not stand against a breath of ridicule, they could not stand against a little temptation, and were soon "wallowing in the mire. One act of sacrifice is not the same thing as a life gathered into one consummate sacrifice, whose value is that it has the whole personality put into it for ever.

Third, this man could not take the full measure of all that he was doing, and Christ could. Christ did not go to His death with His eyes shut. He died because He willed to die, having counted the cost with the greatest, deepest moral vision in the world.

Fourthly, the hero in the story had nothing to do with the moral condition of those whom he saved. The scoundrel and the saint in that train were both alike to him.

Again, he had no quarrel with those whom he saved. He had nothing to complain of. He had nothing from them to try his heroism. They were not his bitter enemies. His valour was not the heroism of forgiveness, where lies the wondrous majesty of God. His act was not an act of grace, which is the grand glory of the love of Christ. Christ died for people who not only did not know Him, but who hated and despised Him. He died, not for a trainful of people, but for the whole organic world of people. It was an infinite death, that of His, in its range and in its power. It was death for enemies more bitter than anything that man can feel against man, for such haters as only holiness can produce. Here is the singular thing: the greater the favour that is done to us, the more fiercely we resent it if it does not break us down and make us grateful. The greater the favour, if we do not respond in its own spirit, so much the more resentful and antagonistic it makes us. I have already said that we speak too often as though the effect of Christ’s death upon human nature must be gratitude as soon as it is understood. It is not always gratitude. Unless it is received in the Holy Ghost, the effect may just be the other way. It is judgment. It is a death unto death.

I conclude by saying what I have often said, and what often needs saying, that it is not possible to hear the gospel and to go away just as you came. I wish that were more realised. We should not have so many sermon-hunters. If people felt that every time they heard the gospel they were either better or worse for it, they would be more careful about hearing. They would not go so often, possibly; better they should not, perhaps. I am not speaking about hearing of sermons. That is neither here nor there. A man may hear sermons and be neither the better nor the worse. But a man cannot hear the gospel without being either better or worse, whether he knows it or not. When you come to face the last issues, it is either unto salvation or unto condemnation. The great central, decisive thing, the last judgment of the world, is the Cross of Christ. The reason why so many sermons are found uninteresting is not always due to the dullness of the preacher. God knows how often that is the case, but it is not always. It is because the sermons so often turn, or ought to turn, upon the miracle of the grace of God, which is so great a miracle that it is strange, remote, and alien to our natural ways of thinking and feeling. It seems foreign to us. It is like reading a guide-book if you have never been in the country. I take down my Baedeker in the winter and read it with the greatest delight, because I know the country. If I had not been there I should find it the dreariest read- ing. Why do not people read the Bible more? Because they have not been in that country. There is no experience for it to stir and develop. The Cross of Christ, the infinite wonder of it wo have got to learn that. We have got to learn the deep meaning of that by having been there, by the evangelical experience whose lack is the cause of all the religious vagrancy of the hour. We have got to learn that it was not simply magnificent heroism, but that it was God in Christ reconciling the world. It was God that did that work in Christ. And Christ was the living God working upon man, and working out the Kingdom of God.