

# A SOLEMN TESTIMONY

## A SERMON

Preached on Sunday Morning, August 28th, 1864

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“He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathers not with me scatters.”

Luke 11:23

So, then, it seems that there will ultimately be but two classes; that there is no middle state; that we must either be tares or wheat, either sheep or goats, either cursed or blessed, either saved or lost, either received or rejected, either rise to heaven or sink eternally to hell, either die in our sins or die in the Lord; either appear at the bar of God, to be personally responsible there for all our sins, or else to appear in and by Christ Jesus, the great Surety that frees us from all. Hence, then, our text is of a decisive kind. “He that is not with me is against me.” You will observe that this sweeps away a shelter to which a great many run. They say, Well, we do not profess to be Christians, but still we are not enemies; we would not do anything against the cause of God, or against the ministers of God, or against the people of God; we would rather help them than hinder them. Now I say, so far so good; those are all good feelings, and right feelings too, so far as they go, but it is not enough to save the soul; there must be something more. And when the Lord is pleased to convince a sinner of the infinite weightiness of eternal things, then such who shelter themselves on neutral ground will come out into solemn decision for God, and will feel that nothing, after all, so much concerns them as that vital godliness which alone can save a soul from death, and fit it to be a partaker of the inheritance on high among all them that are sanctified. And we are every day, which of course increases the solemnity of these things, reminded of the uncertainty of human life. We cannot look around us and see one and another taken from us without feeling solemnized.

“Who next shall be called to the sky?  
My merciful God, is it I?”

I shall in my subject this morning, aim at very great simplicity, in order to ascertain as clearly as possible where you are, even every one of you, for we are to preach the gospel to every creature, as far as the Lord shall enable us so to do. Our text, you will observe, divides itself into two parts. Here is, first, *vital oneness with the Savior*, “For he that is not” thus “with me, is against me.” Secondly, *the direful consequences of not being thus vitally one with the Savior*, “he that gathers not with me scatters.”

First, then, *vital oneness with the Savior*. I will take a threefold view of this department. First, one with him savingly; second, one with him reconciliation-ally; and third, one with him supremely. First, then, savingly. The very first lesson that the Holy Spirit teaches man is, that he is by his sin in a lost condition: but how far he is in a lost condition the sinner finds out generally afterwards; because, when first convinced of sin, we are busied more about our personal outward sins than about our heart sins and original sin. And when, we begin to see the mercy of the Lord towards poor sinners, then the Lord goes on, and convinces us that we are lost by the fall of Adam, and that we are conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity, and that our nature is altogether depraved, as the apostle said, sold under sin. Now, how are we, therefore, to escape the wrath into which by sin we are brought? to escape the curse under which by sin we are brought? to escape the bitterness of death, to escape the thunderbolts of heaven, to escape an eternity of woe? How is this to be done? Let a sinner be brought under an apprehension of this, and God alone can bring a sinner thus under an abiding apprehension of his lost condition. The Scriptures are read in Christian houses, and prayer, all the means possible, yet we find, in many cases, children remain just as blind as they were, unconcerned, unconvinced. And the word is publicly preached, and we bless God for it, and we see that persons will hear the word from month to month, from year to year, and hear it, too, respectfully; and, as I have already suggested, so far so good; yet years shall roll on, and there is no real conviction wrought. Still I have a feeling that when a kind Providence inclines a person to attend the word, there is an ultimate purpose in God's mind concerning that man, and that by-and-bye he shall be brought under a sight and sense of what he is; but again, I repeat it, that none but the blessed God can so cause judgment and mercy to sink down into the heart as to bring a sinner under a real, trembling sight and sense of his lost condition. Ah! do you say, that is my state. I do see myself lost. I do see and feel what a poor, depraved creature I am. I do feel that out of my heart rise all the evil thoughts described by the Savior. I do see myself to be in that condition, and I can say that my prayer, is, "Lord, save me." I can say that my prayer is, "I beseech you, deliver my soul." If you are under this apprehension, or if you ever have been, it is the work of the blessed Spirit of God, and therefore despair not, I say unto such, for if he meant to destroy you he never would thus have chastened you, wounded you, humbled you, spiritualized you, severed you from an ungodly and unthinking world, and caused you so to number your days as to apply your heart unto that wisdom that descends from above. Now, then, let the dear Savior appear, that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" that if you shalt confess with your mouth, that is, of course, an honest confession, the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, and that he has, by his obedient life and by his atoning death, wrought deliverance from the curse, being made a curse for us; that he has wrought deliverance from the wrath of God, himself enduring that wrath indicated by the flaming sword of justice; that he has wrought deliverance from hell, from perdition, from all delusion; and this Person, who has wrought this wonderful deliverance, said, "Him that comes to me I will in no way cast out." Now is Jesus Christ thus the hope of our salvation? If so, I am sure we shall be for him; I am sure we shall be decided for him; I am sure we shall feel, more or less, the force of the apostle's words, when he says, "Neither is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved .but the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." And let me go a little farther here, that if Jesus Christ be the hope of your salvation, you will be employed sometimes in balancing, things. Through a kind Providence you may have many comfortable hopes and expectations in relation to this life; you may hope for good health; you may hope for a comfortable home; you may hope for a successful business; you may hope for the advantage of friends; you may have many hopes, but you will say

to yourself, After all, these hopes may be blasted in one moment, so that there is no hope, after all, like the hope of the mercy of God; there is no hope, after all, like the hope of salvation; there is no hope, after all, like the hope of eternal life; there is no hope, after all, like the hope of the glory of God; there is no hope, after all, like that glorious and blessed hope given unto us by the revelation to our souls of the Lord Jesus Christ. You will say, I would stand but for him; he is my only hope; he is the only foundation upon which my precious and never-dying soul can rest; he is the only way in which God, consistently with holiness and justice, can show mercy. Now, if you are brought thus far, and Jesus Christ, in what he is and in what he has done, has become your hope, you will at least be solemnly, sincerely, and practically decided for him as far as you know him. I cannot expect you to be decided for him so far now as you will be by-and-bye. I speak now to those that have just a hope in Jesus Christ, and have not yet much understanding of that covenant of which he is the Mediator; so that, as far as you know him, you will be decided for him. You will be like the man you read of in the 9th of John; he was very much confused. They said, "Well, but give God the glory; this man is a sinner." As though the blind man should say, I do not know whether he is a mere prophet of God, or whether he is the Son of God; but as far as I know him I will stand out decided for him; and he says, One thing I know, and what I know, that I will abide by, that whereas I was blind, now I see. And so, poor sinner, you may say, Whereas I was once blind to my condition, now I see it; whereas I was once blind to Jesus Christ, now I see he is the sinner's only hope. And after this man that you read of in the 9th of John had been exercised for a time, and still abode by what he knew of the Savior, was not much illuminated yet, but there was the root of the matter, the man was sincere, and thus the work was done; quite enough to make a Pharisaic world despise him and cast him out, and when he was cast out, the Savior found him, and said, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" Ah, that is what he wanted to find out. The Lord knows how to speak to us; he knows what we are really inquiring for; he knows whether we are sincere in our inquiries, and what we are really inquiring for. There is no doubt, but this man was thinking, I wonder if that person be the Son of God; I wonder if he be the Son of God. "Do you believe on the Son of God?" "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" "And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen him, and it is he that talks with you." And then a flood of light rolled in upon his soul; he at once saw that this person was Immanuel; not only the Son of God, but God as well as the Son of God, and he worshipped him. And thus, his mind became illuminated: and as the mind becomes illuminated you will stand out decided. Now then, and I must be exceedingly careful here, for there is no one means by which so many are deceived as they are by a false hope. Everyone has a hope of some sort; who shall deliver us from being deceived by a false hope? Well, say you, but if my hope rests upon Jesus Christ, is not, that right? It may be a wrong hope built upon a right foundation. You may be building upon the right foundation, but you may be wrongly built; You may be but hay, wood, or stubble of a professor; so that you are not a precious stone, you are not silver, you are not gold. People think, if they are upon the right foundation, that is enough. No; you may be upon the right foundation, but you may be the wrong material, and be wrongly built. How then am I to know? You must know it by this; whether you see yourself that lost, depraved, helpless, poor creature that sin has made you, and whether you see that Jesus Christ is the end of the law and of sin, and that from solemn necessity your hope is in him; that kind of hope that admits, not denies, as free-will and duty-faith deny, but admits, without bringing in a doctrine afterward to contradict it, admits the perfection of the atonement of Christ, admits the eternal perfection of his righteousness. Now, if this be your hope, then your hope is that which makes way for the coming in of Christ in the completeness of the warfare, the completeness of the victory, the completeness of his work. But if your hope be associated with that Pharisaic pride that

would thrust aside the perfection of the atonement of Christ, would thrust aside some of the things I presently have to name; then, though you are upon the right foundation, you are wrongly built. In order rightly to be built upon this foundation, refuges of lies must be swept away, and you must be brought into such a state as to feel you can have no hope only by the delightful truths that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, and that his righteousness justifies from all things. Now if your hope does not arise from a sight and sense of necessity; if it is a matter of the deepest solemnity to you, a matter of life and death importance with you, a matter of time and eternity importance with you; if these be not your feelings, as the Lord lives, though you may be upon the right foundation, you are not the right material; you are wrongly built; you must be brought down, and you will be rejected at the last. Thousands upon thousands shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able, because they have never been brought rightly to rest upon that foundation, so as to make way for the coming in of the Savior in the real perfection of his work. So, if you have this true hope, then you are not against him, you are for him, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your heart.

Secondly, not only he that is not with me thus savingly, but he that is not with me in the way of reconciliation, is against me. What do I mean by reconciliation? Well, here is something to be reconciled to. Here is eternal election to be reconciled to, and if you cannot bear that test, there is something, to say the least, essentially lacking in your religion. Yes, not only to be reconciled to eternal election, but to embrace it as an essential of eternal life; for if God had not chosen you, you would never have been given to Christ, nor Christ given to you. It is essential to salvation. You are reconciled to that. I do not mean so reconciled as merely to assent to it; that is no reconciliation at all; that is like the reconciliation that takes place among creatures; they forgive, but do not forget; they just tolerate you, but do not love you. That is not what I mean; that is no reconciliation; that ought to be called a neutralization, and not a reconciliation. Real reconciliation is the entire absence of every antipathy, and the presence of the deepest and the most intense sympathies with the object. And so, you will be reconciled to him in eternal election; you must be with him in that. Suppose you had been on earth with him, and heard him utter these words, what would you have done, according to your present feeling? Try yourself if you can. "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain;" mark that, "remain." Here is the eternal safety of the chosen. Do you see your need of that, and are you thus reconciled to God? But this is not all; there is a covenant also. Great many covenants in God's word, and the Lord has so recorded those covenants that none shall distinguish the true from the temporal but he who is taught of God. And Jesus Christ thanks God the Father for so doing; "You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; so, it seemed good in your sight." When the Lord called Abraham, the first thing that the Lord revealed to him was not the temporal covenant, the gift of Canaan, and a numerous literal posterity; that was not the first. The first thing that God did with Abraham was to swear by himself, revealing himself in an immutable covenant; that in his seed, meaning Christ, should all the families of the earth be blessed. Abraham saw this, understood this, and saw that nothing but such a Priest as that described in the 110th Psalm could answer to this covenant. "The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Now, if you are thus brought to Christ as your hope, brought to him reconciliationally, reconciled to him as embodying in himself the eternal counsels of God; for "he that has seen me," said Christ, "has seen the Father;" if I would learn the immutability of God's counsel I must learn it in and by him who is the same yesterday, and today, and forever; if I would learn the sovereignty of God, I must learn it by Christ

Jesus, and see his sovereign mercy in choosing poor sinners to salvation, and making all that provision that has made their salvation eternally sure. Thus, then, if you are not with him as your only hope, if you are not with him in the order of his covenant, then you are against him. You will say, Well, but supposing I am with him in that hope you have just now described. Then you are so far with him; but in other respects you are at present against him, and you need to be taught the way of God more perfectly; and having that living hope you will be taught the way of God more perfectly. Your eyes will be opened, and you will by-and-bye see those high-doctrine people, as the world calls them, in a very different light. I wonder at some professed Christians, that the things said against the people of God should have the least weight with them whatever. Has not the Savior forewarned us of all this? and has not the church in all ages been, in the eyes of the world, especially the professing world, as the offscouring of all things? But that is one of the means by which Satan keeps for a time some of the doves from their windows, some of the sheep from the green pastures, some of the prisoners of hope from that freedom into which, in the Lord's own time, they shall come. I have more love to the faultiest child of God under the canopy of heaven than I have to the sleekest, cleanest, most faultless Pharisee that ever lived.

But, thirdly, we are to be with the Lord also supremely; there must be no rival. I will take first the pleasures of the world. Now what are they? "A mockery!" to use the words of a great lawyer, "a mockery, a snare, and a delusion." What will be the result? You will turn from them; you will look at the end to which those pleasures will lead; you will look at the dregs that will be found at the bottom of the cup; you will look at the bitters that must come after the so-called sweets; and then you will pray that you may have your evil things in this life, to the end, when you come to die, angels may escort you to Abraham's bosom. You will do, therefore, just as Moses did, when he came to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. No doubt he was reckoned a madman for so doing. Refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter! Why, here is a throne before you, royalty before you, a kingdom before you, one of the most fertile countries before you; and are you going to be silly enough to renounce all that? Why, if you abide by your position you may live a life of entire pleasure. Ah, but these will be but the pleasures of sin, and they will be but for a season; they will soon be gone, soon be over. Pleasures of sin! No, I would rather suffer affliction, hold fast the bitter cup of tribulation, rather than walk in that path that will subject me to the cup of damnation at the last. And so, he chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt." Yes; you call me a fool for leaving the world, reproach me. Why, that reproach is a sign of Satan's hatred and my separation from the world; and even that reproach is dearer to me than all the treasures in Egypt. Mr. Hart has a similar idea, only he is there referring to the internal:

"Above the world-ling's highest joy,  
Our saddest hours we prize."

See how Moses reckoned; he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. He saw the life the saints should live, and longed to be with them; he saw the purity in which they should appear at the last; he saw the righteousness, he saw the kingdom, he saw the glory in which they should stand at the last; and therefore he said, What are all the pleasures of this world in comparison of that fulness of joy that is in the presence of God, and those pleasures that roll forever at his right hand? So, then, you will hold Jesus Christ above the pleasures of the world; willing to leave them

for him; but to leave him on no account whatever. Second, silver and gold. Silver and gold! What! say you that while Jesus Christ, and eternal mercy by him, are better than the pleasures of the world, are you going to tell us this morning that it is better than silver and gold? Yes, friends, yes; better than rubies; all things you canst desire are not to be compared to the grace of God. "You are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold," If that could obtain your eternal redemption, and you needed as much of it as possible with which to appear before God at the last, then you might well take care of it. I think some professors have this idea; and perhaps I had better be careful in handling this part. Now some of you that would not part with hardly anything to help forward the cause of God, you seem to have a notion that you will want your silver and gold to divide Jordan with, and to appear before the Lord with. Now I assure you that is an error. It is indeed. Do you know that you brought nothing into the world? Well, but I mean to carry something out. Ah, that's an error, friends; it is indeed. You won't carry anything out; you won't indeed. You can't carry your body out; you must leave it with us, and we will bury it as well as we can, and pay all the respect to your memory we can; but you can't take that. You can't take your house, your land, your silver, your gold. Oh, well then, if that's it, I won't be so careful of it; I will give more to the poor and the cause of God in future. Well, that's right; I am glad I have convinced you of it. "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold:" we don't want them; "but with the precious blood of Christ." You will need his atonement, you will need his righteousness, you will need his name, you will need his promises; you will need them. "You were not redeemed with corruptible things." "What," say you, "are silver and gold corruptible?" Yes. "Oh, then, I will think less of it than ever." That's right; that's right! "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." So, here is something better than the pleasures of the world, and something better than silver and gold. Now old age will overtake some of us presently, and in relation to mortal things you will say, "Can I discern between good and evil? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Yes, can I any more join even in the outward worship of God with any pleasure?" Yet, when this lament is ended, the same Christian man turns to the sweet hope that he has in Jesus, turns to the true riches he has there. He looks up and smiles. "Ah," he says, "let all that is temporal go, let it go; for though my outward man thus perishes, the inward man is renewed day by day." All departs. He says, "Let them go; I want them not; yes, I want them to go, and I myself want to go; it will make room for those riches which are in Christ Jesus." The riches of Jacob and Esau were so great, they could not dwell together; and so, the riches of Christ are so great that there is no room for anything of this world. So, then, it is we carry nothing with us. But if we are born of God, we shall carry the truth with us, the name of Jesus with us, the Holy Spirit with us, the blessed God with us; and all our true treasures shall go with us there. Thirdly, relatives; we must be with Jesus, above relatives, father, mother, wife, husband. We love our relatives, like to see families love each other, the several branches feel for each other, and be happy so far as we can be amidst the broken down, adverse scenes of this world. Still, at the same time, there is a family unity in Jesus that is better than that, surpasses it all; so that, if your wife, your husband, children, or whatever relatives or friends, wish you for their sakes to give up the truth, you must not listen to them. You will say, No. I love you all; but there is something above you all, something beyond you all; and if I were to give up Jesus, and go where you wish, I should do myself harm, without doing you any good; yes, I should do myself harm, and confirm you in your delusion. But if I stand fast where I am, who can tell but that the Lord may make use of my steadfastness to convince you of where you are, and bring you over into the same hope and into the same path? So, then, we must be with Jesus supremely, above all our relatives near and dear. Fourthly, above our

good name. Yes; the Savior underwent the loss of his name, temporarily so, not in reality; because the clouds that rested upon it, that is, the reproach that rested upon, it soon went off. And so, never mind what people may say of you; your business is with the blessed God, and if people reproach you because you are one of that sect everywhere spoken against, and because you may go to hear that minister who many most solemnly wish was dead, and that plenty would be glad, if they could to kill, never mind them. "He that is ashamed of me and of my words before man, him will I be ashamed of before my Father and before his angels." Fifth and last upon this point, you must be with him supremely above life itself. What is mortal life? A vapor, appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away. There is nothing makes me more ashamed of myself than to read carefully the Scriptures, and see the light estimation in which the prophets held their lives in comparison of the estimation in which they held eternal life; when I look at the millions, I may say, for it is a fact, millions have died by martyrdom between the time the Savior rose from the dead and the present day. I look back at one instance; that instance has taken my mind more than any other I am acquainted with, namely, Laurentius. He must be put to death for the truth by a Roman magistrate, who said, "We will subject you Christians, you despise life, we will subject you to such a death as shall strike a terror into you all." Laurentius well knew that it was not in his power to do that. And so, they had a long gridiron made, and put him over a slow fire. He lay till one side was burnt pretty well to ashes; then he quietly said, "I am done that side; turn me over." They turned him over; happy all the time; yes, the joys of the soul were greater than the pains of his body. They turned him over, and when he was burnt to a cinder on that side he said, "I am done; now I can be served up," and expired that moment. The adversary could not have done a worse thing to the body than that. It made the enemy stand astounded how a man could die such a martyrdom as that. Ah, to him this life was nothing; Jesus was held supremely. So then, let the pleasures of the world go, here are the pleasures of salvation to come. Let silver and gold go, here are the true riches to take their place. And if I must lose friends and kindred near and dear, my God will all my need supply, make me his care, be a father unto me and all I can need. And if my name in the world be blasted, I have a name in Jesus, named after him, upon which not a blemish can ever rest. "It shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." And must mortal life presently expire? What of it? It's only to make way for the coming in of eternal life. Now then, can we this morning in the sight of God say that as the hope of salvation, that as the way of reconciliation to God, and as that stands first and before everything, can we truly say we do so hold Jesus Christ? And do we practically follow out the Savior's words, let his kingdom be first, let the welfare of our souls be first "Seek you first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added"? Now I must be plain, out of love to your souls, and I will include myself, lest I should seem to be speaking to others without also speaking to myself; I therefore say, if we have not this living hope, sight and sense of need, so as to make the heart feel decided for Christ; if we have not this real reconciliation to God in the order of his covenant; and if we do not thus hold Jesus Christ supremely, as being first and foremost and surpassing everything else, then our religion is a thing of nothing; and if we are not thus for him, my text will stand against us, "He that is not with me is against me."

I have occupied rather more time than I intended upon the first part, and I must now hasten in my remarks to conclude the other part. Well, suppose, then, I am not thus with him, what then, what shall I be like? Would that I could describe what you will be like, but I cannot; I can only give you some very dark and distant hints and views of what you will be like. But nevertheless; I will find some circumstances to show what you will be like, if you are not thus found with Christ. You will

be like the man who looks at the ark but prefers yonder towering tree; or like the man who looks at the ark, but prefers that lofty tower; or like the man who looks at the ark, but prefers that lofty mountain. Presently the flood comes, and these, notwithstanding their elevation or exaltation, are engulfed in the waters. You, my hearer, may pique yourself upon your towering profession; you may be like the green bay-tree in your own eyes; your pride may be like a mighty tower, and your good doings may be to you like a high mountain, standing firm and strong. But like the man apart from the ark, you will find such places to be places of danger, and down your guilty soul must for ever go. Or you may be like the Israelite who was determined to escape the angel of death in some other way than that of the paschal lamb; whereas the angel of death cared nothing for anything but the blood; and the sword of justice cares nothing for anything but the blood of Christ. "When I see the blood, I will pass by;" and wherever you are found, if you are not there you must be cut down. Or you will be like the Egyptian, overtaken and drowned. Or you will be like one of Rahab's relations, supposing there was such a one, we do not read there was, who said, Well, I will not stay in this house; there is no safety here. But there was safety nowhere else. We will suppose that one had wandered from that house which was to be sheltered from judgment; the sword of the Lord would have surely cut such a one down. Or again, do you like an uncostly profession, or a profession that costs you nothing? Are you dreadfully afraid your religion will cost you too much? Are any of you afraid of this? I know some of you are not; you have given pretty good proofs that you are not; but some of you perhaps may be. Shall I show you what you will be like? You will be like the foolish virgins, that thought their lamps would burn without oil; they had not gone to the expense of the oil; they were economical, and I dare to say said to the wise virgins, What fools you were to lay out all that money for that oil! what fools you were to be so costly, to go to such expense! Ah, but the wise virgins would say, Well, fools or not fools, we have done it because we sincerely love the bridegroom, and we understand that this is the way we are to express our gratitude; this is his order of things; and we shall see by-and-bye who the fools are. So, when the bridegroom came, they that were ready, and were really decided, went in with him but the others never were with him and therefore, not being with him, they were reckoned as against him. Hence when the woman, she didn't care what her profession cost her, when she anointed the Savior's feet with costly ointment, Ah, why was this waste made? Why, this Jesus Christ is only a minister; why make so much fuss about a minister? He is too well off by half: only puff him up with pride. Why should he be taken such care of? Better by half have given it to some of the poor people, not given it to the minister. Expense like this is altogether out of reason. He never ought to eat meat more than twice a week. Why this waste made? Now that sounds very well, doesn't it, very well indeed? You know what the Savior's answer is. Why, so far from my disapproving of this costliness, this woman's real love to me, I tell you this, that wheresoever this gospel is preached, that which she has done shall be told for a memorial of her.