



The  
CHRISTIAN TREASURY

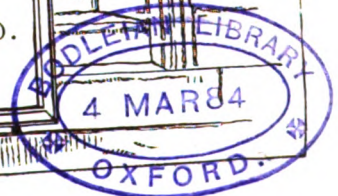
CONTAINING

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MINISTERS AND MEMBERS  
OF  
VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS



1883.

EDINBURGH:  
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LONDON: GROOMBRIDGE & SONS.



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# CHRISTIAN TREASURY.

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## FOOLISHNESS AND POWER.\*

BY EUGENE BERSIER, PASTOR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF PARIS.

‘For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us  
which are saved it is the power of God.’—1 Cor. i. 18.



**FOOLISHNESS**—power! These are the two names that Paul here gives to the preaching of the cross. I propose, my brethren, to study in succession these two ideas, in order afterwards to show you the tie that closely unites them together. This will be the plan

of our reflections.

The preaching of the cross is **FOOLISHNESS**. I pray you to remark, my brethren, that it is not an enemy of the gospel, but an Apostle, who says this to us. Christianity has not waited until the world cast this reproach at it; it has not left it this satisfaction. This insult it has itself seized, and been the first to claim as its lawful property. And let not men say to us that it is here a figure of speech, a bold apostrophe, that has escaped from the Apostle. The gospel is sparing in its use of these exaggerated epithets, of these figures of rhetoric; and, moreover, the same thought is found underlying the entire teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ presented His doctrine as a thing that the world would charge with folly. He clearly speaks of the incompatibility that there is between man's view of things and that which He preached; He foretold

His disciples that they would meet with opposition, hatred, and contempt.

This is, indeed, a strange method of seeking to gain men; so strange that it would be foolishness if it did not show a divine inspiration. Usually, when a man wishes to succeed, he promises to himself and to his disciples success. Every general well knows that in order to succeed he must announce victory to his soldiers. It is the same in the order of intelligence; a philosopher, a chief of a school, is forced to prove that his doctrine answers to all the needs of the age, and will satisfy all its aspirations; he points out intelligences already prepared to embrace it, and proselytes who are about to range themselves under his standard. We ourselves, sometimes yielding to this attraction, have we not announced the near triumph of our beliefs! Jesus Christ alone said to His disciples, ‘You will be judged, calumniated, hated because of My name;’ and it is this thought that Paul takes up when he speaks with so much assurance of the foolishness of the cross.

The cross specially merited this distinction and this reproach, for it is it which epitomises our entire Christianity. It is its centre; it is in it, above all, that there appeared what was strange and opposed to human wisdom. The preaching of the cross was designed to be foolishness; it has been so, my brethren, and Paul has said not a word too much.

And, first of all, considering it only from an

\* Translated from the French for the *Christian Treasury*, by permission of the author, from the seventh edition of the second volume of his sermons. Paris: M. Fischbacher.

## JESUS A SAVIOUR. WHY NOT YOURS?

## A PAPER FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.



HE name Jesus, Matthew tells us, signifies one who 'saves His people from their sins.' Among all the titles bestowed on the incarnate Son of God none is so descriptive of His highest work, none so endears Him to the gratitude of myriads, none will kindle such raptures of praise in heaven as this name—*Saviour*. But whose Saviour is He? A lifeboat is an apparatus for the saving of human life; but assuredly it does not save those who, for whatever cause, refuse to avail themselves of it.

If there be any truth which blazes out on the forefront of revelation, it is that, while Christ's atonement is sufficient for all men, yet only those who 'believe on Him have everlasting life. He that believeth not shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' These are Christ's own words, not ours. Certainly no one has a right to chant a song to Jesus as '*my Saviour*' while He is refusing to give his heart to Jesus and is disobeying all of His commandments. He will not be your Saviour, my friend, unless you come to Him, and ask Him to save you on His own terms, which He has distinctly laid down. One of these is repentance of your sins, and forsaking them. Another is the surrender of your heart to Him as an actual transaction. Saving faith is not a mere opinion; it is an act, and a series of acts. It joins you to Jesus, and thenceforth, because He lives, you shall live also. The one indispensable evidence of your faith will be Christian conduct; the keeping of His divine commandments. Why not make the opening day of the coming year the happiest 'New Year' of your life by accepting Jesus as your own Saviour from sin and death?

Many obstacles may have kept you, up to this time, from coming to Jesus. Perhaps it is a silly fear of ridicule. But will any one whose opinion you ought to respect cast reproach on you for doing right? Will such esteem you the less for a conscientious effort to copy the divinest model for human conduct? If you quail before the short-lived scoffs of fools, it will be a poor consolation to you on a dying bed to have been laughed out of your soul. Does pride keep you back? Are you unwilling to go down before the God whose laws you have broken, and cry out: 'God be merciful to me a sinner'? Rather ought you to consider it a perfect marvel of Divine generosity that God has provided for you such a glorious salvation, and is willing to save so perverse a sinner at all. False pride made Naaman, the leper, sneer at the idea of going to wash in the Jordan; but when he submitted and went, he came back with a skin as pure as a little child's.

Perhaps no such excuse as pride or fear of ridicule, and no such besetting sin as sensuality, or covetousness, or contempt for God's Word, may hinder you from accepting the Saviour. You may say candidly: 'I am wrong, both in heart and life. I ought to be a Christian. My conscience condemns me; but my heart is obstinate and depraved, and I cannot change it.' Then do not attempt to do what is impossible; simply to do what is possible, and what Christ commands you. Suppose that I hand a note to a message-boy, and direct him to deliver it to a person in New York. Suppose that the lad comes back to me, and says: 'The East River is deep, and the tide runs strong, and I cannot swim it.' 'Very true, my lad; but at the foot of Fulton Street is an established ferry. Its boats require no fording or swimming. Take the first boat at the wharf; trust to it, and you will be carried over.' Just as simple as this process is your path of duty. Between you and heaven is a river that no righteousness of your own can bridge, and no unaided strength of yours can breast. Your grievous mistake is that you do not avail yourself of what I may style God's ferry of free grace, and trust yourself to Him who can bear you over. Christ Jesus offers you His almighty spirit to change your depraved heart. He offers you forgiveness and help, and has been waiting for you to accept them through all this past year and many another year of guilt and sin. His love woos you, and conscience presses you to do just what the blind Bartimeus did. The blind man was powerless to open his own eyes. But he did promptly three things: He 'arose and came to Jesus'; he sincerely prayed for restoration; and he yielded himself implicitly to Jesus, to be operated upon in any way that the wisdom and power of the Wonder-worker might act. He did not linger. Ten minutes lost would lose the blessing. He did not attempt to open the sightless eye-balls to the day. His faith brought him close to the Saviour, whose voice he heard, and then he kept 'hands off,' while the Saviour wrought the healing work. Supernatural power did that work, and supernatural grace and strength will do for your soul and your whole character a like work of regeneration. The first step in Bible religion is obedience. Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

If you enter the opening year as a follower of Jesus, you must remember that a Christian character costs something. The atonement your Saviour made for you cost the anguish of Gethsemane and Calvary. The fabric of a Christian character will cost you numberless self-denials and battles with temptation; watchfulness, prayer, and diligence. 'He

that cometh after Me, and taketh not up his cross, cannot be My disciple.' Count the cost. The law of discipleship is: Hold fast to everything that is right; but give up everything that is wrong. Put the knife to sensual appetites. Train your wayward heart to let God have His way. If Jesus appeals to your purse in the persons of the poor and wretched, give to Him through them. With a genuine Christian Christmas lasts through the whole year. Count the cost of loving Christ more than bank stocks or fine equipage. Count the cost of losing money sooner by a thousand-fold than losing a good conscience. Count the cost of offending some friends for the sake of a Better one. Count the cost of a true, honest, prayerful, godly Christian life. It may cost more than you bargain for; but praise be to Him who died for you, such a life pays. There is not a redeemed soul that will sing 'glory to God in the highest' on Christmas morn in heaven who begrudges all the self-mortification and struggles and sacrifices he endured for the honour of his Saviour.

Let me drop three or four encouragements, like diamonds, in your pathway. If you sincerely desire Christ, He is yours. There is a star of guidance clear as that above Bethlehem, that will lead you to Him. The voice of His love, that you have so often drowned, still

calls: 'Come unto Me and live.' All the demons in the pit, all the infidels on the globe cannot keep you from Him. Nobody can, except yourself.

The service of the Saviour yields the solidest satisfaction known to a human heart, not merely in the good done unto you, but through the good you may do to others. The other day, I saw a group of sailors standing beside the speechless form of a man who had once been a blacksmith; but, for a dozen years past, had led scores of seamen to the Saviour. A working Christian never need be wretched. He gathers as he goes, and sends his treasures on before him. His crown brightens every day.

Remember also, that a man is always happy when he is right. The Saviour's smile is the soul's sunshine. In His presence is fullness of joy. Finally, let me remind you that 'this is the promise which He doth promise you, even eternal life!' Then make your gift to Jesus of your whole heart. Accept from Him the transcendent gift of full salvation. Enter the gateway of the New Year a new man or woman, with a new heart and hope. And then how unspeakably nearer and dearer will Bethlehem's child and Calvary's sufferer be to you when you can claim Him as *My Saviour*. —*New York Independent*.

## G I V I N G.

### HOW THE DOMINIE PREACHED IT.

BY 'A COUNTRY PARSON.'

[This paper, for which we are indebted to the *New York Observer*, pleasantly and yet powerfully sets forth the duty of giving. It is a fitting accompaniment to that by Dr Pierson on the 'Uses of Giving' on a previous page (page 64). 'Dominie' is a common name among the Reformed Dutch congregations in country districts for him whom in Scotland we call 'the Minister.'—*Editor of Christian Treasury*.]



**B**IDGEVILLE church was made up of excellent people, but they never had accustomed themselves to the luxury of giving; they were not poor by any means. A hundred thousand pounds would not cover the amount represented by that congregation; but what a ridiculously small sum they gave to benevolence; it never reached twenty pounds; and yet if they had brought in all their tithes, it would have amounted to ten thousand; and one per cent. of an estimated valuation of a hundred thousand would be one thousand pounds. They never had been trained in the good old New England habit of dividing with the Lord. They had never learned that the missionary spirit is the condition for the success of every church. Not only those who go into foreign lands must practise self-denial, but those who stay at home must have the same spirit, if a church is to have life and growth.

Now, the Dominie was born in New England; he graduated in the University of Adversity; he remembered his mother's missionary-

box, and how sacredly she set apart the tenth of her meagre income for benevolent uses. There was a large family, and she a widow; but there was 'plenty' and prayer. That box was kept in a little room, where she had her secret devotions, and he remembered how, when a very little boy, she took him with her into that holy of holies, and the box was laid before her, and she prayed upon it that the kingdom would come and the will be done. Once one of the children, a brother, abstracted a shilling from it in childish naughtiness; and will he ever forget the talk that followed before all the family, after the offender had been laboured with alone, about the sin of stealing, above all, the exceeding wickedness of stealing from the Lord—robbing God? The self-denials and sacrifices practised by that mother that the Lord might have His own made a deep impression on those young hearts. How could the Rev. John Morehouse help being benevolent, and why should he not desire his people to enjoy the same privilege?

He made up his mind he would preach a sermon, what the Catholic priest would call a