern pulpiteer, Dr. George W. Truett, who so recently went through the portals into the presence of the King, used these very same four tests. I do not know how many times they have been used, but for my message, I want to take these four tests and apply them as we shall see in a moment.*

*Every man needs a refuge. I shall never forget how one time I saw a great painting entitled "The Storm"; and the whole tenor and "motif" of the picture was that it portrayed a great multitude of people, filled with terror, running madly and frantically away from the oncoming storm. I never forgot the picture. It seemed to me as though it were a picture of our world -- men and women seeking shelter from the ghastly vehicle of science, the Thermonuclear bomb. Recently I saw plans outlined for the burying of all the major cities of the world to protect them against destruction by bacterial warfare. Increasingly, to use the words of the old spiritual, "There is no hiding place down here". Science now holds in its hands the weapon by which it can accomplish the annihilation of*

*the human race. What an eerie, weird hour this is, and no one knows what tomorrow will bring forth. Increasingly, we are losing all our security, and we are apt to become the victims of our prostituted genius. When we stop to think about it, we are all seeking a refuge that will provide the spiritual resources essential to adequacy and sanity. Refuge means security. It means some place where we can find the quietude, poise and composure that makes for a life that is rich with meaning and purpose. Almost every man has something in which he is trusting as his refuge. The sad tragedy is that there are myriads of people who are trying to hide in false refuges and are not finding that sense of security without which men cannot live abundantly or triumphantly. They are trying that refuge the Scripture speaks about when it says "a refuge of lies". The Word of God says these false refuges are swept away in the exigencies, the emergencies and the tragedies of life's experiences.*

*It is well for us to ask just what is our refuge, and will it stand? Is it a true refuge, or is it one that is merely the figment of our imagination or of our deceitful philosophy? The fundamental need of every man is a refuge for the soul that throbs within him.*

#### **THE FOUR TESTS**

There are four common sense tests that we ought to apply to every hope we have, every refuge we have, to every thing upon which we depend for security in time and for eternity.

## I.

A true refuge should first of all meet the highest demands of our conscience. What pain and agony there is in the jabbing, cutting, piercing thrusts of conscience! Say conscience originates in any way you want to, it is nevertheless a factor with which men live and with which men deal every day. We are finding more and more that the world is geared to a moral order. No matter where we find man, no matter how primitive or aboriginal, he always has a sense of justice. The conscience can be dulled. The conscience can be seared, disregarded, and yet, even then, conscience will have its hours when it will make its serious and its terrible cry. How many men have said in agony of soul: "Only God Almighty knows how I've suffered in my conscience."

One morning in the early hours the phone rang by the side of my bed. The man on the other end of the line said, "Last week when I was in your office I lied to you. I told you that my life was moral and clean," and then he began to sob and cried, "But I lied. I'm a liar, and I'm suffering in my conscience a living hell."

I told him how his conscience would ease itself when he gave up the sin that was besetting him and dragging him down.

The guilt complex is one of the major causes of psychoneuroses. Every man needs a refuge from the accusing cry of his conscience, for every man must live with himself. It is also important that the person you live with is a person you like. The Bible makes this insistence. When John the Baptist stood before the purple-robed Herod, Herod had him killed. One day Herod and some of his friends were sitting about the table, speculating at the feast they were holding, when someone made a casual remark about Christ. He said that this One was going into all the cities, and that the common people were hearing him eagerly and enthusiastically. Of course, he was speaking of Jesus, but Herod did not know that. Herod,

who seemed to be seared beyond the sensitivity of normal feeling, had a conscience that awoke within him. Arising from the table, trembling like an aspen leaf in a high wind, he blurted out, "I suspect that you're talking about John the Baptist whom I beheaded some time ago. I suppose he has risen from the dead!" Conscience in Herod was not dead. You recall how Judas cried out in agony, after he had betrayed the Saviour for his paltry thirty pieces of silver. As he raced back into the presence of the conspirators, his agony and anguish were expressed when he said, "I have betrayed innocent blood." (Matthew 27:4). He took the money back and the reason he returned it was because it burned his brains; it burned his pockets; it burned his hands; but most of all, it burned his conscience. Judas, under the sting of the lash of conscience, went out and took his life. He died a suicide's death and went to hell.

You know that story by George Elliot of the fatal going astray of a young girl. It has been well said that earth's saddest sight is that. Let angels veil their faces; let crape be hung on the door of Heaven when some young girl has fallen into shame and become sordid, sinful and soiled. George Elliot tells how this young girl put to death the child of her shame. Later she was brought to justice. Kindly, loving Christian women sought to help her and to counsel her. Yet in the strange trance that had suddenly captivated her, in the sheer horror of the deed she had done, she kept saying in a plaintive wail, "I know, but will I always hear the cry of the little baby I put to death in the hedge?" Hear Lady Macbeth as she cries, "Oh, the blood, the blood! Though I lave in this basin, I cannot get it off!" Conscience lives, and men must reckon with their conscience.

Conscience is the monitor of the soul, and every man needs a refuge from the accusing cry of his own convicting conscience. The Holy Spirit sharpens the keen edge of con-

science all the more, so that under the Spirit of God, conscience cuts deeper and deeper.

## II.

*Every man needs a refuge* from the slumbering power of sin in his life. If the refuge in which you are trusting is not making you a better man every day you live, it will never save you from the consequences of sin. If your refuge does not save you from the power of sin in this life, it will never save you from the consequences of sin in the life that is to come. How insidious is the awful, ghastly power of sin as it vents its fury upon the human soul. The mighty are made weak. The lofty are brought low. Many of the finest, most splendid, most gifted, most generous, most lovable men go down to doom and death because the slumbering power of sin in a mad moment comes alive and destroys them.

## III.

*A true refuge must stand* the test of the dying hour. Every man needs a refuge when he comes to that final hour that awaits each one. A refuge that comforts us only when we are well and strong, but fails in the dread hour when we stand face to face with death, is absolutely valueless. Every man needs a refuge in that hour; it is an hour we cannot escape; it is one we cannot evade; it is one we cannot miss.

## IV.

*Then lastly, a true refuge must stand* the test of the Judgment Day. I know there are those who make light of the inexorable justice of Almighty God, who make a mock of the fact that He promises not only redemption, but judgment. Harry Emerson Fosdick speaks about the judgment as one with an anthropomorphic God sitting on a material throne. Anyone who takes the glory of the Word of God and desecrates it with his speech, will one day be

judged for the very idle words that he has spoken. So saith the Scripture.

Yes, there is a Judgment Day. The increasing clouds of war, the unremitting growth of the age in its awful orgy of iniquity, promises and portends the judgment of God! A man needs a refuge out yonder, beyond the gates of death, for he is going to be called to the judgment of Almighty God. That there is such a day of days is insisted upon by human reason. Human reason makes its cry that somewhere there ought to be a place of explanation and revelation. In the *first place*, there ought to be a time of retribution and of justice, some place where the tangled threads will be untangled, irregularities made straight, the mysteries interpreted and revealed. Every man needs a refuge in the Day of Judgment. The Word of God is vividly clear when it comes to this matter of the judgment. The Scripture says that God has appointed a day. Believe me, when God appoints a day, no reminder is needed. The Bible says God has set a day "in which He will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ." (Acts 17: 31). The Scripture says, "we must every one of us give an account of ourselves to God." (Romans 14: 12).

Suppose a friend of yours was indicted for murder. You go to see him in his cell, and you find him in a very frivolous, light frame of mind. You cannot understand his attitude in the light of the events just transpired, so you ask him how he could ever feel like he does, as he is about to undergo the ordeal of a trial in which his very life is at stake. You ask him how he can feel so serene and contented. He replies and says, "Well, I'm just not worried."

Then you say, "Well, why aren't you worried?"

He retorts, "Well, I've got an answer."

You respond, "I know, but will your answer satisfy the judge and satisfy the jury?"

And the man replies, "Oh, I don't know whether it will satisfy the judge or the jury, but the point is, it satisfies me."

Immediately you say, "Why man, you're not the judge! You're not the jury! You don't try the case, and your answer is no good unless it satisfies the judge and the jury."

Will *your* refuge satisfy God? The Bible warns us at this point. The Bible says that we can cry "peace and safety" where there is no peace and safety. Jesus, the gentle, loving Son of God, the One whose heart is literally filled with compassion toward those who need Him the most—nevertheless says: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Many," He says, "shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21-23).

This business of meeting the final test is serious. May God help us to detect the false refuges behind which the adversary of our souls would have us hide in false security, behind which he would lure us, deceive us, and destroy us!

These four tests are immutable. Use them to detect the false refuge from the true. Laying aside the Word of God, the guide book, the divine revelation for human conduct, character and opinion, let's apply these four inexorable tests. If the refuge of our soul is trustworthy, reliable and dependable, it will meet them. It will satisfy and be adequate on all four grounds. Here are the four tests: *First*, will it satisfy the conscience? *Second*, will it make your life better? *Third*, will it fortify you in the hour when you die, when the guise and the disguises are off, and your feet go into the stream that separates time from eternity? If a man's refuge for his soul is trustworthy, it will suffice when his feet touch the river of death and the mists from that river encompass his

face. *Fourth*, will it fortify you out yonder at the judgment when you must make a personal answer to Christ, an answer every one of us must make?

What are some of the false refuges? What are some of the refuges of lies in which men are trusting? There are, sad to say, myriads of them, but here are four false refuges by which men are deceived more commonly than by any others.

### **FIRST FALSE REFUGE TESTED**

There is a false refuge of the soul that says, "I'm trusting in my own goodness. I'm good enough in myself without God's help at all. I really don't feel any need of Christ. I'm not perfect, but I know that in the scale of values the good in my life will outweigh the bad." Let us apply the tests, not using the fifth test, which is the unalterable, unchangeable Word of God, but these four just previously named.

*First of all*, does your own goodness meet the highest demand of your conscience? Is your conscience satisfied when you say, "I'm good enough without God's help, no matter what His Bible teaches, no matter what Jesus Christ revealed and demonstrated, no matter what claims He makes upon human life and character, my goodness is good enough? No matter that He went to the hill of the skull and died there, the just for the unjust, that He might reconcile me to God. No matter that He made an atonement, a perfect expiation in which I can find forgiveness of sin—I'm good enough! I don't need the forgiveness of God. I don't need the efficacy of Christ's shed blood. I'm good enough." Does that satisfy your conscience? It does not satisfy mine. Dr. Torrey said he had met only two moralists in his life-time, who said their conscience was contented, that they had never sinned. Any man that says he has never sinned is a liar. The Word of God states very clearly: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and the truth is not in us." (I John 1:10).

*Second*, does it make your life better to say, "I'm trusting in my own goodness and I'll disregard the claims and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?" Does your own morality make you better every day? If it does not, you are missing the right road.

*Then third*, will your own goodness be sufficient in the solemn hour of death? I read once about a very self-righteous man. This man had no use for the church, no use for the Bible, no use for Christ. He excoriated ministers; he loathed them. He boasted only of his own goodness. Sadly enough, he developed cancer of the brain. A great preacher came and talked with him. He came again and again, pleading with him about the matter of his relationship to Jesus Christ and the destiny of his soul in eternity. Ultimately this preacher stayed with him the whole night long, and in the early watches of the morning the man died, but he was saying, "I wish I were a Christian. I wish I were a Christian." In *that* time, when life's sand is trickling to its finishing grains, there is stark reality about life and death that makes men know their own morality, their own goodness, their own inherent righteousness is, in the sight of God, dross, rags and refuse. Suppose you are dying and I came to see you. With an aching heart I bend over you and as I tell you about Christ, you say, "But I'm good enough. Don't pray for me. Don't read the Word of God to me. Don't talk to me about Jesus Christ. I'm good enough!" Do you think that will make your pillow soft, to push Christ away and say, "I'm good enough?"

*Fourth*, will your own goodness stand the test of the Judgment Day when you shall answer to Jesus Christ, as every man must answer personally? Will it suffice when you say, "I may have erred, but I'm good enough without You, without Your blood, Your sacrifice, Your grace, Your love, goodness and mercy?" You would not dare to stand face to face with Christ, and have His awesome, piercing, all-seeing holy eye look you through and through—The Christ who knows

your past, your present, your future, every hidden deed, every hidden imagination of your heart, every thought and intent. You would not dare to say, "I am confident of my own righteousness, and it will pass in the sovereignty of God's white, holy purity." If you think you can pass the test of the judgment, then you had better get alone with God, look up into His face and tell God that. Try to tell Christ that! You will feel as Isaiah did before you are through, and you will be crying and sobbing with a broken heart, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." (Isaiah 6:51).

### **SECOND FALSE REFUGE TESTED**

Here is another refuge that men hide behind—the fact of other people's badness. How common this is: "I'm not very good, but I'm as good as most people. Anyhow, I'm as good as most members of the church." Did you ever hear that? Like the fellow who came to me and said he would not join the church because there were too many hypocrites in it. To say that, is an absolute indication that you are smaller than a hypocrite is, because to hide behind anything you have to be smaller than it is! Let us put this rationalization to the test.

*First*, does it satisfy your conscience to say, "I won't accept these challenging claims of the Saviour upon my life. I will put them away from me. I will not consider them. I refuse them because other men have done it?" That is just as silly as saying, "I won't pay the merchant or the doctor, because I know some other people who don't pay. I'm not going to pay my taxes because Al Capone didn't pay his and if he's not going to pay his, I'm not going to pay mine, either!" You will get caught! Does your conscience approve of your saying, "I will ignore the matchless, glorious, regal, splendid Son of God. I'll put Him out of my life because a great many other people have done it. I will live without

Him because others live without Him?" I *know* that this will not satisfy your conscience.

*Second*, will it make your life any better to say, "Well, I'm not so good, but I'm a whole lot better than some other people I know"?

I had an experience with an embezzler one time who stole thousands of dollars. As I faced him with the issue of his thievery, he said, "I'll tell you one thing. Every time I was in church I put something in the collection."

I said, "Listen. I'll tell you right now, God doesn't want that kind of money." Would that satisfy you?

*Third*, when you come to the solemn hour of death, when you say in your own soul, "I'm dying without Christ – I'm dying without hope—I'm dying without eternal life—I'm dying without faith – I'm dying without Christ's presence, without His comfort, without His strength. Other people have essayed to go this dark, terrible, awful way, I want to go as they have gone," will that satisfy?

*Fourth*, when you answer to Jesus Christ at the Judgment, will it suffice if you look up into the blessed face of the world's only Redeemer and say, "I rejected You. I put You out of my life. I would have nothing to do with You. I did not want You because there were some others I knew that didn't want you?" Will it suffice? The refuge of other people's badness will never save. There are literally thousands upon thousands, myriads upon myriads that have severed themselves from the life of God, out in the endless vastness of Lake Avernus forever without a Saviour because they joined in the idiocy of that kind of speech.

### **THIRD FALSE REFUGE TESTED**

The next refuge is that of infidelity. The man who says, "I don't believe any of it." Whenever I hear a man say that, I am always astounded, shocked.

I say to him, "You must have literally eaten up every book in the libraries of the world. You must have read every vestige and every page ever written in the realm of apologetics. You must have read at least five thousand books written across the centuries by the great men who believed in God. You must have done a monumental piece of research to arrive at such a profound conclusion!" Most of them will be honest enough to say, "I've never read a thing!" Heads as empty as a bucket!

The man who says, "I'm a downright unbeliever; I reject it all," (infidelity, atheism, agnosticism, materialism, positivism—no matter what form it is, it is all unbelief)—for that man I have the utmost pity.

*First*, does it satisfy your conscience to say, "I reject *in toto* the Bible. I reject the matchless Christ, the enhumanated God. I count Him as untrustworthy. I don't believe anything He says. I don't believe the Bible He solemnly declared to be God's Word. I don't believe in His influence, and I don't believe in the deity of Christ?" God help the poor, bewitched, bewildered, benumbed creature!

*Second*, does it make your life better to say, "Unbelief is the refuge of my soul"? Infidelity undermines the foundation of sound character. One time when D. L. Moody was preaching in Chicago, he asked every man to stand who was saved from a life of sin and shame by Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Two hundred men stood to their feet and their faces were radiant. Then he said, "Now I want to ask: Is there any man here who has been saved from a life of sin and shame by unbelief, by agnosticism, by atheism? Would you please stand." There was only one who stood, a drunken fellow, and before the meeting was over, he accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Unbelief makes nobody better. It makes him a sorrier man, a lost man, if you please, a "dead" man. I was reading

an article by A. K. Morrison, author of that book, *Man Is Not Alone*. That great scientist stated, "the science of yesterday with Descartes said, 'I think; this is a sign I exist' (What a profound conclusion!) But present-day scientists say: 'I think; a sign that there is a *metaphysical power* that gave this intellect'." Then he goes on to present as one of his great arguments that there are certain conditions necessary for life. He says that it has never been completely figured out how many trillions of exacting, precise, intricate conditions must all meet together in one dramatic, positive, infinitesimal split second to cause life to come into existence. He said only an intelligence, only a genius infinitely beyond anything that man could produce could bring it all to pass. There is no use wasting time with further discussion on that point. Any man who begins with faith in God and follows the light given will finally arrive at the feet of Jesus Christ, saying with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

*Third*, at the time of departure into the vast eternity, what hope has unbelief when the shams begin to fall away? Wilmot, the infidel, lay dying. He reached out and laid a trembling hand on the Bible, and with unwonted energy, said, "The only objection against this Book now is a bad life." Never forget that he spent his whole life ranting, raving, and criticizing the Word of God. But as always, the Word of God was like Pat's fence. Pat built his fence so that it was in a perfect square. If anybody knocked it down, it just came right up again. That is the way it is with the Word of God. The unbeliever, Volney, cried out in a violent storm at sea, when his physical life was threatened, "My God, my God, what shall I do?" He was a perfect picture of an unfortified, emotionally unbalanced man. Thomas Paine said, "I've gone up and down the Garden of Eden and with my simple axe, I've cut down one after the other of its trees until I have scarcely left a single sapling standing." Further, he said that the Bible was having its last fling, and in one hundred years

it would be wiped from the earth. Yet that same proud boaster exclaimed in genuine remorse and terror, as death laid its clammy, cold hands upon him, "I would give worlds if I had them, that *The Age of Reason* had never been published!" Hobbs, another infidel, in that solemn ordeal of death said, "I am taking a fearful leap into the dark!" Lord Byron, the English skeptic, said, "My days are in the yellow leaf. The fruit, the flower of life is gone; the worm, the canker and the grief are now mine and mine alone." Thank God, to know in vivid, living experience Jesus Christ as your Lord and as your Saviour, means to face the valley of the shadow of death in triumph and in peace. An infidel, dying on the battlefield, was heard to exclaim by his soldier friends who stood about him, "O God, give me one more chance to repent."

Unbelief will be swept away as a refuge in the hour of death. One time I correlated all the testimonies of dying infidels, atheists, and agnostics that I could find. I found out that though they said, "No God, no Bible, no saving Christ," nearly every one of them died just as orthodox as Puritans in the final belief that they would spend their eternity without God.

*Fourth*, how will *you* answer to Him personally, as every man must, when you say, "My refuge, my theory, my pilot was unbelief?" Doubt is either the agony of an earnest soul, or the trifling of a superficial fool. The Scripture says, "If any man," (and that is as broad as the world, as comprehensive as humanity) "willeth to do the will of God, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God." (John 7:17).

Let us take our doubts to God. Let us tell Him we are not sure of the infallibility of the Bible, of the Deity of Christ. Let us approach God with a sincere, open, unprejudiced mind and heart. One time there was a man under the ministry of Dr. Truett who said he did not believe in Christ; he did not believe in the Bible, and he did not believe in the

atonement wrought out by the world's Saviour on the tree of shame. Dr. Truett, in his manly, spiritual way, said, "Kneel down beside me and tell God you don't believe any of it." The man turned pale and replied, "I couldn't do that!" No sensible, reasonable man *would* do that. No man could be that dogmatically positive about his denials. They might not be *sure* (agnosticism), but few men would conclude that they know for a certainty the Bible is a LIE!

Honest skepticism is a very rare thing, and it will bring any man to God if he will follow the light as God gives it. I have yet to find an honest skeptic who read the books that I recommend to him that did not find his way safely to Jesus Christ and take Him as his Lord and Saviour. Most skeptics are not honest. The challenge still remains to anyone to prove that the greatest teachers, the greatest musicians, the greatest men that have graced our world with their presence were not Christians. Professor Romanes of Cambridge University, who was the bosom friend of Charles Darwin, said, "The most illustrious names at Cambridge are ranged on the side of orthodoxy." The greatest scientists, philosophers, scholars and archeologists have upheld the Bible as God's book. Consider the roll: Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Cuvier, Sir John Herschel, Liebnitz, Brewster, Secchi, Faraday, Pasteur, Agassiz, Inge, Temple, Barnes, Sir William Dawson, Gyt, Pascal, Dana, Locke, Llandor, Scott, Newman, et cetera. These were not only men of astute, brilliant unquestioned genius, but were devout believers in the infallible Word of God, the deity of Jesus Christ, His atonement on the cross for the sin of the world, and the fact of His coming again. When you hear some sawed-off, hammered down, disconnected, sophisticated, pea-brain stand up and tell you that the great minds reject Christ, he lies! The greatest names the world has on its honor rolls were humble believers, and followers of Jesus Christ.

The rejection of Jesus Christ and Christianity indicates one of three things: Either an insufficient examination of all the evidence available, or a wilful prejudice imposed because you love sin, or you procrastinate and neglect. Every unbeliever in the world can be put in one of those three pigeon-holes. Unbelief is the trifling of a materialistic, super-egotistical, sophisticated fool, or else it is neglect. Obedience to Christ is the solvent of every doubt in the world. Consider the case of my wonderful Dad. He came to Jesus Christ with his mind literally cluttered with doubts, saturated with agnosticism, but those doubts were banished even as the sun in its glory banishes the mists of the morning. Christianity with its basic revelation gladly accepts the scientific method of investigation and experimentation.

A recent careful investigation proved that the shelves of our libraries in our universities were practically devoid of the great apologetic works and volumes on Christian evidence! Such an obvious bias is unfair and unintelligent.

#### **FOURTH FALSE REFUGE TESTED**

Here is another refuge. A man says, "I do not expect any man to be lost, no matter what his crimes, no matter what his sins, no matter what his conduct, no matter how wretched his character. This is the refuge of universalism and restorationism. Putting aside the Word of God which speaks definitely on this point,

*First*, does it satisfy your conscience to say vice and virtue shall have the same rewards, the same harvests? Is your conscience satisfied with this? The law of sowing and reaping never fails. Everything has its opposite. Hell is merely the abode of the soul who does not want God. Men choose for themselves the way of life that ends in hell, and the men who are in hell *want* to be there, and would not be out of there. They are critical, bitter, and still rebellious. They,

more than ever, are filled with hatred in their attitude toward God. Men choose hell in this life or men choose heaven. There are two modes of living, two ways of life, two directions. You choose, and you go.

*Second*, does it make a man's life better to say that no matter how a man lives, it will be all right beyond the sunset and the night? That is contrary to every argument of reason and contradicts the plain statement of Scripture!

*Third*, will universalism stand the test of the dying hour? It is a "hope so." No rational man in the best hour of his reason could ever believe that one could live a licentious, worldly, God-forgetting, Christ-neglecting life, with abandonment to sin, and then feel that it would all come out all right in the end. Do you think that would qualify a man to die in peace? A man can not *live* in peace who thinks that way, let alone *die* in peace.

*Fourth*, do you think a man can stand up yonder before the face of the Christ who said, "I came to earth to die for sinners that they might not be lost. I wept over them through the agonies of long, weary nights. I poured out my heart for them. I pleaded for them. I stood in the city streets and called. I went out on the hill of the skull and laid myself upon a Roman rack and died, as the perfect Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. I was crucified for them. I gave my life for those who would repent and believe." Do you think you will be fortified out yonder at the Day of Judgment when you say, "I'm here because I said—I thought—I believed that no matter how a man sowed, the harvest would come out all right. I didn't believe You. I didn't believe Your Bible. I didn't believe the logic of my own mind?" You will not use that theory. That theory does violence to the law of philosophy and of fact. A man who gives himself to Christ can not, does not possibly have the same interests, nor can he have the same future or the same

ultimate destiny in eternity as the one who rejects Christ as his Saviour. Conscience, judgment, law, philosophy, reason, all rise up to cry: "As men sow, so shall they reap." There is a law of physical gravity and one of moral gravity, and every man goes to his own place.

All these refuges we have mentioned are refuges of lies. The Psalmist said, "Refuge failed me. Refuge fled away from me. Refuge broke down." But thank God, there *is* a refuge for sinful, eternity-bound souls. There is a sufficient refuge that will stand every inexorable test.

### CHRIST IS THE TRUE REFUGE

The Psalmist said, "Refuge failed me, and *then* I turned to the Lord, and I said, Thou shalt be my refuge." Lord, I surrender to you. I am through with false refuges, illusory, deceiving and insufficient. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3:11). Here is *terra firma*. Here is rock. No matter how sinful, how bedarkened, how confused, how broken, how entangled, the Lord Jesus Christ assures me in the precious promises of His Holy Word that He will meet every need in my life.

*First*, He satisfies my conscience. We have sinned. We have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way. We have come short of the glory of God, but Jesus came to take our place. In language that expresses both the *mystery* and the *love* that caused our wonderful Christ to die on the cross, the Word of God says, "He bore in His own body our sins on that accursed tree." He was the God-man. He was the fusion of humanity and deity. He was God invading humanity in corporeal form. He was the triune God, capacitated as you are not and as I am not, to bear the sin of the whole world. His promise is, He finished that great work. He wrought out a perfect redemption. He satisfied the Sovereign justice of a holy God and made an atonement

for sin, an expiation for sin. The Scripture says, concerning His redemptive work on the cross, "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, *cleanses* us from all sin." (I John 1:7). His blood is the anti-toxin for my sin—the only remedy! *That* satisfies my conscience.

*Second*, He makes better men. That is not all. The Word of God says He makes "*new men*"! Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God overcometh the world." (I John 5:5). "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." (II Cor. 5:17). Millions upon millions have been changed and transformed by the power of Jesus Christ. With Christ, life is glorious; it is abundant. It has an aura of meaning, and it has a purpose to it. It has fulfillment, and you live for the things that are eternal, that cause you to climb higher in the glory of character as revealed in Christ. You become more like Him. Men in the fellowship of Christ become better men every day they walk with Him.

*Third*, He will help us to die. A great preacher said, "The gladdest scenes I have ever witnessed have been the deathbed scenes of true Christians—scenes of glory, scenes of triumph! The renowned preacher, Reverend Scott, said in his dying hour, "This is heaven begun. I am done with darkness forever, and now there is nothing but life and joy." D. L. Moody, in life's last moments, lifted himself, it is said, on his elbows, and with super-physical vision into the realm of that which was spiritual and eternal, he began to say in a soft, gentle voice, "Earth is receding. God is calling, and Heaven is opening up before me." I will never forget, and neither will my Mother, how in the last hours of my Dad's life, in the dark morning hours just before dawn, he lifted his finger, and though he could not speak a word, he kept pointing to the glories of that World where he is now. Christ's promise to me is, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art

with me." (Psalm 23:4). What would you trade for that? What would you give for that? A dying soldier boy in his delirium, whispered, "Now let me tell Jesus, as I'm dying, that I'll lean on Him, for I leaned on Him back yonder, months and years ago, and now I'm not afraid."

*Fourth*, He will help us there at the Judgment. I love the words of the song that says, "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on Thee." I am not going to plead my goodness—I have none of my own. Neither am I going to plead other peoples badness, nor unbelief, nor universalism. I have entrusted my soul to Christ—the gracious, loving, lovely, matchless, adorable Christ. I have *Him* as my Lord! I have accepted Him as the Saviour of my poor, needy soul, and I have had the privilege of walking with Him through the years that I have lived in this vale. That is not all. I know that out there at the Judgment-bar of Almighty God, when men stand in the ineffable brightness of that blazing light in which all is revealed, I shall find myself in God's Presence, suddenly garmented and clothed with the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the Word of God says that all the darts of the adversary hurled against me cannot penetrate the perfectness of that garment. Sinner though I be, He has promised to be the eternal refuge of my soul. On the very promise of the spoken word of Christ, I am, I will be eternally safe!

"The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies," so you may as well throw them away now, and come to Christ. Be ready for life; be ready for the judgment of God; be ready for eternity; be able to sing with all your soul, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name."