

## Week 33—If I Believed What You Say...

### Read

Charlie Peace was a criminal. Laws of God or man curbed him not. Finally the law caught up with him and he was condemned to death. On the fatal morning in Armley Jail, Leeds, England, he was taken on the death-walk. Before him went the prison chaplain, routinely and sleepily reading some Bible verses. The criminal touched the preacher and asked what he was reading. “The Consolations of Religion,” was the reply. Charlie Peace was shocked at the way he professionally read about hell. Could a man be so unmoved under the very shadow of the scaffold as to lead a fellow-human there and yet, dry-eyed, read of a pit that has no bottom into which this fellow must fall? Could this preacher believe the words that there is an eternal fire that never consumes its victims, and yet slide over the phrase without a tremor? Is a man human at all who can say with no tears, “You will be eternally dying and yet never know the relief that death brings”? All this was too much for Charlie Peace. So he preached. Listen to his on-the-eve-of-hell sermon.

“Sir,” addressing the preacher, “if I believed what you and the church of God *say* that you believe, even if England were covered with broken glass from coast to coast, I would walk over it, if need be, on hands and knees and think it worth while living, just to save one soul from an eternal hell like that!” <sup>1</sup>

### Reflect

*And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)*

### Respond

Write your thoughts here:

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Prayer Requests for yourself, your students, and others with whom you serve in ministry:

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**Remember**

*“I still, from my armchair, preach in great revivals. I still vision hundreds walking the aisles to accept Christ. I still feel hot tears for the lost . . . I want no Christmas without a burden for lost souls, a message for sinners, a heart to bring in the lost. May food be tasteless, music a discord, Christmas a farce if I forget the dying millions; if this fire in my bones does not still flame. Not till I die or not till Jesus comes will I ever be eased from this burden, these tears, this toil to save souls.”*

*John R. Rice, age 85*

*(Part of a 1980 Christmas letter dictated few days before his death)<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Leonard Ravenhill. *Why Revival Tarries*, (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1959), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Curtis Hutson, ed., *Great Preaching on Soul Winning*, (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers), preface.